

## **Val Harrison**

### **Description of the front elevation.**

Here we are looking at the west elevation of Higher Uppacott, a Dartmoor longhouse owned by the National Park Authority. As you can see it's a long low building which snuggles into the natural contours of the hill slope, to such an extent that the higher end is actually built into the ground, and you can see that the window sills are approximately level with the ground surface, and as we move down the hill slope the ground falls away so we can see the full height of the wall towards the south end. You can instantly see that it's an unusual house to our modern eyes, it's got no first floor windows along any of this elevation, and it has a very deep thatched roof. There's a central front door which opens onto a passage which runs from the front of the house to the back of the house and is known as either a cross passage or a through passage, and above the passageway we can see that the walls take on a very different look, we have three windows set within the wall, whereas below the cross passage the relationship between solid wall and opening is quite different; we've just two little thin slits and this presentation of the front wall is telling you how inside the building was used, the upper end being used by human beings and the lower end being used by animals; however you mustn't assume that because these people shared their home with animals that this was any kind of mean dwelling, this was actually quite a sophisticated house in the medieval period and there are lots of features surviving within the building which demonstrate that.