



Devon History News

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In this issue:

- Devon in the 1920s
- Local reports
- Local programmes
- Devon Heritage Centre
- Todd Gray
- Blundell's School
- John Torrance
- James Ravilious

From the Chair, Katherine Findlay

Welcome to the first Devon History Society newsletter of 2022 and my first as Chair. The days are starting to lengthen, the first spring flowers are just appearing and most of us are tentatively getting back to a more 'normal' post-pandemic life. In this hopeful spirit, Todd Gray offers us a vision of how clear-eyed study and communication of local history can help to counter the polarising voices that have dominated public debates on heritage in recent years. His article on pages 2-4 examines how evidence can enable us to talk respectfully about that most painful historical topic, slavery. All of us who share a curiosity about Devon's past have a duty to neither ignore nor inflate our county's role in the horrors of the transatlantic slave trade, and I am hopeful that we are starting to reckon with these events and their continuing impact in a more open and truthful way.



As an aside, I must admit that until reading Todd's article I was ignorant of the kidnapping of Devonians by pirates from the 17th-19th centuries. This is yet another link in the histories of Devon and Iceland, from where people were also taken into slavery in North Africa. The connections between our coastal communities seem ever deeper and are worthy of further study.

In this edition we also have several fascinating insights into Devon's inter-war history thanks to the *Devon in the 1920s* project. This project is bearing the fruit of an enormous amount of hard work on the part of volunteer researchers and its coordinator Julia Neville who gives us a summary on pages 5-6. The project is illuminating an often overlooked yet pivotal period and I congratulate everyone involved in its success.

We also have a wide range of updates from local societies and organisations, showing as ever how vibrant the local history scene is across the county. My thanks go to everyone who shares their passion for Devon's stories by contributing to this newsletter and in particular to our new editor, Brian Carpenter, who puts it all together. Brian is one of our trustees, without whom there would be no Devon History Society. We are currently looking for new trustees, in particular those who have an interest in events and publicity. I encourage any member who could offer some time and skills to the board to get in touch – we would love to have you on the team!

Editorial

In 1970, in the first edition of *The Devon Historian*, the first President of what was then called the *Standing Conference on Devon History* but which later evolved into the Devon History Society, Professor W.G. Hoskins, wrote:



'Local history can often be a lonely occupation, especially if one is engaged in writing the history of a particular parish or village. There is often no one else for miles around with a kindred interest, and most of the existing societies have not the permanent staff to cope with queries about sources, or problems, or methods'.

I was a long way from Devon in 1970 and I was still wearing short trousers at the time, but I know that things have changed immensely in the last fifty years. Because of the DHS and the local societies which support and enhance our work, there's no reason why researching and writing local history need necessarily be a lonely endeavour. I don't have any statistics to prove it, but my impression is that the number of local history societies in Devon has increased markedly since I came to live and work in the county in the early 1990s.

In many ways this is unsurprising; the last three decades have seen the invention of the World Wide Web, one of the single most resonant technological developments in human history. This has enabled societies to reach wider audiences more easily than ever before, and the Covid-19 pandemic has further stimulated this by influencing societies to stage events and talks online. Also, there has never been a time when history has been as prominent in the media as over the past thirty years. Popular series such as *Time Team*, *Who Do You Think You Are?* or many of Michael Wood's superb programmes, have provided vivid illustrations of the intrinsic value of primary archival sources, many of which are now much easier to access as a result of their digitisation and dissemination on the Web.

The reports and programmes of the societies represented in this newsletter – from *Way of the Wharves* in Bideford to Wembury, near Plymouth – illustrate the range of local societies' activities and hopefully they will continue to flourish, hand in hand with the DHS, but there are clouds on the horizon. Because historical research is a time-consuming activity, it tends to be pursued by people with more leisure time than the working population, and the same is largely true of the business of running societies. I know from my own involvement with other clubs and societies and as a Parish Councillor that it's becoming harder to recruit people to do the type of work that societies such as this depend upon. A range of cultural, technological, economic and demographic factors mean that people are retiring later, and, while they're still working, they have less time and inclination to devote to voluntary work. We have recently acquired someone who is going to assist with organising and publicising events, but, to reiterate what Katherine Findlay has said, we would welcome any further help with this or any other aspects of the society's work. Please think carefully about whether you can help your society in this way, and if you feel you can, get in touch with us via the contact form on the society's website.

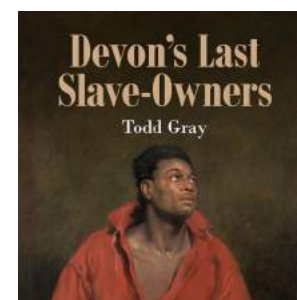
We look forward to welcoming you.

Brian Carpenter

Don't Shoot the Historian

In the wake of the publication of Devon's Last Slave-Owners, Dr Todd Gray MBE reflects on the public reaction.

Throughout this past year colleagues consistently called me 'brave' for analysing a subject no other career historian in Devon would touch. Bravery is not commonly, if ever, a quality associated with historians living outside of authoritarian societies. But we live in contentious times.



For nearly forty years my work has been guided by the central principle that it is led by the evidence but in regards to African enslavement in general, and of Black history in particular, assumptions or opinions increasingly matter more than historical fact. Evidence is disregarded by those who believe Covid vaccinations contain computer chips and by those who are convinced the presidential election was stolen by Joe Biden. The death of George Floyd, the ongoing debate on statues and the language expressed in male 'banter' have widened social divisions in a manner reminiscent of the Trump rift in America if not Brexit. Does English society today have a more contentious topic in which history has become weaponised? My intention, or hope, has been that the new book will take some of the heat out of the arguments and perhaps even bridge divisions.

The lack of research has generated suppositions and there are different approaches to history from the far right and left. One side has an indifference if not hostility to the topic; that the past should be celebrated rather than questioned. The other fundamentally misunderstands the nature of local history; in the rush to reckon with the past has come the assumption that Devon's history follows the national narrative. But each county has its own unique history. Yorkshire has always differed from Kent and that mix of similarities and differences alters when those counties are compared with Devon or any other.

The disillusionment felt by those who either enlarge or diminish the past generates uncompromising stances and each finds factual history challenging and inconvenient.

Devon's 300 year history in African slaving was unwritten until 2007 when I edited a collection of relevant documents but this did not stop ill-informed views staying entrenched. Some still claim, after reading the book, that Devon did not involve itself in slaving while others espouse the view that it was the leading county. Both opinions are, of course, false. Between 1563 and 1807 some forty vessels left Devon ports to slave; another 12,000 sailed from other ports. Fourteen years ago the barracking from extremists was more than balanced by the vast majority of the public, those in the middle, who had a willingness to examine basic evidence.

More recently I have pondered, as the public debate has become increasingly polarised, whether there is room left for impartial history, that is, work in which the conclusions are reached only after having first examined the evidence. Will the new research likewise replace assumptions with informed opinions or have views become too entrenched? Is there still a majority in the middle or have the vocal minorities silenced them?

This research shows that Devon's level of direct ownership at the end of slavery was lower than its share of the national population. There are, of course, additional ways to gauge economic benefit but it should not astonish anyone that Devon's involvement, at the time of emancipation, reflected its poorer character compared to leading industrial centres. It would be truly newsworthy if Exeter or Plymouth owned more enslaved people than London or Liverpool but to be expected that they exceeded poorer cities.

It should also be unsurprising that former slave-owners subsequently lived in fashionable seaside resorts. These men and women came from other parts of the country and the Empire and they chose Teignmouth over Cullompton, Ilfracombe over Cridton. Many rented, some had second homes and most led transient lives.

There are starkly opposing interpretations of all aspects of the wider topic. A spin is often placed on evidence regarding the Black presence in Devon; our first Black man was recorded in 1484 but until the twentieth century the number of subsequent men and women probably never comprised more than 0.1% of the population. Some use this to claim Devon has no Black history while others magnify the numbers to suggest a history which is greater than it was.

Perhaps the widest division concerns slavery in the Barbary Coast and the British Empire. Each disputes the validity of one of these but should they not be understood alongside one another?

It should not be a surprise to anyone interested in Devon's past that between 1603 and 1816 Devonians were enslaved by North Africans and taken to Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya. For nearly the same length of time, from 1619 to 1807, West Africans were kidnapped and enslaved in British colonies, many of them in the West Indies.

While Devon's history of slave plantations has been untold until recently, 'Turkish' piracy has been an occasional topic amongst local historians. But it was not until 1989 that I wrote what has remained its

most detailed account. Local and national documents detail North African kidnapping in the Mediterranean which suddenly, in 1625, occurred off the Devon coast.

It is probable that we suffered more than any other county but some men paid ransoms which enabled them to return home. It is thought about 1.25 million Europeans were enslaved and I estimate this included some 20,000 Devonians.

At the same time, and earlier, Devon men transported at least 5,000 Africans across the Atlantic. No ransoms could be paid but a very small minority were later able to buy their freedom if they managed to find a substantial fee. It was suggested then that 10 million were enslaved and modern historians suggest the figure was higher.

It is important to acknowledge the importance of all slaves' lives but also that one movement involved overwhelmingly higher numbers and that the international context differs from that of Devon.

We also have a responsibility to face up to complicity on both sides: not only did Africans participate in enslaving their own people but Englishmen helped enslave their fellow countrymen in North Africa.

The foundations for these forms of slavery differed. In 1603 the English government withdrew its cooperation with the North Africans against the Spanish. This caused a sense of betrayal which culminated with the corsairs extending their attacks to British ships. They periodically targeted Britain over the following two centuries.

In contrast, Europeans seized Africans partly because they were not Christian. In the 1400s and early 1500s millions of Jews, Muslims and Indigenous Americans were enslaved but eventually it was only West Africans who were kidnapped and taken to the Americas. A key difference between the two movements is that the Europeans, notably the English, industrialised slaving. For every one European slave in North Africa, there were probably ten Africans in the Americas.

At the heart of this slavery lay profit, race and religion. Two hundred years later the enduring legacy is its influence on how Black men, women and children are viewed today. It is unlikely that in North Africa the enslaving of Europeans has left a similar legacy.

The last few months have taught me that those in the middle ground remain supportive of detached, impartial and evidence-based analysis. It is my hope that it will bridge those vocal elements of society which view the past so very differently. The differences in their views can easily be met simply by understanding the evidence. Please don't shoot the messenger/historian, all of our history matters.

Todd Gray

Devon Heritage Centre Update, Winter 2021-22

The theme for Devon Heritage Centre staff in the second half of 2021 was one of adaptation. Adaptation to being open to the public on a regular basis after long periods of closure in both 2020 and early 2021, and also adaptation to new ways of working – reduced opening hours and appointments – entailed both by the Covid-19 pandemic but also the regrettable departure of a number of experienced and valuable staff in 2019 and 2020.

However, as we go into 2022 we are approaching the future with optimism and the hope that we can now remain open permanently, allowing us to welcome more researchers but also resume and expand our programme of outreach work which has been severely hampered by the pandemic. In early January we hosted the first group tour of the Centre (by a group of trainee Exeter Red Coat guides) for two years, and we hope to expand those and stage other events for a more diverse range of groups over the course of this year.

Behind the scenes we have continued to receive a lot of new archive collections. Over recent months these have included material collected over a period of thirty years by the Branscombe Project, the exemplary local history initiative run by the late John Torrance and Barbara Farquharson [see Barbara's obituary of John elsewhere in this newsletter].

This includes original documents, transcripts, local publications, illustrations, photographs and oral history recordings.

Many people will be familiar with the artistic talents of the Reverend John Swete (1752-1821). We hold a collection of seventeen volumes of his journals, but three volumes are missing and were reportedly 'destroyed' during the Second World War. We have recently been sent two watercolours – depicting Orestone and the Bishop's Palace in Paignton – by Swete which apparently originated in one of the missing volumes. They came to us from someone in the United States who had purchased them from an art dealer who obtained artworks from burnt homes after World War Two and then sold them on. This leads us to believe that many of the illustrations from the other journals will be out there somewhere, but who knows where?

In December we purchased a large collection of diaries, albums, watercolours and photographs belonging to the Simpson family of Maypool near Dartmouth. They were bought at an auction in Exeter which attracted national media attention when two 16th century books sold for £365,000, but we paid considerably less!

