

The

HONITON

Flyer

SPRING 2024

GRATIS

THE **FREE AREA GUIDE** ABOUT HONITON **FOR HONITON**
PRODUCED QUARTERLY: **SPRING • SUMMER • AUTUMN • WINTER**

LOCAL NEWS & PHOTOS • REGULAR CONTRIBUTORS

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WELCOME TO The Honiton Flyer for Spring 2024!

And a warm welcome to a number of new advertisers. Thank you for your support.

The other "welcome" news is that Honiton as a town has successfully had the proposed on street parking charges thrown-out, which is a huge relief to shoppers and businesses alike.

We have an interesting selection of editorials in this edition.

Honiton Lions Club bring us their fundraising update on Page 10.

Then on Page 16 you will find a report from **Honiton University of The Third Age (U3A)**.

We are pleased to bring a recruitment message from **Honiton Rugby Club** on Page 22.

Martin Long, Chairman of **The Friends of Honiton Station** has a positive article on the history of local railways on Page 24.

Terry Darrant, our regular contributor on local history covers **Ancient Toll Roads** on Page 28, by way of comparison to the recent scrapping of on-street parking charges

On Pages 34 & 35 our local journalist Ana Collingridge covers a project researching Honiton's multicultural past - **"Telling Our Stories, Finding Our Roots"**.

Finally, **Honiton Nomads Football Club** introduce themselves on Page 38.

Please try to support our advertisers. Reading through the variety of businesses, and the quality they are offering, it is difficult to see why any discerning customer would not support the local businesses advertised in this edition.

With best wishes for Spring 2024.

Anthony Bucke EDITOR.

Email: honiton@theantiquetourist.com

Wednesday 20 March 2024.

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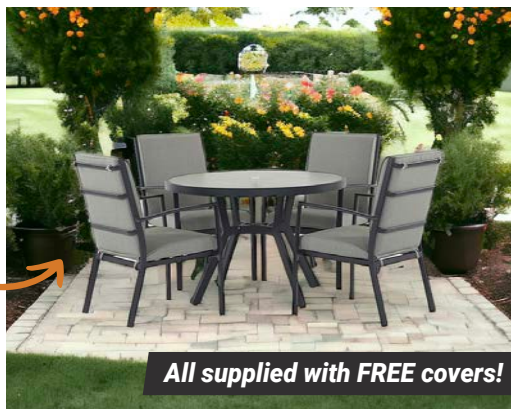
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Honiton u3a

The new year of talks organised by Honiton u3a kicks off at 2 p.m. on Wednesday April 17th, when Helen Baggott gives a talk entitled "From Bombs to Bournville". Her illustrated talk includes the story of a family who helped build torpedoes and buildings. And she discusses the story of a man from Cornwall whose invention transformed manufacturing on both sides of the Atlantic.

May 15th sees Toni Hiscocks give a talk about Hospiscare, which does such important work in our community. Hospiscare supports nearly 2,000 patients and their families every year across Exeter, Mid and East Devon, and needs to raise around £10 million a year to continue doing so. Just 18 per cent of the charity's income comes from the NHS.

On June 19th, Jenny Mallins delivers a fascinating insight into five generations of her family who lived in India during the days of the British Raj. Her presentation, entitled "Walking into Grandmother's Kitchen at Christmas: a British Raj lifestyle", contains an extensive collection of sepia photographs and the story of a 170 year-old cookbook penned by her four-times Grandmother in 1844.

And on July 17th Barry Hamblin talks about "Lavender, the Forgotten Herb". Barry explores the history of lavender, how it is grown, different varieties, its properties and uses. His talk is

based on his and his wife's experience running a lavender farm in Somerset.

As well as the monthly talks, Honiton u3a runs around 30 Activity Groups, ranging from Walking and Nature Appreciation, to Current Affairs and History, from Book Groups and Poetry Appreciation to Knitting and Crochet.

In addition, Honiton u3a has also recently organised several popular one-off events. These included a First Aid session for members, which gave those who attended essential practice in CPR and some awareness of Defibrillators. And new members were invited to a special meeting to meet the Committee and Activity Group leaders who were seeking potential new members.

