

*The*

# HONITON

*Flyer*

AUTUMN 2023

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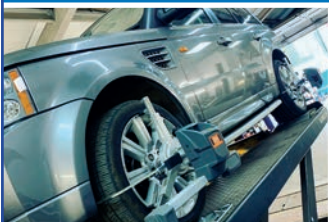
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## Welcome to the Honiton Flyer for Autumn 2023.



Our new front cover photo features the parish church of St Mary Magdalene, at Monkton, east of Honiton on the A30. This lovely building is one which we regularly pass in our busy lives, yet we rarely have time to appreciate. The tower is mainly 15th century, in perpendicular style. The rest of the church was rebuilt in 1863. Inside there are no memorials apart from a plaque recording the gift of the bells and glass. The glory of the church is a complete set of William Morris stained glass windows dated 1889. So maybe worth a visit after all?

Our advertisers in this edition are many and varied – from retailers and service providers on Honiton High Street, and Heathfield, Fenny Bridges, Dunkeswell, Wilmington, Sidmouth, Axminster and beyond! Just take a look at our indexed map on Pages 22 & 23.

Our report on the very successful Dunkeswell Airfield 80th anniversary is on Pages 36 & 37.

The Honiton Flyer also visited The Honiton Show (see our photo report on Pages 10 + 11) and The Honiton Hill Rally – find this on Pages 20 + 21.

At Honiton Hill Rally we bumped into the Honiton Lions Club stand. Our photo is of Brian Richards, President & Nigel Cray, Fund Raiser.

We welcome contributions and feedback from Honiton and the surrounding areas. Please contact us by email – details below.

Best wishes,

*Anthony Bucke* EDITOR.

Email: honiton@theantiquetourist.com

Wednesday 6 September 2023



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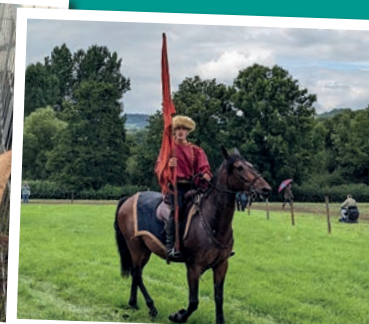
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# Honiton

Agricultural Show

3rd August 2023

Show Opens 8.00am – 6.00pm



Sadly the weather was wet for this year's Honiton Show. The Honiton Flyer spent much of the day at the show, and took many photos. Visitor numbers were high, despite the conditions underfoot and overhead, which made for a very positive atmosphere. The animal lines were well populated, and we even found some sheep which no longer have to be shorn! The judging of hounds in the lower area, whilst possibly controversial, demonstrated the huge bond between animal and handler. The motorcycle display was astonishing! We spent some time in the outer paddock, watching the Cossack display preparing for their turn in the ring.





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Fig & Ivy, a lifestyle store in Honiton, opened its doors in October 2020. Owner Sarah, with over 20 years of retail experience, including homewares buying, was inspired to start her own business.

Driven by a passion for visual merchandising and a commitment to providing a unique shopping experience, Sarah sources brands from around the world, offering an alternative to chain store shopping. The store offers carefully curated collections, including women's fashion, children's clothing, toys, home decor, and gifts.

Soon, Fig & Ivy will launch its website, enabling you to shop online with the option of home delivery or in-store pickup.



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# HONITON LIONS

Honiton Lions recently presented Mandy Patch of The Otter Inn a certificate of appreciation in recognition of her efforts, raising money for Lions' Charities by raffling Easter eggs and selling charity draw tickets.

At present the Lions are engaged in selling tickets for their annual charity draw which will take place at The Otter Inn on 24 September 2023. Tickets are selling well, and the amount of money raised so far exceeds £1,800.

The Lions' Classic Car Show on Honiton Charter Day was a great success, raising £620. At the same event another £450 was received from the sale of plants, jewellery and books, bringing the total raised on the day to £1,070.

