

DEVON HISTORY NEWS

NEWSLETTER OF THE DEVON HISTORY SOCIETY

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Cover: Pike Ward - a Devonian in Iceland (courtesy of Devon Heritage Centre). One of a number of images at the DHC, which have inspired a new book, summarised on p6-7.

SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE DUE 1ST MAY HAVE YOU PAID for 2018?

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**NB Subscriptions due
1st May**

From the CHAIRMAN



Change is one of those words that we all use without giving it much thought. We assume we know what it means. We assume others know

what we mean when we use the word. Gradual change is something we accept as a given (we are all changing as life progresses). Sudden, lurching change is rather different. I say all this because I have just been reading John Kent's, *Wesley and the Wesleyans: Religion in eighteenth-century Britain* (such an interesting read...). Kent's central thesis is that there was no 'evangelical revival' in Britain, coincident with but not necessarily dependent upon the emergence of Methodism. This set me thinking about other such apparent 'changes' in British society – was the legislation of 1828-29 the 'catastrophe' (for the ancien regime) that Jonathan Clark claims? What was the impact of the great Reform Act and the other 'reforming' legislation' of the 1830s and '40s? How did people at the time experience these things (rather than 'perceive' them)? I suspect that we are all inclined to think that these things came as 'the sudden lurch', with a jarring force that knocked society in a different direction. I also suspect that much of this, if not nonsense, is an exaggeration.

This is where local historians and local societies have much to contribute. We need studies of change, apparent and real, and its impact upon our county, our towns and villages. Elsewhere in this Newsletter, you will read about a projected study of Devon post-1918 to which you are warmly invited to contribute. Just what was the impact of the end of the War upon Devon's societies. How did people react; how did authority (local and national) react? What was the experience of ordinary people in the 1920s as life returned to 'normal' (or maybe it didn't, and 'normal' has to be redefined in the light of local research).

I hope you will respond to the invitation to get involved. A collaborative study across the county of the war's aftermath seems to me to be very worthwhile.

Andrew Jones



Wesley's legacy: Ottery St Mary Wesleyan Chapel (1829). There are hundreds of similar survivals particularly in the Southwest of England.

Affiliated Societies Seek, Share, Solve



Hello! I'm Abi, and I was recently elected to serve as the DHS Liaison Officer for Affiliated Societies.

Julia Neville has stepped down from the role after six years; we thank her for all she has done for the Affiliates and wish her all the best for the future. As you know, Julia developed an encyclopaedic knowledge of local groups, and I hope that over the coming months I will get to know more about each of your organisations and the research you are undertaking. It has been fascinating so far, finding out about all the amazing local research work that is going on across Devon, and I know there is still a lot more for me to discover!

I am an Archaeologist and Heritage Consultant, and am based in South Devon

where I run the Devon Rural Archive near Modbury: I hope many of you will come and visit me here in the years ahead. I have worked in the museum sector for 18 years, and have a strong interest in community archaeology and public history, particularly in the contribution that local societies can make. So, as I begin my first term as the Affiliated Society Liaison Officer, foremost in my mind is one of the founding aims of the DHS, namely to connect the county's local history groups and enable their members to have a shared local history experience. It is with this in mind that I invite our affiliate members to seek advice, share knowledge and together solve the issues that they encounter in their efforts to advance the study of Devon's history. Whether it relates to day to day administration (such as membership and programme planning); how and where to apply for funding; or planning a new research project, it is highly likely that other groups are experiencing or have experienced a similar situation. There are currently 69 affiliated groups so let's start a conversation and work together!

In the coming months, I will be in direct contact with all of you as I attempt to learn more about your group and how I may best support you. In the meantime, if you have any questions or comments on this new forum, please feel free to contact me by email on abigail.gray@acgarchaeology.co.uk. I will provide an update in the next newsletter.

Abi

Access to Plymouth Record Office

Due to the imminent arrival of The Box we will have to be contracting our opening hours substantially from April 2019. We will be opening on 2 days a week and bookings must be made in advance. Please contact us on pwdro@plymouth.gov.uk (and check out page 30 in this edition of the News) for more information.

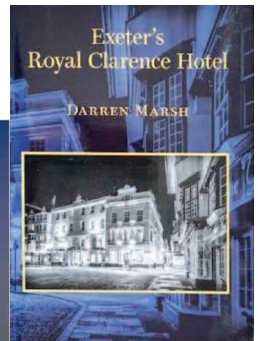
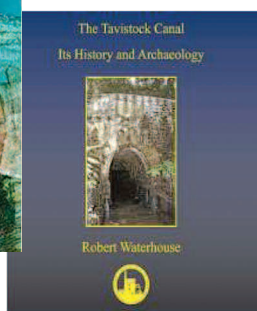
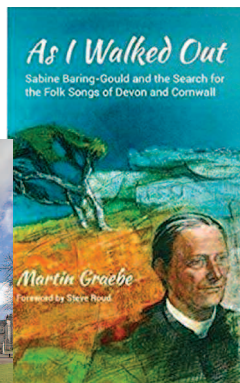
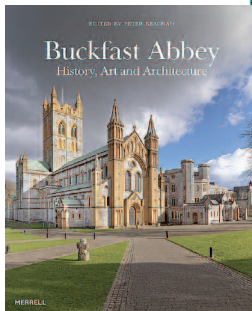
AGM & Conference 2018

Conference 2018 focussed on the life and times of the cottage hospital movement which in most cases preceded the NHS but still survives in some places within it.

The day began with a welcome from Professor Mark Brayshay (DHS President) followed by an expeditious disposal of a short AGM agenda. All was completed with little ado, confirming the election to council of Abi Gray who takes up the reins of affiliates liaison officer from Julia Neville, who deserves (and was accorded) heartfelt plaudits and thanks for her tireless efforts over the last five years. The conference later in the day was the beneficiary of Julia's enthusiasm for local research - first for WWI hospitals as part of the Devon Remembers project, following through to the work on cottage hospitals that were so popular in pre NHS Devon.

The Book prizes are always a key feature of the AGM/Conference meeting and the

DHS Book of the Year and the three joint winners of the W G Hoskins Prize.



2018 winners presented a new treasure trove of heritage reading for members and Devonians in general.

Peter Beacham - himself a regional treasure where history and heritage are concerned, has made a glorious book about *Buckfast Abbey* in preparation for its millennial celebrations in 2018. A worthy book of the year if ever there.

The three joint winners of the W G Hoskins prize this year were Martin Graebe's *As I Walked Out: Sabine Baring-Gould and the Search for the Folk Songs of Devon and Cornwall*, Robert Waterhouse's *The Tavistock Canal: Its History and Archaeology* and Darren Marsh's *Exeter's Royal Clarence Hotel*.



I to r: Peter Beacham, Martin Graebe, Robert Waterhouse, Darren Marsh.

The titles are self explanatory and I would have all three on my shelves if funds permitted, although Martin Graebe's folk lore work will have I believe a broader interest for English Social historians more generally, alongside the value the book will undoubtedly have for folk music and folk lore devotees.

More details of the books are on the website here [Book of the Year Awards](#) .

CONFERENCE

The work of the last party of the morning and the afternoon session was the presentations by local historians from across the county drawing together the themes from a variety of local experiences. The speakers: Helen Tucker, Graham Ward , Gail Ham, Frances Billinge, Nigel Hyman and Caroline Stanford offered between them a fascinating portrait of Devon as a caring county in a less sophisticated medical environment. From Graham Ward's Egg Coddling to Frances Billinge's incensed vicar, members found much of interest and amusement.

Attendance was not as high as in previous years, but Council continue to look for areas of interest where members are galvanised to meet together for mutual benefit and enlightenment. If you have any comments about the format for DHS meetings please write to the Liaison Officer Abi Gray at this email address abigail.gray@acgarchaeology.co.uk

If you are publishing anything about the history of your locality, please get in touch. Articles about new research and publications are of value to members even in advance of more formal reviews. Write to dhsnewsed@gmail.com, with suggestions or ideas.