This year, they have been examining the possibility of starting a group to play Pickleball, one of the country's fastest-growing sports.

Over the last 12 months, the group has welcomed 60 new members to its ranks. A spokesperson for Honiton u3a said that their ethos can be summed up in the famous quotation by the poet W. B. Yeats, who wrote: "There are no strangers here; only friends you haven't met yet."

To find out more about Honiton u3a and how to join, go to: u3asites.org.uk/honiton/home

Martin Long
Press Office Honiton U3A



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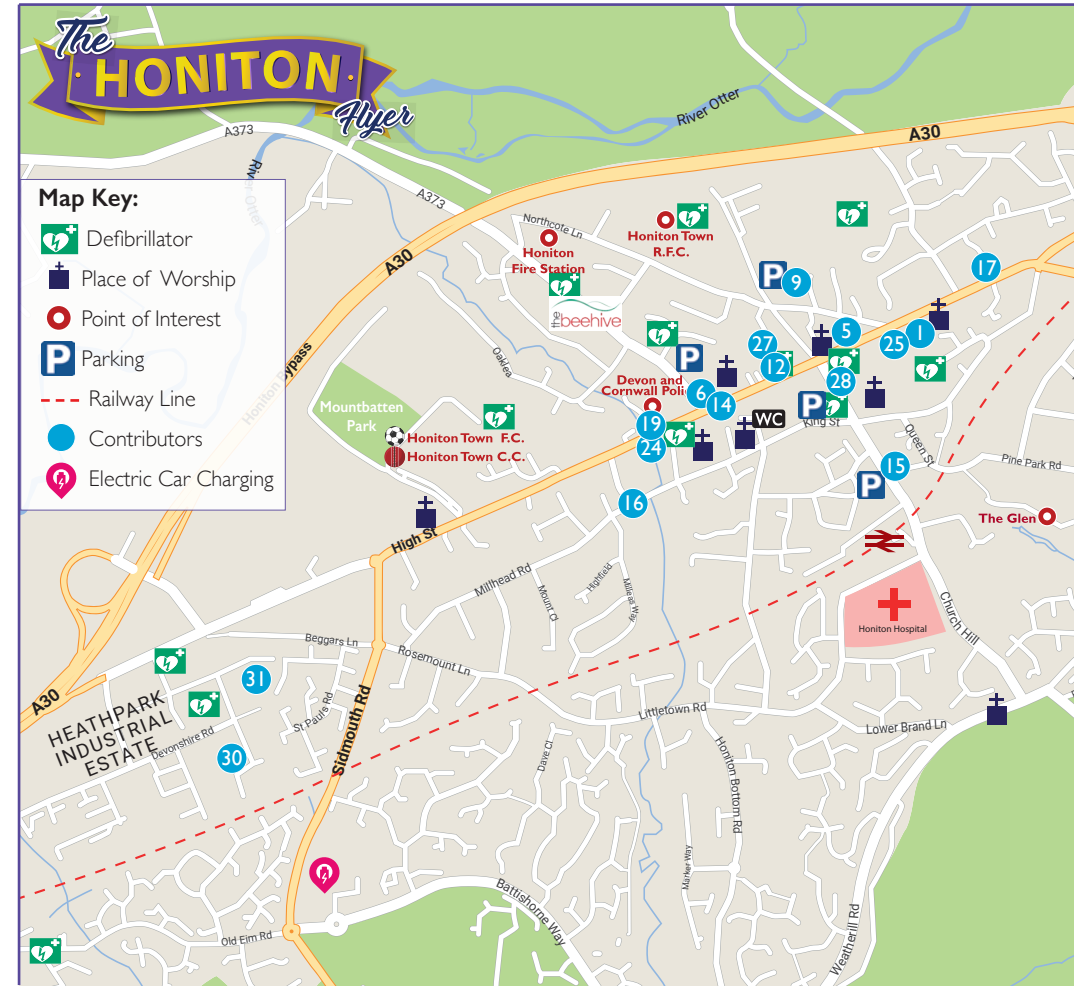
