A Walk from Braunton Museum/Countryside Centre

to St. Sylvester's Chapel Walk 4

Time: 40 minutes + return

Take care: keep to pavements – crossing roads – especially with children and dogs - accompanied please by a responsible adult

- Museum/Countryside Centre. Collect a card from here if this is your first walk. Walk to the main road crossing the entry road to the car park by The Green Newsagents.
- Cross the main road at the Pelican Crossing and turn left passing the parade of shops and the Duck Dive. Look over the parapet at the River Caen. Have you ever wondered why it is called 'Caen'. Yes, it appears to be after Caen in Normandy and dating from Norman times but now pronounced 'Kane'
- Continue on past Caen Court This used to be the GP surgery for Braunton. Many older residents remember Drs. Ritchie, Rogerson and Waters in practice here. Turn right into North Street. Take care especially with children and dogs as this is a narrow section of road before it widens with a pavement.
- This now becomes a pleasant walk past many former farms now converted into residential dwellings. What are the names of the farms recorded in the names of the properties? Unusually, whilst farms habitually have their lands surrounding, in Braunton the farms would use the Great Field for arable in strips and Braunton Marshes for summer grazing. There was also Braunton Down for grazing. None of these were enclosed under the Enclosure Acts.
- Where North Street bends steeply up Rock Hill instead carry straight on. Note the row of elevated cottages on your left some still thatched and bear down to the right past Scur Farm between an old wall and cottages.
- Cross over the Tarka Trail formerly the railway line through the Butts Whilst the Butts often denotes where longbow practice took place in the Middle Ages, think famously Battle of Agincourt, it does have a second meaning referring to a strip of land between two sets of boundaries.
- The path turns left alongside the River Caen and out to the main road. The old Mill Leat for Iron Mills across the road runs through the rear gardens of the cottages on your left. To your right is Butts Bridge with a stone inscription giving the date of construction.
- However do not turn right but cross the road Take especial care. Turn left along the pavement. We could continue along the pavement but it will be more pleasant to bear right past the former Iron Mills and across the pedestrian bridge into the Churchyard.
- In the Churchyard bear left passing the main West entrance to St. Brannock's Church and out on to Church Street by the River Caen. I am sure walkers will be familiar with the story of the founding of the Church around 550AD by St. Brannock a Welsh saint. Less known might be that as a Brythonic monk he

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founded a Celtic Church which did not recognise the Pope in Rome as its Head. This changed gradually after the Synod of Whitby in 664AD across England

- Turn right and then shortly left into Silver Street. On the corner on your right-hand side used to be the New Inn, one of a large number of traditional public houses in Braunton. How many are still in being?
- Continue walking up Silver Street. Looking back with the old rectory (now Pikkeston Court) on your right and various cottages particularly on your left this still feels a very old part of Braunton. Take care especially with children and dogs as there are no pavements
- Continue up to Sylvester House on your left. Just beyond by its double garage and convex mirror is a 5 bar gate leading into the field on your left. PLEASE DO NOT ENTER THE FIELD. The box containing the tokens is hanging from the gate by kind permission of the owner. You will note in the field there is a flat platform where there used to be a chapel which fell into disuse and was taken down in the 1800s. Whilst St. Sylvester's is recognized as one of the five mediaeval chapels its exact position here is the subject of debate. According to mediaeval legend St. Sylvester miraculously cured Emperor Constantine of leprosy.
- Please collect a token, closing the lid and return to the Museum/Countryside Centre to stamp your card
- If you are familiar with Braunton do not be tempted to combine this with a walk to St. Michael's Chapel from Silver Street. The gate and path is NOT a public footpath and we have been expressly asked to point this out. Please follow the permissive footpath on the St. Michael's route sheet

We do hope you have enjoyed your exploration of Braunton. We would love you to make a donation using the QR code, by card on www.brauntoncaenrotary.co.uk or cash at Braunton Museum or Countryside Centre

Braunton Caen Rotary's Involvement

- Six of our members have been to India to assist in campaigns led by local Rotarians to locate and vaccinate as many children as possible. Each child vaccinated would have their finger marked with dye (which wears off after a week or so) to show they have received the vaccine.
- Hence the colour purple. Those living in Braunton cannot fail to have noticed the purple crocuses that now flower as a harbinger of Spring around the green in the centre of Braunton.
- Roger Byrom has for many years been our Rotary District representative for End Polio Now and has also twice been part of the Rotary team at meetings at committee rooms in the House of Commons drawing together international health leaders, polio survivors and politicians to emphasise the importance of the work to Government

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