The Icelandic Adventures of Pike Ward.

The following is a summary of a fascinating new book with particular encouragement to those looking for inspiration while grazing in the Devon Heritage Centre. Ed.

Pike Ward was a Devon fish merchant who became one of the most significant figures in Iceland in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. A new book based on the exciting discovery of his lost diaries and photographs opens a new window on this pivotal period in the nation's history.

The Icelandic Adventures of Pike Ward is centred on his 1906 diary and includes an introduction, epilogue and notes by Katherine Findlay to explain the context of his extraordinary life. In entertaining style, Pike records his journeys around Iceland on dangerous and adventurous trips to buy fish in remote corners of the country. He travels by pack pony, rowing boat and steamship, through mountains and dangerous seas, on perilous cliff paths and in terrible weather. He copes with cold, lice, illness and meagre food with no means of communicating with the outside world. His writing reveals a humorous, intrepid and gregarious man who had friends at every level of Icelandic society. The book also includes plates showing a selection of his photographs, which are among the most important early images of Iceland and Icelanders.

Katherine Findlay first discovered Pike Ward's photographic scrapbooks while working at Devon Heritage Centre in 2016. As an Icelandophile already, she was captivated by the images, which date from the 1890s until the eve of the First World War. She was determined to find out more and eventually tracked down Pike's descendants who gave her access to the family's private collection of diaries and letters. She spent two years working on the diary and researching Pike's story in Icelandic and Devonian sources, uncovering his vital part in Iceland's transformation from impoverished Danish outpost to wealthy modern nation.

The book shows that Pike Ward was a major figure in Icelandic history. He revolutionised the nascent fishing industry and was one of the most well-known and well-loved people in the country. Iceland's independence and wealth were made possible by fishing, and fishing was made profitable by Pike Ward. He was the first person to pay Icelandic fishermen in cash and he brought with him new methods and new markets. Fish prepared in the way he introduced were known universally as Wardsfiskur – Ward's fish. In recognition of his role in Iceland's rapid 20th century rise, he was awarded the Grand Cross of the Icelandic Falcon, the nation's highest honour.

Pike Ward fell in love with Iceland and became as Icelandic as he was English, although he never forgot his Devon roots. He spoke Icelandic and spent 22 years there, but he came home to Teignmouth for around three months every winter. His wife Grace Agnes and young son Edward lived with his mother in the town, until she died giving birth to their second son, who also died, in 1901. Pike gave the baby an anglicised Icelandic name, Thorarin, and mother and child are buried in Teignmouth.

When he returned to Devon permanently, he named his home Valhalla, covered the outside with Viking-style carvings and filled it with Icelandic treasures. Many older people in Teignmouth remember two huge whalebone arches on the seafont that he brought back and donated to the town. Shortly before he died in 1937, he wrote to an Icelandic friend and hinted that he would like his remains to be sent to Iceland. In the event, his ashes were ceremonially scattered from a boat into the sea in Teignmouth harbour.

The publication of his diary, along with an exhibition of his photographs at the National Museum of Iceland in September 2019, presents an opportunity to celebrate the links forged by Pike Ward between Devon and Iceland, and restore his role in a remarkable story.

The Icelandic Adventures of Pike Ward, edited by K. J. Findlay, is published by Amphora Press in the UK. It is available to buy from Devon Heritage Centre and Teign Heritage Centre, or online at amazon.co.uk

Pike Ward appears on the cover of this edition of the News. Ed.

Blue Plaque Scheme

Longer standing members of the Society may remember that some years ago we started a Blue Plaque Scheme to honour notable Devonians. The first of these commemorated the childhood home of Ernest Bevin (1881-1951), founder of the Transport and General Workers Union and later M.P., Minister of Labour, and Foreign Secretary.

The Council has recently decided to revive the scheme, but this time with more clearly defined criteria. We are particularly keen to recognise individuals whose connection is with the more rural parts of the county which aren't within the areas covered by the more well-known civic society schemes. The first plaque of the revived scheme will commemorate Margaret Partridge, a pioneering electrical engineer of rural electrification in Devon. This plaque will be unveiled in Willand on 6 March. If any member would like to attend the unveiling ceremony, please contact Ann Bond by 22 February for further details.

The scheme is now open for nominations from members and affiliated societies for further plaques. A nomination form and detailed criteria are now available on our website. Funds for the scheme are limited and we cannot guarantee that all nominations will be successful. A small committee will convene to agree which nominations meet the criteria and an order of priority.

AB



Ernest Bevin's childhood home in Copplesstone

Book Review



Peter Beacham, ed.

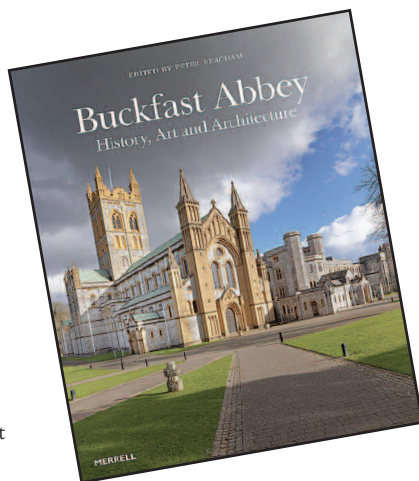
Buckfast Abbey: History, Art and Architecture.

London: Merrell, 2017. 270pp.

ISBN 978-1-8589-4650-4. £60.

In 1018, during the reign of King Cnut, a religious establishment was founded by the Anglo-Saxon ealdorman Æthelweard, at a site (perhaps not precisely that of the present monastery) called Buckfast, beside the River Dart and near the main road between Exeter and South-West Devon. A thousand years later there are still monks at Buckfast, still (in the grand Benedictine tradition) offering hospitality to visitors who make the short detour from the A30, whether for private contemplation or to hear a mass or recital in the imposing abbey church, to enjoy a moment of tranquility in the monastery gardens or a meal in the Grange Restaurant, to participate in an event at the Conference Centre, or to visit the monastic shops in search of books, gifts, or Tonic Wine. Buckfast's millennium has been marked by some striking capital projects, including a new monastic shop and an immersive visitor experience, 'The Monastic Way'. This beautifully produced book is another souvenir of Buckfast's 1000 years, and a significant contribution to scholarship on the abbey's history.

Like Buckfast's story itself, the book falls into two halves, respectively from foundation in 1018 to closure at the Dissolution, and from the return of the monks in 1882 to the present day. In the opening chapter, Nicholas Orme provides an overview of 'The History of the Abbey, 1018-1539', leading us from the community's fairly obscure early centuries as a Benedictine monastery, through its reorganisation in 1136 as a Savigniac, and subsequently a Cistercian abbey, down to its surrender in 1539. David M. Robinson then attempts to reconstruct 'The Architecture of the Medieval Cistercian Church and Cloister', drawing on historical depictions of the abbey ruins, archaeological findings, and



analogy with a wide range of contemporary Cistercian examples. Complementing Robinson's focus on the religious heart of the monastery, Stewart Brown's detailed archaeological investigation of 'The Medieval Inner and Outer Courts' reminds us that 'Buildings in the inner court would almost certainly have included granaries, a bakehouse and a brewhouse, while in the outer court there would probably have been workshops, a slaughterhouse and tannery, fishponds and orchards' (p. 73). These three substantial chapters are followed by a pair of very short commentaries by John Cherry on 'The Tiles of the Abbey' and 'The Seals of the Abbey', and these complete the medieval half of the book.