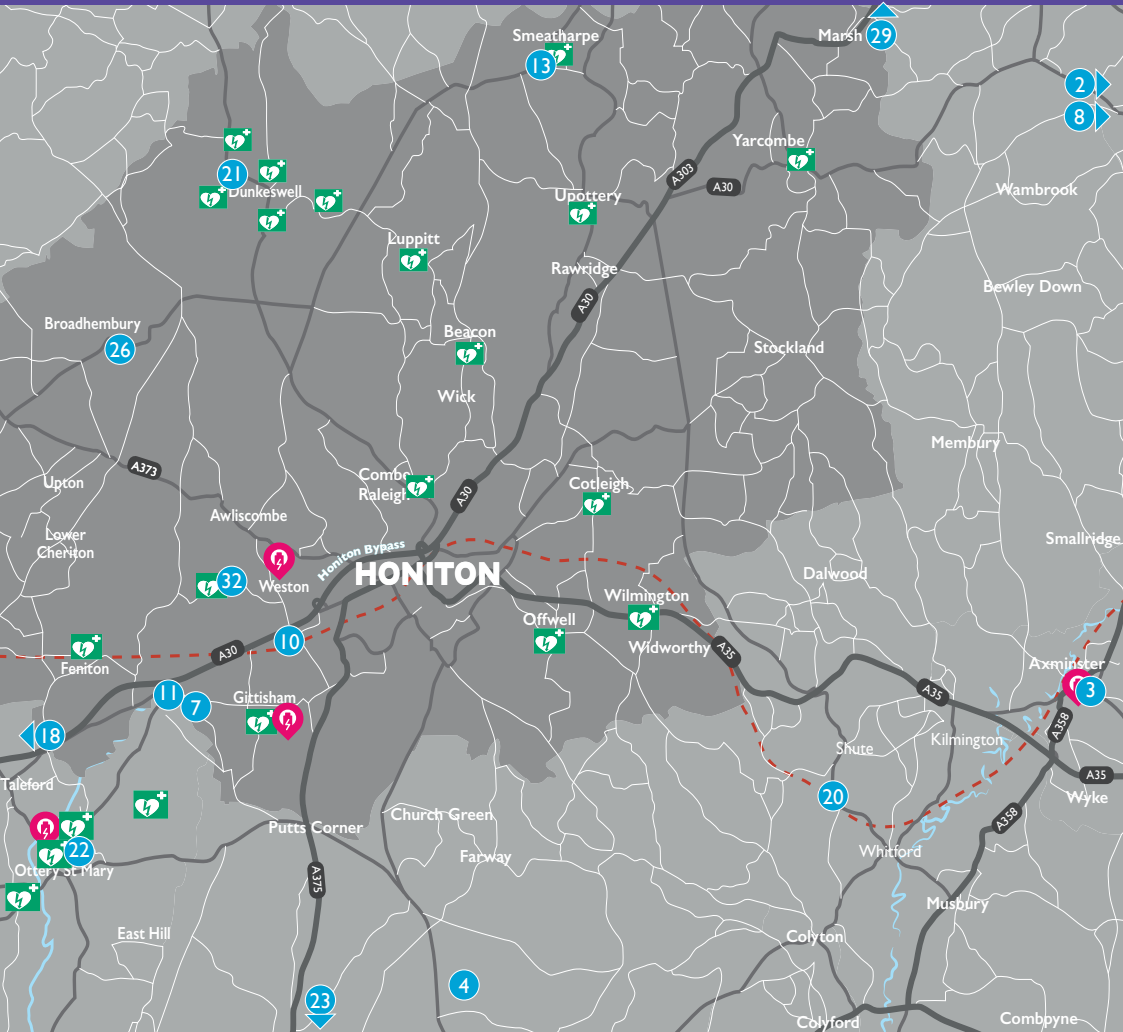
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FRIENDS OF HONITON STATION

Everyone in this country it seems loves a good anniversary. We are always looking back to the events of the past, sometimes with nostalgia, sometimes with a sigh of relief that those days are over. Such backward looking can sometimes help us think differently about the present, and come up with ways to improve the future. There is an old saying, that if we don't learn the lessons of the past, we are doomed to repeat it.

