Heavitree Local History Society

Newsletter No. 73 **June 2018**

FORTHCOMING HLHS MEETINGS AND EVENTS - WHAT'S IN STORE?

Tue 5th Jun 2018
'Alehouses and Drinking Culture'
A look back at what was going on in our public houses in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, drawing on extensive research in Exeter and beyond to suggest what might have been happening in Heavitree's inns.
- Dr Mark Hailwood (Bristol University)

Sat 7th Jul 2018
Boundary Walk. Leave from Livery Dole at 9.00am prompt. This year those who wish to stop half-way round at Honiton Road, can complete the route on the following Saturday 14th, when the second part will start at 10.00am. The whole route is of 14.75 miles; doing it in two stages will be 7.75 miles and 7 miles, the speed of walk will be at the slowest walker's pace.

Tue 4th Sep 2018
AGM followed by a talk on Heavitree Pleasure Ground by Parklife Heavitree

Tue 4th Dec 2018
'Mobs, crowds and the outcasts in Exeter' - Todd Gray

Tue 5th Mar 2019
To be announced

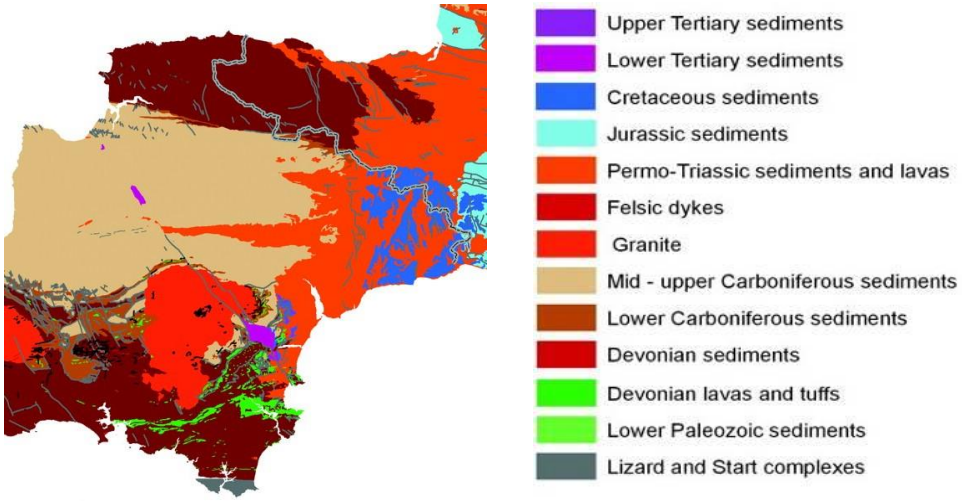
Tue 4th Jun 2019
'From Exeter to Heavitree by Tram' - Dr Julia Neville

All meetings start at 7.30pm (apart from Boundary Walk) and are held in the Rifford Room at Heavitree Parish Church.

John Allan - Heavitree Stone and the Heavitree Quarries

Our March meeting was in collaboration with Heavitree Squilometre as part of the Heavitree Quarry Trails community project. Our speaker, John Allan, is President of the Devon Archaeological Society and Consultant Archaeologist to the Dean and Chapter of Exeter Cathedral. He is also an honorary university fellow of the Archaeology Department of Exeter University. For 20 years he was Curator of Antiquities at the Royal Albert Memorial Museum. His talk on Heavitree Stone was really interesting; it has made me, and I'm sure many other members, look at every wall I see in a different way! (Most of this write up is John's words, but I have also added in some of my own research)

