November December 2023

EXMOOR NEWS



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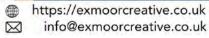
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Cover image 2023: © Jonathan Wright

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EXMOOR NEWS

COVERING SOUTHERN EXMOOR

Another year nearly over - where does the time go?

We are, as ever, hugely grateful to those who help us out, with photos, articles, delivery and for the lovely comments and support for our magazine.

Exmoor News is a community magazine so please, if you have a new group, enterprise, event or just want to reach out - send us an email/photo with your contribution.



Best wishes, Ceri Keene and Claire Savill
E: exmoornews@gmail.com T: 07497 914441 W: www.exmoornews.co.uk
Post: The Old Stores, Brushford, Dulverton, Somerset, TA22 9AH

We take our responsibility to maintain high editorial standards seriously. Should an error occur please do not hesitate to contact us.

Dont 7

The deadline for the Jan/Feb'24 issue of the Exmoor News is Thursday 30th Nov 2023

Printed by Brightsea, Exeter





Exmoor News Rate Card 2023

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Mono £20 Colour £28

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60w mm X 188h

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DULVERTON VINTAGE FILMS

Wed 8th November

TEA with MUSSOLINI

Maggie Smith, Judi Dench, Cher, Joan Plowright & Lili Tomlin (1999)

Wed 13th December

WHITE CHRISTMAS

Bing Crosby & Rosemary Clooney (1954)

Film starts at 2.30 pm at Fishers Mead Community Centre

£2 includes tea and biscuits

DULVERTON GARDENING CLUB



16th November - Talk, lan Anderson

The Nature of Somerset

7.00pm for 7.30pm

At Dulverton Town Hall

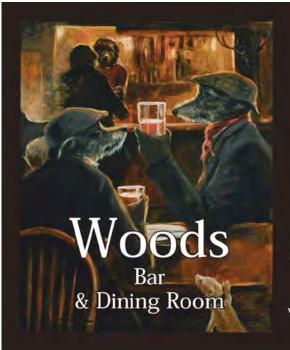
Tickets for Non members £4.00



Jeneba Kanneh-Mason Piano Friday 24 November 2023 7.30pm St Michael's Church Milverton

Jeneba first performed for Milverton Concert Society, together with her siblings, in 2021. She is now forging a very successful career for herself as a soloist, captivating audiences with her 'maturity in performance and interpretation'. She is the third of the Kanneh-Mason clan to establish herself as a soloist, following in the footsteps of her siblings, cellist, Sheku and pianist, Isata. She has performed at the BBC Proms and is due to play Rachmaninov's 2nd Piano Concerto with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra later in the year. Her programme in Milverton includes Beethoven, Debussy, Shostakovich, Prokofiev and William Grant Still. Details and booking: www.milvertonconcerts.org





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Join us at 1 pm for our

CHRISTMAS JOLLY

of nibbles, mince pies and bubbly ~ bring a plate of food to share ~

(please phone 07929 761-958 if you plan to come so that we have some idea of numbers)

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Film starts at 2.30 pm at Fishers Mead Community Centre

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Brushford Parish Hall Christmas Fair



25 November 2023 13:00 - 16:00.

Plus PopUp Bar, Mulled Wine, Bacon Rolls & Mince Pies

9th December 19:00 to 22:00 Pop Up Bar plus Jukebox with All Your 60s, 70s, 80s + Music Favourites



25th December 11:00 to 13:00 Christmas Day Pop Up Bar with Hot Potato Roasties



Details of all our Events, Facilities, Clubs and other Information on our website: https://www.brushfordparishhall.org.uk

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We are also looking for Volunteers to join our Team Rota to help with our events, bar & minor maintenance for whatever hours you can spare.

Please email: enquiries@brushfordparishhall.org.uk

Upton Coffee Morning and Christmas Craft Fair

21 November 2023 from 10.30 m



Christmas Craft Stalls

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Various | Crafts



Mince Pies





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for more information please call either Pauline (01398 371241) or Val (01398 371595)





Celebrating Christmas with Voices of Exmoor



Our Christmas Concert takes place in Dulverton Town Hall at 7.30 pm on 9 December. Tickets are £10, in aid of this year's charities, St Margaret's Hospice, North Devon Hospice and the Calvert Trust.

A recent review...

"A wonderful evening was had on 16 September, when Voices of Exmoor took to the stage in Dulverton Town Hall. It was such a joyous and, at times, emotional event, as the choir performed their Woolhanger the Reprise concert, following the highly successful show that they performed for the very first time at Woolhanger Estate in September of last year.

"With delightful humour from their musical director, Amanda Taylor, and beautiful music from accomplished pianist, Joke Routledge, assisted by Arwen Lewis on the recorder for two songs, it was most definitely another successful concert from the Voices of Exmoor and one that I'd happily attend again. I am very much looking forward to their Christmas concert in Dulverton..." Maria Lloyd

Visit our website or follow us on Facebook for details of ticket sales, forthcoming events and concerts; www.voiceofexmoor.co.uk

Table Tennis

We are always pleased to welcome new members at our very friendly Table Tennis Club held at Brushford Parish Hall, each Friday from 2.30pm to 4.30pm. There is always a cup of tea half way through the afternoon and, if we are lucky, there might be some homemade cake to savour! The sessions cost each person £2. We can provide bats if you require. Come along and have a go; there are some quite good players and others of lesser standards, so you should fit in very well.

If you would like any more information then contact either:

Richard Archer on: 07773 160222 or email: archer8r@hotmail.com or Alan Smith on: 01398 324353.

Minehead Museum Quiz



Are you a wiz at a Quiz? Or, just like some fun?

Friday November 10th Social Club, North Road Quiz starts at 7-30 prompt!

£4 per person. Come as you are or bring a team. Max. team size 6. Help support your local museum.

Numbers will be limited so why not book your tickets in advance at mineheadmuseum@btconnect.com

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Dulverton Town Hall

Friday 3 November

EMILY (Cert 15)

Director: Frances O'Connor 135 mins

In this semi-fictional account, Emily imagines Emily Brontë's own Gothic story that inspired her seminal novel, Wuthering Heights. Haunted by her mother's death, Emily struggles within the confines of her family life and yearns for artistic and personal freedom, and so begins a journey to channel her creative potential into one of the greatest novels of all time.

Friday 24 November

SHE SAID (Cert 15)

Director: Maria Schrader 129 mins

The New York Times journalists, Megan Twohey and Jodi Kantor, publish a report that exposes sexual abuse allegations against powerful Hollywood producer, Harvey Weinstein, breaking one of the most important stories in a generation—a story that shattered decades of silence around the subject of sexual assault and harassment in Hollywood and impelled a shift in American culture that continues to this day.

Friday 15 December

PRETTY RED DRESS (Cert 15)

Director: Dionne Edwards 110 mins

Set against the backdrop of South London and humming with the energy of iconic Tina Turner hits, Pretty Red Dress follows a family tested to their limit when Travis, fresh out of jail, is found wearing a dress by his partner, Candice, and secretive teenage daughter, Kenisha. The family is sent spinning by this startling discovery and the truths that remain.

Tickets: Dulverton Films members £3, non-members £5, students, accompanied by an adult, £2.50. Book in advance at Dulverton Post Office (tel: 01398 323474) or email: janaross2003@yahoo.co.uk. Bar open from 7pm.



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Moor Movies at Winsford Village Hall

Tuesday 7 November 2023. What's Love Got to Do with *It?* Cert 12A. Comedy/Romance.

Stars Lily James, Shazad Latif, Emma Thompson.

How do you find lasting love in today's world? For documentary-maker and dating app addict Zoe (Lily James), swiping right has only delivered an endless stream of Mr Wrongs, to the dismay of her eccentric mother Cath (Emma Thompson). For Zoe's childhood friend and neighbour Kaz (Shazad Latif), the answer is to follow his parents' example and opt for an arranged (or "assisted") marriage to a bright and beautiful bride from Pakistan. As Zoe films his hopeful journey from London to Lahore to marry a stranger chosen by his parents, she begins to wonder if she might have something to learn from a profoundly different approach to finding love.