Railway people are no exception. Recently, I read Christian Wolmar's latest book on the history of British Rail. As well as de-bunking some tired old myths about BR, such as the disgusting sandwiches, it was fascinating to see how for generations the benefits of a coherent railway network were undervalued, while road travel was seen as the answer to every question.

It is only now that we are seeing how short-sighted that view was, and how hard it is to reverse decades of under-investment or station closures, to rebuild a network fit for a de-carbonised future.

How different it all looked in the Victorian era. If anything, the problem then was that too many groups, often with conflicting agendas, sought to build railways here, there and everywhere, without any overall plan. Lines often duplicated each other, or ran in areas where there was only a dubious need for a railway. No wonder it was dubbed "Railway Mania."

Some form of rationalisation was inevitable, and indeed necessary. The problem was that by the 1970s it was clear that this process had gone too

far. And railways which we now badly need to help alleviate road congestion around big cities or to provide a life-line to smaller communities just aren't there, or will cost a fortune to rebuild.

This will no doubt be on everyone's mind as we begin to plan for next year's big railway anniversary, Railway 200 which, as its name suggests, celebrates the opening of the first fully-fledged railway between Stockton and Darlington in 1825.

Railway 200 will be a great opportunity to remember the huge benefits that a national railway network has brought us, how surprisingly close we came 50 years ago to it being reduced to a skeleton of InterCity routes, with the Waterloo to Exeter line through Honiton closed and counties such as Cornwall cut off completely.

The anniversary will help us celebrate how, despite the overlaps and duplication, the Victorian pioneers have bequeathed to us a priceless gift: the means to travel across our country, for business or pleasure, without having to use our cars.

Martin Long.
Chairman - FRIENDS OF HONITON STATION.

A4 Pacific, Union of South Africa,
passing old Honiton signal box on November 6th 2005.
Credit: Dave Withey



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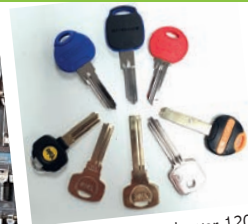
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Ancient tollroads

There was a recent success for the people, shopkeepers and motorists of Honiton, last month with the **scrapping of the hugely unpopular proposal from DCC to introduce parking charges to the High Street.**

Honiton, one of eight pilot towns in Devon, being trialled for the 'pay to park' scheme were unanimously shelved after a huge outcry from the community however, there were times when similar highway fees were not so reliant on public opinion! These negative, mutual feelings of charging the traveller hark back to the days of our grandparents' grandparents when tolls and turnpikes were the car tax of the time as this month we see the centenary of the end of the vast majority of the old West Country tolls!

Turnpike trusts were setup in the mid to late 18th century to fund dramatic improvements to the country's infrastructure, which had not been addressed for centuries. Under this scheme users of the turnpike roads would have to halt at tollhouses and pay a fee to use the next section of the highway. Honiton Turnpike Trust was formed in 1765 and at its height consisted of some twenty tollhouses.

Whilst the turnpikes tolls greatly improved the roads they were staggeringly unpopular and many found ingenious ways of getting around them. One such local rogue, a farmer from Awliscombe, travelled the course of the Gissage, still being a right of way, but with no tolls gates on the river bed. He frequently drove cattle, bought from the Honiton market, up to where the river meets Littleton, which was outside

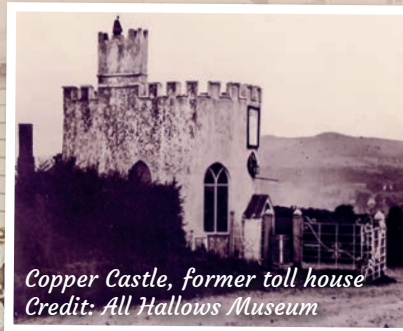
the toll area. He was then able to ramble down the west side of town back to Awliscombe without passing any toll gates and thus got away without paying penny!

With the arrival of the railway and the decline in stage coach travel, by the second half of the nineteenth century, Turnpike Trusts were approaching financial ruin. In 1877, **the majority of the Honiton toll houses were sold off and by 1885** all the town's turnpikes had been abandoned; however, surprisingly the tolls remained in many other places.