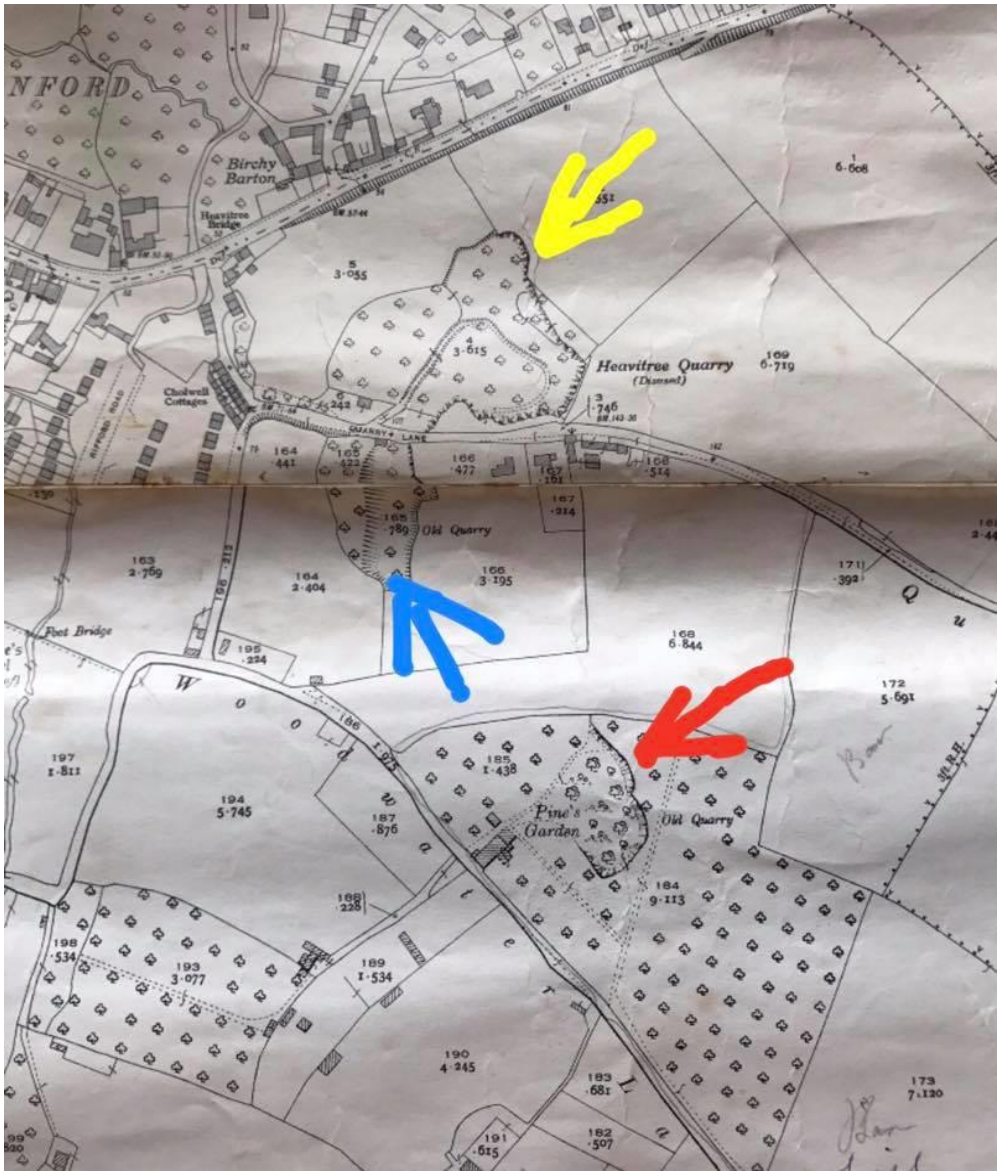
What is Heavitree Stone?



John began by explaining that Devon is one of the most interesting counties geologically, supplying an amazing variety of building stones. This fundamentally affected the style and type of buildings that were built. During the Permo-Triassic period, around 280 million years ago, the climate was like that of the Sahara Desert today. Around the time that Dartmoor's tors were being formed, seasonal flash floods swept large quantities of sediment into the valleys and the plains fringing the deserts. As the stones within never had the chance to wear down, they remained angular and sharp. Despite being formed at the same time, the red sandstone from Dawlish area was pretty useless for building, whereas the breccia from the Heavitree area was much better; it can be found throughout Exeter and beyond.

Where were the quarries located?

Quarries were opened at Heavitree, Wonford, Whipton and Exminster, around 1350, and operated until the mid-19th century. The map below shows the location of quarries in the Quarry Lane area of Heavitree / Wonford. Lancaster Close, off Quarry Lane, (where Sparrows Crane Hire was formerly located) is actually sitting in



a disused quarry; several of the houses have a high quarry wall at the back of their gardens.