Tuesday 5 December. *And Then Come the Nightjars* Cert 12A. Drama.

Stars Nigel Hastings, David Fielder.

Adapted for the screen from Bea Roberts's multi-award-winning stage play, *And Then Come the Nightjars* is a heart-warming story of friendship and survival set against the backdrop of the 2001 Foot and Mouth outbreak. An unlikely friendship develops between a Devon farmer and the vet who is assigned to cull his precious herd.

All welcome, no need to book. Entry: £3 members and £5 non-members. New membership starts September, at the movie night. Any enquiries to Orla Jones 01643 851881.,





Please note this is an illustration only - Ed

The Missing Angels

There's nothing quite like a mystery to solve than at Christmas time. Residents in Exford are trying to follow up leads on two stained glass windows, the work of the late Victorian artist Edward Burne-Jones, that were removed from an old Methodist chapel and reportedly left to the "Parish of Exford". The two windows were last tracked down in a storage facility in a museum in Manchester. The plot thickens. Investigations continue. Ed.

BRUSHFORDPARISH HALL

Let's get connected Internet Cafe

Are you having problems with the internet or struggling with technology?

If so, just drop in with your appliance, have a coffee and we will try to help sort it out with you.

14.30 to 16.30 First Thursday of the month Sponsored by the



Local Community Fund

Dulverton Health Walks

This friendly group meets each Tuesday morning at 10am to walk at differing locations. Walks last an hour or two, through our wonderful countryside. They are not too difficult and we stop, now and then, to catch up and also to admire the landscape.



In September, we visited Lynmouth (see photo), travelling from Minehead on the Exmoor Coaster open-top bus. We would be delighted to see new people so if you feel you would like to join us then please contact either:

Richard Clarke on: 01398 341141 or

email: richardclarke567@btinternet.com or

Richard Archer on: 07773 160222 or email: archer8r@hotmail.com



(Formerly EXMOOR U3A)

Our meetings are held in Dulverton Town Hall on the last Wednesday morning of the month, 10:00am for coffee.

We welcome non-members, who can attend their first meeting free of charge.

Talks start at 10:30am and last about one hour.

October 25: Sir David Calvert-Smith

A Life of Crime

November 29: Peter Gill Surviving the Great War with the Arts

There is no meeting in December but we are planning an informal evening of carols and wine led by Gary and Sabine. And, in January, we have our annual lunch at the Rest and be Thankful. Details of both these events will be announced shortly.

We resume our regular meetings on Wednesday 28 February.

To find out more about membership, interest groups, speaker meetings and social activities, please email: info@exmoorfriends.co.uk.

tiverton film club

October 31: Joyland

This is a bold imaginative Pakistani drama that won awards at Cannes this year. It addresses the social struggle within the bonds of the country's familial and societal expectations. In this patriarchal society, the worry about 'what will people say' is continually an issue. The film was the official entry to the Academy Awards this year despite being banned in parts of Pakistan.

November 21: One Fine Morning

Our choice is a French romance with phenomenal acting from the cast in this beautifully poignant story of a family balancing the issues of ageing and love. This tale presents a tender intermingling of grief, guilt and ecstasy in a story that is a series of ebbs and flows, with love winning. It was another Cannes award winner.

December 12: Close

This time it is a coming-of-age drama from Belgium. It has had excellent reviews with 'masterful camera work, acting and storytelling' and is a moving examination of innocence lost. The two young actors are exceptional in their roles. This was a Cannes winner—the Grand Prix in 2022, an Oscar nominated film in 2022, and a winner of a number of European film awards in 2023.

We look forward to seeing you at our autumn film club meetings, which are held at Petroc College, Tiverton. Doors open at 6.30pm and screenings start at 7.30pm. For club membership details, visit our website: www.tivertonfilmclub.org Do tell your friends about this coming season's choices. Guests are always very welcome at £5 a film.



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Dulverton and Morebath Christmas Craft Fairs

Dulverton Town Hall hosts the Christmas Craft Fair on Saturday 11 November 2023, from 10am—3pm. This is the third event at the venue this year, organised by local nano-brewery, Cottage Beer Project. You will find a fantastic array of local, artisan traders offering high quality products they've each made. The event is sold out for trader spaces, which include food (cakes and olives), drink (bottled real ales, cocktails and cider), jewellery, flowers, ceramics, art, chocolate, soaps, and much more, among the 26 stalls, upstairs and downstairs. Christmas-themed products will be available to purchase.

The event is free to enter, with everyone welcome. The Town Hall is dog friendly, and wheelchair accessible. Hot and cold drinks will be available.

Morebath Village Hall is hosting the Christmas Craft Fair, on Wednesday 13 December, 5pm—9pm. Organised by Cottage Beer Project, this is the second event to be held in Morebath, after a very successful fair last Christmas. There are stallholders attending from

across the area, with excellent quality products again on offer, made by each artisan trader. Max and Mike's Street Food will be attending again; they proved very popular last time, serving their fabulous food outside. There will be tables inside, so you can eat, drink or chat in comfort. There will be candles, various drinks, art, chocolate, fudge, cakes, dog apparel and more available to buy. These are all hand crafted and make perfect Christmas gifts.

Again, the event is free to enter, and wheelchair accessible. There's a free car park opposite the hall. Hot and cold drinks will be available, including mulled wine, and there's the very popular tombola too. This was an amazing success last year, as many of the prizes were products donated by the traders attending. Profits from these will again be donated to a local charity, choice to be confirmed.

Follow the Cottage Beer Project on Facebook or on Instagram @cottagebeerproject to keep up to date with the traders attending the Christmas Craft Fairs.



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Dulverton by Starlight

Once again, Dulverton by Starlight brings the festive spirit to Exmoor—with shops open, craft market, entertainment, and the wonderful fireworks too!

The annual winter festival takes place on Sunday 3 December, from 2-7pm, sparkling with white lights on the Christmas trees lining Dulverton's streets. The shops and businesses will be traditionally dressed for the season and many will open all day for browsing and buying Christmas goodies.

Don't miss the indoor and outdoor Winter Market (2-7pm), with its range of local crafts, gifts and food.



Roaming street entertainers will keep you enthralled, with pop-up performances, juggling, tricks and endless jokes. Look out for Santa in the Heritage Centre from 3pm, join the carol singing by the big Christmas tree at 5.45pm, and finish off a fun day by staying to watch the fireworks at 6.15pm.

Dulverton Town Council has liaised with Somerset West and Taunton Council to ensure free parking in the town's car parks on the three Saturdays leading up to Christmas—2, 9 and 16 December—and for Dulverton by Starlight on 3 December, with park and ride from Brushford, Masons Kings and the Anchor Inn in Exebridge.



Dulverton by Starlight would like to thank its sponsors: Dulverton Town Council, *Exmoor News*, Remote Therapies and Exmoor Distillery.

Lift your spirits and enjoy plenty of festive cheer with a visit to Dulverton by Starlight.

Find out more at: www. visitdulverton.com/dulverton-by-starlight/





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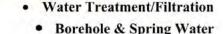
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More time for Exmoor...

When *Exmoor News* interviewed Patrick (Pat) Veale in summer 2021, he was busy running Lance Nicholson, Dulverton's specialist country sports shop. Retirement was

then on the distant horizon but in June of this year, retirement became a reality for Pat. However, as we discovered, he has plenty of plans for the future.

"I'm looking forward to doing what I want to do, not what I have to," he says. "Looking at my bees when I should, rather than when I have time. Being a better chairman to Fishing for Life and the Dulverton Angling Association."

Although Exmoor has long been home to Pat, there are many local places that he has yet to visit. "I'll have the time to see where roads go and visit smaller villages—I went to Twitchen for the first time this July!"

Family life has always been important to Pat but now even more so. "Being able to say 'yes' instead of saying I have to work is a welcome change."

Work tasks at Lance Nicholson have certainly been transformed since Pat took over in 1979. "Then we would write out an order, post it second class, and get the goods in two to four weeks, which was considered normal. Now it's either email or online ordering, with real-time stock levels, and delivery the next day. Today's customers expect much more. We used to be able to plan for busy and slack times in the year; most schools had holidays during the same weeks, and the weather was more predictable, so we knew what to expect."