With the end of the era fast approaching in Totnes the toll gates were taken down and were publicly burnt yet it was not until June 2nd 1910 that the toll charges at Honiton were finally completely abolished. There was said to have been public "rejoicing" and "public entertainment" at the removal of these hugely unpopular charges. Honiton was, in fact, thought to be the last town to have had an active tollhouse. Most other West Country tolls, not including bridges, ended in **April 1924 and the Road Traffic Act of 1930 finally brought a unanimous end to all the few remaining tolls gates.**

Only three of the town's tollhouses survived into the twenty first century, one of which was sadly demolished with the arrival of the residential complex on the site of former Holyshute House. Today only two remain, one being the **'Copper Castle'** on the A35 and **'Manna House'** which lies just before Exeter Road meets the A30.

Terry Darrant - March 2024



*Copper Castle, former toll house
Credit: All Hallows Museum*



Credit: Terry Darrant

Honiton Toll Abolition Celebrations, June 2nd 1910

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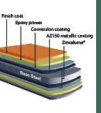


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HONITON LIONS

During the last few months Honiton Lions have been busy raising money to enable them to support charities and good causes.

In December 2023, by kind permission of Tesco, several Lions members spent two days at the company's supermarket collecting money in aid of **Devon Air Ambulance Trust**. Thanks to the generosity of Tesco customers, **£620** was collected for the charity.

During March the Lions, with the support of local businesses and pub landlords, raffled 20 giant Easter eggs. This is an annual fundraising project which normally raises in excess of a **£1000**.

Money taken from the club's charity account, together with the profits from recently held fundraising events enabled the Lions to make the following donations.

£250 to Awliscombe Primary School for the purchase of litter picking equipment.

£200 to Offwell resident Steve Branch who is running in the London Marathon to raise money for VICTA a national charity that provides support for children and young adults who are blind or partially sighted.

£250 to a Lions member who is raising money for **Hospiscare** by participating in that charity's "Men's Walk" event.

£500 to the Honiton Museum for building works to restore a section of the lath and plaster ceiling.

£520 to Ukrainian refugees who reside in the Honiton area. Most of this money was collected, by the Lions, from the public in 2023.

Honiton Lions Club PRO Lion David Rickard.



As always if you would like to find out more about Lions Clubs International and in particular the Honiton Club please give me a call on **01404 43738** or mobile **07966 173 828** or you can email me at **brian.richards@honitonlions.org.uk** or visit our website **www.honitonlions.org.uk**



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Stories of Honiton's multicultural past being researched and archived by volunteers for future generations

Stories of Honiton's multicultural past are being researched by volunteers, who have joined Telling Our Stories, Finding Our Roots. The history project, managed by Devon Development Education launched its Honiton branch at The Beehive community centre in November last year

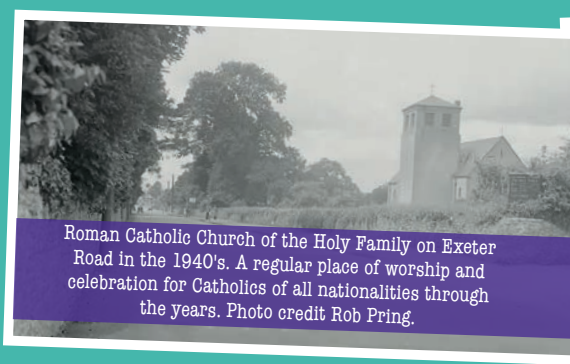
The launch party was reported as being a great success with some important story leads already presenting themselves and requiring further investigation. During the launch, Nepalese and Indian food was served by The Brave Gurkhas curry house and classical guitarist, Jose Rodrigo Jimenez Monroy entertained the small group of volunteers, project coordinators and heritage guests. Stories collected from previous projects have led to new educational resources, museum exhibitions, walking tours and a website – all points of success, shared by guest speakers at the launch, Sandhya Dave and Hilda Kalap.

Project Coordinator, Hilda Kalap said: "Devon has a long multicultural history that's not commonly known about, with the common view that Devon's population has always been white, Anglo-Saxon and monocultural. However, more evidence has and continues to emerge that the real history is quite

different. Volunteering on this project is a chance to be part of the story, gain new skills that could lead to a career, meet like-minded people, make new friends and create a more inclusive society for future generations."