In the past 2 months Honiton Lions Club have made donations to the following charities and good causes;

£250 to Honiton Air Training Corps for assisting the Lions with their classic car show.

£100 to Lion Heidi Nathan who will be joining a charity climbing expedition to Mount Kenya, Africa's second highest peak. The event is in aid of a school for the visibly impaired.

£500 to Exeter Leukemia (ELF).

£250 to a Cranbrook family whose baby needed specialist treatment as a result of a stroke.

£250 to Kids Cancer Charity.

£100 to Honiton Museum.

£500 to The Lions International Eye Centre, based at Korle Bu Teaching Hospital, Accra, Ghana.

*David Rickard, Honiton Lions.*

Anyone wishing to have more information about The Lions should contact Brian Richards on 01404 43738 or 07966 173 828.



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**Honiton Station has played many roles since it opened in 1860.** As well as passengers, the station once played a major part in the transport of goods of all kinds, as well as the much-missed parcels service.

During the Second World War, large numbers of service personnel heading for the Heathfield army camp arrived by train. These included women recruits to the Auxiliary Territorial Service undertaking their six-week basic training.

Initially used by British troops, Heathfield Camp was later taken over by the US Army, as troop numbers in the South West began to build up in preparation for D Day.

Men and supplies also arrived for the airbases operated by US personnel at Upottery and Dunkeswell in the hills above Honiton. Much of the material used by George Wimpey to construct the Dunkeswell base was brought in by train.

The station once enjoyed a large goods shed, goods yard and several sidings, located at the western end of the station. The last of these were closed in May 1967. At its peak, almost 150 wagons could be accommodated in its various sidings.



Records show that a wide range of products passed through Honiton's goods yards. These included coal, meat and fish, livestock, animal feed, fertiliser and agricultural machinery. Much of the output of Honiton Pottery also left by train, carefully wrapped in straw.

In the 1920s and early 1930s, up to 200 000 gallons of milk a year was being sent by train to the Ambrosia dairy at Lapford in North Devon. Apples also made their way from Honiton to be made into cider at Whiteways in Whimble.



The goods yards also handled the large amount of timber associated with the five-acre George Blay sawmill which was located next to the station. When it closed in 1998, the site was turned into a housing estate, its former life remembered in street names such as Crosscut Way.



All this activity required an extensive labour force. In the 1940s, for instance, as many as 22 people worked at the station. These included a Station Master, ticket office staff, porters, those working in the signal box, as well as clerks, mechanics, and a number of platelayers who maintained the track.

The recent announcement about the future of ticket offices at stations has reminded us of how much users of the station still value seeing a friendly member of staff on duty.