There is, of course, an interval between the two halves of the story. Between 1539 and 1882 there were no monks at Buckfast, and this period is the subject of a fascinating chapter by Bridget Cherry. Her title, 'Picturesque Antiquity', points towards the popularity of views of the abbey ruins among nineteenth-century artists (including Turner), though she also covers the exploitation of Buckfast as an industrial site (for cider-making and cloth-working) and the residences of a succession of private owners. It was the last of these, Dr James Gale, who first conceived the idea of returning the site to monastic use, and in 1882 advertised for suitable occupants to present themselves. The offer was taken up by an exiled

community of Benedictines from the French monastery of La Pierre-qui-Vire.

Aidan Bellenger begins the modern half of the book with a broad sketch of the re-establishment of monasticism in England in the late nineteenth century, as context for a quick overview of Buckfast's modern history, with a focus on its abbots. That the monks proceeded to rebuild the monastery on its medieval foundations is well known: indeed, in his brief Introduction Peter Beacham calls it 'one of the most engaging and inspiring episodes of the whole Catholic Revival' (p. 9). Somewhat surprisingly, the volume itself de-emphasises the episode. Instead, Roderick O'Donnell's study of F.A. Walters, the abbey's architect from 1883 until his death in 1931, stresses the role of Walters and other professionals in the project, in an important study that includes many reproductions of the original architectural drawings. Marian Campbell provides a survey of 'Sacred Silver and Other Metalwork' (much of the most important is German work of the 1930s). A brief chapter by Alan Powers describes the building of the school in the 1960s (subsequently converted into the Conference Centre), and Stewart Brown focuses on St Anthony's, the light industrial building of the first half of the twentieth century whose Bee Department and Tonic Wine Department were the base for Buckfast's two best-known commercial ventures. Another Buckfast 'export' was Charles Norris's dalle de verre glass, found in numerous mid twentieth-century Catholic churches across England, as well as Buckfast's own Blessed Sacrament chapel (completed 1966), and described in a chapter by Robert Proctor. The volume's editor, Peter Beacham, rounds off the collection with an essay on 'The Making of the Precinct' that takes us up to the present day.

The book is of large format and lavishly illustrated with some 250 illustrations, most in colour: it will be equally at home on the coffee table as in the academic library. The beauty of its appearance will surely recommend it to a wide range of readers, and so it should be pointed out that not all those readers will necessarily find everything they are looking for. Beyond the

immediate appeal of the illustrations, the book's text may sometimes prove off-putting for non-specialists, especially in some of the more technical chapters; while specialists may grumble that no sources are given for the majority of the illustrations, many of them never previously published and potentially a rich resource for further research. And the volume does not tell the whole story of Buckfast. Despite the book's subtitle, this is very much a history of the art and architecture of the abbey. Although one learns much of the design and development of the buildings, surprisingly little emerges of the community of monks (and others) who called those buildings home, or the spirituality that underpinned them, and that they in turn supported, and continue to support. But if not all readers will be satisfied all of the time, no reader could fail to admire this very fine book.

E A Jones University of Exeter

Book Reviews requested

A reviewer is requested for the following volume sent to the DHS recently.

A Lord Lieutenant in Wartime: The Experiences of the Fourth Earl Fortescue during the First World War, edited by **Richard Batten**, Boydell & Brewer for The Devon & Cornwall Record Society, 2018.

Reviews are still sought for the following (details in previous newsletter)

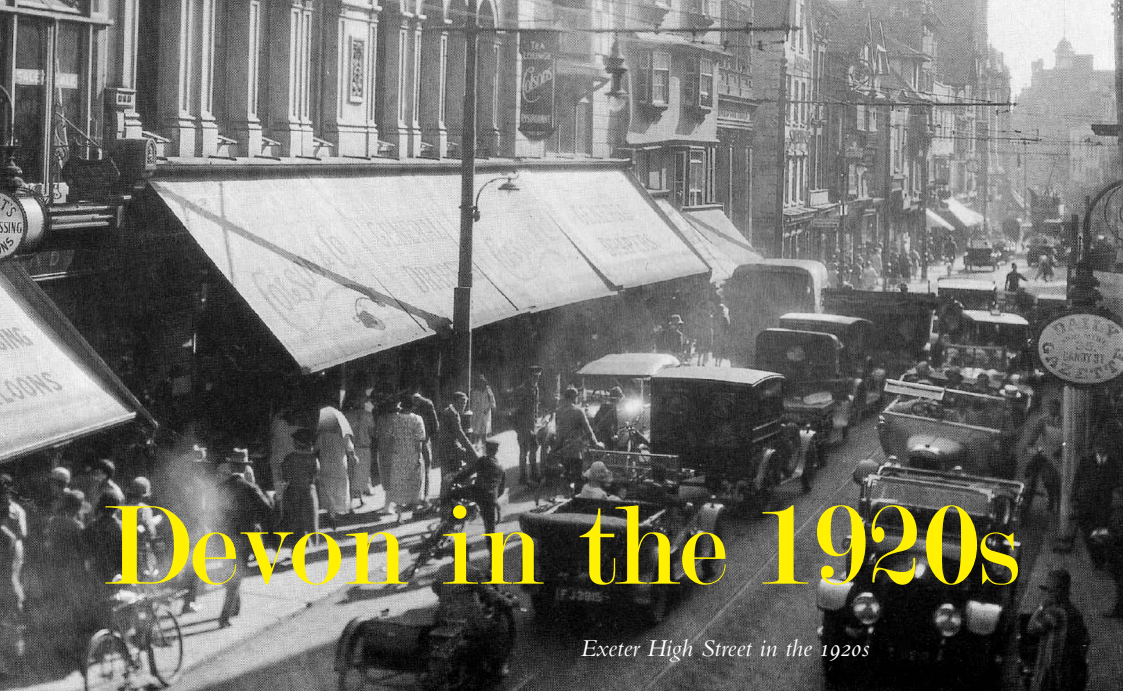
Lustleigh: A Dartmoor Village in Focus, published by The Lustleigh Society, 2018

Medieval Pilgrimage: With a Survey of Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Somerset and Bristol, by Nicholas Orme, Impress, 2018.

Poltimore: A Village in Transition, 1911-1921, Poltimore Estate Research Society, 2018.

Please contact the **Review Editor**:

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Devon in the 1920s

Exeter High Street in the 1920s

Now the First World War is over ... what about the 1920s? Many local historians, and people new to local history, learned a lot about the history of the communities they live in during the work done for the centenary commemoration of the First World War. But what happened next?

Lloyd George and the coalition candidates made lots of promises at the General Election held in December 1918. The most famous is 'Homes fit for Heroes'. But there were also promises about jobs for returning soldiers and sailors, opportunities for education and training, improving village life and rural industries, paying

Below: cottage before reconditioning



decent agricultural wages ...and many more. There was a lot of hope and a great many expectations.

How did Devon fare in the 1920s? Were these expectations met? Who were the winners and the losers? How did new technologies affect everyday life? How did people react to the continuing and increasing intervention by the government in their everyday lives? Were children's lives better than their parents' had been?

I'm interested in seeing whether we can shape a Devon History Society research project that makes a contribution to the history of Devon by looking at some of these questions. If you've already done some relevant research it would be great if you could share it. If you – either individually or as a society – would be interested in working on any of these topics and comparing your findings with those from other places, please get in touch to discuss what we might do. Email me in the first instance – j.f.neville@btinternet.com.

Julia Neville

THE PROGRAMME FOR

2019

SPRING-SUMMER 2019 AND THE NEW VENUE FOR THE AGM AND CONFERENCE

In 2019 the Society has continued its collaboration with other societies and organisations. First up is a lecture by **Douglas Herdson** on the evening of **Tuesday February 12th at the Devon and Exeter Institution on Darwin in Devon**. This is being held in conjunction with the Royal Society of Biology and promises to answer the question of why Darwin was so unhappy in Plymouth, while he prepared for his epic voyage on HMS Beagle in 1831. In March, the **Friends of Devon's Archives and Devon Archaeological Society** invite members to attend a seminar on **Investigating Medieval and Early Modern Devon: Manorial Records and the c.1613 Norden Survey of Devon Crown Lands**, which is being held at the DAS offices in Dix's Field, Exeter on the morning of **Saturday March 2nd**.