The conservation staff have also been busy, working on a range of collections including letters from Edward Lear which are held at the Somerset Heritage Centre, the Exeter City 'Ancient Letters' and some Japanese watercolours from the Westcountry Studies Library.

Our Project Conservator Lucy Cokes has continued her work on the Probate Accounts of the Diocese of Bath and Wells, another collection from the Somerset Heritage Centre, the work on which has been funded by the National Manuscripts Conservation Trust. Conservation volunteers have been cleaning, packaging, re-boxing and surveying a range of other documents, including deeds from Exeter Cathedral and lantern slides from the Westcountry Studies Library.

In the second half of 2021 we held a series of online and in-person events in connection with our participation in the British Library's *Unlocking Our Sound Heritage* project, and more are planned for 2022.

The reminiscence DVD produced in connection with the *Devon in the 1920s* project was completed in late 2021 and sent to more than 150 Devon care homes in January 2022. It was a very fulfilling project to be involved in; it gave me the opportunity to learn some new skills and consolidated my belief in the value of Devon's archives for people at all stages of life and with all kinds of interests.

Brian Carpenter

Community Learning Officer

Devon Archives and Local Studies Service

Devon in the 1920s

After a successful programme of autumn & winter Zoom events – thank you to all those who contributed – we are looking forward to our first live event due to take place on Saturday April 23 2022. This will be a Spring Conference about Transport in the 1920s. As you can imagine, this was a time of huge change, with the growth of motor vehicle ownership and services.

We're holding this at Newton Abbot Museum's new home, Newton's Place, in Newton Abbot. In the morning we welcome guest speakers Professor Colin Divall, Emeritus Professor of Railway Studies at York University, on Roaring Twenties? Consuming Mobilities in Devon, 1918 to 1930 – and Robert Crawley, Chair of the Westcountry Historic Omnibus and Transport Trust, on Solids to Pneumatics – how public transport evolved in 1920s Devon. The full programme and booking details (£10 via Eventbrite) are

able at <https://www.devonhistorysociety.org.uk/events/>.

We have research groups working on Agricultural Education; Estates and Landowners; Exeter's West Quarter; Farming Statistics; Housing; and Tourism and Leisure. New members are always welcome, or if you'd like to research a different aspect, please get in touch to discuss your ideas. You'll find contributions from some of our researchers elsewhere in this newsletter.

A major contribution to 1920s research was made available in January with the publication of the 1921 census, available digitally via Find My Past. It's frustrating at the moment that it can't be available online at our record offices, and it costs £3.50 to obtain a digital image of just one household, but we hope this phase will not last long. It is certainly going to be very interesting. In my limited trawl so far I've found the new detail about employment particularly interesting. Miss Mabel McGrath, for example, who lived in a flat in Exeter, records herself as a 'lace mender' and says she was employed by Sir Ian Amory. Well, that said Tiverton to me, as it probably would to most of you. I thought 'What a long way to travel to work'. But no, the form has to include not only the nature of occupation and name of employer, but the address of the employer. She has written 'Cowick Street, Exeter'. Was there really a lace mending service for Heathcoat's there? More investigation is required.

For all queries about the project or to make a contribution, however small, please contact **Julia Neville**, j.f.neville@btinternet.com.



Rural Innovations in the 1920s

Farming in the inter-war period is often seen as a period of low prices, depression and stagnation. At least in one corner of Devon however, new ideas were adopted to help farmers make the most of their resources and improve production.

Hemyock, at the northern edge of the Blackdown Hills and just two miles south of the Wellington Monument, seems an unlikely place for the start of a national organisation. However, at the end of January 1921 it was the venue for the first distribution of calves to a group of youngsters in what was to become the Young Farmers' movement. As the beneficiary of a DHS Newspaper Archive bursary, one of the questions I wanted to answer was: Why Hemyock?

The formation of a Calf Club was promoted by United Dairies (UD) who, in 1916, had taken over the Culm Valley Dairy Company's butter making factory at the head of the Culm Valley Light Railway in Hemyock. UD installed Tom Sandford, a son of Great Torrington, as manager; one of his early innovations, in January 1919, was to form a milk recording society in the Culm valley. A similar society had been set up in South Devon, to start recording in April 1918, in connection with the Board of Agriculture scheme for the improvement of livestock. The Culm valley scheme was favourably received and at the first AGM in January 1920 became the East Devon Milk Recording Society (EDMRS).

East Devon milk recording statistics for the first five years

| Year | Members | Herds | Cows | Average Herd size |
|------|---------|-------|------|----------------------|
| 1919 | 16 | 18 | 224 | 12.4 |
| 1920 | 26 | 22 | 373 | 17.0 |
| 1921 | 45 | 47 | 784 | 16.7 |
| 1922 | 52 | 54 | 868 | 16.1 |
| 1923 | 63 | 63 | 916 | 14.5 |

There is a limited amount of genetic improvement to be made in small herds, however the more prominent pedigree herds with larger numbers of cows were more likely to be recorded and the records build up over time; thus in 1927 the EDMRS launched the "Bradfield Bull Scheme". The Hon. Mrs Adams of Bradfield House "purchased the bull that won her cup for the highest milk yields on both sides [dam and sire's dam], and inspection for two years in succession". He was based on various farms around the East Devon area for specified dates and EDMRS members were invited to take their cows to him for a nominal fee. This was believed to be the first scheme of its kind in England, where farmers anxious to improve their herds had access to a bull whose qualities would otherwise be beyond their budget.

In 1923 the East Devon Society had two milk recorders full time and one part time. Both the East and South Devon societies continued to make steady progress; they published handbooks on various topics connected with improving milk production and their annual meetings included lectures from eminent speakers including from the National Institute for Research in Dairying at Reading. Devon Heritage Centre has a run of South Devon handbooks from 1923 to 1939 and although the articles are mainly about dairy farming there are many other topics. These include sheep and pig production, marketing farm produce and fruit bottling and jam making.

I believe the formation of the milk recording society showed that the Culm Valley was prepared to consider new ideas and would be receptive to another organisation promoted by United Dairies. In 1919 they recruited from Mr P B Tustin from the Winnipeg Health Department and he was tasked by the UD Chairman "that anything he could do to push things ahead he was to do". The priority was to produce more and "cleaner" milk at a time when the value of liquid milk as a foodstuff was tempered by the transmis-

sion of tuberculosis and contamination during hand milking.

Mr Tustin had come across the 4-H clubs (head, heart, hands, and health), a North American rural movement for young people, aiming to introduce new agriculture technology to communities outside the classroom and teach leadership skills. He “was confident the movement would be as great a success here as in America”. Calf Club No. 1 was established in October 1920 and in January 1921 distributed 19 Shorthorn calves from milk-recorded cows to boys and girls from Hemyock and surrounding parishes. Arthur Broughton, a well-known Shorthorn breeder from South Petherton, judged the calves at the start and again after a year. Points were awarded for their improvement and for records of their management, kept in pre-printed record books. The youngsters also attended meetings for instruction and discussion on milk production and scientific dairying. The Calf Club was seen as a way of improving milk production by informing the youngsters and, through them, their parents, who were also welcomed at the Club lectures.

At the end of the year, in January 1922, the points were totalled up and the winner was Doris Fry who had been allocated Star the 2nd. She and her brother were both club members and had to travel over three miles to meetings and it is likely that their father accompanied them. In an essay written in 1923 Doris wrote of the benefits of Club membership: visits to other farms, stock judging, how to hold meetings, how Dairy Shorthorns had been introduced in to the district where Devons and crossbreds predominated and how she had learned to look after her father’s calves in the same way as her club calves. Mr Fry had been encouraged to start milk recording and found that several of his twenty-four cows “did not pay for keeping. He is replacing those with low records with better stock whenever possible.”

The Calf Club and dissemination of knowledge to farmers during the 1920s is the subject of ongoing research; if anyone knows of any East Devon Milk Recording Society handbooks from the period, I would be delighted to hear.

I can be contacted at hemyockcalfclub@gmail.com

Penny Lawrence





DEVON in the 1920s: GROWING UP

As part of the *Devon in the 1920s* project, two separate research groups have been meeting to study aspects of the lives of children growing up in Devon. There have been some fascinating presentations and discussions on ‘education’ and ‘beyond the school gate’. Read on to gain a flavour of our research.

The aftermath of the First World War was still being felt but it was recognised that the deficiencies in health and education of the working classes needed to be ameliorated. Local education authorities had to promulgate the 1918 Education Act and some progress was made during the 1920s, albeit slowly and unevenly. There were those who championed education reform and those who vehemently opposed it. In February 1921, public schoolboys from Blundell’s School debated ‘that in the opinion of this House, secondary education should, in general, be neither compulsory nor free’. The motion was carried.

Working men’s children often worked from quite a young age. As one man explained, when a boy, he worked six days a week for the butcher, loading heavy hides into a barrow to go from the abattoir to the shop where he would scrub the floor in return for a joint of beef at the end of the week. Jobs varied from farm work, domestic work, hotel work and delivery work, all completed before going to school. No wonder teachers complained that children fell asleep at their desks! Rural children would arrive at school on rainy days in drenched clothes. In winter time, the schoolroom could be bitterly cold, smoky, dimly lit and dirty. Clothes would be dried around the stove.

Epidemics of influenza, whooping cough, scarlet fever, and diphtheria were not uncommon. The other disease which blighted some schools was ringworm. In fact, at one school, some children were excluded from school on medical grounds for a period of two years! But healthcare was improving, not only as a result of the School Health Service but also improvements in the treatment of childhood diseases. The creation of the Princess Elizabeth Orthopaedic Hospital in Exeter made a huge difference to the lives of children with disabilities.

With neither television nor computers to entertain children, many played in the streets. In Plymouth 725 children were injured in street accidents in the first seven months of July 1925. A programme of educational lectures was given by the local police force to alert children to the dangers of road traffic.

Leisure activities included a picnic in the woods, a day at the local agricultural show, watching the hunt pass by, going to a fete, taking a charabanc ride to the seaside, dressing up for the annual carnival or a day at the fair. There were local clubs; youth clubs, the YMCA, the Scouts, the Girl Guides, the Boys Brigade, Sea Cadets and swimming clubs. Athletics and football matches were also organised. There was still a rigid class system extant and although there was some interaction between the classes, some activities were the domain of the better-off children such as the cricket club and the hunt. They would receive invitations to tennis parties, attend dancing classes, visit a children's cinema or museum. On the other hand, for them, the fair was rather frowned upon.

If you would like to get involved, please get in touch with our Project Manager, Julia Neville, at j.f.neville@btinternet.com.



Healthcare in Devon in the 1920s: Jean Rhodes from Chagford writes about a very different world:

‘In those days’

A group of 4 interviewees recorded by me in the late 1990s recalled that their families did not send for a doctor or attend surgery in case of illness because of the cost. Traditional folk remedies were often used instead. Each of the interviewees was in their 90s, describing medical services in the 1920s.

Mrs A.H. said ‘they wouldn’t send for the doctor if they could avoid it, because of the expense. People used the chemist – you had to have faith in the chemist in those days. My mother and sister had flu and pneumonia and were attended by nurses including a night nurse. I’m quite sure my parents couldn’t afford it, but I have a feeling the village did it. Then the doctor came out three times a day. He just watched for the point of crisis and then they made a turn for the better. The bill was as much as my father earned in a year but they paid it bit by bit.

Mrs E.R. agreed. ‘You had to pay if you had the doctor. You see, being poor, you didn’t call ‘en unless you were forced to.’ Her father paid into the Forresters – a Friendly Society, but this only covered him and not the family.

Mrs D.K. remembers having a cut stitched by a doctor. ‘I suppose my mother had to pay for that, because it wouldn’t come under Dad’s Slate Club. You didn’t have a doctor to your house in those days unless you were dying, because you couldn’t afford it. Conversely she commented that ‘mothers knew different things’. A cure for conjunctivitis was given to her mother by a gypsy. ‘You’ve got on the garden the very thing which will cure that. Boil up parsley, leave it on the hob so that it is warm every morning. Bathe her eyes and it will clear it up.’