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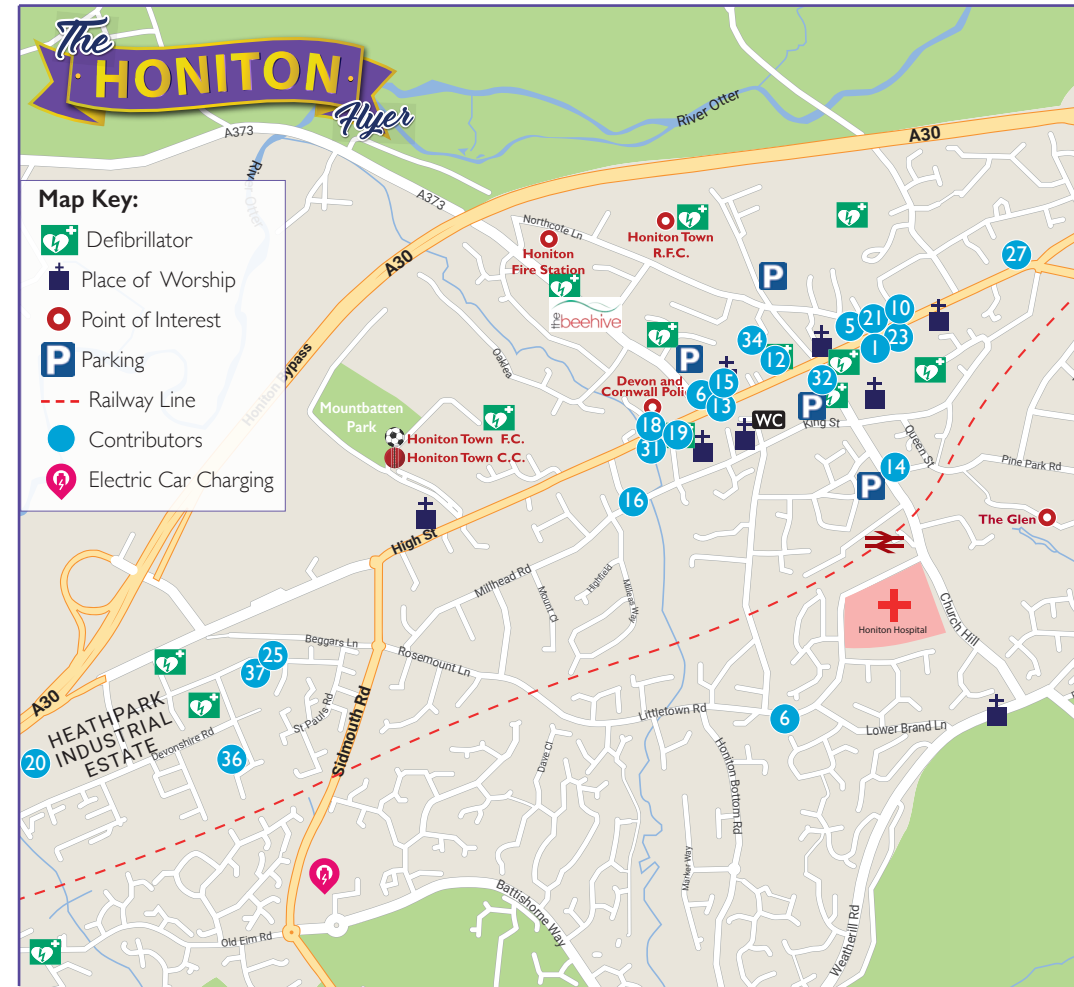
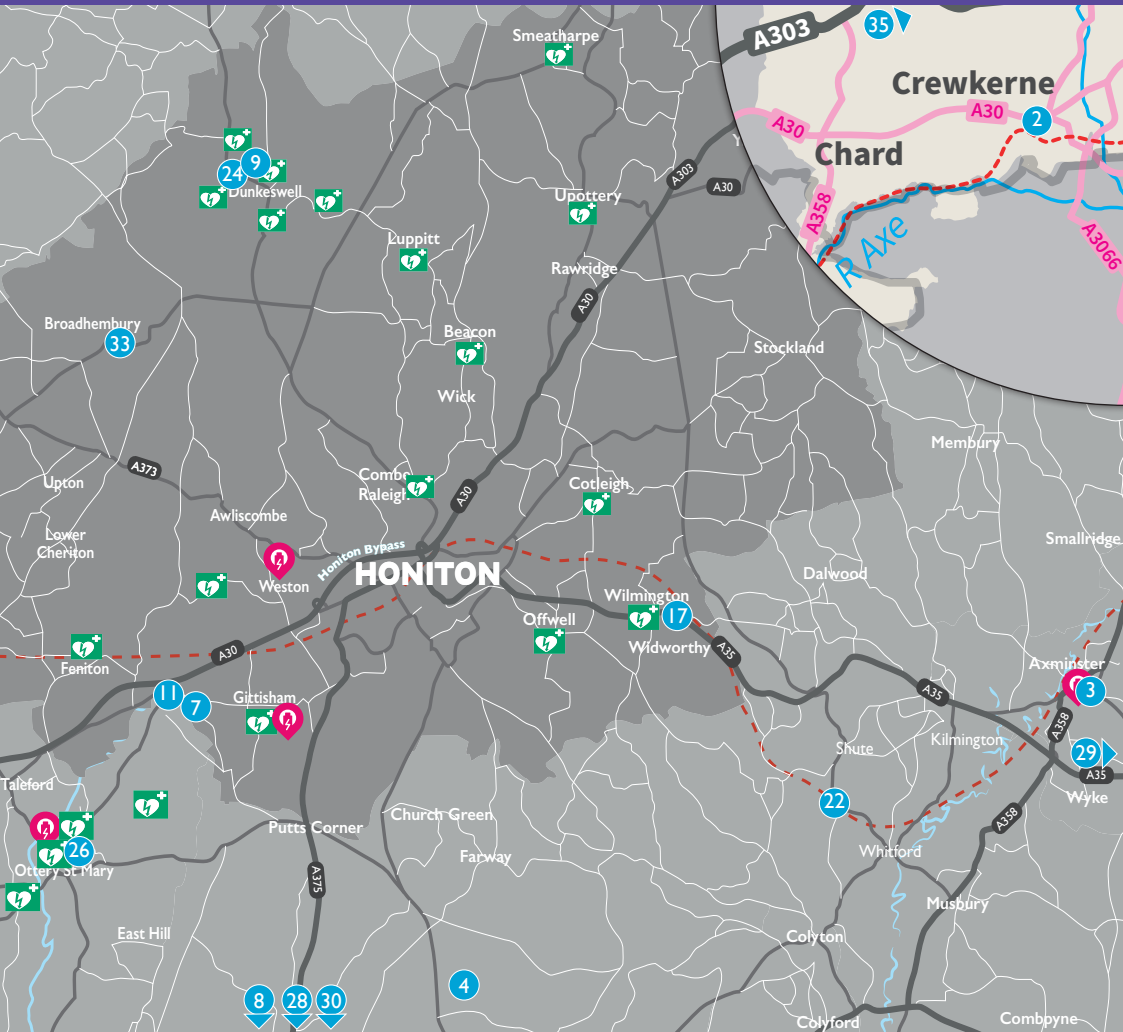
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There was kind weather on August Bank Holiday Monday when The Honiton Flyer visited Honiton Hill Rally. The auction was in full swing; tractor-pulling was very evident in the background, whilst gentle cultivation commenced immediately after the harvest. Corn was being threshed, families enjoyed the fairground attractions, and there was probably every type of vehicle on display for all to admire. The food and trade stands were busy, and the craft tent was popular. What a great venue with so much hard-standing for vehicles and visitors.