Country sports were different too. "Most anglers were in their twenties—young, fit, unattached and with the time and money, to go out and enjoy country sports. Now it is mostly the over-fifties..."

Dulverton itself has also seen changes. "The town is more

prosperous but fewer people work locally or in agriculture. And then there are the holiday lets. Many properties are empty for weeks, or are let to summer visitors—good for

some local businesses but not for winter trade, and we could do with bigger car parks to encourage visitors. We need more affordable housing projects too; very few working people can afford an average priced house now."

One thing that won't change for Patrick is calling Exmoor home. "I wouldn't live anywhere else. Collecting my granddaughter from school at Heasley Mill, it's not unusual to see deer, buzzards, kestrels, goldfinches, kites, rabbits and hares. The spring blossom was fantastic this year, as were the wild flowers. Not many people can say that about the school run. And then there are all the very good friends we have. They have been so supportive of us over the years; we couldn't wish for better people."

Pat originally joined Lance Nicholson back in 1979 as a tea boy and shop assistant. Four years later, he and his wife, Jackie, became Lance's business partners in 1983 and, in 1992, the couple bought the business from Lance. James Hughes, who has worked with Pat since 1998, and as his business partner for the past 15 years, now runs Lance Nicholson. "James has been doing the lion's share of the work for some time," says Pat, "so he's more than capable of carrying it on, hopefully becoming sole owner."



Enjoy your retirement, Pat-you've definitely earned it!

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A Pasture for Life in Skilgate

This edition's story comes from a small hill farm the secluded parish of Skilgate. We asked Philip Beauvais, who owns and manages Elsworthy Farm, to tell us more about its regeneration. "Elsworthy is a recombination of land in Upton and part of a farm in Skilgate. I retired from a full-

time job earlier this year and have since spent most of my time focusing on setting up the business.

"I introduced an old breed of cattle—the English Longhorn—about 15 years ago. They are large animals for an old breed and have a very kind character. The cattle were a change for the farmland and part of plan to start regenerating the land."

He explained that the fields are mostly medieval in

origin, around 1.5 to 2 acres, with thick, banked hedges. These small paddocks had been tightly grazed and, while the hedges thrived with plants and wild flowers, the grassland was poor.

"By having fewer cattle and allowing the animals to choose where they graze, I am beginning to see more grasses and flowers, including orchids in the pasture! This prompted me to look into a system that supported my philosophy, so I recently joined the Pasture for Life organisation and have become fully accredited.

"My cattle are born, reared, grown and finished on this farm, on the grass and hay from this farm! That's all, no fertilisers or chemicals on the land either. It's a guarantee that the meat is free from cereals, antibiotics, or other medicines and growth regulators. It's probably of a higher standard than organic meats you may buy in shops."

Philip explained that he runs a beef box scheme. He currently processes one animal a year and sells it in 10kg boxes, by word of mouth and with the help of Exmoor News!"

But what about his plans for the future, now that he is no longer working full time?

"It's tempting to scale up, but today's climate requires a rethink. So I am planning to create an educational experience. I'm looking forward to reconnecting with members of the general public, who might be interested in visiting a small hill farm with a regenerative approach to its field management!"



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Living Well with Pain on Exmoor

Living Well with Pain on Exmoor is a new peer support group for those living with chronic or persistent pain in Dulverton, the surrounding communities and Exmoor.

Chronic or persistent pain can have a wide-ranging toll on both your physical and mental health, it can range all the way from little niggles to cripplingly painful illnesses. It can make you feel alone, it is difficult for others to understand; pain is personal and different for everyone, often invisible, its effects are far reaching, affecting your work, social and family life. Navigating health appointments, medication, and treatment can be difficult, trying and tiring. Understanding can be hard to find. It is estimated that up to 43 per cent of the UK population suffer from chronic pain.

Joining a peer support group can have far-reaching benefits, its greatest benefit being the mutual understanding of what it is like to live with chronic pain.

What is peer support?

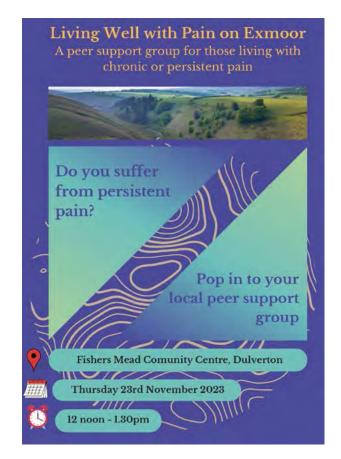
- A place where people with similar conditions or health experiences (in this case chronic or longterm pain) give or gain support from each other.
- Helps people build their own knowledge, skills and confidence.
- Focuses on emotional support, sharing experiences and education.
- Offers friendship, in a warm and non-judgemental space.
- · Reduces isolation and loneliness.
- Links to experts and signposts to resources

Leads to more effective self-management.

Who better to understand and support you than others with lived experience.

I was inspired to start this group following eight years of chronic pain, prescription opioid addiction and difficulty finding understating and relevant support. I was fortunate enough to find support from the pain management team at Musgrove Park Hospital. I am now an expert patient for them and volunteer for a pain charity called Pain Concern; I am studying to be a counsellor and have completed relevant training to enable me to run the peer support group.

For more details, contact: christine.nelder@outlook.com







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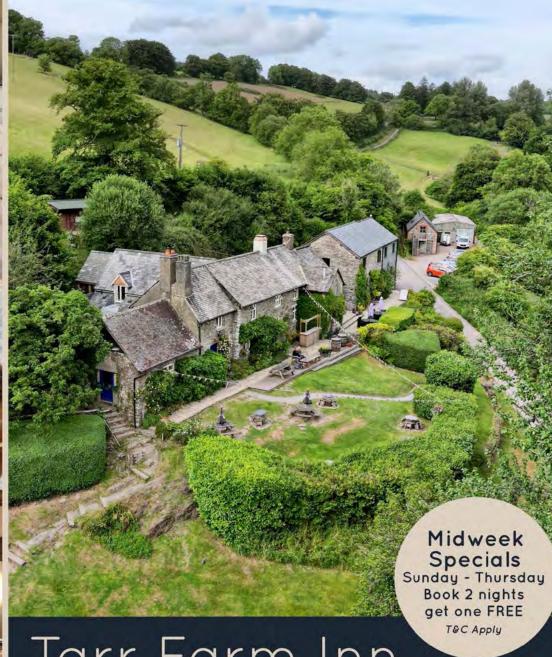
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Staying positive and having good habits that sustain you

Winter brings challenges to Kate Pegram—Homeopath our physical and mental wellbeing; with shorter days, lack of sunshine, never ending cold and rain, it's easy to start feeling down and lose motivation! But if we remember that winter is a time to nurture ourselves, be still, and reflect on our inner world, we can put some simple sustaining habits into place and avert exhaustion and the winter blues. Make winter sunshine a priority: this light therapy lifts our mood and our vitamin D, the immunity-boosting hormone. It's a good idea to take a vitamin D³ and K² supplement too over the dark months. Keep moving—even if you're not outside—by gently stretching, doing yoga, or an exercise routine. This raises your serotonin and gets your lymph moving, which helps your body detox. Reduce screen time: blue light reduces your production of melatonin, which affects your circadian sleep/wake cycle and the quality of your sleep. Cut down on processed carbs: they deplete your natural stores of vitamins and minerals and spike your blood sugar. Choose whole foods and protein-based snacks instead.