Mrs E.S. agreed. Her mother ‘took a few leaves of House Leek from the garden wall, put them in muslin, bruised them with a knife handle and squeezed the juice into the eye. It always worked.’ She also gives the reason for not going to the doctor. ‘Oh we didn’t go - no. because you see, I remember the bills – the bill would be Four Pound which – you’d have to sell several chicken and that – to raise that – your money to pay. Four Pound is nothing now to look at – but it was an awful lot then – so we didn’t go.’

All four respondents gave expense as a reason why their families would not send for the doctor. Each described traditional remedies that were used instead and remembered that they usually worked.



Chagford Market Square (Crediton Local History Society)

TRANSPORT IN THE 1920s: THE HALWILL TO TORRINGTON RAILWAY, A LATE-COMER TO THE RAILWAY MAP

The railway line from Torrington to Halwill Junction had a relatively short life – from 1925 until 1965 – but the fact that it was built at all is almost a miracle. One of the last railway lines ever to be built in Britain, a gambler would probably have put odds on it never opening at all even though some of it at the northern end already formed a narrow gauge railway serving clayworks. Named the North Devon and Cornwall Junction Light Railway, it never got to anywhere in Cornwall.

The story is a complex one and paradoxically almost certainly owes its existence to the poor economic conditions at the time as well as the drive of a few key people including local MPs and auctioneers. It is a tale of widespread support but much less enthusiasm from people when it came to putting their money where their mouths were. So much of the story of this railway went to the wire.

The early proposals had come prior to World War I. By early 1922 it was estimated that the cost would be around £220,000 and the benefits were already well rehearsed – huge quantities of clay to transport, the importance for agriculture, cutting journey times and reducing isolation.

The various local authorities were asked to play their part and as the third decade of the century began, sums were agreed. In early 1920 things looked promising as the Ministry of Transport had promised £200,000 if the districts provided an additional £30,000. Moreover, the London and South Western Railway had agreed to run the line – a logical outcome bearing in mind they ran the railways at either end of this route.

It was freight traffic that provided the greatest justification. The quality of the clay meant a large export market to the Potteries and Italy. It was argued that there was sufficient clay in the locality to last for 1000 years. There was a heady optimism that the railway could not fail. When a question was asked locally what would happen if the railway did not pay, the reply was that every railway pays. The elephant in the room though was who was going to pay and if so what about the interest on their loan?

Councils were often split on the loans. Decisions were often deferred. Others wished the scheme well but did not feel itself able to contribute. At national level there was some bickering between the Ministry of Transport and the Ministry of Labour. By the summer of 1921, it was reported that difficulties were being experienced. The Government had decided that financial assistance could not now be given. The emphasis now shifted to ways in which the construction could help relieve the dire national unemployment rate. It was felt that 2000 men could be started on the project along the whole length of track.

The Managing Director of the proposed line was Colonel H F Stephens, a man associated with many light railway projects. He envisaged the line of some 20 miles. He envisaged there would be a need for 40,000 sleepers mainly derived from local sources. There would be 18 months' work and £130,000 of the £235,000 needed would be direct labour costs.

The Councils meanwhile continued to fret about finance and sometimes fell out with one another. It is also important to remember that the railway was not the only show in town.

There were a range of other schemes such as various road ones. The local MPs George Lambert and Captain Tudor Rees stressed the urgency of things. The opportunity if missed may never come again. Schemes were tumbling in and it was likely to be first come first served. Yet local authorities still wavered.

The end of 1921 was the really crucial period. The warning came that if the scheme did not happen, the Government money would go to a Welsh scheme. However, favourable opinion continued to grow. Donations trickled in. The rector of Pyworthy set an example by donating £100. The advocates redoubled their efforts. Ambrosia weighed in stating they might be interested in opening a factory if the line was constructed. The regional newspaper, the Western Morning News, and Mercury General Fund agreed to provide £500 from its fund aimed at relieving unemployment. The claims of the benefits escalated – one argued it would relieve the monotony of existence in the district and help to reconcile the agricultural labourer to his lot. Some councils though started to doubt the claimed benefits and profits.

Away from the finances though things were starting to happen. It was reported that the unemployed were converging on Torrington. Overall though there were very few reports of navvy misbehaviour so often associated with early railway construction. 1922 began much more optimistically. Satisfactory tenders had been received. It was reported that this scheme was number one on the Ministry list. The LSWR Company had guaranteed 5% on half of the capital. The total estimated cost was £249,596. By the end of May it was confirmed that the contract was signed and that would commence immediately providing for 800-900 labourers. At the same time, local authorities started to be invoiced.

Mr Arthur Neal, Parliamentary Under Secretary at the Ministry of Transport cut the first sod at 1.15 on 30 June 1922 at Hatherleigh. The challenges for the rest of the year largely centred around the labourers, the construction and the ubiquitous issue of finance. There were soon complaints that the proper scale of wages was not being paid. By the autumn, it was clear that progress was slower than planned partly it was claimed because of the small number of men employed. By the start of 1923 double shifts were reported as a way of speeding up the construction.

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In 1923 there was considerable debate and dissatisfaction with working conditions. It was reported that there was no shelter from rain, and labourers were up to their necks in mud and water. Also that night shifts of 12 hours were being worked. Bideford Council also complained asserting that they were not even what would be expected of a limited liability company with no soul. Sometimes wages were as low as 15 shillings as they were miles from habitation and could not work in wet weather. They had to drink water from a stream polluted by cattle. One reported that the World War One trenches had been better. There was nowhere to dry clothes. Some even slept under a hedge. To compound the problem, the labourers had to pay high rail fares to get to the construction site. During 1923, however, the working conditions do seem to have improved although a number of fatal accidents did occur.

Towards the end of 1924 talk began of completion although cited dates slipped partly because of contractors' financial embarrassments that meant the Company had to complete the line itself after February. The construction had been estimated as taking 20 months but it took 3 years, a situation blamed on exceptionally wet summer seasons in 1923 and 1924 and the type of labour imposed by the Ministry.

There were to be stations at Petrockstowe, Hatherleigh and Hole and halts at Dunsbear and Meeth. The line had been built on top of the seven mile narrow gauge clay line which would be taken up when the new line opened. The journey was extremely slow taking some 80 minutes for a 20 mile journey. The opening at the end of July 1925 was a low-key affair. The 4-5 trains per day anticipated earlier was optimistic. The service initially ran three each way and in British Railway days just two. There was never any Sunday service.

The line closed to passengers in March 1965. Only clay traffic continued north from Meeth until 1983 when this also ended as there was no money to upgrade the line to take the new china clay wagons used elsewhere. Perhaps it is not surprising that this would be amongst the shortest-lived passenger railways in the United Kingdom. Its role today as part of the Tarka Trail almost certainly witnesses more people than it ever did as a railway line.

Tim Lomas

The Devon in the 1920s DVD

For me, an unexpected and interesting benefit of *Devon in the 1920s* has been the opportunity to take part in a series of short films about aspects of life in the decade. The films – about Home, School, Work, Holidays and Travel, Romance and Special Occasions and Events – have been put onto a DVD which has been distributed to more than 150 care homes in Devon to aid them with reminiscence work. They feature documents, photographs and objects from the collections of the Devon Heritage Centre and the Museum of Somerset.

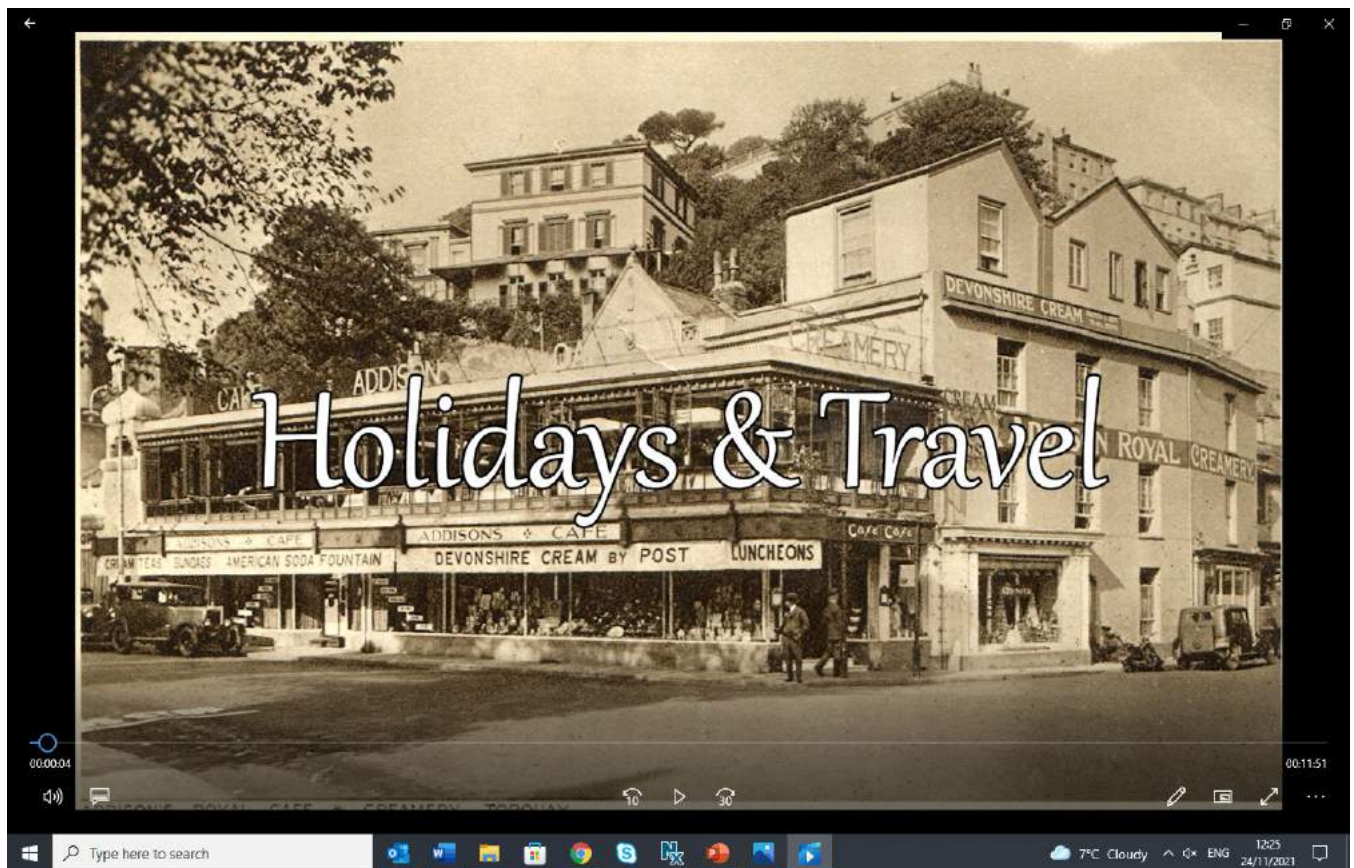
The project was a collaboration between the Devon History Society and the South West Heritage Trust. Julia Neville took overall managerial responsibility for the project, while four members of SWHT staff had important roles in the production of the films. John French, from the Somerset Heritage Centre, advised on content, narrated and wrote accompanying learning materials; Bethan Murray, Curator of Social History and Textiles at the Museum of Somerset, and Rachel Ponting and I from the Devon Heritage Centre, took part in the films. The filming was carried out by an experienced local film-maker, Phil Gurr, whose technical expertise and advice was invaluable, and we also received important input from George Coxon, the owner and director of two care homes in Dawlish and Teignmouth and someone with huge experience in care provision and great enthusiasm for doing it well.

The three films I took part in (my colleague Rachel featured in the others) were my first experience of being filmed talking to a camera. It proved an enjoyable experience, and, thanks to the presence of an autocue, much less difficult than I expected.

At the time of writing [early February 2022] we are awaiting feedback from care homes about their experience of using the DVD with their residents.

I will be discussing the project with Julia Neville in a DHS Expert Witness Seminar on Zoom at 7 p.m. on Thursday 10th March. If you would like to attend, please contact Julia via j.f.neville@btinternet.com.

Brian Carpenter



Devon in the 1920s – Tiles, Pots, Jugs and Mottoware

Are you interested in the history of Devon pottery? Would you like to join a research group looking at what the development of Devon pottery and potters in the 1920s? What was happening to studio and commercial pottery in the decade after the First World War. Changes in design, technology, commercial practice and self-employment will all have played their part, as will the new emphasis on reviving rural industries.