We have three events in May.

On **May 9th - Reimagining an 'At Home'** with the Plymouth Citizens Association (PCA) in 1919. In November 1919 Plymouth Sutton became the first constituency in England to elect a woman MP, Nancy, Lady Astor. That same month the first two women had also been elected to Plymouth Council. Nancy Astor's election leaflet said 'I believe I know the real Plymouth, its children and women and its social problems ...'. So did the former suffrage activists of the PCA. What did they think should be done next? How could they

work with Astor to best effect? As part of Plymouth History Month, Jo Loosemore of the BBC's Listening Project will host a 'sofa conversation' in which three historians discuss the 'hot topics' for Plymouth as they would have been seen in 1919. A bonus will be the venue – the wonderful historic setting of the Mayor's Parlour in Devonport Guildhall.

The Historical Association Plymouth Branch have extended their annual invitation for DHS members to attend one of their lectures without charge, in this case on the evening of **Tuesday May 14th** at the University of Plymouth where **Laura Quigley** will be talking about **Plymouth under Siege: Plymouth and the Civil War**.

Thirdly, on **Saturday May 18th**, the **DHS summer meeting** will be held in **Dartmouth**, one of Devon's most historic and attractive towns.

In **June, and on the evening of 6th**, we are jointly presenting **with the Devon Rural Archive** at their excellent premises in Shilstone, Modbury, a lecture by **Dr. Julia Neville** on **Learned and Literary Ladies: Devon Women Campaigning for the Vote**. The first half of the year concludes with a lecture by the well-known historian and author **Dr. Ian Mortimer** who will be talking at **the Mint Centre in Exeter** on the afternoon of **June 12th** on **The History of a Devon Town House: Mearsdon, Moretonhampstead, from the Thirteenth Century to the Present Day**.

We have held our AGMs and Conference in Streatham Court at the University of Exeter since 2013, and I am sure everyone will agree that it has been a well-equipped and comfortable venue with good space for exhibitors and a free car-park adjacent. However, the cost of the venue rises each year and the most convenient car-park (D) will not be available in 2019 due to building works.

THE PROGRAMME FOR

2019

.../continued from previous page

Council has therefore decided in 2019 to hold the **AGM and Conference** at the **Rougemont Room at Exeter Central Library**. The Rougemont Room can hold 80 people and is fully IT equipped. Morning refreshments will be provided as will a limited number of tables for exhibitors; there is a large choice of nearby places to buy lunch, or

Below: The Whitchurch butter making class in 1934, kindly lent by Miss Ann Cole of Lamerton. Her mother, the then Annie Mudge, is seen at the back, second from right, and Miss Bray is in the centre, fifth from left. I have this from Helen Harris as a supplement to her article in TDH (2018 edition) 'Devon Dairying - A Look Back'. There is another photo in the digital version of the Newsletter and there are more photos on the same topic held by the Devon Archive and Local Studies Service at Exeter (DHC). Ed.



members can bring their own lunch (there are seats outside the Rougemont Room and in the neighbouring garden). Although easily accessible by public transport, Exeter Central Library does not of course offer free parking, but we hope that this will not deter members for attending this year's conference which will be on **The Maritime History of Devon**. We look forward to receiving your feedback in the new venue at the conclusion of the conference.

Paul Auchterlonie
Programme Secretary

Online booking available now on
<https://www.devonhistorysociety.org.uk/news/devon-history-society-2019-programme/> (click [HERE](#)).

Book Review



David Parker

Early Victorian Devon 1830-1860. An Age of Optimism and Opulence.

Wellington, Somerset, Halsgrove, 2017.

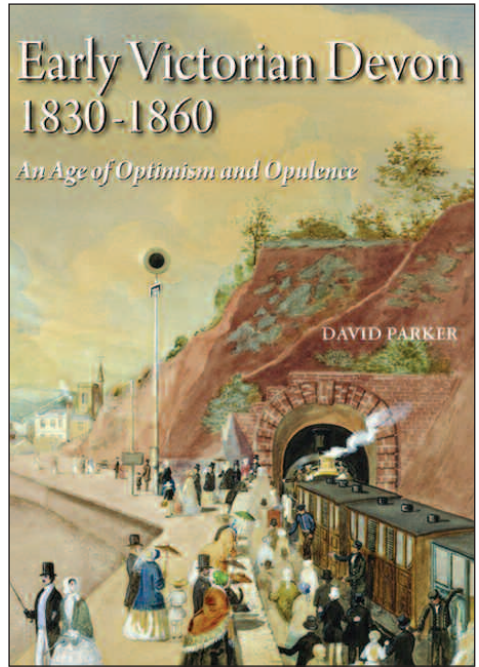
160 pages. Illustrations. Hardback.

ISBN 978 0 85704 319 1. Price £24.99.

David Parker, who wrote an acclaimed book on Devon in the Great War and then a prequel on Edwardian Devon, has now ventured into early Victorian territory. The new work is heavy (in one sense), printed on glossy paper and well illustrated in black and white. The sense of a coffee-table book is confirmed by the series of short chapters covering germane topics: transport, the landowning classes and their politics, overseas wars, the working economy, ports and resorts, the churches, schooling and, lastly, poverty and charity. All this is preceded by a short chapter that tries to set Devon in a period of national change.

That introduction – or at least the intention behind it – is the weakest part of the book. As a summary of British history of the times it is not just rather banal but also outdated. There is little awareness of recent scholarship on many topics and episodes and, as with so much local history, there is little attempt at comparative or contextual understanding. Is Devon to be taken as a typical slice of national experience or was it an outlier, an unrepresentative (and rather stagnant) corner of a country undergoing dramatic developments? How did it compare with even the rest of the South West? Nor is the sub-title justified. Much of what we find covered here could just as well be sub-titled 'Pessimism and Poverty'. The book doesn't explore why Devon continued to witness food riots later than most parts of the country.

As a contribution to local history the work is more successful. It is largely based on a scouring of local newspapers and some of the reports unearthed are of real interest and certainly unfamiliar to this reviewer, but the methodology gives most of the chapters a rather snippety feel. They tend to reportage rather than serious analysis or argument – perhaps the work is intended for dipping into rather than reading straight through.



There is also an element of padding, particularly with the illustrations (many from the Illustrated London News) which aren't always specific to Devon. It's hard to see what drawings of episodes in the Crimean War or Indian Mutiny tell us about Devon. Some of the lack of recent historiography shows here too. The national significance of a couple of elections in Devon parliamentary constituencies is missed and Thomas Shapter is still presented as a proponent, rather than opponent, of sanitary reform in Exeter. (So much for a lecture given by this reviewer a couple of years ago!) There were also more non-landed MPs for Devon seats than is allowed here (the gentry and aristocracy do seem to impress the author, not least for some of the semi-public entertainments they staged) and the work's focus on the upper and the lower classes leaves the middling classes in the towns sold short. It would have been good, for example, to know more about Samuel Carter of Tavistock who was the country's last Chartist MP to be elected. Parker is much defter in dealing with rural society than urban. Why no serious mention of banking as part of the economy? Exeter was an important banking centre, like many county towns, and had its note-issuing banks into this period. The author recognizes the divisions in county opinion caused by parliamentary reform, the Corn Laws, the New Poor Law and religious controversies but he never develops or quantifies them. It's on to the next press cutting.

That said, dipping into the work has its rewards and occasionally some of the larger issues emerge. Transport is well covered here, including the long-term importance of paddle-steamer traffic (much of it recreational) and the competition between Devon ports for limited commercial business. Indeed the burgeoning of the county's coastline as resort territory probably owed something to its commercial decline and even to the ending of smuggling, though apparently Devon kept the latter going until the 1840s. The new railways are properly given prominent coverage.