Volunteers who sign up for this exciting project in Honiton, which runs until the end of this year, are receiving training in archive research and oral history recording. An amazing amount of stories relating to people of many different nationalities who arrived in Honiton for a variety of reasons, married locally and settled in the town, are coming to light, such as the Irish labourers who were employed by George Wimpey to build Dunkeswell Airfield during WW2, the post war **Polish** servicemen, the **Romany Gypsy** community who annually visited Honiton Fair and the school for the children of former **German** POWs at Summerlands.

Other leads being researched include the **Indian** 'Ayah', **Spanish** Basque children staying at St



Roman Catholic Church of the Holy Family on Exeter Road in the 1940's. A regular place of worship and celebration for Catholics of all nationalities through the years. Photo credit Rob Pring.



Fresh flowers for sale outside in Honiton High Street. Photo from private collection.

Joseph's Missionary College (now St Rita's) during the **Spanish** Civil War, a school in Combe Raleigh for **Jewish** children evacuated from London during the Second World War, **Fijian** and **Black American** servicemen billeted in the locality and an important part of Honiton's history, already thoroughly researched for the 50th anniversary, **Ugandan Asians** at the Heathfield Resettlement Camp. Honiton Community Heritage Coordinator, Jess Huffman would love to hear from anyone who can add to any of the above stories, with family tales, photographs or artefacts. Jess is at Honiton Library every Wednesday morning from 10 am until 12 noon and can also be emailed jesstosfor@gmail.com

While some people may query what is the point of this project, others will marvel that their family stories are finally being told, seeing it as a legacy for future generations to understand how all the people, through the ages, and from not only outside of the town and county but who were born in other

countries, have helped to 'shape the life' of Honiton as it is today. Jess said that "watching people's faces light up" when she talks to them about the project and they begin to "think of their own family history and heritage is illuminating."

For the grand-daughter of Timothy O'Brien, an Irish worker at Dunkeswell Airfield, who was also on Air Raid Patrol during WW2 and a valid member of the Royal British Legion Club in Dowell Street, Honiton, recording the town's multicultural past and its tolerance to outsiders who put down roots there is "more important now than ever before."

By Ana Collingridge ©

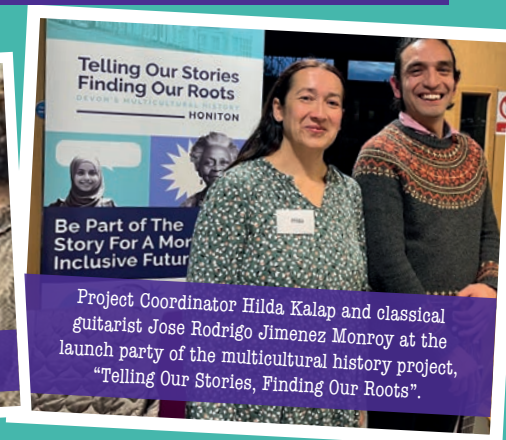
N.B. Devon's Multicultural History project – Telling Our Stories, Finding Our Roots is managed by the global learning charity, Devon Development Education (DDE). Funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the project is continuing in Honiton and in Ilfracombe during 2023/2024 and follows on from similar projects in Exeter (2013), Tiverton, Bideford and Okehampton (2019-2020). Facts that have been uncovered in DDE's previous successful projects, include the historical verification that Exeter had a sizeable population of French Huguenots by 1715 and that 'enslaved people' were freed at a crossroads in Okehampton, as far back as 980 AD. The charity, which is based in Exeter, has over 20 years experience of providing expertise to schools and communities in Devon. Its main aim is to 'provide a window on the world, to enable children and adults to understand links between their own lives and those of others worldwide'. The hope being that by working together, people will 'help to create a just and sustainable world for everyone.'



Community Heritage Coordinator for TOSFOR in Honiton, Jess Huffman (2nd left), with volunteers Candida, Anne, Maggie and Peace, at the Thelma Hulbert Gallery.



Volunteers from the Honiton and the Ilfracombe branches of TOSFOR at the Devon Heritage Centre in Exeter.