The former owner of the land on which the Woodwater Lane quarry was located

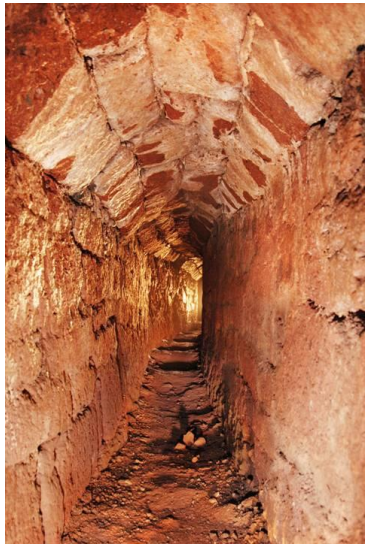
remembers it being used to bury waste, some of it which might now be valuable! On the Exeter Memories forum, he said 'I vividly remember a couple of V8 ford pilots that were driven up to the quarry. The chap just took the batteries off the cars and left; they got buried a few days later- that was in the early 1960's. I don't think they built any houses over the actual quarry; that was left as a play area to the rear of the school.... '

The quarry in Exminster was located just over the Countess Weir bridge and produced a stone almost identical to that of Heavitree. Exminster was a good spot as it was close to the river. Transport was vitally important; it cost more to transport the stone than to quarry and dress it!

When and where was Heavitree Stone used?

Heavitree Stone has been in use for a very long period. People long ago, who had an intimate knowledge of the countryside, would have found it; there is evidence that from early on people sought it out. Exeter was an important market for stone by the late Saxon period. The best quality of stone was imported from France (Caen limestone - there is some in Heavitree church), Beer or Salcombe and there was lots of use volcanic stone. The Saxons were not afraid to transport stone! The Romans didn't really use Heavitree stone, preferring volcanic material (for example from Rougement area).

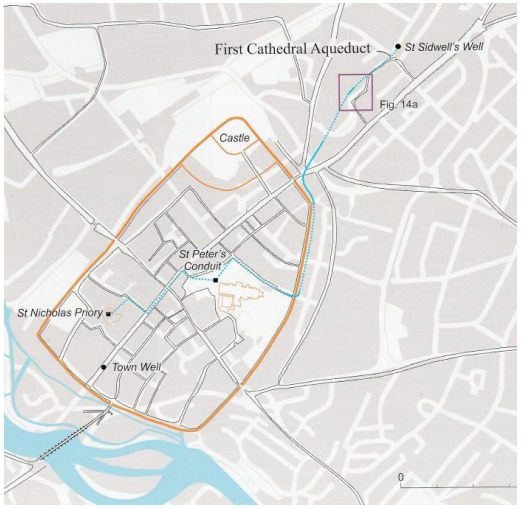
The type of stone from which a building is constructed is fundamental in distinguishing its age. We can roughly say that pre-1350, most Exeter buildings would have been made from volcanic stone rubble; not all faces would be dressed. For example, the early Exe Bridge was made from rubble with purple volcanic arches. St Pancras church, built in the early 1200s, was made from red sandstone (probably from Exe Estuary) and purple volcanic material. It does in fact have a few bits of Heavitree Stone rubble mixed in; it is typical of the early period when it wasn't intensively quarried, but people were using whatever was to hand.



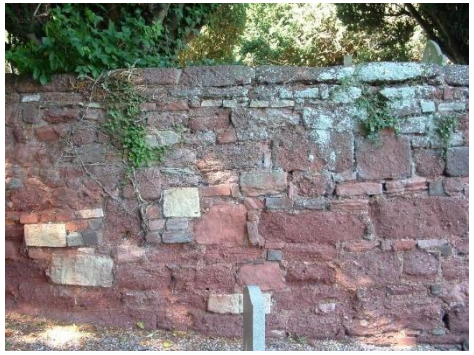
The first recorded use of Heavitree Stone was in the Underground passages dating to 1349. Post-1350 and through the 1400s, there was a great re-building and flowering of masonry skills after the devastation

of the Black Death. There was a pride in workmanship and in re-building the city. The use of Heavitree Stone ashlar was connected with a big increase in the quality of building. Huge blocks were available, and it was regarded as a real showpiece.