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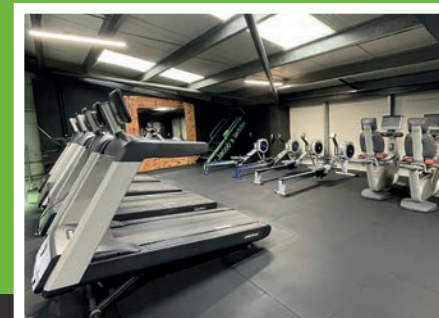
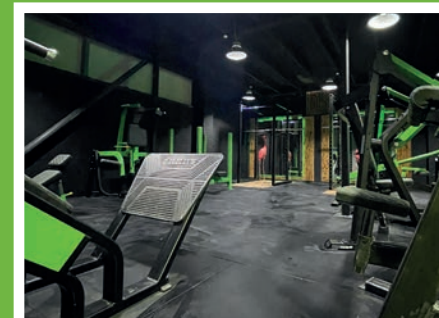
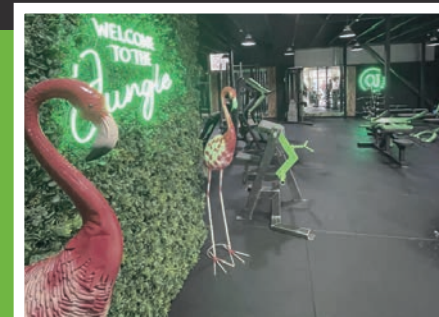
Honiton has always been in our hearts as somewhere we'd love to bring one of our community gyms to and in October 2022 we finally got to do this.