The book will surely win a place on quite a few coffee-tables with owners interested in local history, particularly if they like it glossy. It is well referenced and there is a useful, if rather dated, bibliography. It is a nice piece of book production, though the text might have gained from a harder critical reading before publication. It isn't true that Exeter's civic politics were under Conservative control throughout the period, residents of Holsworthy would be surprised to learn it is 'in the east' of the county and the 'embattled' Eggesford House should surely be 'crenellated', while a 'gentile country festival' doesn't deliver all it promises. Above all, one could do without repetitions of the meaningless phrase 'typically Victorian' and not just because the work covers only the early Victorian years and ends in 1860.

Bruce Coleman



Todd Gray receives historic key to mark Freedom of the city

Long serving DHS Council member Dr Todd Gray has received a fitting keepsake to mark being awarded the Freedom of the City for his services to history – the key to an iconic lost building.

On 30 November he was presented with a 3D reproduction of the key to Exeter's East Gate during the ceremony, held to mark his tireless work to uncover Devon's past.

Dr Gray has written more books on Exeter than any other historian – 14 of his 48 books are about the city – and his research has played a role in helping Exonians become more aware of their history and the ancient buildings around them.

The key was made by experts at the University of Exeter's Digital Humanities Laboratory using a 3D printer. It will be given to Dr Gray by Exeter's Lord Mayor, Cllr Rob Hannaford at the ceremony organised by Exeter City Council at the Guildhall.

Dr Gray was born and raised in New England, USA, but has been fascinated by Devon's history after first visiting for a school trip in 1973. After completing his degree in London he moved to Exeter in 1984 to study for a PhD. He completed his doctorate in 1988 and has been a Research Fellow at the university ever since.

Dr Gray became a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society in 1992, in 2006 he became a British citizen and was awarded an MBE for voluntary services to Devon's history in 2014. He has organised 12 exhibitions in Exeter's Guildhall, including one featuring the Royal

Salt, otherwise known as the Exeter Salt - the only loan ever made of the Crown Jewels or Plate from the Tower of London.

Dr Gray has organised more than 50 history conferences and has given nearly 2,000 public lectures in Britain, North America and Asia. He is, or has been, a committee member, chairman or president of Devon History Society, Devon & Cornwall Notes & Queries, the Devonshire Association, Devon & Cornwall Record Society, Devon Gardens Trust, Devon Family History Society, the Centre for South-Western Historical Studies and the Friends of Devon's Archives. He is currently co-organising the first Exeter History Day to be held in 2019.

In the course of researching his books Dr Gray has examined every document collection in Devon's three public archives - 16 linear miles of papers. He is also the only historian to have worked in all 80 local authority archives in England and Wales and his most recent book is based on material from archives, libraries and museums in the UK, the continent & North America. Dr Gray has led campaigns to ensure continued access to the public archives in Plymouth and Exeter.

This extensive use of archives has allowed him to shine a light on previously forgotten or overlooked parts of Devon's history such as slavery in the late 1600s, the rise of fascism in the 1930s and the outbreak of looting in 1942. But he has also examined lighter aspects of history - two years ago he discovered forgotten Tudor swear words used in Devon and another Exeter word, quilling, is currently being considered for inclusion in the Oxford English Dictionary.

During the Cathedral Yard fire two years ago Dr Gray acted as an expert for journalists, explaining the history of the area during more than 50 interviews. He later organised two public meetings in the city for people to discuss the impact of the fire and his book, *St Martin's Island*, written with Sue Jackson, is a lasting account of the fire and its aftermath.

Dr Gray said: "The history of the honorary freedoms of Exeter has yet to be written. I have made an initial search through the records and have discovered that in the 1700s and early 1800s the Freedom was bestowed mostly on leading national politicians and military heroes. A number of Prime Ministers - including Robert Walpole and the two Pitts - were given the honour and also leading admirals and generals. The most famous of them was Nelson but the Duke of Wellington was another. Exeter appeared to favour honouring those who fought against the American rebels in the 1770s. The years of Reform apparently brought a cessation of the Freedom in the 1830s but it was revived at the end of the Victorian period. Retiring mayors were then a particular favourite as well as Exeter's bishops. There were some interesting other individuals including Mrs Alice Vlieland, the tireless worker for women's health in the early 1900s. Captain Bell of HMS Exeter was also honoured: his ship was one of those that defeated the Graf Spee in the River Plate during the Second World War. Winston Churchill was voted the Freedom in 1945 but he may not have collected it!

"It is a tremendous honour to be given such an award, particularly amidst such a group of distinguished men and women. It appears I am the first person connected with the University of Exeter to be honoured – Sir Steve Smith follows in a few months. I have worked closely over the years with a number of groups and many colleagues and I feel I share the Freedom with them. Exeter has a vibrant history community and Exonians have a great interest in their city's history. If we have learned one thing from the Cathedral Yard fire then it is to appreciate those ancient buildings which survived that disaster and to look again at the others across the city. I am deeply grateful to all those who played a role in my being given this honour."

(Adapted from Exeter University Press release)

A Volunteers Tale

Dave Scotting is a Volunteer Assistant, Photographic Digitiser and Oral History Interviewer at the Beaford Archive. Here's his account of the pleasures and unique demands of his work on one of Devons most renowned photographic archives.

I've enjoyed the work of James Ravilious for a long time. His photographs depict this patch of Devon so honestly. As well as his eye for a fine image his great gift was to be among the detail without affecting it. Nothing seems forced. Everything is found, and natural.

I'd been to a few of Beaford's events over the years and I saw that they were asking for volunteers and so I signed up. For six months or so I spent alternate Mondays at the Devon Heritage Centre helping with the digitising of the photographs selected for adding to the Archive. Under the skilled tutelage of Dave Green I had the privilege of 'spotting' – checking images for defects – hundreds of James' photos. It was a relaxed and friendly atmosphere and it was a real pleasure to view, on a scale very likely not seen before, hundreds of wonderful images. I really got a kick out of this! I was also allocated two Oral History interviews to talk with Devon natives about their time in the area and the changes they've seen. Again, this was another privilege and I spent time in the company of some lovely people having interesting conversations.

Working on the Beaford Archive has deepened my love of the county. Whilst parts of Devon, particularly in the south and east, have developed greatly much of the less fashionable interior in mid and north Devon remains far less affected. I often found myself reflecting that some things have stood still – village centres, churches, much of the landscape – but that other aspects have changed – for example how we live and work, and our connection to the places in which we live, particularly.

In James' photographs there are less cars, technology is older, more basic, and I can think of only one photograph that shows a computer. One of my interviewees told me that growing up, if anything happened in his village, everyone would be there. Now people commute more out of the area for work and entertainment. In fact they're more likely to entertain themselves at home using modern technology rather than join in with events in the village. Pubs, schools, post

offices all close. Church attendances continue to decline. I can see this very clearly in my own village. That said things also change in other ways. Rural life still appeals and many villages attract incomers – although you need more money to live out of town these days. In our village one shop closed but a much nicer one opened up, and a pre-school club also. And an allotment group was born, land found and allotments set-up. Redundant farm buildings are being turned into new dwellings, bringing new blood into the villages.

Life in James' photographs looks tougher, people often appear poorer. Life and work seem much more hands-on, more physical. But there also seems to be a much stronger sense of community in them too. Life does seem simpler, and people seem more grounded and content. Change is the only constant, they say. But in facing the challenges of a country and a world seemingly more divided than ever I think we will need to rediscover something of that connectivity to one another and to nature. These values are so redolent in James' work and the stories of the folk in the oral Archive.

This isn't simply 'rose-tinted': James' images are far too honest for that. But it does seem clear that in some of the gains of modern living we have also lost things of value too.

Volunteer transcribers needed!

The oral history project has gathered almost eighty interviews from people across North Devon. The interviews are digitally recorded and are between one and two hours in length.