A crucial source for ascertaining when Heavitree Stone really got going is the Cathedral fabric rolls. The one place from which accounts remain is the Cathedral; Exeter happens to have the best collection of rolls of all the English Cathedrals, may be even Northern Europe. There are hundreds of entries of building stone (all in Latin). They show that in the 1340s there is sudden evidence of stone being brought in from Whipton. A lot of stone could be moved by pack-horse, but in this case it could have been cart loads. The cost of transport included the cost of repairing the cart, as the weight of the stone often destroyed it! In 1349-50 there is a large entry: 650 loads were conveyed! Although the city used small amounts prior to this, e.g. individual blocks are embedded in the Cathedral [see Chapter House image (right)] this was a huge quantity. For some reason, the Cathedral was required to repair the city wall by the East Gate (where Boots is today). It seems that this may have been because the Cathedral had decided to simplify its water supply (previously taken from St Sidwells well and carried around the city by conduit to Cathedral Close) by cutting through the East gate, hence all the repairs and stone required.



Heavitree Stone's heyday was in the 15th and 16th centuries, which is when we'd see the very large, uniform, squared-off blocks. We only have to look at churches dating from that time to see that it was the preferred choice in Exeter. St Mary Steps is built from grand Heavitree ashlar, as is St Stephen's, and the tower of St Martin's; Heavitree's St Clare's Chapel is a lovely example. Sadly, St Michael's church is made from limestone, not Heavitree Stone, but perhaps it used to be. When it was demolished by the Victorians, part of the old church probably went to form the boundary wall between the two graveyards, which contains a whole mix of interesting materials: Heavitree Stone, red sandstone, volcanic blocks and medieval floor tiles!



Another place in Exeter where we can see Heavitree Stone from the Middle Ages is in the old city walls. Although in places the Heavitree Stone is actually beneath the Roman volcanic stone, this does not mean that it is older, but is actually because the older wall is on top of the newer part; the ground would've been much higher on both sides, so when this was levelled, would've been underpinned with Heavitree stone. The wall near Trinity Street is a good example of this.

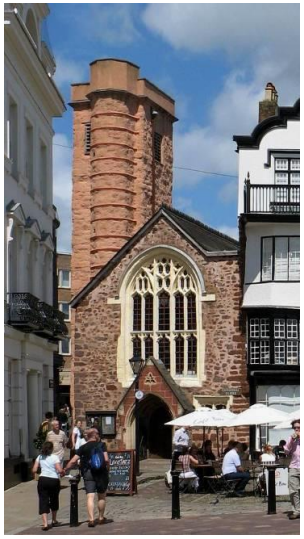
Wynards almshouses on Magdalen Street are an example of high quality building with Heavitree Stone but, for the most part, as we moved into the 17th and 18th century, the tendency was towards using rubble again. It was often covered in render – as the Devon and Exeter Institute was.

The Squilometre Quarry Group explained that 'Heavitree stone was used so ubiquitously through the city that its remnant walls act as a kind of red skeleton showing us the shape of our city from 500-600 years ago.' Much of the stone that has been recorded by the group takes the form of low, basal courses that would've been beneath traditional cob or wooden structures. Some interesting questions have been raised through the survey, such as why Rowancroft has a curved boundary wall, and whether Roseland Avenue once bounded an archery field. It was through following the boundary walls of Heavitree Stone in the Wonford area that the *Squilometre* team discovered the previously excavated site of the Great House, Wonford (one of the great Anglo-Saxon hundreds).

As we begin to move further from Heavitree, we see some wonderful examples of Heavitree Stone, for example Alphington, Kenn, Kenton and Exminster churches. As we move out again, the materials used become more mixed. Both Pinhoe and Topsham churches used a whole mixture of stones and Clyst Honiton used Heavitree Stone in front, but a real mix behind. Broadclyst is so close, but already the stone has changed to another, once local, source - it is made of volcanic stone, as is Ide.