Project Coordinator Hilda Kalap and classical guitarist Jose Rodrigo Jimenez Monroy at the launch party of the multicultural history project, "Telling Our Stories, Finding Our Roots".

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 Start time: _____
 Time to solve: _____

SUDOKU 2

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Level: **Hard**
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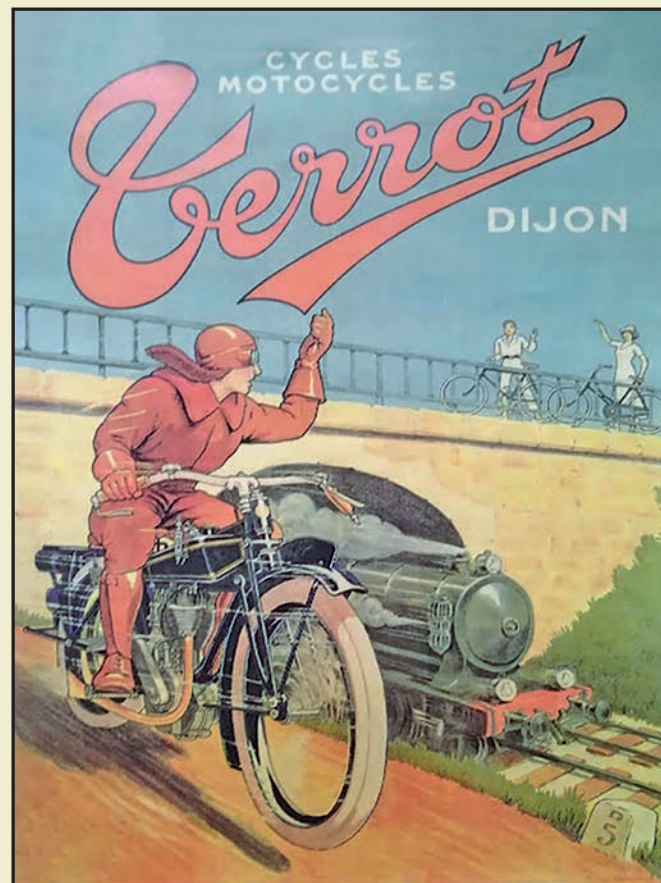
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The founder Mr Benjamin Slater, an Army veteran & international development worker / businessman who recently returned from West Africa. Now a local postal worker wanted to establish something that he noticed was missing in the community.

"This club is not just about scoring goals; it's about embracing diversity and creating a safe and friendly space, Football for all."

Honiton Nomads FC stands out for its unwavering commitment to inclusivity. Regardless of ability, race, gender, sexual orientation, or religion, everyone is welcome to join this progressive football family. With a motto that "football is for everyone," the club actively promotes diversity and inclusion both on and off the pitch. What sets Honiton Nomads FC apart is its emphasis on providing a safe and welcoming environment for all players.

The club aims to address discrimination, racism and the underrepresentation of LGBTQIA+ individuals in sports by offering a space where everyone feels valued and respected. It's not just about playing football; it's much more.

Since its inception in January 2024, **Honiton Nomads FC** has experienced exponential growth, quickly becoming the fastest-growing club in the area. Its inclusive ethos has resonated with individuals from all walks of life, attracting

attention, support and admiration from the wider community, sponsors, local Government and media.

On Tuesdays, members gather at Honiton LED for kickabouts and training sessions, where camaraderie and sportsmanship flourish. These sessions serve as more than just a chance to hone football skills; they're an opportunity to exercise & socialise. In addition to regular training, the club participates in monthly fixture matches both 6/7 and 11 Aside with other like-minded clubs across the country. Not only do the players enjoy these fixtures it also demonstrates their dedication to Honiton Nomads FC.

Despite Winning their last couple fixtures. At its core, Honiton Nomads FC is about more than just winning games. It's about creating a legacy by championing inclusivity and providing a safe and friendly platform for individuals, paving the way for a more diverse and equitable future in sports.

As Honiton Nomads FC continues to grow, one thing remains certain: everyone has a place on the pitch and in the squad. In a world where differences too often divide us, this club brings varied people from the community together.

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