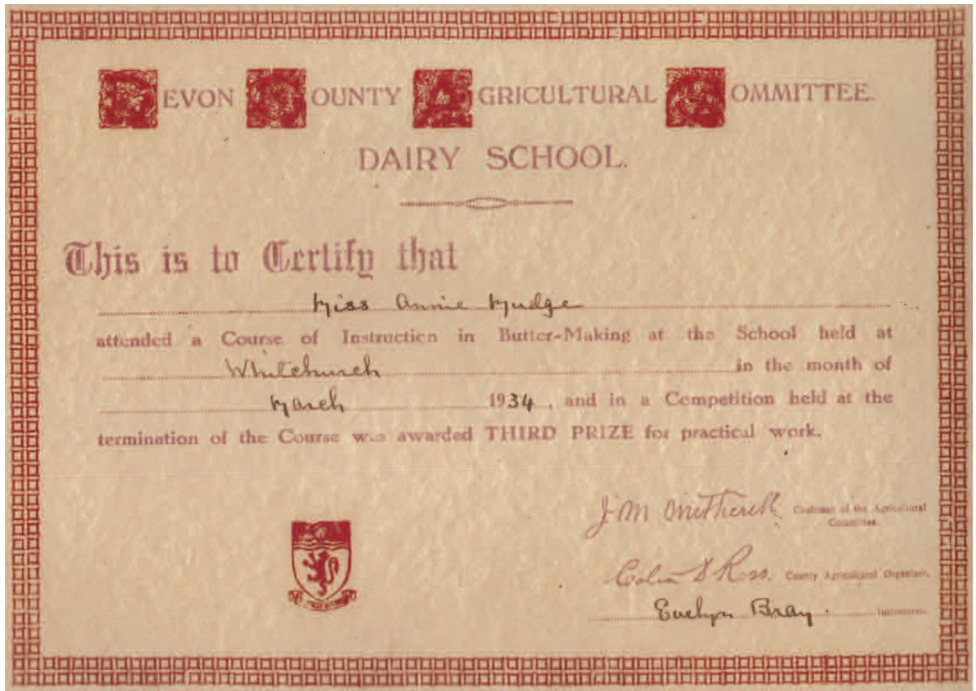
We are looking to recruit people skilled in audio-typing to transcribe these interviews.

Transcribers will receive training and specialist software to enable them to do the work.

Transcription is a time intensive and very rewarding task – one hours recording usually takes approximately 7 hours transcribe. If you have the time and skills to help us, please contact Kay Willmott kay@beaford.org



Devon Dairying - A Look Back



I have this from Helen Harris as a supplement to her article in TDH (2019 edition) 'Devon Dairying - A Look Back'. There is another photo in the paper version of the Newsletter and there are more photos on the same topic held by the Devon Archive and Local Studies Service at Exeter (DHC). Ed.

East Devon Local History Workshop

The ninth meeting was held on Monday 5 November 2018 at Kennaway House, Sidmouth.

Present: Norah Jagers (Beer); Penny Lawrence (Blackdowns AONB) Barbara Farquharson, John Torrance (Branscombe); Mike Tracy, Dee Tracy, April Marjoram (Exmouth) Trevor Waddington (Fairlynch Museum, Budleigh Salterton); Jenny Moon (Lypstone); Shân Merritt, Adrian Mustoe (Newton Poppleford); Martin Smith (Otter Valley); Julia Neville, Ann Jervoise (Poltimore); Brian Golding (Sidmouth); Nigel Hyman,

Anne Tanner, Ian Simpson (Sidmouth Nuseum); Jan Betteridge (Topsham Museum); David Rastall, Margaret Burrough (Whimble); Patrick Dillon, Diana Wackerbarth (Woodbury Salterton); Chris Woodruff (East Devon AONB); Philippe Planel (DHS).

Apologies for absence were received from Sue Dymond, Stelios Lekakis, Gill Selley, Roger Stokes and Dee Woods.

The deaths since the last meeting of John Cochrane (Colyton) and Dave Seward (Northleigh) were noted with great sadness.

Representatives from local museums not already represented were welcomed to the meeting, and will continue to be invited.

1. Chris Woodruff (Manager, E. Devon AONB): The AONB's art project on the East Devon Way, in partnership with the Thelma Hulbert Gallery at Honiton, was a popular success. The AONB's 'Legacy to Landscape' project at Shute has come to an end, but with further funding and activity possible. The AONB's sustainable development fund will continue this year and next year to support qualifying projects by applicants.

EDDC's 'heritage strategy' is still under consultation. There is still no reaction from EDDC to the proposal to list local heritage assets.

DEFRA is producing a 25-year plan for AONBs, and the proposal for a Dorset and East Devon National Park is under consultation. There may also be an EU-funded citizen engagement project on threats to the coastline.

The AONB was thanked for its continuing support for the Workshop, and Kennaway House for providing facilities and refreshments.

2. Phil Planel: The twelfth AONB historic landscape conference will be held at the Lockyer Observatory, Salcombe Regis, on Saturday 27 April, 2019. The subject is 'Artefacts, local museums and the historic landscape'. Adrian Green, Director of Salisbury Museum, will be the keynote speaker. The programme will be circulated to those on the Workshop mailing list.

3. Brief reports on activities were received from societies and museums.

Beer Heritage Society is recording monumental inscriptions from the Victorian cemetery, and considering window plaques to commemorate WWI servicemen. Current projects in the Blackdown Hills AONB concern hedges, Saxon iron-smelting and the first Young Farmers Club at Hemyock in 1921. Branscombe Project, now in its 25th year, held an exhibition on the village pubs, to be followed by a book, and has followed-up photographically the 1910 register of farm buildings, while continuing a project of fixed-point photography. Exmouth Historical and Archaeological Society held a History Day and exhibition to mark its 50th birthday, has produced a book on the local women's suffrage movement, and set up a research group on the history of Bystock Court, now

for sale. Lymptone History Society has published three books and is digitising historical documents. Newton Poppleford Local History Society has published its first book and held a WWI commemorative exhibition. Poltimore Estate Research Society has published a book on the village in the 20th century. Sidmouth History Group was involved in an exhibition on the 1968 flood and with a play on WWI families. Whimple History Society, now 30 years old, held an exhibition of WW2 artefacts, and the customary apple-pressing day and wassail (over 100 people); its Heritage Centre is open Wednesdays and Saturdays, April to September. Woodbury Local History Society have scanned and uploaded to its website over 11,000 pages of historical documents. Woodbury Landscape History Group are recording ash-trees and have various activities for the 50th anniversary of the death of W. Keble Martin, botanist.

Exmouth Museum was reported to be trying to raise £200,000 to buy and refurbish its building, now for sale by South West Water. Fairlynch Museum held exhibitions for the 400th anniversary of Sir W. Raleigh's death, on the Voluntary Aid hospital in Budleigh Salterton in WWI, and from its collection of costumes and lace. £8,000 was raised for a security upgrade, and a Heritage Lottery grant secured for outreach. Its contribution to next April's conference will be on the geological and archaeological collections of George Carter. Sidmouth Museum has held exhibitions on the local women's suffrage movement, on local RAF training, on a find of bullets from rifle practice in 1861, and on the 1868 flood. Ian Simpson, the Museum librarian, has transcribed 4,500 memorials from the Temple St cemetery, opened in 1878. The museum's contribution to next April's conference will be on 'Where Land meets Sea'. Topsham Museum has held exhibitions on women at work (including a notable suffragist) and on WWI, with new material on returnees, the armistice, etc. The archives and research room has been refurbished. Its contribution to the April conference will be on Topsham's maritime past.