Homeopathy can be used to address various symptoms associated with the winter blues and support overall well-being during the colder months. Here are some helpful remedies that you can self-prescribe for acute episodes: Kali Phosphoricum is known as the "nerve nutrient" and is invaluable for managing stress, anxiety, and nervous exhaustion that often intensify during the winter. Aconite is effective at the onset of colds or flu, addressing sudden symptoms like high fever, restlessness, and anxiety. It can provide rapid relief and prevent the worsening of these conditions. Nux vomica can help alleviate indigestion, nausea, and irritability often associated with overindulgence in food and alcohol (especially at Christmas!) These remedies, when chosen based on individual symptoms, may help to support mental and physical resilience winter durina the months. www.evolutionhomeopathy.com

Paul Tam—Hypnotherapist

The shorter and colder days seem to come too quickly and sometimes it's difficult to remain optimistic, especially in the light of all the problems we face today. To some, this can be quite depressing, leading to a negative spiral. However, if we consider that "it's all in the mind" (well, some of it) there is hope.

Hypnotherapy can lead you to self-hypnosis and is not as mysterious as it might sound. It's also easy to learn. In this way, you can develop those positive habits that will help sustain you through difficult times and simply be in a calmer state of mind, so that you can face those problems. Just don't be afraid to ask for professional help.

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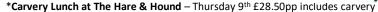
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- *Bath Xmas Market- Saturday 2nd £19.00pp coach only
- *Clarks Village Tuesday 5th -£15.00pp coach only
- *Carvery lunch & Dartmoor Scenic drive Thursday 7th £31.95 Adult/ £29.50 sensor
- *Sidmouth Donkey Sanctuary-carols by candlelight Friday 8th £16.00pp
- *Longleat light display Saturday 16^{th} Adult £63.95/child £4.95 includes entry, safari and light display

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Making the most of Dulverton Sports Field

Dulverton is fortunate to have a large sports field and pavilion close to the town's centre, off Millham's Lane. It hosts the cricket, football, squash and tennis clubs, and is managed by the Dulverton Sports Field Charity, formed in 1995 to redevelop the site. We would like to find ways to increase the usage: can *Exmoor News* readers help? You are invited to suggest how other sports could use its award-winning grounds and facilities.

The new pavilion was opened in August 2006 and was built through the generosity of the Cave Foundation, the Abbott Trust, the Dulverton Trust and other bodies including DEFRA. And there was a huge effort by local people and the Dulverton Town Council to secure the funding and get planning applications approved. In addition to the playing fields, tennis and squash courts, it provides a community room, changing facilities and car parking, replacing an earlier pavilion built in 1952.

There's plenty of space for more players within the existing clubs, so if you play cricket, football, tennis

or squash you are welcome to join. If you think that walking football, croquet, tai chi, the bridge club or darts team might be more of your thing, do get in touch. We're interested in finding new ways in which the sports field and social club can be used by residents and visitors of all ages, with new clubs being able to fit in with the current clubs, taking advantage of what is on our doorstep in Dulverton.

Drop Christine Dubery, Secretary of the Joint Sports Field Committee, a line with your ideas and suggestions at duberyc@aol. com

Thank you.

Nick Thwaites, Chair, Dulverton Sports Field Charity

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THE DULVERTON EXMOOR LITERARY FESTIVAL 2023 CHILDREN'S WRITING COMPETTION

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We don't mind about perfect spelling and grammar, just let your imagination fly and have fun! If you enjoy pictures, you can illustrate your story too. Why not think about the incredible landscape, animals and people who live on our local farms here on Exmoor?

Enjoy writing something original with a great plot, characters and language. Write a story you'd love to read!

The competition is open to children aged under 13. Entries to be submitted by 31 October 2023. Email your entry to: hello@visitdulverton.com or put it in the special named box in Dulverton Post Office.

Please include the name and contact details of an adult we can get in touch with to invite the shortlisted entries to the awards ceremony.



Entries cannot be returned so please keep a copy. The Judge's decision is final.

Waterstones Prizes of Waterstone's vouchers will be winners and runners-up Winner and Runners Up at the

Awards Ceremony at 4.15pm on Sunday 19 November 2023 at the Dulverton Exmoor Literary Festival in Dulverton Town Hall.

The prizes will be presented by

Sir Michael Morpurgo Mi

Michael Morpurgo!

The winning entry will be read out at the ceremony by the Competition Judge, historical fiction author, Kate Lord Brown. All of the winning stories will be published on the Visit Dulverton website visitdulverton.com



Illustrations by Rebecca Day, The Toad Hall Company

Dulverton Exmoor Literary Festival

Tickets to November's Dulverton Exmoor Literary Festival 2023 are selling fast. Have you had a chance to buy yours yet? The event takes place in Dulverton Town Hall across the weekend of Saturday 18 and Sunday 19 November, with online ticket sales via the Visit Dulverton website: www.visitdulverton.com

Alice Thomson's interview with former Children's Laureate, Sir Michael Morpurgo, was destined to be a popular event and tickets sold out in just three weeks! However, budding young writers still have the opportunity of meeting one of Devon's most celebrated authors if they enter the festival's Children's Writing Competition—Sir Michael is presenting the prizes to the lucky winners! Full details of the competition are on the website and in the official programme.

Festival Director, Ali Pegrum, has been delivering festival programmes and details of the writing competition and creative writing workshops to schools right across Exmoor. "Last year's competition had some brilliant entries, with children from South Molton to Cutcombe and Watchet to Bolham taking part—we're hoping that will be repeated this year."

Other talks not to miss over the festival weekend include:

 Rachel Johnson, with writer, Rachel Campbell-Johnston;

- historical biographers, Andrew Lownie and Catherine Ostler;
- best-selling novelists, Janet Ellis, Sarah Turner and Hannah Richell;
- restaurant critic, William Sitwell, with wine writer, Henry Jeffreys;
- Julian Glover and Victoria Eveleigh asking 'What is our countryside for?';
- photographer, Harry Borden, and writer, Albert Read, discussing creativity, with Miranda Taylor;
- British explorers, Belinda Kirk and John Hudson, with Hilary Bradt;
- ITV sports reporter Dennis Coath;
- local railway historians, Freddie Huxtable, Ian Coleby and Amyas Crump.

The event has been kindly sponsored by local businesses Tozers Solicitors, The Exclusive Cake Company, Exmoor Character Cottages, Exmoor News, First Design, Friendship & Sons, Hedley Price, Jeff Pegrum Landscaping, Maitland Walker, Osteo & Physio, Risdon Hosegood, The Sip Shed, Stockham Farm Exmoor, Town Mills, Ware Construction, Wellhayes Vineyard, Winsbere House, The Bridge Inn Dulverton, James Pryce Tractors, Masons Kings, Rothwell & Dunworth and Fabula Arts.





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Wed 11.00am Brushford Parish Hall Easy Exercise for the Older & Wiser (for the less active)

Thurs 5.00pm Brushford Parish Hall Over 50s - Toning Legs, Core and Arms (for a toned body)

> Fri 8.30am Brushford Parish Hall Step, Tone, Sweat & Stretch (for the very active)

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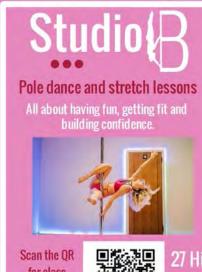


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A Country Property Diary

The West Country and Exmoor have been and always will be a popular place for people to live. From our heather-clad moors and deep valleys, to our ancient woodlands and picturesque coastline, not to mention our beautiful villages and towns, then really what is not to love?



Over the last few years—and especially during the pandemic—an increasing number of people have sought to relocate to the West Country, with many searching for a lifestyle change where they could escape the hustle and bustle of their former life. We saw a surge in people relocating from overseas, London and the Home Counties. However, despite an increase in buyers from these sectors, over 60 per cent of clients the Dulverton Office sold to were actually local or had a local connection.



Having hopefully put the pandemic lockdowns behind us, the market reaching a 'new normal' and economic changes, it would probably be reasonable to expect buyer and seller activity to have reduced. However, the West Country—in particular, Exmoor—remain among the country's top choices of location and there is a diverse selection of property currently available, so it is an opportune time to be looking for a new home.

Between Webbers and Fine & Country, out of our network of fourteen offices, six cover Exmoor: Dulverton, Wiveliscombe, Minehead, South Molton, Barnstaple, and Ilfracombe. All of our offices have seen a huge number of people looking to move for various reasons and continue to see high numbers of people registering on a regular basis. Buyers move for many reasons—downsizing, upsizing, first-



time buyers, or perhaps moving for employment or education.