I'm looking to recruit some interested people to research different aspects of the pottery industry and put together a story covering the county from North Devon to South Devon. I'm delighted to say also that Nicola Thomas, Professor of Historical and Cultural Geography at the University of Exeter, who has a long-standing interest in the history of regional craft, has agreed to be a mentor and adviser to our research.

Please get in touch if this appeals to you, or if you know of someone who has already researched any individual potters or studios. Contact me, Julia Neville, on j.f.neville@btinternet.com



Devon Mottoware, produced at Watcombe, promoting Lynton



A Barum pottery vase from Barnstaple



Pottery factory workers, courtesy of the Bovey Tracey Heritage Trust

A R Quinton Picture Postcards

Julia Neville has collected a number of picture postcards taken from paintings by A R Quinton* made throughout the 1920s. These postcards have been assembled into a slideshow which has been used to entertain the audience while waiting for DHS Zoom events to commence. To view the slideshow, go to:

<https://www.devonhistorysociety.org.uk/ar-quinton/>

What the DHS would now like to do is to add a photo of the same scene taken from the same vantage point today, so that we have a 'Then and Now' presentation. See the Sidmouth examples below.





If you live near, or visit, any of the locations then perhaps you could take a photo and forward it to the DHS at:

webmaster@devonhistorysociety.org.uk

The result will be added to the slideshow and posted on the DHS website.

* Alfred Robert Quinton (28 October 1853 – 10 December 1934)

Was an English watercolour artist, known for his paintings of British villages and landscapes many of which were published as postcards. His work routine would be to travel around England and Wales for three months of the year, mostly during the summer months and often by bicycle, during which he would draw sketches and take photographs of locations which he would work up into paintings in his studio during the winter months.

Wikipedia

After fifteen years as School Archivist at Blundell's School in Tiverton, DHS Council member and Editor of The Devon Historian, Mike Sampson, retired in December 2021. Here he reflects on his time at the school.

Fifteen years as a School Archivist: Some Reflections

Retirement has now given me the luxury of being able to look back over fifteen years as the archivist of Blundell's School in Tiverton. I was offered the post on the recommendation of a former master – no formal application procedure necessary! I was even asked what I thought my salary ought to be; the amount I suggested being agreed without discussion, perhaps I should have asked for more! My lack of experience as an archivist led to a distance learning course with the University of Liverpool, being aided throughout as my mentor by Brian Carpenter, from the then Devon Record Office. Brian's eagerness to fulfil this role was possibly due to the opportunity to combine imparting his archival knowledge with watching some rugby and cricket. The two-year course culminated with the award of a Diploma in Professional Studies: Archives and Records Management.

I joined the School Archivists Group, an organisation of mainly part-timers working in independent schools. As most of us worked alone we soon realised that no matter how difficult our particular conditions were, others endured far worse – at least the archive at Blundell's has no infestation of rats or danger of burst water-pipes, nor do the teaching staff 'borrow' items without asking.

One advantage with most independent schools is that they have a long, rich history. Blundell's, founded in 1604, is certainly no exception. The archive collection has several items from the earliest days, including the Account Book, beginning in 1610, which records such minutiae as the number of nails and slates bought for repairs; the Books of Orders, in other words, Governors' Minutes, containing such resolutions as that passed in 1730 'that all cockfighting at the Schoolhouse on Shrove Tuesdays be abolished for the future'. However, the earliest document dates from 1456 and is a deed of a property in Tiverton that was eventually purchased by Peter Blundell, the founder of the School. Estate records figure largely in the collection as the School was maintained financially until 1904 from the rents of the Manor of East Portlemouth in the South Hams, which Blundell had bought in the 1570s.

The longevity of the School means that the archivist receives many and varied enquiries, ranging from 'my mother was a cleaner at Blundell's, what can you tell me about her?' to 'I am a Professor of Physiology, and am writing a new biography of A.V. Hill, your Nobel Prize winner, what did he achieve at School?' The years around the centenary of the First World War prompted many requests for information about former pupils who had taken part in the conflict – usually necessitating a trawl, page by page, through the volumes of the school magazine, a task made much easier once many of them had been digitised. On occasion even such heartrending investigations revealed facts capable of raising a smile, such as the discovery that boys of the Officer Training Corps had to remove the bayonets from their rifles in class, and, later during the Second World War, monitors were each issued with ten rounds of live ammunition in case of German invasion!

Despite the fact that some days were spent in fruitless searches ending with the need to send an apologetic email to a hopeful enquirer, other days saw delightful tales uncovered. In the 1960s a handful of boys had ventured, 'without permission' to the cinema in Tiverton to watch an X-certificate Sophia Loren film, on return they were beaten harshly, one of the masters thought too harshly. He wrote to the actress asking her to open the year's school fete, she consented, saying it was the least she could do for the poor boys – however, filming commitments prevented her from coming. Nevertheless, the school has on display a poster produced by the sympathetic master in anticipation of Miss Loren's presence.

Not all events leave a tangible reminder: the end-of-term ‘japes’, are nowhere officially recorded, but are remembered gigglingly by staff and former pupils. These included covering the bannister to the Staff Room with honey, positioning the CCF’s 25lb field-gun facing the Head Master’s study, making a cricket pitch out of turf in the School Chapel, removing every classroom clock (over 70 in all!) and placing them in the Biology class, putting goldfish in the water dispensers – Blundellians, if nothing else, are inventive!

The situation at Blundell’s with its vibrant Old Blundellian Club, gave plenty of opportunity to meet recent (and not-so-recent) pupils at social events, ranging from giving tours, putting on displays, and attending receptions and lunches, including the regular Winter Lunches, all of which usually resulted in being given a great deal of useful information for the archive. The Winter Lunches consisted of a few drinks, followed by a wonderful meal and ending with a short talk, but woe betide the speaker who went on too long, as he was likely to be accompanied by a chorus of post-prandial snoring.

Having attended several of the school’s social events and met quite a few notable personalities, both former pupils and guests, I am now able to name-drop: Richard Sharp (the great England rugby player), Sir Christopher Ondaatje (philanthropist), Ben Collins (the original ‘Stig’ of ‘Top Gear’), Robert Fox (the journalist and broadcaster), were memorable among the former pupils, and I have cloudy memories of standing at the Staff Club bar supping pints until 1.30 a.m. with the former Welsh rugby international sports commentator, Eddie Butler, but, possibly the greatest moment was shaking hands with the legendary Gary Sobers, generally regarded as the greatest all-round cricketer of all time.

James Ravilious

It was a great pleasure for me to be involved in the organisation of a DHS blue plaque in memory of the great photographer of English rural life, James Ravilious, who died, aged 60, in 1999. After a long delay caused by the pandemic, the plaque was unveiled on his former home in Chulmleigh at the end of September 2021. Following the ceremony, guests assembled in Chulmleigh Town Hall and among the speakers was the Reverend Peter Beacham, a former English Heritage Director who worked with James Ravilious on their book Down the Deep Lanes. Peter Beacham gave a moving tribute to James Ravilious and he has kindly agreed to let me quote from it here.

There are many – and better people who could have done what Robin has asked me to do this afternoon, so I start by noting what a privilege it is for me to honour my friend James in this way. My contribution is simply to reflect on the man I knew and had the pleasure of working with, and to do so by sharing some moments on our journey of friendship and companionship.

It began over 40 years ago when a friend gave me a copy of *The Heart of the Country*, James and Robin’s hauntingly beautiful first book. I savoured that book as I travelled rural Devon in my job with the County Council ‘keeping an eye on a past which is disappearing before our eyes’, as my first boss put it. In the background of the books’ powerful images – warm, intimate, heroic, humorous and utterly real – were the buildings I was supposed to do something about – farmsteads of cob and thatch, patchy lime render, plaster, and lime wash, all with wonderful textures and patinas.

Years later, in the 1990s, aware of James’ continuing battle with his health and with growing concerns about the curation of his life’s work, I suggested we might collaborate on a book in which we would group his photographs around certain little celebrated rural themes on which I would write short essays.

He was dubious at first, saying ‘Who on earth’s going to be interested in something on cob, cabbages, and corrugated iron!’ To which I replied ‘That would make rather a good title for the book.’ It became *Down the Deep Lanes*, and to make it we sat side by side in the North Devon Record Office in September 1997 going through all his 35 mm contact strips. I was once again bowled over by his genius in capturing the fleeting moment of people, places, landscape, and skyline.

The archive images were to be supplemented by newly commissioned photographs. Our joint expeditions became some of the most creative, inspiring, and enjoyable days of my life, with hilarious incidents leavening the seriousness of our endeavour. Though increasingly unwell, he was not to be deterred, sometimes asking me to help lug the heavy equipment needed for the plate camera [he’d been given it by Olive Cook, the widow of his photographic mentor Edwin Smith] over fences and across fields to reach the perfect vantage point. Our journeys were sustained by hearty pub lunches. On one occasion, he’d been telling me he’d been reading new research suggesting large quantities of red meat could help his condition. To his delight, the pub we lighted on was offering a ‘mixed grill special’ of any four items from steak, chops, liver, kidneys, bacon, sausages, black pudding. ‘I’ll have the lot and pay the extra,’ he declared – and was still ready for a full afternoon’s work.

It was his engaging humanity, his embrace of life in all its fullness, which inspired his life’s work and which we celebrate today with the Devon History Society’s perfectly-judged initiative. As Olive Cook once put it so succinctly,

‘His photographs are the fruit of a quite exceptional acuity and patience of witness and a quite unusual humility and warmth of spirit.’

What a privilege to have shared a little of his life and work.



Unveiling of DHS Blue Plaque in memory of James Ravilious, Chulmleigh, 30th September 2021

John Torrance, one of the two key figures in the development of the Branscombe Project, died in 2021. His partner, Barbara Farquharson, has kindly contributed this obituary.



JOHN TORRANCE, 1933 – 2021

John Torrance was born in Bath and educated at Marlborough College. Following National Service, he read Politics at Oxford (first at Lincoln College, then Nuffield). He became a don at Hertford College, taught political history, was twice vice-principal, and was regarded as ‘charismatic’. In 1995 he published Karl Marx’s *Theory of Ideas* (Cambridge University Press).

In the mid-nineties John’s wife, Charity, became ill. They moved to Poole and he looked after her for ten years. She died in 2006 and he moved to East Devon, first to Beer, and then to Branscombe, where he lived with Barbara Farquharson.

Barbara was co-founder of The Branscombe Project – a community-based project with, as its motto, ‘Where Memory Meets History’. The project concentrated on recording people’s memories and returning them to the community as booklets, winter talks, summer walks and Easter exhibitions. John found this entirely to his liking and, being more interested in history than memory, took the project into areas that had hardly been explored.

For him, the ‘making’ of a parish was about topography and geology, house building and settlement, roadways and path ways, local industries, changing land-use, working people and land-owners. It was also about people’s changing understandings of the world they lived in.

He believed in walking the landscape – checking out quarries and outcrops; working out how and when different resources – limestone, sandstone, marlstone, gypsum, and flint were used. Often his investigations spread beyond Branscombe – his study of lime-burning covered the whole of East Devon.

He loved the way in which a place got used and reused, and, taking a very unmemorable stretch of the A3052, told its story – from prehistoric standing stones to Iron Age defences, a medieval chapel, forge, enclosures, a cross-road suicide burial, the coming of the toll-road...

He pushed back in time, plotting in considerable detail the medieval domain that covered the southern half of the Parish. He explored the quite complex medieval water system in the middle valley and discovered that Manor Mill farm, always described as a grist mill, had, in fact, been two mills – a grist mill and a fulling mill complete with a ‘rack field’ on its south-facing slope. He thus showed that Branscombe, like other rural parishes, had once had a thriving woollen cottage industry.

In the year before he died, John was working on the Branscombe woodlands – taking it from medieval times through to contemporary concerns with biodiversity and rewilding.

John and Barbara worked on books together. One on an infamous late nineteenth century shooting, another the story of the three Branscombe pubs. During Lockdown they worked on a third book – the face-off between an avacious late eighteenth century land-owner and the local vicar.