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## UNPREDICATBLE WEATHER?

Apart from a wonderfully hot June, this Summer has been a rather disappointing and stereotypical affair of rain, drizzle and downpours! As we now move into Autumn and Winter, and this pattern of precipitation probably with us until next Spring, could old local customs help us predict the future? St. Swithin's day, for example, so named after the eighth century Bishop of Winchester who cursed those who moved his body from the churchyard, on July 15th, by bringing down 40 days of rain. It has therefore always been believed that if it rained on July 15th (St. Swithin's Day) it would thence rain for 40 more. Honiton noted this date as having particular powers in forecasting the weather.

A Mr. Berry of the town wrote in 1918 that: • "In 1912 it rained on the 15th, and we had rain on 36 days after. • In 1913 it did not rain on that day, and there were only 14 wet days after. • In 1914 rain on St. Swithin's day was followed by 31 wet days. • In 1915 a wet St. Swithin's was again followed by 31 wet days. • In 1916 there was no rain on the 15th and only for 11 days after. • Last year it rained and we had 33 wet days after."

Whilst predictions are one thing, the past can also help us, with increased rain along with more frequent hotter spells get modern day scientists in a fit of anxiety with talk of 'climate change'. However examples of such extreme weather, even locally, go back way before the "hottest July" on record. On January 31st 1809, the mail enroute from London to Plymouth was delayed due to "the breaking down of several bridges, and flooding on roads." Honiton itself had a whole bridge "entirely washed away" which had cost thousands of pounds to erect only a few months before. This incident had followed a similar event only two years earlier in 1807 which had seen weiring carried down from Littleton, destroying the original wooden footbridge over the Gissage. In 1854 a large thunderstorm led to "a flock of thirty-one sheep, which had sought shelter under an oak tree near Honiton" being killed by a bolt of lightning. October 1875 saw horrific flooding in Exeter with water up to the bottom of carriages, and in 1881, one local amateur meteorologist, wrote after having noted "snow" up to his "windows" in the January, that by the July, there was a shade temperature of 97°F writing it was "hottest ever recorded"!

By Terry Darrant ©



Two photos, both of flooding at Langford Bridge in 1913. - Credit Allhallows Museum.

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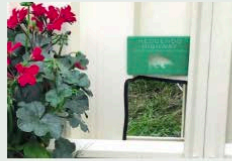
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## ColourFence Fencing - Keeping Hedgehogs safe in your garden

ColourFence are often asked about creating hedgehog highways in our fences and we do so gladly!

There's no better time to do our bit to make sure our gardens are hedgehog-friendly and, for that matter, are safe havens for all wildlife. During the long days of summer, hedgehogs will often venture out before it's fully dark and activity an hour or so before and after sunrise/set in the summer is not unusual.

### Hedgehog Highways



Hedgehogs are known as the gardeners' friend but their numbers are in decline so it's important that we do everything we can to help them. Providing shelter, wildlife rich gardens and food are great ways to help them thrive but helping them access your garden is hugely important too. Hedgehogs travel around one mile every night in search of food and a mate so ensure hedgehogs can pass freely through your garden by creating Hedgehog Highways – a small opening between your garden boundaries (a space of just 13 x 13cm is enough for any hog to get in and out of your garden!).

### Feeding hedgehogs



Leave out foods like tinned dog or cat food (not fish-based) and crushed dog or cat biscuits. Specialist hedgehog food is also recommended and can be bought from wildlife food suppliers.