From July 2022 to July 2023, 60 per cent of buyers that the six offices sold to actually lived within a 25-mile radius of the Webbers office in question. For many, this will certainly be surprising, but also an encouraging statistic. This sends a positive message to our communities that locals want to stay local! That said, it is still positive to see that a healthy balance of 40 per cent of our buyers are relocating from out of the area and this continues to stimulate our market, economy, and communities.



If you would like to know about the service Webbers and Fine & Country offer or are just curious to know how the market is performing in your area, please do not hesitate to contact your nearest Webbers and Fine & Country Office.

Best wishes

Ginny





Ginny Saunders Local Director



Louise Garner Administrator



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Larchwood Cattery



We have taken the difficult decision to close Larchwood Cattery after Christmas. We would like to thank all our customers and furry friends that we have had the pleasure of meeting and looking after. We wish you all well and thank you once again for your support over the years.

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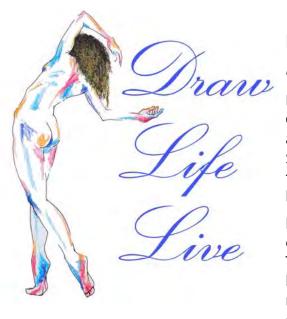




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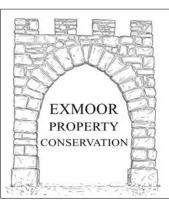
Bringing Life Drawing to You

DrawLifeLive—set to define the local art scene

DrawLifeLive, founded by Tony Keene, a retired film and TV Cameraman, is set to make its mark on the local art scene. This new art venture brings life drawing to a scarcely served area of Exmoor. Starting in January 2024, Brushford Parish Hall will be the home of this initiative, providing a welcoming space for individuals of all skill levels to engage in life drawing.

In the past, attending a regular life drawing class from Brushford often required traveling up to 50 miles each way. By chance, Tony met Tara, the model on one of these distant sessions, who faced the same lengthy and costly commute because she lived in Dulverton, Tony's neighbouring town. This fortunate encounter has led to the creation of DrawLifeLive, a collaboration between Tony and Tara to make art more accessible in the local community. The art club will offer quality facilities and guidance, with Tara bringing a variety of models, including herself and her mother, who has a wealth of experience as a professional model, including over two decades of posing for artist Robert Lenkiewicz.

So if you're looking to embark on a creative journey, regardless of your skill level, DrawLifeLive is the ideal choice. Join us in enriching the arts on Exmoor by visiting our website at www.drawlifelive.com. Discover the joy of life drawing, connect with fellow art enthusiasts and release your inner artist! Tea and coffee on tap!



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Exmoor Society Walks Figure 1 Figure 1 Figure 1 Figure 2 Figure 2 Figure 2 Figure 2 Figure 3 Figure 3 Figure 3 Figure 4 Figure 3 Figure 4 Figu

Larkbarrow Walk

2nd November 2023 10:30am
Join our walk leader Steve Key for a
4-mile circular walk past the ruins of
Larkbarrow Farm and Cottage, built
in 1840 as part of the Knight Family's
reclamation of Exmoor Forest. The
walk continues to the ruin of another
John Knight farm – Tom's Hill Farm,
before heading south over Swap Hill
then east back to the lay-by.

Along the way you learn the history of this part of what was the Royal Forest of Exmoor.

GRADE: A 4 mile Moderate walk ///port.rekindle.boom



History Walk on 'other' side of the East Lyn River

8th November 2023 10:00am Join our walk leader, Tony Piper for a woodland circular taking in the river life, and the human endeavour beside it. Stout footwear required. Dogs are welcome. GRADE: A 2.5 mile Leisurely walk Location

MeetatUpperLyndalecarpark(Higher side of St John's church), Watersmeet Road, Lynmouth, EX35 6EP SS 7248 4937 ///drizzly.larger.replace

Stoke Pero Guided Walk and Carol Service

3rd December 2023 3:00pm

This walk is in two parts. The first half takes us up in a loop through Cloutsham Farm and along a lovely traverse, crossing Prickslade Combe and passing through Church Farm before reaching the church for the 4pm carol service.

The second part, after the service, follows the small surfaced lane back to Cloutsham Gate. We should be able to see lots of stars as the moon will not have risen.

Those who wish to, can just walk the lane to the church and back, self-guided as it is sign-posted.

This is a family friendly event and dogs are welcome as long as they are kept on a lead.

3pm - 6pm

2.5 mile easy walk or 1.5 mile easy self-guided option (some muddy patches)

Refreshments; mince pies and mulled wine.

Location

Cloutsham Gate Common, TA24 8JT SS 8840 4303



Dulverton - Barle River, Weir and Leat Walk

7th December 2023 10:00am

Join Stan Lester for a walk around Dulverton, taking in the old mills, the mill leat, the weir, and the River Barle as far as Marsh Bridge. If there is time, we will also visit Oldberry Castle. Up to 240m/800ft of climb and expect it to be muddy in places.

3.5mls/3hrs walk. Dogs on leads. Older children welcome. Refreshments locally.

GUIDE: A 3.5 mile Moderate walk. Location

Meet outside the National Park Information Centre in Dulverton. ///agents.stung.giraffes



Porlock Weir Tabernacle Guided Walk with St Nicholas Patronal Service

10th December 2023 1:00pm This walk is in two parts. The first half

takes us from Porlock St Dubricious church to the Porlock Tin Tabernacle along Underway, passing the back of Greencombe Gardens and through the ancient deer park.

At the church, we will enjoy the traditional St Nicholas Patronal service, at which St Nicholas may appear (without his sleigh we fear).

After the service, the walk will take us to Porlock Beach and across the pebbles to reach the edge of the marsh, returning past the air crew war memorial to reach Porlock.

This is a family friendly event and dogs are welcome as long as they are kept on a lead.

1pm - 4.30pm4.5 mile easy walk but pebbles on return leg.

Refreshments; mince pies and mulled wine.

Location PorlockStDubriciousChurch,TA248QJ SS 8864 4667



Selworthy Church to Lynch Chapel of Ease Guided Walk

19th December 2023 10:00am

This walk starts with a visit to Selworthy Church and then a walk across the green into the woods of the Holnicote Estate. After passing Katherine's Well and Agnes' Fountain, we will drop into the hamlet of Lynch and the tiny chapel of ease.

After a break, we will walk along the side of Horner Water to reach West Luccombe. After a short climb over the wooded ridge we will drop to cross Piles Mill water meadows and around the grounds of Holnicote House.

We will then follow in the footsteps of Baron and Lady Acland on their way to church up Private Path and Back Lane to pass Selworthy Farm and return to Selworthy village.

This is a family friendly event and dogs are welcome as long as they are kept on a lead.

10am - 1pm 5 mile moderate walk Refreshments; please bring your own for the break in the chapel. Location

Selworthy Church, TA24 8TW SS 9197 4680



As 2023 draws to a close, the Regal Theatre Minehead offers an exciting programme of events.

After Henry, a comedic musical drama, based on Simon Brett's hugely successful TV sit-com series, is presented by Barnstormers on the evenings of the 2nd, 3rd & 4th November.

The 11th of November features another monthly classic film matinees, **The Titchfield Thunderbolt** – some of which was filmed very locally some 70 years ago.

Avalon – the Birth of a Legend, a Waterfront Theatre presentation is on 23rd, 24th and 25th November ~ the final battle of Camlann is over and Arthur mortally wounded...

As Christmas looms the MATA Regal Theatre Co. Ltd presents **Nativity: The Musical** on 7th, 8th 9th December at 7.30 pm; plus a matinee on Saturday 9th at 2.30pm.

The Santa Show 2023 is on Friday 15th December at 4pm, with a gift for each child too.

Scrooge the Musical, the monthly classic matinee film, is on Saturday 16th December at 11am.