John presented his findings at the winter talks; he wrote project pamphlets and articles for learned journals; he and Barbara wrote and directed drama-documentaries (one, about the nineteenth century shooting, involved over thirty villagers). Famously, they led a walk following in the footsteps of a hymn-singing blacksmith-cum-postman. Villagers along the way added their stories.

In late 2020 John was diagnosed with cancer. In the last few months he continued to work with Barbara, but also assembled a collection of his poetry, and wrote, with transparent honesty, about the process of dying.

The book of poetry has now been published. There was a joyous celebration of his life in October last year. The AONB decided to sponsor an annual John Torrance Talk and the first of these took place in November 2021 in Branscombe Village Hall. The paper that he’d written on Branscombe Woodlands was given by Barbara and although Lockdown had only just begun to lift, seventy people were there to honour him.

A list of his publications is available on the Branscombe Project website:

<https://www.branscombeproject.org.uk/>

Daphne J. Barnes-Phillips, *250 years of Exmouth's FIRSTS* (Exmouth: Corridor Press, 2019), 208 pp., illustrations. Softback. ISBN 978-1-897715-04-8. £14.95.

This is Daphne Barnes-Phillips' second book about Exmouth, the first being *Exmouth's ROLLE: educating students and teachers from 1870 to 2008* (2015). Here, she has chosen to celebrate the achievements of 24 people who were either born, educated, worked or died in the town. This miscellaneous collection spans a period of 250 years and covers a variety of fields and age groups. Some of those written about, for example, Ann Perriam, the Parmenter cousins and Francis Cammaerts of Rolle College have been well documented. Others would not be known outside the town. Barnes-Phillips has undertaken detailed research on the people she has selected because of their connection with the town. The information is arranged in chronological order according to their birth and time in the resort.

In terms of the likely readership the book would interest people wanting to know more about the history of Exmouth.

The definition of what is considered a first is not consistent throughout the book. With this in mind, as far as the individual "firsts" are concerned the 24 people are not strictly speaking all firsts. This is particularly true if one takes the dictionary focus to mean the first to achieve something of note, for example, John Dunning, the 1st Baron Ashburton; two individuals who were First World War poets; a descendant of the 1st Viscount Exmouth; the 1st Lady Nelson. Further, a number of those included hardly warrant a mention, for example, an individual who came first in Devon's Scholarship Exam or the first Radio DJ to play a request for royalty; likewise the first four year old to hold an art exhibition. It would have helped if the criteria for inclusion had been mentioned in more detail in an introduction. With this in mind it is important to cite the available evidence that indeed they were actually "firsts".

On the positive side, the book is attractively produced with plenty of illustrations. However, a number of common faults that one finds with many local studies are repeated here. First, the introduction does not really introduce the subject; second, there is no concluding chapter; third, there is no index and fourth, the photographs lack captions. Although there is an extensive list of sources, some would be difficult to trace if a reader wanted to undertake further detailed research was deemed necessary. For example, school magazines and some individual letters.

For anyone wishing to undertake a similar piece of research, it might be advisable to take a thematic approach and concentrate on individuals who would have a wider appeal with less material documented about them.

The book can be obtained direct from the author. Corridor Press is a community publisher, producing local books for individuals. It has existed for twenty-five years, taking its name from the M4 corridor in Berkshire.

Jackie Bryon

NEWS FROM AFFILIATED SOCIETIES

Crediton Area History and Museum Society

The Crediton Area History and Museum Society held its second-ever exhibition just before Christmas 2021, entitled "Christmas at the Museum", and opened the museum for seventeen days. During that time, there were 369 visitors, 70 of whom visited in the evening when the museum stayed open especially until 7 pm, on the night of the Crediton Christmas lights big switch on.

The exhibition was really well received and attracted a number of younger people who had never stepped inside the museum before. Encouragingly they said that they would be back for our next exhibition, "The 50s", which we hope to open at the beginning of April.

Tim Sedgwick (Secretary)

Hemyock History Society

The talk in December 2021 was given by John Ward, a Hemyock resident, who has held the national collection of Gentians and other Alpine plants. John has also been a lifelong Mason and gave a fascinating presentation on the History of the Masons including a film of the activities at a Lodge meeting with all the masons wearing their appropriate regalia. The Masons originated as the masonry experts who built our Cathedrals. Every large church building will have a keystone at the east end of the building showing the initials of the master mason.

We were privileged to have Michael Bowerman give our talk in January on the family history of the Bowermans and their 400 year residence in Hemyock.

The Bowerman family have connections to the Isle of Wight, owning what became Osborne House. We started with the Dissolution of the Monasteries when Dunkeswell Abbey was taken over by Henry VIII's men in 1539 with the Monks being dispersed and the property and land taken by the Crown and given to the King's new favourite John Russell, who was made Baron Russell by the King in late 1538. He was first noticed at Court when Archduke Philip of Austria and Juana his wife (King and Queen of Castile) were shipwrecked off Weymouth, and he escorted the royal couple to the English court in London. From then on John Russell was on an upward trajectory. John Ley was the last Abbot of Dunkeswell and he seems to have married into the Bowermans after leaving Dunkeswell Abbey and becoming the Vicar of Sheldon and Sainthill. One of the other Monks given a pension by the King when they left the Abbey was a William Boreman, although he had to travel to London to receive it. Another William Bowerman is reported as the sub Dean of Wells Cathedral. It was about this time that the Bowerman family moved from the Isle of Wight to Hemyock and settle in Whitehall Manor where they stayed in residence for over 400 years. Various members of the family became involved in overseas expeditions, as did many families around the West Country. Michael has made available many copies of the original documents he has unearthed of the Bowerman activities in the various trading locations on both sides of the Atlantic including Cartagena in Colombia.

One of the attendees at the meeting was a Julia Spencer who lives opposite the Pump and who has published a book of her time living with her family in a mountain village in Andalucia where they experienced extreme criminal activities against them, all described in her book *Calamaries and Corruption*, copies of which can be obtained from Julia.

At our February 17th meeting another Hemyock resident, Chris Western, talked about the 1893 Polar expedition and on March 17th Colin Spackman will be talking about local history.

Mike Cooper

The Lustleigh Society

The Lustleigh Society resumed its programme of 'live' talks in January with an excellent talk on Devon Orchards by Michael Gee. This is being followed by a talk on the history of food in Devon by Dr Paul Cleave, Honorary Research Fellow at Exeter University on 16th February. On Wednesday 30th March Bernard Mills returns with the second part of his talk about railways around Dartmoor.

An Exeter man in Algiers is the subject of a talk by Dr Paul Auchterlonie on 27th April and the Society's Spring season is completed by a talk about the restoration of Castle Drogo, which is the prelude to a tour of the Castle in June.

All talks take place at 7.00 p.m. in Lustleigh Village Hall and are open to non-members. Further information on the Lustleigh Society website <https://www.lustleigh-society.org.uk/> which also has information on the Lustleigh Community Archive which will be re-opening in March.

Lympstone History Society

We have various projects ongoing in the Society. The main project is to put up around eight 'History Points' around the village. These will be small diamond shaped signs around 7 cm x 9 cm with a title according to the location, a picture usually from our archive and a QR code. The QR code will take the viewer to the Lympstone Village website, initially to a short paragraph about the location or topic. Further (illustrated) information will be available at another 'click'.

The 'locations' relate to structures of the village such as church, buildings, shops, farms, the railway station and orchards, events in the village such as fire and flood, and a general location (e.g. 'The Waterfront', with information about lime kilns, fishing, smuggling, piracy and boat building).

We were originally going to put up boards of information but we came to see the boards as cumbersome and rather ugly. They were also going to be very expensive and there were some political issues about funding them. We feel we have 'gone the right way' by using QR codes.

An important event of the last six months has been the agreement of the Parish Council to take on the financing of the Archive. This removes the pressure constantly to raise funds for the society through our publications and talks.

Teign Valley Museum & Archive Trust

The Teign Valley History Group was founded in 2010 after I detected an unanswered need for more information on the history of the Valley which could be shared amongst anyone with an interest in the local community.

The group's remit was to meet that need with regular talks on Devon history which particularly related to the Teign Valley whilst also offering a central collection point for an archive for the district. This would then be shared with the community who would not make the journey to the Devon Heritage Centre in Exeter.

The group was an immediate success and has a present membership of 140 whilst several people have chosen just to attend occasional talks.

Our archive collection continued to expand and many people have said they have interesting artefacts which they are willing to give or loan once the collection has a secure site, the collection being kept in seven different locations at the time. In view of the ever-increasing size of our archive, it was decided in 2017 to set up a new entity, a registered charity, Teign Valley Museum & Archive Trust with the aim of building a secure and modern style museum in which we could have displays and give presentations on a regular basis. The Trust's remit is:

To establish and maintain a museum for the benefit of the public to enable them to view historical documents and objects relating to the Teign Valley

To encourage historical research and presentation

To advance education by organizing exhibitions and other educational events and displays to examine aspects of local history

To establish collect and maintain an archive of documents and artefacts concerning the history of the Teign Valley to provide the general public with opportunities for research and to encourage education into local history

To promote interest and active research into local history generally and particularly encouraging participation in such activity by the schools in the Teign Valley

Christow was chosen as the preferred site as it was the largest village and in the centre of the Teign Valley. A request to the villagers for their support resulted in a large number in agreement to which were added letters of support from the local schools and several professional historians. Informal approaches to the parish council gave the impression that it would agree to lease us land on which to build so we produced what we felt was a sympathetic design drawn by a local architect. It was a great shock to hear that our proposal was turned down with seemingly no suggestions as to how we could improve the design.

We decided on a different course so proceeded to design a website giving details of our collection. This was greatly helped by Nick Kirkland, a retired professional IT consultant who went through the detail on how to make a searchable database. He has since become a director. All six directors have an interest in local history to which are added separate areas of expertise to create the whole. In addition we employ an experienced archivist part time to add each item we hold to the database. We now have over 2000 items recorded with many more to list.

Our current greatest difficulty is in attracting funds to continue financial support. We attend every summer show in the valley as well as farmers' markets where we sell produce made by our supporters. In addition we have books by the late Stafford Clark and two books of mine on local and social history in the valley. Another book by several supporters, a second edition of residents' memories of living in the Valley, is in the planning stages.

The archive went live in July after a year's intensive work and is available free of charge to all at **tvhistorycentre.org**. So far there have been almost 3000 visitors. Some of our items, such as photos in albums are difficult to photograph with an ordinary camera so a specialist camera and associated stands are now sought. A fundraising exercise is now under way.

Graham Thompson

Chair

graham@tvhistorycentre.org

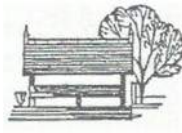
Books available direct from the author are:

A Devon Village, Life in Victorian Christow

The Pellews of Canonteign

Limited supplies of Stafford Clark's books will be available later

More details at tvhistorycentre.org



Uffculme Local History Group

Like other local history groups, we have been unable to have our programme of regular meetings since March 2020 but the group has stayed active online, through our parish magazine and on a number of behind-the-scenes projects. We have continued to have a monthly article in the parish magazine, written by the Chair, about a topic of historical interest (e.g. VE day last year, the history of the census in March 2021, anniversary of the birth of a local photographer etc.). We have also had a photo quiz each month of historic features in the village initially to encourage people to use their exercise during lockdowns to notice the history around them. This has proved very popular and we have had excellent feedback from that. We have also updated our website and used that to create links to online events of interest, including talks in a programme devised in collaboration with a number of nearby local history groups. We jointly applied for a grant from a County Councillor's 'locality' budget to pay for a year's subscription to Zoom to host this successful series of events. We're hopeful that the joint working 'forced' on us by pandemic restrictions will continue to flourish.

The committee has worked very hard over the past six months on a Heritage Board for the central area of the village – long talked about but not actioned until now. In addition to the selection of locations to depict, the design of the board and work on a parallel 'virtual' Heritage Board on the website, we have also had to fundraise for the project. It's been a major undertaking. The board will be installed and unveiled in August – a considerable achievement by the committee and others! We're also working on an exhibition of local shops for Heritage Open Days in September which will be our first face-to-face event. The committee is also trying to get support from Devon History Society for the installation of a Blue Plaque in the village for an internationally famous archaeologist who was also a past President of our Local History Group.

