



a. Merchant's House
Market Place
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w. www.colytonheritagecentre.org

21 August 2023

Colyton Parish History Society Newsletter

1. News

Various announcements this month – thanks to Brian Lowing for information on our new website. Do let us know what you think of the new site. We also have some new records about the history of Southleigh kindly donated by Colyton Library. Extensive work by Exeter University has led to a new map of roman roads in the south west. And personal requests for information from Alfredo Perry in Australia who is seeking information about the Edwards family and Andrew Barlow who is enquiring about the Snell family.

a) **Our new website goes live - Brian Lowing**





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The Society has launched a new website colytonheritagecentre.org

For many years the Society maintained two websites:-

- One for the History Society itself (colytonhistory.co.uk)
- One for the Heritage Centre (colytonheritagecentre.org)

Inevitably, there was some overlap. It also meant we had two websites to maintain and keep updated. This year we were told that it would cost a substantial sum just to maintain the existing Heritage Centre site going forward so we decided to take the opportunity of amalgamating the two sites and giving them a complete makeover, as well as making the new site easier to keep updated.

Whilst the new website takes the Heritage Centre web address, the colytonhistory.co.uk web address will also take you to the new site. So don't worry if you have that address bookmarked in your web browser – you can still keep up to date with members' news and events etc.

One feature of the new site is an online shop. So for those readers who cannot get to the Heritage Centre you can get items delivered to your door. Initially we have virtually the full range of books available to order plus the popular Colyton Tea Towels; but we intend to gradually add more items to the shop. The whole process can now be completed online with payment by credit or debit card. We hope you like the new site.

b) New archives on the history of Southleigh donated to Heritage Centre

Colyton Library has kindly donated a batch of old files to the Heritage Centre containing copies of extensive research carried out by Mary Binns over the course of some 30 years, about the history of Southleigh Farms and Cottages, History of Wiscombe Estate, Board School, St Lawrence Church, etc.

Mary Binns died in 1997 and her original research documents were in the care of Mrs Bunnie Chichester (who lived with her husband Richard at Wiscombe House). The items donated to the Heritage Centre are old copies and represent a valuable addition to our archives.

c) Family tree inquiries

a. George Edwards and Elizabeth Spark – request for information from Alfredo Perry

George Edwards and Elizabeth Spark were married at Colyton on 22 February 1803. George Edwards is described as being "of this parish" although both of them are described as 'sojourners' - which implies neither of them was born in the Parish but were temporary residents.

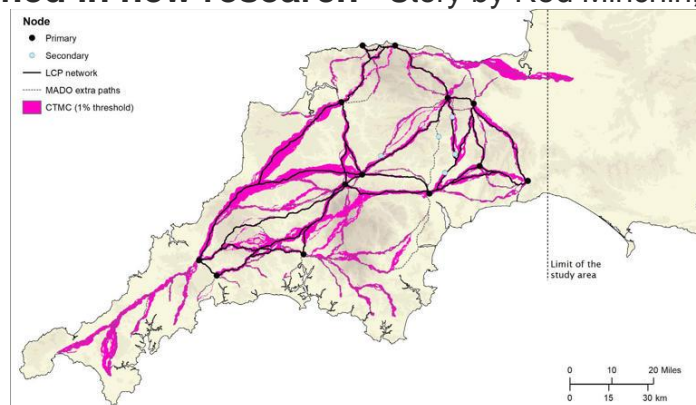
Alfredo Perri who lives in Melbourne, Australia is trying to find out more about George Edwards and Elizabeth Spark – his five times great grandparents. He would like to find out the names of their parents, where they were born and any other information about this couple. If any of you have any information about the Edwards or Sparks families Alfredo would be very pleased to receive it. Please let me know.

b. Snell family

Andrew Barlow barlow.andrew@sky.com is trying to find out more information about his Colyton ancestors. "I am by descent a Colyton 'Snell', I've traced the family back from my 2x Great Grandfather Mark Snell born in Colyton in 1837 who moved to Lancashire, back to the late 1500's in Colyton and local area. Is there any members of the group who are also members of the same Snell family who I could link up with, thanks Andrew." If you are able to help Andrew please email him at the address above or let me know.

d) Roman road network spanning the south west of England

identified in new research - Story by Rod Minchin, PA





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A Roman road network that spanned Devon and Cornwall and connected significant settlements with military forts across the two counties as well as wider Britannia has been discovered for the first time.

Archaeologists at the University of Exeter have used laser scans collected as part of the Environment Agency's National LiDAR Programme to identify new sections of road west of the previously understood boundary. Using sophisticated geographical modelling techniques, which incorporate information around gradients and flood risk, the researchers have then been able to map out the full extent of the network and begin to understand the rationale for its existence. Among the things it reveals is that far from Exeter being the main nerve centre of the network, it was North Tawton that supported strategically vital connections with tidal estuaries north and south of Bodmin and Dartmoor.

The research was led by Dr Christopher Smart and Dr Joao Fonte, specialists in landscape archaeology and the heritage of the Roman Empire, in Exeter's department of archaeology and history.

"Despite more than 70 years of scholarship, published maps of the Roman road network in southern Britain have remained largely unchanged and all are consistent in showing that west of Exeter, Roman Isca, there was little solid evidence for a system of long-distance roads," said Dr Smart.