2023 comes an end and the New Year welcomed in too with the Regal Theatre's ever-popular Pantomime. Adapted from Hans Christian Andersen's classic tale Panto People present their entirely original version of **The Snow Queen**, beautifully adapted for Pantomime.

Dates/times are:-

30 December Saturday: 2.30 and 7.30; 31 December Sunday: 2.30; 1 January Monday: 2.30; 4 January Thursday: 7.30; 5 January Friday: 7.30; 6 January Saturday: 2.30 and 7.30

For details of all events at The Regal Theatre Minehead see www.regaltheatre.co.uk

Throughout November and December the Regal Film Society also offers an enticing programme of films, and screening of ballet and opera from the Royal Opera House – for full details visit www.regalfilmsociety.org

Tickets for all events at the Regal can be bought from the Box Office Monday to Saturday, between 9.30 and 12 noon (01643 706430) or on-line at https://www.regalboxoffice.co.uk





Village Agents—your local helping hand

The Somerset Village and Community Agent service, run by the Community Council for Somerset (CCS), enables you to access support, when you most need it. Village Agents provide confidential, practical community-based solutions for people in need of help and advice.

Village Agents from our West Somerset Team host several Talking Cafes in or close to the Exmoor National Park. Talking Cafes provide a local place for people to seek advice and support for a range of different issues that might be causing worry or distress. If our Village Agents can't help, they will know someone who can!

During the colder winter months, we see an increase in people experiencing fuel and food poverty and feelings of loneliness and isolation. We are here to help and you can access our support through the following Talking Cafes:

Williton: Williton Pavilion, every Tuesday 1pm—3pm.

Dulverton: Fishers Mead Community Room, every Thursday 10.30am—12.30pm.

We also host a Talking Cafe at Minehead's Methodist Church, every Monday from 10am—12 noon.

Citizens Advice will be joining us at the Dulverton Talking Café on the following Thursdays: 2, 16, 30 November and 14 December.

You can contact your local Dulverton Village Agent, Nikki Bonner, directly on 07940 913 698 or via email at nikkib@somersetrcc.org.uk or contact your local Village Agent by visiting www.somersetagents. org and using the 'Find an Agent' tool.

Community Council for Somerset (CCS), Viney Court, Viney Street, Taunton, TA1 3FB

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"I remember, I remember..."

Could it be the house where you were born and grew up? Maybe you have memories of a remarkable grandparent or an inspirational teacher who changed your life? Have people often told you that you should write a book?

We all have a story to tell and there are people who would like to read your story. This is where Exmoor News comes in. As well as producing the bi-monthly magazine, editors Ceri and Claire have published over 40 books. We can help at various stages, from suggesting suitable writing software, through to copyediting, layout, design and illustrations, proofreading, and publication. We can even put you in touch with a writing mentor if you need some guidance.

Here are our suggestions to help you get started...

As with so much in life, planning is key; before you write a single word, think about why you want to write and what you want to write about. You might want to create an interesting record for your family, or perhaps there is potential for a much larger audience? Will you

write about your life to date or a particular period? Childhood is a popular choice, but maybe your career took you to different parts of the world, or introduced you to extraordinary people?

Will your be in memoir chronological order? Which people and places do you want to include? Will you have a theme running throughout? In her excellent memoir, A House *Unlocked*, author Penelope Lively, used her grandmother's house on Exmoor as the focus. Each chapter begins with a memory of an item from the house.

Gather all the information you can. If you're a souvenir hoarder, it's time to bring out those restaurant bills or travel itineraries. If you've always kept a diary or have masses of photographs, you're off to a flying start. If you have questions for family members, ask them now! And, finally, set aside some time to write every day, to keep you motivated. Good coffee helps...

Want to know more about writing and publishing your memoir? Just contact Exmoor News at: exmoornews@gmail.com or call: 07497 914441.

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Sleeping Beauty and the Magic of Christmas

It is nearly that time of year again, when the Queen's Theatre, Barnstaple, brings you another magical pantomime; this year it is that family favourite tale, *Sleeping Beauty*.

CBBC and Blue Peter's Barney Harwood headlines this year's panto, in the comical role of Lester the Jester,

and, returning due to popular demand, Lauren Hendricks will be reprising her role as Fairy Flora. This enchanting, magical and 'fun for all the family' pantomime has a stellar cast, including Sue Appleby—straight from the West End production of Harry Potter and the Cursed Childplaying the role of Carabosse, (Maleficent for Disney fans!) Best-selling synth pop artist. Natalie Gray, takes on the leading role of Princess Rose and is joined by Dereck Walker in the role of her

mother, Queen Camilla, and Zak Marx as love interest, Prince Philip.

We're told there are also a couple of surprise cast members.... 'Oh yes there are!'

Families and theatre lovers of all ages will be swept away by a breathtaking journey through a land of dreams, where curses are broken, true love conquers all, and laughter reigns supreme. The timeless tale of love promises magic and adventure in a production bursting with energy and creativity. The show is produced by RED Entertainment, the team behind last year's hugely successful reimagining of *Jack & the Beanstalk*, and runs at the Queen's Theatre, Barnstaple from 13-31 Dec 2023.

Don't miss out on the most magical event of the holiday season—tickets for *Sleeping Beauty* are available now! Limited tickets at just £15 are available on the official opening night, 16 December at 6.30pm.

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online: www.queenstheatre-barnstaple.com





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Biomass boiler boosts National Park's Carbon neutral commitment

Exmoor National Park Authority is proud to announce the completion of a biomass boiler at Pinkery outdoor learning centre, as part of its commitment to becoming carbon neutral.

The innovative project, which has been funded by a Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme government grant, means the centre will be able to produce electricity from logs from the Authority's sustainably managed woods.

The new boiler has replaced outdated fossil fuel systems and will supply renewable heat and hot water for the whole site, including the classrooms and accommodation units.

Andrea Davis, Chairman of Exmoor National Park Authority and Cabinet member for Climate Change in Devon, said: "This is a real boost to Exmoor National Park Authority's climate action plan and net zero commitments.

"Added to our switch to electric

vehicles, and the existing solar panels and wind turbine at Pinkery, this will help us to continue to provide sustainable, inspirational, and wellbeingorientated activities."

The project has been funded by £115,211 from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme, which is run by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero and delivered by Salix Finance. It will deliver 605 tonnes of CO₂ savings over its lifetime, which is more than 30 tonnes of CO₂ per year.

Chairman, Andrea Davis added: "I am so pleased that, with the help of Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme funding to support our net-zero carbon commitment, we can continue the great work that happens at Pinkery, fostering a vital connection between our local landscape and generations now and into the future."

Senior Energy and Carbon Analyst, Nadim El Bakri at Salix Finance said: "Salix is delighted to support Exmoor National Park Authority and Pinkery Outdoor Learning Centre and join them in this journey of decarbonisation.

"This project has been inspirational because it looks not only at the carbon reduction, but at the wider



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Ahmed Ali and Nadim El Bakri from Salix Finance and the team from ENPA

environment and how the work impacts the whole community.

"The funding, as well as the support we offer at Salix, will mean that the park and the centre can become more eco-friendly, reduce carbon emissions and support the net zero agenda."

The works, together with the addition to the centre's electric vehicles, its on-site wind turbine, solar panels and increased battery provision to power equipment, will bring Exmoor National Park Authority ever closer to its Carbon Neutral Goals.

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No use yawning, or being bored I can live today, in my own way; whatever you say, I will reap my own reward.

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Life seemed fine when I stayed inside snuggled up, warm, cosy, and fine hiding from winter, from life, like a hedgehog hibernating from everything icy. I could stay in my comfort zone not live, not stretch myself stay all day, every day, in my home creating not much else, merely thinking about myself.

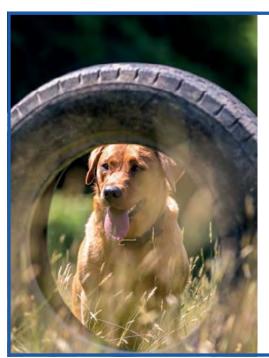
But, today I'm going to escape, climb out of my den smile at the sun, live my life run life's exquisite race even though I will face challenges perhaps get knocked, sometimes face pettiness, revenge

today I am living today is all mine I am breaking out!