Who knew that the pandemic year (and a half) was going to be so busy?!

Way of the Wharves, Bideford

Redevelopment work has started on the Barnstaple Street wharves site. Demolition of the remaining buildings is completed. The Baker Plaque from the wall opposite the Royal Hotel has been preserved and will be re-installed on the new building. Archaeological work is underway, sea wall repairs were expected to start in January and main contractors will be on site from early summer. Way of the Wharves has continued to keep supporters and public informed through newsletters and Facebook posts.

In 2021, as Covid restrictions eased, WOTW re-started a programme of activities:

re-printed the self-guided Walk the Wharves map and ran a programme guided walks around East the Water

adopted the phone box in Torrington Street to convert into a heritage resource. More at:
www.phoneeastthewater.co.uk

ran the community event Bideford BIG DRAW looking east across the river. More at: www.bidefordbigdraw.org

published the book 'A history of East the Water, Bideford' in December. Available from Book Orders page of www.the-wharves.org and local bookshop

For 2022 WOTW plans include:

Walks and talks, events promoting the book

History presentation in the phone box and audio archive of 'phone box stories'

Maritime Heritage Day activities in conjunction with the Rotary Water Festival on Sunday 24th July

Working with developer Red Earth on content for interpretation panels to be installed in new development

Michael Teare

Way of the Wharves

wotw.wharves@gmail.com

Woodbury History Society

Every Monday, for seventy weeks of 'lockdown', Woodbury History Society Committee sent to its members a picture and text of an aspect of Woodbury History (see picture on page 30). The AGM at the beginning of the year was held on Zoom. A further Zoom meeting was held in May when Roger Stokes gave an illustrated talk about Woodbury from the 19th to 21st centuries using images of the village and its people from his huge collection of photographs and post-cards.

We were able to hold two live meetings in the Village Hall – in September an illustrated talk by Gill Selley entitled 'The Origins of the Parish of Woodbury and its Manors', and in November an illustrated talk by Todd Gray entitled 'The Blackshirts of Devon'. Both talks, especially that by Todd Gray, were very well attended – over 50 people at each event.

In the summer of 2021 a small group of Woodbury volunteers from The Friends of St Swithun's (several of them members of the History Society too) tackled a serious problem of damp within the floor and wall of the early 16th century north aisle of the 13th century parish church. One member was an experienced engineer, and under his guidance new drainage pipes were laid following the excavation and removal of high ground against which the aisle had originally been built. During the excavation work a quantity of bones was found from early unmarked burials beside the wall. These bones were re-interred with reverence in a new grave close by with a special service of re-burial. Also discovered whilst excavating, was a grotesque which may at one time have been attached to one of the present walls, or possibly from the original wall before the erection of the north aisle (see picture on page 31).

The following programme of lectures for 2022 has been arranged in Woodbury Village Hall, subject to Covid!

3 Mar – 'A Changing World' - a film by Julian Ware. Julian was born into a longstanding Woodbury family, and has recently retired from being a full-time documentary film producer for the BBC and ITV. This film is the last of six episodes which he has made about his family history in Woodbury.

5 May - 'A Short History of Tiverton' – an illustrated talk by Mike Sampson

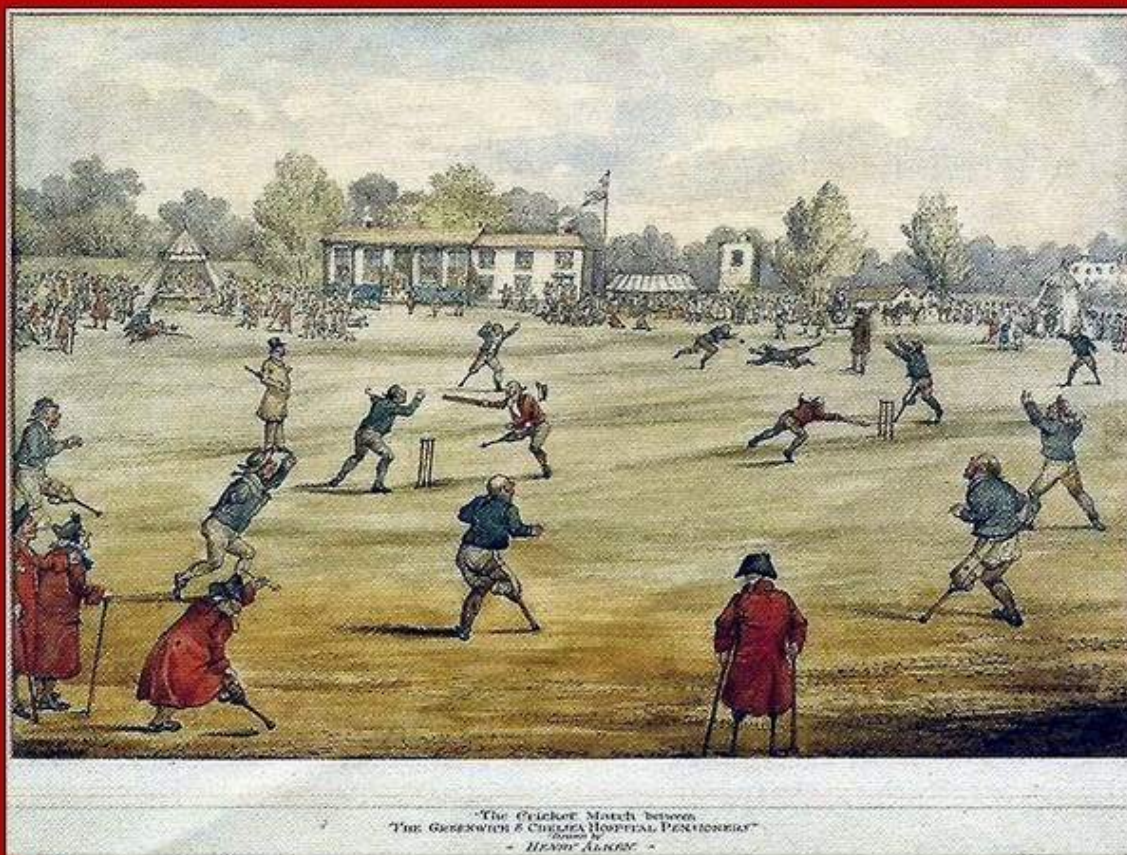
2 Sep – 'The Royal Mail Guard from 16th to 19th Centuries' – an illustrated talk by Martin Horler

4 Nov - 'Devon and African Enslavement' – an illustrated talk by Todd Gray

The Society hopes to arrange an outing on 15th June, to explore Tiverton.

A BRIEF LOOK BACK AT TIMES GONE BY!

42



Maimed army and navy pensioners

This etching records a game of cricket played between the army pensioners from Chelsea and the naval pensioners from Greenwich in the early 19th century. Several matches are recorded between the two including a game in which one-legged naval pensioners challenged one-armed army pensioners. These games were very popular spectator events, and not surprisingly, there was a lot of gambling. Usually two innings were played over a period of two days. As has been commented this gives a whole new meaning to the term 'leg stump'! In 1859 a cricket club was founded in Woodbury by the Reverend John Loveband Fulford and almost certainly played on the large grass area in the front of his new house of Parsonage. As far as is known all the team had full use of their limbs, though the vicar, playing in the first game fell and injured his leg. The first team which represented the parish was made up of a few gentlemen and sons of well-known tradesmen in the villages. The first two games were against a Topsham side, when Woodbury managed to rustle up a few runs. Their next opponents were the men of Ottery St Mary, who gave them a good thrashing with Woodbury only managing to score five runs, of which two were 'extras'. There were no more reports of Woodbury cricket after the summer of 1859, so perhaps they became disillusioned after such a trouncing.

Picture and text by Gillian Selley



Grotesque discovered at St. Swithun's Church, Woodbury, 2021

See the next page for details of a series of events in Branscombe in the early months of this year.

*We would appreciate it if people would wear masks when not seated.
We hope that you have all had a double covid jab.
If possible, could you take a lateral flow test before coming.
We're going to provide tea and coffee (and biscuits)
but would like you to take them back to your seats ...
Don't be put off coming – we're looking forward to seeing you!*

Monday January 31 – 7:30
John Ford's Estate Book

Sue Dymond

These accounts provide a wonderful insight
into running an estate and home in Branscombe
in the first part of the nineteenth century

Monday February 28 – 7:30
The Land of the Uffington White Horse

Patrick Dillon

The White Horse is a huge hill figure created
about three and a half thousand years ago
on a stretch of chalk escarpment overlooking the Upper Thames Valley.
Current archaeological thinking is that the figure is a sun-horse image,
tracking the passage of the sun through the sky.
But why was this *particular* place chosen?
Drawing on cultural traditions from the steppes and plains of central Asia,
and the ecology of pasturelands in Europe,
Patrick thinks he has an answer.
Illustrated with remarkable drone photography by Hedley Thorne

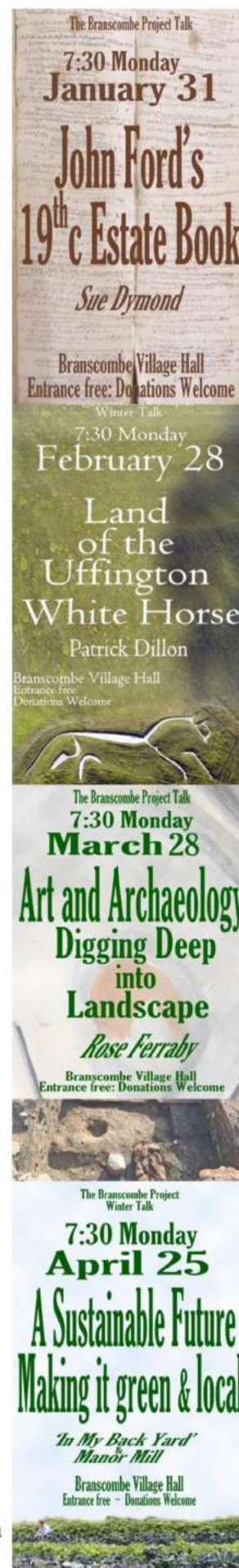
Monday March 28 – 7:30
Art and Archaeology
Digging Deep into a Landscape

Rose Ferraby

Rose, an archaeologist *and* artist,
will discuss some of the projects she's worked on -
making images for the British Museum,
working with poets to think about Bronze Age barrows,
and creating paintings of Mesolithic peatlands.

Monday April 25 – 7:30
A Sustainable Future: Making it Green & Local
In My Back Yard, Manor Mill, the National Trust and AONB

Before Lockdown, we talked with Laura and Jon (Bulstone Springs),
Joe and George (Elbow Farm), Jenny and Ian (Natural Branscombe),
and Nicky Westlake (Manor Mill)
about small-holdings and organic farming in Branscombe and Beer.
We also talked with Rob Skinner from the National Trust
and Chris Woodruff and Pete Youngman from the AONB.
With Lockdown, local produce became increasingly important.
The Co-operative which had been in the pipeline
became a reality and 'In My Back Yard' got under way.
We'll show the exhibition intended for 2020 and the
people we'd talked with will give their first-hand accounts
of what happened in Year One of the Pandemic. There also be a discussion
about biodiversity and rewilding.



COLYTON PARISH HISTORY SOCIETY

PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS FOR 2022

Colyton Town Hall, 7.30pm

| | | |
|------------------------------------|--|----------------------|
| Wednesday 23 rd Feb | MEMBERS' EVENING Experiences of a WW2 Evacuee in Colyton & Slide Show of Old Photographs of Colyton & Colyford | Colyton Town Hall |
| Wednesday 23 rd Mar | THE GERMAN HANSA IN ENGLAND The important role of German merchants in Medieval England By Brian Norris | Colyton Town Hall |
| Wednesday 27 th Apr | THE PILGRIM FATHERS By Mrs Carrie Southwell, of The Mayflower Society, USA THE MAYFLOWER Life on Board & Exhibition of Scale Model of Mayflower By John Addie NEW WORLD ADVENTURERS By Sarah Charman | Colyton Town Hall |
| <hr/> | | |
| Wednesday 28 th Sept | DEVON'S LAST SLAVE OWNERS By Todd Gray | Colyton Town Hall |
| Wednesday 26 th Oct | ARCHIVE FILM SHOW Austerity to Affluence in Post War Britain And Films from Colyton Cine Club Presented by Brian Norris of Greenpark Archives | Colyton Town Hall |
| Wednesday 23 rd Nov | FURTHER SECRETS OF SHUTE by Bijan Omani | Colyton Town Hall |

All talks start at 7.30pm. The attendance fee for each talk is £2 for Members and £4 for Non-members, and includes refreshments.