"But the recent availability of seamless LiDAR coverage for Britain has provided the means to transform our understanding of the Roman road network that developed within the province, and nowhere more so than in the far south western counties, in the territory of the Dumnonii."

The National LiDAR Programme was conducted between 2016 and 2022 by the Environment Agency covering the whole of England. It transformed the amount of terrain mapped of Devon and Cornwall, which had previously stood at just 11%. The Exeter team studied the scans and together they were able to map around 100km of additional roads.

Although this represented a significant advancement, the overall picture remained fragmented and patchy, with large portions of the map showing no evidence of Roman roads. The team developed a geographic information system predictive model, which could intelligently fill in the gaps as to the likely

layout of the network. They plotted primary and secondary “nodes” across the two counties, which included permanent military fortifications, including the known forts of Old Burrow and The Beacon at Martinhoe, as well as the settlements at Exeter and North Tawton. They then calculated the easiest routes between these points. And when the team returned to the LiDAR scans, they were able to identify a further 13km of Roman road within a short distance predicted by the model.

2. Other CPHS Matters

- a) **Next talk** – Don't forget the History Society's autumn series of talks begins at 7.30 pm on Wednesday, 27 September with a presentation by Lucilla Phelps on '**Sothebys and Fine Art Photography**'.

The 25 October talk is by Kay Townsend on '**Fairgrounds at War 1939-45**' and on 22 November Stewart Raine will talk about '**The History of Seaside Towns.**'

Talks are held in Colyton Town Hall and begin at 7.30 pm. Entrance fee: Members £2 and Non-Members £4

b) **Dark Skies Calendars 2024**

TIM WHITE's 2024 CALENDARS are available at Colyton Heritage Centre. 'Birds of the Axe Valley', and 'Dark Skies of Devon' which features rare images of the Northern Lights over Seaton and East Devon. Range of cards also available.





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3. **Other organisations events**

Heritage Open Days

Treat yourself to a day out and visit somewhere new or a place that you can't normally get access to. The annual heritage open day week runs from 8 to 17 September this year [Homepage | Heritage Open Days](#)

4. **News items you may have missed**

- a) Exeter Cathedral dig unearths grave of William the Conqueror's nephew** https://www.devonlive.com/news/devon-news/exeter-cathedral-dig-uneearths-ancient-8632614?utm_source=devon_live_newsletter&utm_campaign=western_morning_newsletter2&utm_medium=email
- b) Holloways** <https://www.bbc.com/travel/article/20230813-holloways-englands-mysterious-sunken-roads>
- c) Looking back at the railways of Bridport and Lyme Regis** <https://www.bridportnews.co.uk/news/23687672.looking-back-railways-bridport-lyme-regis/?ref=rss&IYA-mail=1ed933c3-0f6e-4168-8256-ab7a1bdc02a8>
- d) Two centuries of cricket celebrated in Sidmouth** <https://www.sidmouthherald.co.uk/sport/23682622.two-centuries-cricket-celebrated-sidmouth/?ref=eb&nid=2405&u=26e309a1465491fa9108b8530c3bc91f&date=290723>
- e) Mill conservation work at Branscombe delayed to protect nesting birds** <https://www.midweekherald.co.uk/news/23692997.mill-conservation-work-delayed-protect-nesting-birds/?ref=eb&nid=2397&u=26e309a1465491fa9108b8530c3bc91f&date=020823>
- f) Servicemen killed in Korean War honoured in Sidmouth** <https://www.sidmouthherald.co.uk/news/23693244.sidmouth-service-honours-servicemen-lost-korean-war/?ref=eb&nid=2405&u=26e309a1465491fa9108b8530c3bc91f&date=020823>
- g) Gran – he's talking French again** <https://www.thedevondaily.co.uk/news/local-news/%E2%80%99Cgran%E2%80%A6-he%E2%80%99s-talking-french-again%E2%80%9D?IYA-mail=1ed933c3-0f6e-4168-8256-ab7a1bdc02a8>



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h) Historic grade II listed farm house for sale near Axminster

<https://www.midweekherald.co.uk/news/23698958.grade-ii-listed-farmhouse-14-80-acre-near-axminster/?ref=eb&nid=2397&u=26e309a1465491fa9108b8530c3bc91f&date=050823>

i) East Devon walking festival celebrates ten years

<https://www.sidmouthherald.co.uk/news/23697899.east-devon-walking-festival-celebrates-10-year-anniversary/?ref=eb&nid=2405&u=26e309a1465491fa9108b8530c3bc91f&date=050823>

j) Old pictures of Lyme show bustling seaside town

<https://www.dorsetecho.co.uk/news/23658816.old-pictures-lyme-show-life-bustling-seaside-town/?ref=rss&IYA-mail=1ed933c3-0f6e-4168-8256-ab7a1bdc02a8>

k) Incredible - free to enter - Homeyards garden in Shaldon has secret castle

<https://www.devonlive.com/whats-on/whats-on-news/gallery/incredible-devon-gardens-hidden-secret-8669971?IYA-mail=1ed933c3-0f6e-4168-8256-ab7a1bdc02a8>

l) Lyme Regis author John Fowles

<https://www.bridportnews.co.uk/news/23733440.lyme-regis-author-john-fowles-dearly-loved-town/?ref=rss&IYA-mail=2c626b80-7a64-4f57-afe4-6bdeb137e043>

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