**Leave out water** - Never feed hedgehogs milk as it can cause diarrhoea; instead simply add a shallow bowl of water in the shade (preferably near the hedgehog hole). Leaving clean water in small dishes around the garden is good for lots of wildlife if they pass through, especially in very cold months where most water is frozen at night.

Check for hedgehogs before using lawn mowers or strimmers. Check compost heaps before raking them over. Build bonfires close to the time of lighting, and check before you set them ablaze. Avoid the use of pesticides, as they can be poisonous to hedgehogs.

Doing some of these tasks won't just enable these cute mammals to make full use of your garden, but it could save their lives. Hedgehogs play a vital part in our ecosystem, they are deeply rooted in our culture and they will help protect your flowers as they eat snails, slugs and other pests.

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Established in 2013, The Lace Knittery is a family-owned business specializing in natural fibers, heritage yarns, sustainability, and ethical crafting. Proudly designated a Rowan flagship store, we offer the full Shetland spindrift range and are the sole stockists of Hedgehog Fibres in the southwest.

Our diverse offerings encompass patchwork, embroidery, spinning, felting, and a forthcoming ready-to-wear line. Join our Wednesday knit nights and upcoming skill-enhancing classes. Count on us for project aid, crafting guidance, or a friendly chat.

Discover our unique range, including self-produced yarns, kits, and patterns, all drawing from the enchanting British Isles. Let every colour at The Lace Knittery weave a captivating tale. We await your visit at our Rowan flagship store for an unforgettable crafting journey.

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Opening hours are Monday - Saturday 9:30 - 4:30. Closed for lunch 12:30 - 1:00. Sunday 11:00 - 3:00.

\*Guided Tasting Sessions must be pre-booked. Please email us for full package details.



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## DUNKESWELL AIRFIELD 80<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

The Dunkeswell Airfield 80th anniversary celebrations proved to be a huge success, despite a yellow weather warning forecasting strong gusts of wind, ranging from between 50 to 70 mph for its first day. As Dunkeswell Aerodrome is 850 feet above sea level and wide open to the elements, organisers cancelled outdoor activities and flights for the Saturday. Ticket holders who had pre-booked, were offered either a refund or ticket for the Sunday, when two former British World War II fighter planes from spitfire.com, which had arrived on the Friday, were seen 'taxiing' from the hangars.



*Welcoming crew at the Dunkeswell Airfield Heritage Centre.*

On Sunday August 6th, exactly 80 years from the date in 1943 when personnel from the 479th Anti-Submarine Group of the United States Army Air Force (USAAF) arrived at RAF Dunkeswell – the airfield took another 'flight into history' when the gates opened at 10.30 am. The first of thousands of visitors arriving were treated to a display of parachuting before the air space was reserved for flights by the iconic spitfire, biplanes, training helicopters from AH Helicopters and other light aircraft. While on 'terra-firma' – visitors enjoyed looking around the static displays of historic propeller planes, vintage military vehicles from the Supacat Group and classic motorcycles and cars.



*Charlie and Lily enjoying the Dunkeswell 80 celebrations with family, climb on board a WW2 U.S. Army Jeep.*

*A privately owned 'spotter plane' on show at Dunkeswell 80 – this 1942 Piper J3 Cub was originally used by the US Army Air Corps for aerial reconnaissance and aerial mapping.*

For many visitors and those who had grown up in the Dunkeswell area, this was a trip down memory 'runway', especially for Brendan Procter, the current co-owner of the airfield and flight training school, who feels proud that his family are part of the airfield's success story, and its future as a busy hub for the aviation community, offering sky diving, tandem parachuting (ideal for charity jumps), wing-walking, helicopter and microlight training, gliding and aerobatics.