4. 'Making their Mark', a presentation by Julia Neville (DHS), covered the Society's recent work on women's suffrage activists in Devon, with emphasis on their mapped distribution and on individual biographies.
5. 'An American serviceman in Sidmouth: November 1918', a presentation by Nigel Hyman (Sidmouth Museum), explored the correspondence and diary of a serviceman convalescing from flu in Sidmouth at armistice time.
6. 'Local museums: what, how and wherefore?', a presentation by Barbara Farquharson, raised a range of questions about local museums and elicited a vigorous discussion.
7. The next meeting of the Workshop will take place on Monday 4th November 2019.



Artefacts, Museums and the Historic Environment in East Devon

East Devon AONB
Heritage Conference

Saturday 27 April 2019
Norman Lockyer Observatory
Sidmouth



The Seaton Down Hoard

Artefacts, Museums and the Historic Environment in East Devon

The conference will this year explore themes relating to the local distinctiveness of East Devon museums, the landscape that surrounds them and the history of their collections.

This immediately raises the question concerning the importance we attach to things or artefacts. In the case of archaeological artefacts, what thinking underpins the display and interpretation of objects, given the lengthy process of deposition, discovery, excavation, conservation and, finally, museum display?

What criteria do we use to select artefacts for display and what do the criteria and the artefacts themselves reveal about landscapes and the built environment and indeed the identity of the area, both in the past and today?

As in previous years, the conference will include a mix of presentations by heritage professionals and local enthusiasts, plus a European dimension.

Programme

- 09.30 – 10.00 **REGISTRATION**
10.00 – 10.15 **Chris Woodruff** - East Devon AONB manager: *Introduction*
10.15 – 11.15 **Adrian Green** - Director of Salisbury Museum: *Archaeological displays in museums – reconnecting artefacts with landscape.*
- 11.15 – 11.45 Coffee/Tea provided**
- 11.45 – 12.05 **Patrick Dillon** - Emeritus Professor, University of Exeter: *Sorting things out: Artefacts and the roles they play in our lives.*
12.05 – 12.25 **Barbara Farquharson** (Prof. Barbara Bender): *Museums in local landscapes.*
12.25 – 12.45 **Bill Horner** - Devon County Archaeologist: *Cash & Carry - The deposition, excavation and display of the Seaton Down Roman coin hoard*
- 12.45 - 13.45 Lunch provided**
- 13.45 – 14.05 **Jan Oke & Nicley Hewitt** - The Fairlynch Museum (Budleigh Salterton): *The George Carter Legacy.*
14.05 – 14.25 **Nigel Hyman** - Sidmouth Museum: *Where land meets sea.*
14.25 – 14.45 **Jan Betteridge** - Topsham Museum: *Topsham Museum, echoes of a maritime past.*
- 15.00 - 15.05 Short break**
- 15.05 – 15.25 **David Tucker** - Director of the Lyme Regis Museum: *Lyme Regis Museum – built with purpose.*
15.25 – 15.45 **Dr Stelios Lekaklis** - Newcastle University: *The museums of Naxos – building Greek national identity*
15.45 – 16.00 **John Torrance** - Emeritus Fellow, Hertford College, Oxford: *Final remarks.*

Booking Form and payment – note early bird discount

Please enclose a cheque made payable to “East Devon District Council” for the early bird sum of £18 per person **if received by 28 Feb.** Fee £20 thereafter.

For printable booking details and form click here . or visit

<http://www.eastdevonaonb.org.uk/>

East Devon Way footpath



Making their Mark - Putting Devon's Suffrage Activists on the Map

14 December 2018 was the centenary of the first day on which women in the UK cast their votes in a General Election. (Well behind New Zealand, where women had been doing that since 1893, but we got there!) Devon History Society helped celebrate this momentous event both nationally and locally.



Illustration: Vm Styles

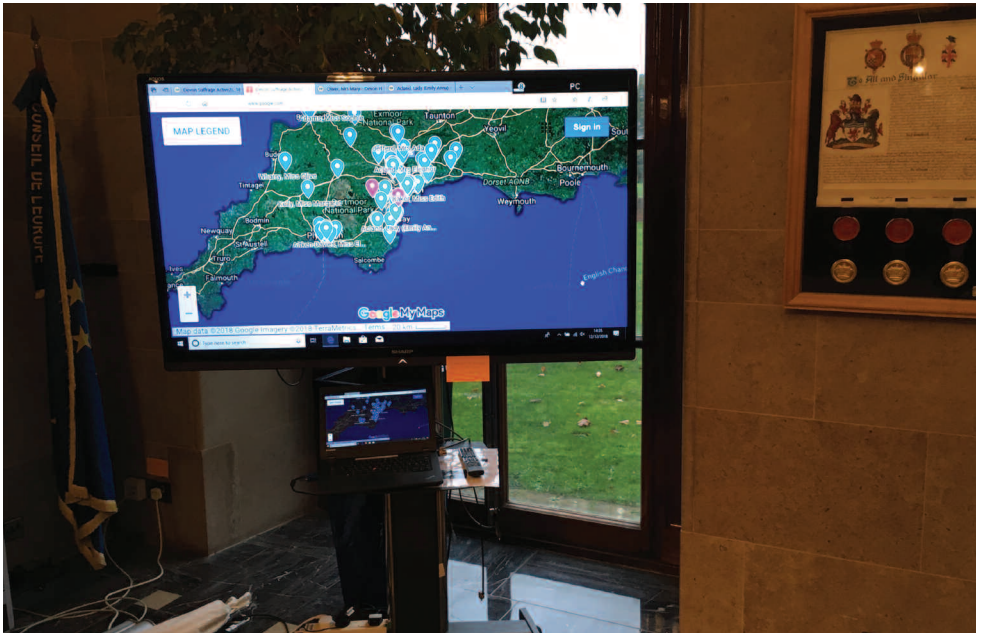
Nationally Historic England launched a new page on their website, *Nine Places that tell the story of Suffrage Activism in Devon*, see <https://historicengland.org.uk/whats-new/in-your-area/south-west/nine-places-that-tell-the-story-of-suffrage-activism-in-devon/> The page uses work done by the Devon History Society research group to feature some of the places associated with the activists and to publicise the fact that we have now 'Enriched the List' for 41 listed buildings in Devon by adding information about the women involved. The launch also gave the Society good national publicity. Liz Clare, the Local Engagement Adviser for Historic England, set up the page and tweeted about it on the day. She commented afterwards that "There have been thousands of 'engagements' (users liking, retweeting or clicking on the links), which is exactly what we hoped for."

Locally, Devon History Society also supported an event organised by Devon County Council for Parliament's "Vote 100". This was held at County Hall on 14 December. A number of schools were given a chance to take over the Council Chamber and the ante-room next door featured an exhibition with information about the development of the democratic process, including our Suffrage Activists map and biographies.

Elsewhere at County Hall. at the Women in Public Service event, the life of a Devon Suffrage Activist, Juanita Phillips of Honiton, was celebrated in a specially written song performed by Wren Music, and Lisa Berry-Waite and I were part of a session reflecting on the suffrage campaign and its success.

The project is now nearing an end, with 100 of the full biographies up on-line, and plans to print and make the full set available through local archive centres as well. Many thanks to those who have joined in and researched the life of even just one activist. We've uncovered some new and unexpected stories. There was the Devon violinist who played at the Proms – and to entertain those boycotting the census in 1911. One Devon woman active in Yorkshire later became mistress of Girton College, Cambridge. And another Devon Suffrage Activist hired an architect associated with Letchworth Garden City to build workmen's dwellings in Devon to let at reasonable rents ... and many more. The research group has now had an initial discussion about how to draw our findings together to tell the story of Devon's distinctive contribution to the movement. Watch this space.