The Colyton Chamber of Feoffees' Archive

After the reformation, the dissolution of the monasteries and the seizure of church lands under Henry VIII in Colyton, the Chamber of Feoffees became the body charged with using the proceeds for “good, godly and commendable purposes.” Included was the management of local fairs and markets at which a Court of Pie Powder could be held – a system for administering on-the-spot justice.

In 1547 the Chamber appointed a Bailiff to administer its affairs and keep meticulous records of meetings and accounts. These continuous records remain in existence providing a record of over 450 years history in the parish. The Feoffees, the forerunner of what we know as local government, were responsible for many public initiatives including the founding of Colyton Grammar School (1546), the introduction of an early water supply (1641), the formation of a local fire brigade (1641) and the introduction of street lighting (1858). Formerly grants were made to the needy of the Parish for the purchase of food, fuel and blankets and now in modern times support of academic and sporting pursuits by young people have been encouraged and the Feoffees work closely with the Parish Council.

The Colyton Chamber of Feoffees' Archive is fully digitalised and high resolution images of over 1200 documents dating from the 16th century to the early 20th century are accessible at the Colyton Heritage Centre.

If you book a session at the Heritage Centre you will be supported in familiarising yourself with using the database that accesses the Archive. You will also be able to print pages of documents (for a small materials fee) or download electronic documents for viewing at home.

For more information about the Archive or to book a session at the Colyton Heritage Centre, please contact info@colytonheritagecentre.org.

DEVON & CORNWALL RECORD SOCIETY

Winter & Spring Series of Online Lectures

Each lecture starts at 2 pm. They're free to members and there is a £3 fee for non-members. The lectures are bookable through Eventbrite and the ones which have already happened are noted here for information.

Winter Series, 2022: Four diverse approaches in understanding place and the past

29 January

Dr Todd Gray, 'Understanding Dartmouth, Crediton and Colyton through parish rates, 1500-1650'

Taxation records survive for three distinctly different Devon communities and these reveal how each emerged in different ways out of the Reformation.

non-members may book through: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/dr-todd-gray-understanding-dartmouth-crediton-and-colyton-1500-to-1650-tickets-229263231497>

5 February

Professor Stephen Rippon, 'Exeter: A Place in Time – Roman and medieval Exeter in its hinterland'

This talk will outline the development of Exeter from its origins as a Roman legionary fortress and Roman town, through to a medieval city of flourishing fortunes. A series of plans will outline the changing layout of Exeter over time, while the use of scientific techniques has shed new light on its economy. Exeter will also be placed within its wider regional and international hinterland.

non-members may book through: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/prof-stephen-rippon-roman-and-medieval-exeter-in-its-hinterland-tickets-229306831907>

12 February

Dr Catherine Lorigan, 'Boconnoc: it is the paradise of Cornwall'

This talk will discuss the development of the estate at Boconnoc, including the house and associated buildings. Over many centuries, it has been owned by a number of Cornish families. Their influence, both locally and nationally, will be considered.

non-members may book through: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/dr-catherine-lorigan-boconnoc-it-is-the-paradise-of-cornwall-tickets-229311134777>

26 February

Dr N. W. Alcock & Dr Martin Cherry, 'Medieval Cornish Buildings: New Discoveries'

The opportunity to apply tree-ring dating to three Cornish houses and one barn has transformed our knowledge of the county's medieval buildings. This talk will discuss their dating, architectural evidence and social context.

non-members may book through: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/dr-n-w-alcock-dr-martin-cherry-medieval-cornwall-new-discoveries-tickets-229316159807>

Spring Series, 2022: Church fittings

12 March

Michael Swift, 'Cornwall's stained glass crown jewels'

A very personal selection of the best stained glass (sacred and secular) in Cornwall. The selection covers seven centuries and include some of the best in the country. Cornish windows are unique in England in the ways in which a distinctive Cornish identity is portrayed through the medium of stained glass.

non-members may book through: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/michael-swift-cornwalls-stained-glass-crown-jewels-tickets-231793740317>

26 March

Dr Jo Mattingly, 'Rood screens and lofts in the Diocese of Exeter'

Many rood screens survived the Reformation and Georgian 'opening-up' of churches in Devon. Cornish examples are less complete, though more varied in style. This talk will examine form, including painting, carving, alabaster in lofts and local versus Breton craftsmen. Function and impact of screens, lofts and early organs on Perpendicular architecture will also be considered.

non-members may book through: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/dr-jo-mattingly-rood-screens-and-lofts-in-the-diocese-of-exeter-tickets-231796147517>

2 April

Nigel Browne, 'A Confounded box of whistles: church organs in Devon'

The organ is very often the largest object in a church, and in terms of replacement cost one of the most valuable. They are largely ignored by church historians, but their long and varied history epitomises the changes in liturgical, architectural and social practices over the last few centuries.

non-members may book through: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/nigel-browne-a-confounded-box-of-whistles-church-organs-in-devon-tickets-231807812407>

23 April

David Cook, 'Victorian stained glass in Devon's churches'

For the past twelve years David has been researching the stained glass of Devon dating to between 1800 and 1939. The variety of documentary evidence has been different from what was expected, particularly in the case of the local firms. With about 4,000 windows in the date range Devon also has glass from nearly all of the national stained glass firms, with some superb examples.

non-members may book through: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/david-cook-victorian-stained-glass-in-devons-churches-tickets-231809587717>

Harberton and Harbertonford History Society Programme

2022

Tuesday March 15th

7.30pm - Online via Zoom

Speaker: Robin Toogood

A History of Orchards and Cider in South Devon.

Apple growing and cider making were a mainstay of the rural economy and at its nineteenth century peak Devon was England's most prolific county with 23,000 acres under orchard. In this talk, Robin Toogood will trace the story of orchards in this area and how they impacted our communities, landscape and economy.

Robin lives in South Brent and is chairman of the South Devon organisation Orchard Link.

Tuesday June 14th

AGM -7pm

7.30pm - Online via Zoom

Speaker: Lynette Gribble

Sharpham Estate: Ups and Downs

An illustrated talk by Lynette Gribble, Archive Volunteer

The magic of Sharpham lies in the relationship between land and water.

Its history, like that of similar estates, is a rich tapestry of ownership and loss of opportunities, of unfortunates and saviours, of marriages and descent, of sales and buy-backs, of gains and losses and... mortgages.

Lynette came to the area to take up a teaching post at Dartington Hall School in 1963. When that school closed its junior school, Lynette collaborated with four other women to set up Park School in 1986. That school has entered its thirty-sixth year. In 1998 Lynette became one of the Directors of the Open School under the aegis of Michael Young. In 2000 she was asked to become a trustee of the Sharpham Trust and later became its Chair. When Lynette retired from that she turned her attention to developing the Sharpham Archive.

Tuesday October 4th

7.30pm - In Person or Online

Speaker: Dr Ian Mortimer

The Time Traveller's Guide to Regency Britain

This 70 minute talk will focus on an A-Z of Regency themes, but the presentation may vary depending on whether the talk will be in person or online.

Dr Ian Mortimer is a British Historian and is best known as the author of The Time Traveller's Guides: to Medieval England (2008); to Elizabethan England (2012); to Restoration Britain (2017); and to Regency Britain (2020). He is a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society and a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, and has published research in academic journals touching on every century from the twelfth to the twentieth.

Dr Mortimer has been described by The Times as 'the most remarkable medieval historian of our time'.

Tuesday November 22nd

7.30pm - online

Speaker: Dr Helen Wilson

From 'Lady Woodcarvers' to Professionals: The Remarkable Pinwill Sisters

The Pinwill sisters, Mary, Ethel and Violet, learnt to carve as teenagers, during the restoration of their father's church at Ermington. With the patronage of architect Edmund H. Sedding, they established a professional woodcarving business, Rashleigh, Pinwill & Co. in 1890, which later relocated to Plymouth.

After about 1907, Violet ran the business single-handedly, with a workforce of nearly 30 carvers and joiners, establishing one of the best wood and stone carving companies in the West Country.

The full story of the Pinwill sisters and their astonishing woodcarvings has now been revealed in Helen's new book about them.

Dr Helen Wilson was born and brought up in Plymouth, Devon, and studied for a BSc and PhD in Environmental Science as a mature student at the University of Plymouth, teaching there for a number of years. She has since developed interests in local history, architecture and churches, applying research skills to her main project of the last decade, studying the life and work of the Pinwill sisters, ecclesiastical woodcarvers. Dr Wilson sits on the Executive Committee of the Devonshire Association and acts as Chair of their Buildings Section.

Friends of Totnes Museum present:

A talk on Isambard Kingdom Brunel and his major projects, including the GWR and the South Devon Railway, with Tim Bryan, Director of The Brunel Institute, SS Great Britain Trust.

Thursday 17th March, at the Gatehouse, 2 High Street, Totnes, TQ9 5RZ

£5 entry. Doors open 7pm for 7.30pm.

For booking information contact Kathy Alexander, Secretary, Friends of Totnes Museum, cravekathy@hotmail.com.

MORETONHAMPSTEAD HISTORY SOCIETY PROGRAMME 2022

WINTER/SPRING

We have organised for our talks until the summer to be delivered by Zoom in view of the continuing uncertainty about COVID. However, if there is a significant improvement in the meantime we can revert to live talks as all our speakers are Devon based.

We are hoping to have a live event in May (see below) in the Parish Hall to raise money for the upkeep of the archives provided that we are confident it can go ahead with no health risks.

Wednesday January 19th: 'The buildings of Exeter; urban & suburban architecture in an ancient English city' by Richard Parker. Richard is well known for his closely researched reconstruction drawings of historic townscapes & buildings.

Wednesday February 16th: 'Devon in the 1920s' by Dr Julia Neville. Julia is the research leader for an ongoing project by Devon History Society, Devon Family History Society, South West Heritage Trust & The Box (Plymouth) to explore life in Devon in the 1920s. MHS contributed material from its archives & a member was part of the team of volunteer researchers.

Wednesday March 16th: 'Prostitution in Victorian North Devon' by Peter Christie. A generally light-hearted look at an unexpected facet of North Devon's history.

Wednesday April 20th: 'Hiding in the Chancery cupboard; the trials & tribulations of an C18th wife' by Sue Swalwell. Sue specialises in the use of records from the English Court of Chancery for local history & will share with us some of their enlightening stories.

Tuesday April 26th: *'Archaeological tour of Haytor'* with Dr Phil Newman, a leading Dartmoor archaeologist.

Friday May 6th: *'Songs of Dartmoor'* presented by Jim Causley & Bill Murray. This is a fund-raising event for Moreton Archives with entry by paid ticket. Details will be given nearer the time.

Wednesday May 18th: *'Grave-robbing & body-snatching in Devon'* by Dr Peter Selley. Peter is a retired Devon GP who now researches local medical history & its heritage.

SUMMER

We have organised the following to be held in compliance with any current COVID rules & guidelines.

June: *'Guided tour of Topsham.'* Date & details to be confirmed.

Wednesday June 22nd: *'South Tawton Church & Church House'* by Dr Sue Andrew. A guided tour with one of Devon's leading church historians. Date & details to be confirmed.

Friday July 15th: *'Guided tour of Bideford'* by Peter Christie. Peter has been Mayor of Bideford twice & has an in-depth knowledge of its history & heritage. Details given out nearer the time.

Wednesday August 10th: *'Tour of Great Fulford Manor House'* by Francis Fulford. Francis is the 23rd Fulford to have owned & inhabited the house.

AUTUMN

We will revert to live talks provided that we are confident they can go ahead with no health risks.

Wednesday September 21st: *'Using the chief rents of Moretonhampstead to map the town in the C17th'* by Dr Ian Mortimer. Ian's presidential talk will share with us his amazing research on a problematic source to uncover the C17th expansion of our town & the social context of its houses.