Dunkeswell Airfield was used by the USAAF until November 1943 to fly anti-submarine missions over the Bay of Biscay, using B24 Liberator bombers. It was later turned over to the US Navy and reassigned to Navy Patrol Squadrons with top-secret messages received from the



*"Historic Helicopters" from Somerset take part in Dunkeswell 80 with their restored former RAF Rescue Westland Sea King and former Royal Navy Westland Wessex helicopters.*

*Aircraft crew make safety checks before the two-seater Spitfire takes off for a controlled 30 minute flight.*

N.B. Dunkeswell Airfield was built on land previously used for agricultural purposes and requisitioned from a number of farm owners under the Emergency Powers Defence Act of 1939. Construction of the airfield began in early 1942 and was completed by June 26th, 1943. The work was carried out by George Wimpey and Co, one of the country's largest civil engineering contractors, incorporated by the British Government during the Second World War into the Royal Engineers as operational army units, along with Laing, Mowlem and McAlpine. A high proportion of the labour force at Dunkeswell were from Southern Ireland as Wimpey had been granted permission under the 'group labour recruitment scheme' to recruit workers from the neutral part of the country, following a bilateral agreement in July 1941 by the British and the Irish Governments.



*Visitor Lynda next to the WWII Monument of a propeller from a B24 Liberator.*

code-breaking centre at Bletchley Park.

A visit to the Dunkeswell Heritage Centre is always recommended. Open on Thursdays to Sundays from Easter until late October from 11 am – 4 pm, the museum's war time collections and photographic displays explain everything that happened at the airfield – including a 'morale boosting' visit to Dunkeswell by one of the greatest heavyweight boxers – Joe Louis, who served in the US Army as Private Barrow, rising to Staff Sergeant and was awarded the Legion of Merit.

**For info on the airfield visit** [www.dunkeswell.co.uk](http://www.dunkeswell.co.uk) and for the heritage centre (now recruiting for a volunteer) [www.southwestairfields.co.uk](http://www.southwestairfields.co.uk)

By Ana Collingridge ©



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9		8	7		5			
		1	2	5	8	7		6
	2				1	3		
	1	4		9	6			
		2				6		
			1	7		4	5	
		6	8				3	
1		7	3	4	5	9		
		3			9	8		7

Level: **Easy**  
 Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Start time: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Time to solve: \_\_\_\_\_

## SUDOKU 2

2		5	6					
	4							
6		1	8	7	2			
7						4	2	
			3		6			
	9	3						5
			2	5	7	8		1
							5	
				3	6			9

Level: **Hard**  
 Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Start time: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Time to solve: \_\_\_\_\_

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#### SUDOKU ANSWERS:

4	7	5	6	2	9	8	1	3
8	1	9	5	7	4	3	2	6
2	3	6	8	1	4	5	9	7
6	5	3	2	8	7	9	4	1
4	9	7	1	3	6	2	8	5
1	8	2	9	4	5	7	6	3
5	7	1	3	6	2	9	4	8
9	6	7	4	5	8	1	2	3
3	2	8	7	9	1	6	5	4

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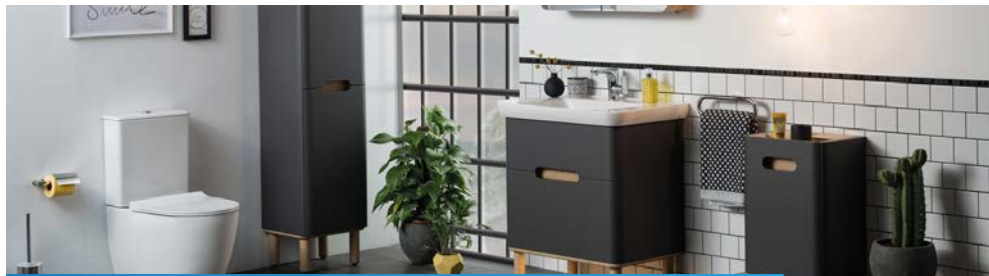
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