Julia Neville



The Devon Suffrage Map displayed on the big screen in the anteroom of the committee suite at County Hall, Exeter. To access the real map and index to the biographies click the picture or [here](https://www.devonhistorysociety.org.uk/research/suffrage-activists-in-devon-1866-1918/) or key in <https://www.devonhistorysociety.org.uk/research/suffrage-activists-in-devon-1866-1918/>

DEVON RURAL ARCHIVE

Evening Lecture Programme 2019

7th February 2019

Plymouth's Bloody History
Laura Quigley, Author and Historian

7th March 2019

Killerton Bygones: Three Houses, Two
Deerparks, One Family
Bryn Morris, Archaeologist, South West
Archaeology

4th April 2019

A Wild & Wondrous Region: How Dartmoor
was portrayed in art, 1750 – 1920
Peter Mason, Moor Than Meets The Eye

2nd May 2019

An Audience with Lady Katherine: The
Champernownes of Modbury. Rosemary Griggs,
Costumed History Interpreter

6th June 2019

Learned & Literary Ladies: Devon women
campaigning for the vote
Dr Julia Neville, University of Exeter, Honorary
Research Fellow in History

***This talk has been organised in
association with Devon History Society***

4th July 2019

Sharpham Estate: Ups and Downs.
An historical portrait of a small, precarious
country estate
Lynette Gribble, Archive Co-Ordinator for the
Sharpham Estate

1st August 2019

The Italian Garden at Great Ambrook
Angela Dodd-Crompton, Researcher at Great
Ambrook

5th September 2019

A Rural Legacy Lost: Salmon Fishing on the
Dart

Nick Baker, Lecturer and Author

3rd October 2019

Haytor Granite, A Celebration
Stuart Drabble, Local Historian, Stover Historic
Landscape Trust

7th November 2019

The Vikings in the South West
Derek Gore, University of Exeter, Honorary
Teaching Fellow in Archaeology

5th December 2019

As I Walked Out:
Sabine Baring-Gould & his search for the folk
songs of South Devon

Martin Graebe, Researcher and writer on
English Folk Songs

**Tickets: £5 each
or £44 for a Season Ticket to
attend all 11 lectures in 2019
To purchase tickets please contact
Abi Gray on 01548 830832 or
email office@dra.uk.net.**

*Tickets are in high demand and seats are allocated
on a first come first served basis.*

*Guests who purchase tickets in advance will have a
seat reserved in their name.*

*All lectures are held at the DRA in the grounds of
Shilstone House near Modbury at 7pm, for
directions visit www.devonruralarchive.com. The car
park is accessible from 6:30pm, when the doors
open, and free refreshments are available in the
exhibition gallery.*

*Devon Rural Archive, Shilstone, Modbury,
PL21 0TW*

*A part of The Fenwick Charitable Trust,
Registered Charity No. 1007957*

DARTMOUTH HISTORY RESEARCH GROUP

Memories of War meeting

Held on Monday 26th November, at Community Corner

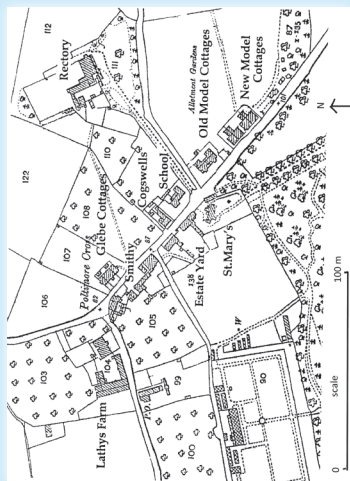
To commemorate the 75th anniversary of D Day the Dartmouth History Research Group is preparing a new book titled 'Memories of War in Dartmouth and the Dart'. The project was launched at an open meeting held on Monday 26th November in the Community Corner. Wally Fleet gave an illustrated talk about the defences of Dartmouth and his own memories of playing as a boy around Dartmouth Castle and its fortifications. His grandparents owned the tea room there. He described the gun emplacements, the boom across the mouth of the Dart and the line of mines protecting the river. His presentation stirred other memories in the 25 people who attended the meeting and there was much conversation over tea and cakes. Hilary Sunman, who is editing the planned volume, explained that now is a time for reflection and it would be wonderful to draw on the memories of people in the town or indeed any diaries, letters or pictures that they may have. If anyone has any ideas – however seemingly small – please let the History Group know on enquiries@dartmouth-history.org.uk or contact Hilary directly on hilarysunman@gmail.com.



https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Dartmouth_Castle09.JPG
Toxex [Public domain], from Wikimedia Commons

Poltimore

A Village in Transition, 1911–1921



Poltimore Village as it was in 1921



1754-1161-NOLLSYBI NI FOYTHIA V - EROVILLOD



Poltimore Estate Research Society

Poltimore: A Village in Transition, 1911-1921

In October 2018 Poltimore Estate Research Society published their first book, 'Poltimore: A Village in Transition, 1911–1921'. Copies are available via the Poltimore House website at only £5 plus postage and packing, see <http://www.poltimore.org/shop/>.

The group set out to answer the question 'What happened in Poltimore village when Lord Poltimore moved out at the start of the First World War?' Over 40% of the heads of household were employed by Lord Poltimore in 1911 and most of the other adult workers were employed on the estate or by the farmers who leased their land from him.

The book tells the stories of some of the families who lived in the village, the houses they lived in, and how they were affected by the war and the retrenchment at Poltimore House, even before Lord Poltimore decided to see his East Devon estates in 1921.

Local families kindly lent photographs and PERS members investigated buildings in the village and documentary resources to produce an illustrated book which is both visually appealing and makes a serious contribution to an understanding of the continuities and changes that resulted from the decisions that the landowners of Devon's greatest estates were taking during the 1910s. If any other societies have undertaken similar work (or are thinking of doing so) we'd be interested to compare notes .

Julia Neville, Poltimore Estate Research Society

From the DHS Mailbox...

Your members may be interested to know that 2019 marks the centenary of the founding of the Devon General Omnibus & Touring Company Limited.

The DGS is arranging a number of events to celebrate this centenary, outline details of which can be found on our website at devongeneral.org.uk/events.html. We also have a Facebook page @devongeneralsociety and a Twitter account @devongeneralso1 which will enable people to keep up to date with our activities.

We would be delighted if you could help spread the word about these events amongst your affiliated societies. There will be many locals who recall the Devon General of old, because they went to school or work by bus, or possibly travelled on the seaside open top buses or Grey Cars sightseeing tours. In many ways Devon General was the backdrop to the social history of South Devon in the 20th Century, and indeed was the source of employment for up to 1000 people at the time. It is also remembered with fondness by families across the country who holidayed in South Devon in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s and travelled by Devon General bus.

We are producing monthly news releases about our 2019 programme of events. Would you like to be included on the circulation?

Regards

Paul Jenkins (07738 696377)

*Below: Devon General opentop at Babbacombe.
Photo: Geof Sheppard. Wikimedia Attribution-Share Alike
3.0 Unported license.*



Happy New Year from The Box team!

The Box, Plymouth...

The Box is a major scheme in the heart of Plymouth, a symbol for Plymouth's current regeneration and a museum for the future. The Box (previously referred to as the Plymouth History Centre) will open as the flagship building for the Mayflower 400 commemorations in spring 2020.

It's such an exciting thing to be able to say that we will be opening The Box just next year. It feels so close now, after such a long period of planning and development.

The big change for the project is that everything is now gearing up for delivery.

For those of you who have not yet been able to go around the site or, indeed, have been before and would like to see the development since, hard hat tours have recommenced. The Box website has more details if you are interested. The space for the future 'Cottonian' reading room is now accessible for instance; although it is not fitted out yet of course.

In terms of research spaces, it is important that you are all aware that **we will have to be contracting our opening hours substantially from April 2019. We will be opening on 2 days a week and bookings must be made in advance.**

Please contact us on pwdro@plymouth.gov.uk for more information. This is to allow staff to prepare the collections at the Plymouth and West Devon Record Office, the South West Image Bank and the South West Film and Television Archive for move to the Box in the autumn of 2019.

<https://plymhearts.org/thebox/>