Wednesday October 19th: *'The Newton Abbot to Moretonhampstead Railway Line'* by Mike Lang. Mike is a trustee of Bovey Tracey Heritage Centre based in the former station there & co-author of the most authoritative book on our local railway history & its heritage.

Wednesday November 16th: Short AGM followed by *'Plymouth in 1620'* by Martin Read. Martin is currently Chair of Plymouth Archaeology Society & has been an historic advisor to the Virtual Mayflower 1620 Team for the 400th anniversary of that event.

December: Xmas Event TBC.

WEMBURY LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

www.wemburyhistory.org.uk

Programme for 2022

January 20 **THE TAVISTOCK CANAL** Simon Dell, Local Historian, Chairman of Princetown and Tavistock LHSs, Director of Moorland Guides.

February 17 **FROM DRUIDS TO DRONES: A HISTORY OF ARCHAEOLOGY ON DARTMOOR** Andrew Thompson, Heritage Consultant, Interpretations, Learning and Research.

March 17 **AN AUDIENCE WITH LADY KATHERINE - THE CHAMPERNOWNES OF MOD-BURY** Rosemary Griggs, Author and Speaker.

April 21 **THE HISTORY OF RADFORD** Robin Blythe-Lord, Chairman of Plym Valley Heritage, Author.

May 19 **PUTTING THE DEVON MANOR HOUSE ON THE MAP** Abi Gray, Lead Archaeologist at the Devon Rural Archive.

Summer Visits – Details to follow

September 15 **HISTORY OF THE RIVER YEALM** Terry Calcott, member of Port Of Plymouth Canoeing Association, Author.

October 20 **ROMAN AND MEDIEVAL COMMUNITIES IN THE TEIGN AND TAMAR VALLEYS** Chris Smart, University of Exeter, Department of Archaeology

November 17 **REPUTATION AND SLANDER IN ELIZABETHAN DEVON** Dr Todd Gray, Devon Historian, Author and Broadcaster.

All meetings are at Wembury War Memorial Hall (Village Hall) at 7.30pm on the third Thursday of the month. Membership is £12.50 per year, and the charge for visitors is £2 per meeting.

DEVON RURAL ARCHIVE
EVENING LECTURES 2022

THURSDAY, 3RD FEBRUARY 2022, AT 7PM.

*Devon's Last Slave-Owners: emancipation & compensation
in 1834.*

Dr. Todd Gray, Historian.

THURSDAY, 3RD MARCH 2022, AT 7PM.

Some Local Myths and Legends.

Dr. Kevin Dixon, Historian & Author.

THURSDAY, 7TH APRIL 2022, AT 7PM.

*From 'Lady Woodcarvers' to Professionals:
the remarkable Pinwill sisters.*

Dr. Helen Wilson, Local Historian.

THURSDAY, 5TH MAY 2022, AT 7PM.

*A Thousand Year History of Thorn House and Garden, Wem-
bury.*

John and Eva Gibson, Thorn House, Wembury.

THURSDAY, 9TH JUNE 2022, AT 7PM.

Footprints in the Sand:

the story of the Carews of Devon, 1086 – 1945.

Sir Rivers Carew, Author & Family Historian.

THURSDAY, 7TH JULY 2022, AT 7PM.

Marine Heritage on the Torridge Estuary.

Dr. Michael Teare, Way of the Wharves, Bideford.

Thursday, 4th August 2022, at 7pm.

The Hole Family of Parke, Bovey Tracey.

Dr. Frances Billinge, Hon. Assoc. Research Fellow University of Exeter.

Thursday, 1st September 2022, at 7pm.

The Icelandic Adventures of Pike Ward of Teignmouth.

Katherine Findlay, Heritage Consultant and Chair of Devon History Society.

Organised in association with Devon History Society & Friends of Devon's Archives.

Thursday, 6th October 2022, at 7pm.

Spirit of Adventure: the Plymouth Blitz & the post-war rebuilding.

Dr. Clare Maudling, Researcher, Historian & former Library Professional.

THURSDAY, 3RD NOVEMBER 2022, AT 7PM.

Rougemont Castle, Exeter:

an overview of archaeological work, 1985-2016.

Dr. Stuart Blaylock, Consultant Archaeologist and Architectural Historian.

THURSDAY, 1ST DECEMBER 2022, AT 7PM.

Adventures in Romanesque Sculpture:

exploring the twelfth-century stonecarving of Devon and Cornwall.

Dr. Alex Woodcock, Stonemason, Author & Artist.

Tickets: £5 each

or £44 for a Season Ticket to attend all 11 lectures in 2022.

All lectures are held at the DRA, in the grounds of Shilstone House near Modbury.

Complimentary refreshments are available from 6:30pm, when the Archive opens.

To purchase tickets, or for directions, please visit www.devonruralarchive.com

Devon Rural Archive, Shilstone, Modbury, PL21 0TW

T: 01548 830832 | E: office@dra.uk.net

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DEVON & CORNWALL RECORD SOCIETY

registered charity no. 1011931

Devon Parish Taxpayers

1500 – 1650

Volume Three

Churchstow to Dunkeswell

Edited by Todd Gray

This volume contains parish rates for Churchstow, Churston Ferrers, Clayhanger, Clayhidon, Clovelly, Coldridge, Colebrooke, Colyton, Combe Martin, Combe Raleigh, Combe-in-Teignhead, Cookbury, Cornwood, Cornworthy, Coryton, Crediton, Cruwys Morchard, Dartington, Dartmouth, Dean Prior, Diptford, Dittisham, Dodbrooke, Doddiscombsleigh, Dolton and Dunkeswell in which thousands of Devonians contributed to maintain their poor, churches, hospitals and military.

The volume is free to members of the Society for 2022. It will be published in the autumn and available with individual membership at £25 or joint/institutional at £30. To join and receive this volume on publication, please complete below and send with a cheque made payable for £25 to the Devon & Cornwall Record Society by 31 December 2022 to DCRS, Devon Heritage Centre, Great Moor House, Bittern Rd, Sowton, Exeter EX2 7NL

Name:

Delivery address:

Email address (for confirmation of order and dispatch):

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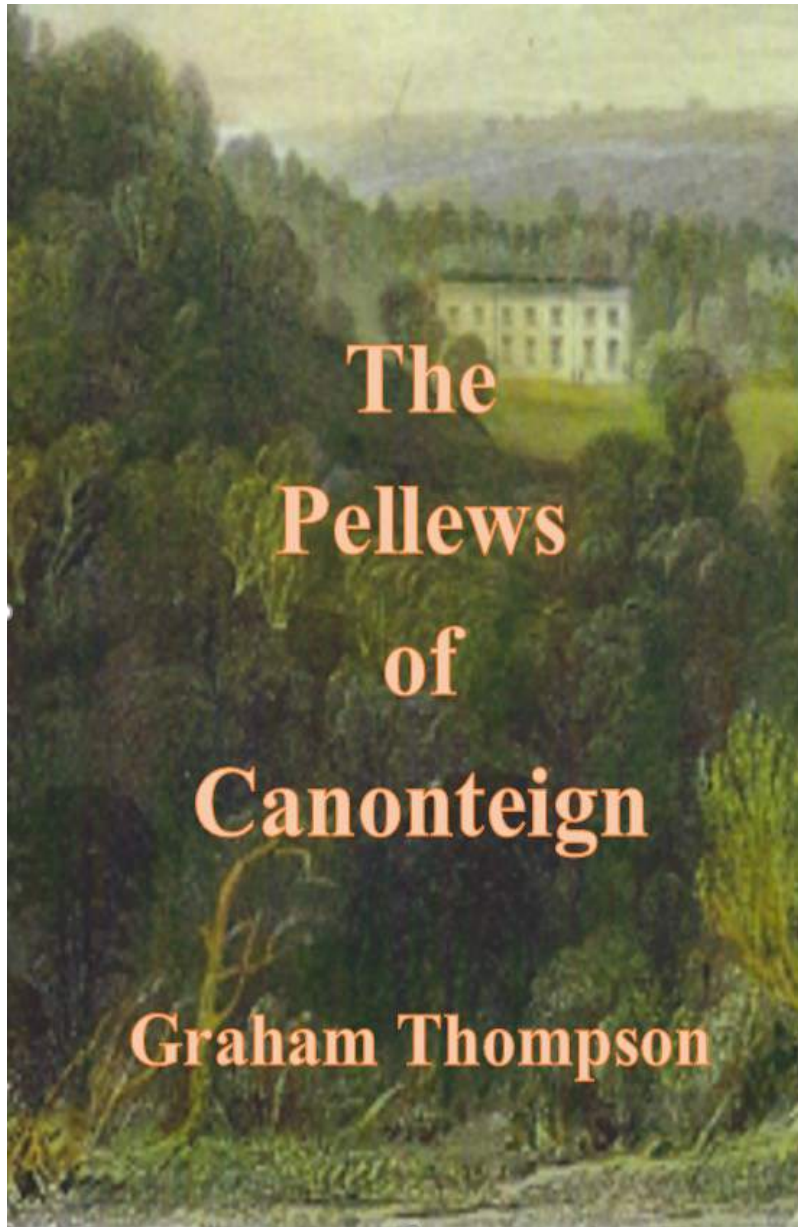
Our privacy statement: www.devonandcornwallrecordsociety.co.uk

The book cover on page 46 is that of the DCRS volume for 2021, which is forthcoming.



James Davidson's East Devon Church Notes

Edited by
Jill Cobley



Admiral Sir Edward Pellew, first Viscount Exmouth was Lord of the Manors of Christow and Canon-teign. His exploits in the Royal Navy and his care of his fellow sailors deserves to be better recognised.

This book explores reasons for his invisibility and why he should be as well known as Lord Nelson.

It also records the extraordinary contributions his family have made to society and traces the family back to 1195.

Available from Graham Thompson for £7.95 plus P&P

grahamt@tvhistorycentre.org

All proceeds go to Teign Valley Museum and Archive Trust to support

the local archive of life in the Teign Valley

Tracing Devon's 1920s Transport History

Saturday 23 April 2022, at Newton's Place

43 Wolborough Street, Newton Abbot, TQ12 1JQ



Buses in the market place at Newton Abbot, courtesy Richard Harris

Morning Sessions – plenary (main lecture theatre)

| | | |
|----------|---|--|
| 09.45 on | Arrivals and Coffee | |
| 10.15 | Welcome & Introduction to the Day – Charlotte Dixon (Newton Abbot Museum) and Julia Neville (Devon History Society) | |
| 10.25 | The Roaring Twenties? Consuming mobilities in Devon, 1918–1930 - Colin Divall, Professor Emeritus of Railway Studies at York University | |
| 11.20 | Break | |
| 11.35 | Solids to Pneumatics - how public transport evolved through the 'twenties - Robert Crawley, Westcountry Historic Omnibus and Travel Trust chair | |
| 12.30 | Lunch – bring your own or use the resources of Newton Abbot | |

Afternoon Sessions – choose between

Walk and visit – Newton Abbot's railway station, built during the 1920s. This option is only available at 13.30

Talks – these will be run both at 13.30 and 14.20

Devon's last new railway, Torrington to Halwill Junction, 1925

The Honiton to Exeter road and its impact on local communities in the 1920s

Available throughout the afternoon at your own pace

Visit the Railway Studies Library at Newton Abbot Library

Self-guided visit around the museum, including a slideshow about local life

| | | |
|-------|---|--|
| 15.10 | Opportunities for Research into Devon's 1920s transport - Julia Neville | |
| 15.30 | Close | |

For further information about access, including car parking, visit the Newton Abbot Museum website (<https://museum-newtonabbot.org.uk/>). The Newfoundland Way car park is adjacent to the museum but parking is cheaper at the long-stay Wolborough Way car park.

Society News

As mentioned in the editorial, we would welcome additional assistance with the organisation of events. Please think about whether you can help your society in this way.

The society's Membership Secretary and Treasurer is now Martin Smith. If you wish to pay your membership subscription by cheque, send an email to membership@devonhistorysociety.org.uk and an address will be supplied.

From the next newsletter onwards, we will only be posting printed copies of the newsletter to people without an email address.