© Fran Bridger

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World-class images of North Devon

Beaford, the North Devon based community arts and heritage organisation, has commissioned Gideon Mendel, one of the world's leading contemporary photographer to record our changing landscape. He has documented conflict, change and social issues on a global scale since the early 1980s, earning international acclaim.

Since 2007, Gideon has been working on *Drowning World*, a major project about flooding and his response to the climate crisis. Documenting a variety of flooded locations internationally, his images have been exhibited in galleries and museums around the world.

In September 2023, Gideon visited North Devon to create portraits of young people on location, in areas at most risk of being below the annual flood level in 2050.

Nigeria2012© Gideon-Mendel

"The Beaford Archive has always documented today's North Devon for the future," said Beaford director, Mark Wallace, "but we're living in a crucial time for the future of young North Devonians—and it's important for their voice to be heard now."

Climate Central, an independent organisation of leading scientists and journalists, who research climate change and its impact on the public, has found that large expanses of inhabited land in Devon are expected to be below the level of average flooding by 2050. In coastal North Devon, there are several areas potentially affected on either side of the Taw and Torridge River estuaries, with Barnstaple, Braunton, Fremington, Yelland, Westward Ho!, Appledore and Bideford being the worst affected.

The North Devon portraits created by Gideon feature local young people holding handmade placards with messages of warning and hope. They are being exhibited alongside images from his *Drowning World* series, as part of an international Climate Festival in Barnstaple's newly refurbished Pannier Market. The exhibition opens on Friday 3 November 2023, UNESCO's International Day for Biosphere Reserves, and runs until Friday 17 November.

For more information, including a link to Climate Central's Coastal Risk Screening Report and interactive map, visit: www.beaford.org/signofourtimes

View the full collection of Gideon Mendel's *Drowning World* images at:

www.gideonmendel.com/submerged-portraits/



Portrait of Gideon-Mendel ©Gowhar-Fazili



Thailand2011© Gideon-Mendel



Bampton Heritage and Visitor Centre's 10th Anniversary

On Wednesday 20 September, Bampton Heritage & Visitor Centre (BHVC) held an all-day party to mark their 10th anniversary. A team of volunteers and trustees were there in shifts throughout the

day to welcome visitors calling in to celebrate with them. Refreshments of hot drinks and homemade cakes were on offer too.

Alongside the regular centre displays and activities, there was a special exhibit of some larger objects from the collection, which can't easily be displayed. As well as these, there was a new addition to the collection—a portfolio of old maps, with the oldest dating from 1579. These showed how Bampton changed and grew over the centuries and fascinated our many visitors.

The party mood was in full swing from 10.00 am. We had visitors from the Crediton Museum and History Society, representatives from Tiverton Museum and

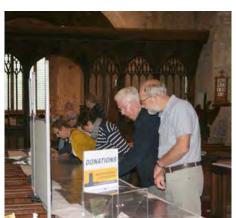
Visit Mid Devon, local groups and local people who have supported us from the beginning. We had a visit from Jonathan Hill, a former Bampton shop owner and creator of a mini heritage collection. Jonathan donated his whole collection to us after he retired and he not only spent time viewing the displays but also brought two new items to donate.

By evening, the celebration swapped from tea and coffee for wine and nibbles. Trustees took over the refreshment duties to give the volunteers time to enjoy themselves and mingle. Old friends were welcomed back from as far afield as Salisbury and Cardiff. Some local business owners called in to raise a glass, along with local councillors from the town, district and county councils. There were two short speeches and then plenty of time to wander around the exhibits and chat.

Judi Thomas, now Chair of Trustees, has been involved with BHVC since the initial discussions in 2011. At that early stage, a consultation was held to hear the opinion of the community of Bampton, and there were very positive responses we received. That motivation was enough to create a plan on how









the story of Bampton could be told to residents and visitors. With a successful application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the centre was opened.

Throughout the last 10 years, there have been so many visitors to Bampton who have come to the centre during their stay in town. The centre's information boards, objects, photographs, videos, quizzes (for children and adults), special events and town trails draw them in to spend time finding out more about the town.

The town's rich history is shown in many ways but one of the most important contributions to the collection is in a different form. Objects and pictures are important, but personal lives and experiences bring history to life. There has been an ongoing programme to record the voices of local people who have given the most generous gift of their own memories of growing up here, living and working locally. These stories are saved as a digital record for the future. So often these precious memories are lost and we are working hard to hear from as many residents as we can, while we still can. Memories shared tell of every aspect of life, from school times

with favourite teachers, school meals, getting to school in bad weather to visiting shops that are no longer in town.

Everyone involved with the centre is so proud of everything it has achieved in its first 10 years and they are looking forward to continuing ambition and commitment by increasing our collection and finding new ways to tell Bampton's stories.

Bampton Heritage and Visitor invites you to take a step into our past and find out what we plan for the future and how you can support them. Visit our web pages: bampton.org.uk/BHVC/index/html and follow us on Facebook: Bampton Heritage and Visitor Centre and Instagram: @bamptonheritagecentre









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DULVERTON'S SECRET GARDENS

The Secret Gardens of Dulverton day on 2 July was a great success and Visit Dulverton is delighted to announce that profits from the garden visitors and cake sales have meant that a generous donation has been made to Exmoor National Park's (ENPA) CareMoor charity. Ten private gardens, across the pretty moorland town of Dulverton, were specially opened for the day and visitors were treated to unusual plants, summer colour and careful landscaping—and tea and cakes in the Town Hall of course!

Christine Dubery, Chair of Dulverton Town Council, was keen for any profits from the day to be made as a charitable donation to a local relevant cause. After discussion with the Visit Dulverton team and with the ten garden owners themselves, a donation of £1,000 was made to ENPA's CareMoor Sowing the Seeds Appeal. Christine said: "We are delighted to have been able to give back to our local community in this way—and our huge thanks to the owners of the ten gardens for kindly opening their gardens and making this a possibility. We look forward to opening more of Dulverton's 'secret' gardens to visitors next summer."

Katrina Munro, ENPA's Sustainable Economy Officer said: "Thank you so much for the donation from the Open Gardens to our Sowing the Seeds Appeal. It will help with the purchase of a new piece of specialist equipment required and the setting up of a wildflower seed nursery on ENPA land at Exford."

The ENPA website explains that meadows attract a multitude of wildlife and often support flora and

fauna that cannot thrive in other habitats. Typically characterised by species such as black knapweed, ox-eye daisy, yellow rattle, hawkbits, vetches and rarer orchids, they can also support colourful waxcap fungi with names such as parrot, snowy and crimson. In addition to being aesthetically beautiful, they are ecologically important as they provide areas for pollinating insects, nesting, food gathering, shelter and even animal courtship displays.

Like other ecosystems, meadows experience increased pressure due to climate change, especially as precipitation and weather conditions change. However, grasslands and meadows also have an important climate change mitigation potential as carbon sinks; deep-rooted grasses store a substantial amount of carbon in soil.

The ENPA has been running informative sessions about the creation of wildflower meadows, one of which was attended by Visit Dulverton volunteer, Ken Warren, who said: "The session in Simonsbath included a presentation on how to convert grassland, whether a garden lawn or many acres, into a wildflower meadow. We were shown a brush harvester, which is used to collect fresh seed from existing wildflower meadows. That seed is then used to sow potential new meadows. We then walked to nearby land where many, many acres of wildflower meadows have been created. To see meadows as some of us might remember them, was a privilege and a memorable experience."

For more information on the ENPA CareMoor Sowing the Seeds Appeal visit: www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/caremoor/caremoor-welcome/sowing-the-seeds-appeal



Scams are all too prevalent and come in all shapes and sizes. Here it's a pram, but it could be almost anything.

"I bought a pram online for £400. At checkout it said delivery would take three to five working days but I never received any tracking information. I chased the seller and they said they would speak to the delivery company. Now my calls go straight to voicemail. I've had no response to emails either. I thought the website looked legit but I've seen people posting on review sites about products that never arrived and some saying it is a bogus seller. Have I been scammed and if so, what can I do?"

Unfortunately, scammers are always finding more sophisticated ways to trick shoppers including having some very legitimate looking websites. The Citizens Advice website has lots of information about scams, how to spot them, and how to get your money back. Search: Citizens Advice (www.citizensadvice.org.uk/resources-and-tools/Search/?c=HOME&q=scams) People can also need emotional support when they have been scammed and there is information here about this too.

As you have parted with your money, your first step is to contact your bank and let them know. According to how you paid there are steps to be taken to get your money back. If you paid by debit card, your card provider can contact the seller's bank and ask for the money to be refunded. (the Chargeback Scheme). If you paid by credit card and the item cost more than £100 but less than £30,000 you might be able to claim under the Consumer Credit Act Section 75.

Scams should be reported to Action Fraud, and Trading Standards can investigate a seller who refuses to deliver an item.

In the event that something you ordered and paid for doesn't arrive but the seller does get back in touch—and it turns out it isn't a scam—it is the seller's responsibility to get the item to you. If they say they don't know where the pram is, you can ask for a redelivery or a refund.

You can always ring our FREE, local AdviceLine on 0808 27 87 999 or take a look at: www.ruraldevoncab.org.uk and click on Get Advice.



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"I need a car for work but can't afford brand new, so I'm looking at second-hand options. I've heard horror stories about people buying faulty vehicles and I don't know much about cars. What do I need to check to make sure I don't buy a dud?"

First, where are you planning to buy the car? If it's from a trader, choose a trustworthy one with an established reputation. Ideally, they will belong to a trade association or at least follow the industry's code of practice. Buying at an auction is much riskier: you'll have fewer legal protections like the right to return or refunds, so read the terms and conditions very carefully before you bid. If you buy from a private seller, try and buy the car at their home address in case anything goes wrong later.

Also, if buying privately, make sure the car's details are correct, using the DVLA free online vehicle information checker. You'll need the registration number, MOT test number, mileage and make and model of the car. You can also check the car's MOT history for free on gov.uk Keep a copy of both these results and the original advert or description of the car. A private history check will show if it has been reported stolen, still has money owing on it, or has been in a serious crash. This costs about £20.

Ideally, inspect the vehicle during the day when it's not raining, as scratches are harder to see on a wet car. Take it for a test drive for at least 15 minutes and on different types of road if possible. (Check you have the appropriate insurance for a test drive).

Once you have decided on a car, don't be afraid to negotiate the price. If you take out a loan or finance, make sure you can afford the payments over the lifetime of the contract. Paying with cash gives you fewer protections than other options like debit.

It may be, despite all this, you still find something wrong with the car after you've bought it. You may have a legal right to a repair, the cost of a repair or some money back but it's on a case-by-case basis; for instance, the car's mileage might be wrong or it keeps breaking down.

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A Dog's Day Out These are a few of my favourite things...

What you doing for Christmas, Honey?

"I'm planning to help in the kitchen; I can Hoover up all the food bits off the floor as she goes along."

Good idea. I watched her wiping the spiders off the cook books on the window sill the other day. She's still trying to find a recipe for the dog biscuits that had bits of liver in them. She said her Auntie Babs used to bake them and put them into old tea caddies to give to her friends at Christmastime.

"Perhaps you could help her sniff it out Buddy."

She'll never find it; long gone, Honey, been tossed out. I heard her muttering that it probably came from one of those women's weekly magazines her aunt used to read.

She's looking at that book now with a cover all crusty in old flour and sugar. There's a shopping list over there with ingredients she needs to find.

"What's cloves?"

It's an aromatic, Honey; it's going in a bread sauce she says she wants to make to go with a roast.

"This is really getting exciting. What else is on her list - what does that say?" Exmoor beeswax polish. We

have to make the house smell festive and inviting as well.

"Invite in? Who's coming?"

Santa is coming, Honey. Remember, he's on his way. My shed's full of logs for the fire and our bushes are already covered in red hawthorn berries. Yippee—what more could we possibly want?

"Hercule Poirot, Buddy. He's my favourite and *The Adventure of the Christmas Pudding.*" Cripes, that's another story, Honey.

Buddy Brown (pure Jack Russell), a roving reporter

Liver Flavoured Dog Treats:

1 cup rolled oats

1 cup all purpose flour

half a pound of chicken livers (or beef liver) rinsed and trimmed

2 large eggs

1 tablespoon vegetable oil, or more as needed.

Method: Preheat oven 325 degrees F (165 degrees C). Grease 9-inch square baking dish and line with parchment paper. Add oats to the bowl of a food processor, pulse until finely chopped, 10-15 seconds. Transfer oats to a large bowl and mix in flour. Place livers in the food processor and process until smooth 10 – 15 seconds. Add eggs and blend until well combined, about 10 secs. Add oil and process until incorporated. Add liver mixture to oat and flour mixture. Stir until well blended. Spoon into the prepared baking dish. Bake in the preheated oven until firm to the touch but not hard and crispy 30 – 40 minutes. Remove from the oven and let completely cool before cutting into 50 pieces.

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Travels from Dulverton: Chapter 7

With a promising start in June, it seemed no sooner had summer started, once the schools broke up, than it nose-dived into a swimming pool of

monotonous dreary wet days through most of July and August. At one stage, we had thought it would be fun to listen to the rain pummel the van roof as we snuggled up inside, although we never actually got round to it.

September was a different kettle of fish altogether. I celebrated my half-century in the blazing heat of a super hot summer day: sweltering top temperatures that lasted late into the evening, only to be superseded by a sudden down pour of warm rain as we walked home in the early hours. The distinctive smell of rain on warm tarmac, 'petrichor' from the ancient Greek word *petra* meaning rock and *ichor*, the liquid that flows in the veins of the Gods.

Getting ready to settle in for the shorter days and darker nights, we were happy and relieved to join The Bridge reopening. It's

such all venue for offering menu are publiched that it alley is be this has been Interestit bowling from the skittles, County the centuried boss plain a team up by his The skittles.

such an important venue for Dulverton, offering a great new menu and traditional pub charm. There has been a rumour the skittles is going to reopened this has still not confirmed. Interestingly, ten-pin bowling originates from the sport of Somerset one of trendsetters centuries ago. My boss plays regularly in a team that was set up by her grandma. The skittle alleys are

or were located in pubs, different counties having their own versions. In Dorset, they play Dorset Flop. Similar to skittles, players wear elbow and knee pads and follow through behind the ball, with their body collapsing prone to the floor head to head with the fallen skittles. There is a league; competition is serious but friendly, and keeps families and friends entertained through the winter months, enjoying a pint, a chat, and the warmth of the crackling fire at the same time.

We decided on a last blast in the van. Simonsbath is not too far away but is home to the Exmoor Forest Inn, which is self-sufficient in sourcing the finest and well treated longhorn beef and lamb from its own farm. The inn is also launching a farm shop, offering a butchery and locally produced groceries. We parked up for the night having booked a table for lunch. Matt had the most delicious cottage pie of his life, bursting with tasty, savoury beef mince, and topped with a generous portion of Parmesan-infused creamy mash. Their thrice-roasted potatoes with sorrel and garlic mayo were a triumph, as was the smoked goat's cheese spelt risotto with toasted walnuts and spinach.

The following day we headed to Putsborough Beach on the North Devon coast at the south end of Woolacombe Beach, one of Matt's favourite surfing haunts. The water clear, crisp, and clean; its straight-edged waves cutting along the shoreline ensured a satisfying surf upon their crest.

I have started a beekeeping course. I have been meaning to for a while so I am happy to get going. As part of this I have also started writing a blog, you can follow me at 1humanbeeing.wordpress.com — a combination of my beekeeping journey, the wonders of the natural world, and its magical healing powers. There are also lots of other people writing interesting content that you can follow.

So, this being the last edition of *Exmoor News* for 2023, it's a goodbye from me, and a goodbye from him. Have a wonderful Yuletide and we'll see you again in 2024!

Mary Ford

Photos: Mathew Ford

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