By the time we reach Aylesbeare, we see a progressively smaller usage of Heavitree Stone: as we get into East Devon there was a struggle to find a good building stone. Even though it's only about six miles from Exeter, the materials are of a much poorer quality, with small bits of Heavitree Stone mixed in with inferior local material.

Heavitree Stone in the 21st Century



Although Heavitree Stone was a high-quality material, it is prone to weathering, after 800 years of exposure. Older buildings would've had no damp course, so water rises up from the ground, then oozes out and weathers it. This explains why we see most buildings are only weathered up to a certain height. Putting cement onto Heavitree stone is the worst thing that you can do; there are better ways, like the lime putty mortar which has been applied to the towers of St Stephen's and St Martin's churches in Exeter, then coloured pink to blend in a bit more. It looks odd, but it's a way of protecting it.

If you demolish any building now, you can't bury the Heavitree Stone; it needs to be saved to repair buildings in the future. The council does keep some, but perhaps not as much as it should, for a material that weathers quite badly.

Where to find out more?

The Squilometre 'Quarry Pod' has worked incredibly hard to research the quarries / local Heavitree Stone, and have a few exciting projects in the pipeline for this summer and beyond:

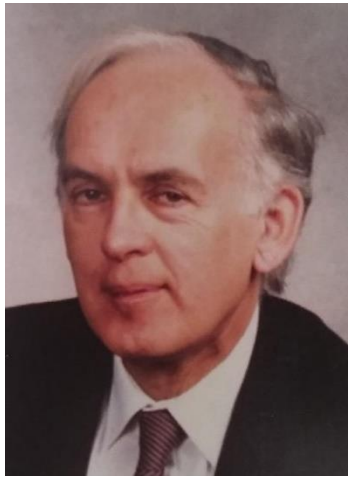
1) *Q is for Quarries* - A Placeify, digital Exhibition Trail featuring and giving interesting details about 26 different Heavitree Stone across the City. These will be identified through a single letter so that people can design their own Trails, perhaps spelling out their own name! The Placeify Exhibition is designed to be access through hand-held devices and will include audio.

2) Suggested Trails – The team are also producing suggested Trails in leaflet form for people to pick up and design fun and informative walks for all the family that links different sites together to tell the story of Heavitree Stone.

3) Performance Trails – There will also be two *Squilometre*-style roaming performances, creatively celebrating the fascinating history of Heavitree's very own stone. The first will be in Heavitree on Sunday 8th July – box office opens soon. The second, on Exeter's historic Quay, will be a fortnight later.

Sally Robinson

Remembering David Morrish 1931 – 2018



David Morrish, co-founder of Heavitree Local History Society and our first Chairman sadly died on 14th February this year.

A County and City Liberal Party Councillor for Heavitree for three decades, David was widely known as 'Mr Heavitree'.

He always had a passionate interest in the local history of Heavitree. In a Heavitree Liberal Newsletter of April 1968 David wrote an article about Heavitree in Australia. Here two of his great interests came together – geography and history.

The newsletter said that David 'makes a spare time hobby of recording aspects of Heavitree's history. As a geographer and Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, he has been busy tracking down Heavitree's Australian 'twin''.

Given this level of interest in local history and his 'can do' attitude it is no surprise that David supported the formation of a Local History Society. Together with Den Perrin (whose death on 18th November was reported in the previous newsletter) they drew up plans and David hosted an initial meeting at his Birchy Barton Hill home on 12th August 1998.

David and Den's enthusiasm was infectious, and the Society was quickly inaugurated that October. Den was elected Secretary and David the Chairman, a post he held for 12 years.

David immediately got down to work on issues the Society could research and discuss. He wrote a paper for the Society's first meeting suggesting a number of themes. These included: Heavitree Urban District Council (1896-1913), schools, origins of street names, buildings in the conservation area, census returns, the cemetery, old newspaper reports, breweries and the churches.

Particularly popular were David's guided tours of the Fore Street area. The first one was held on Sunday 2nd July 2000; an amazing 83 people turned up. The Society newsletter reported 'Despite the numbers and the constant roar of traffic, David Morrish managed to both entertain and enlighten all those present'.

It was fitting that the Society's meeting on 6th March was packed to the rafters. Those present held a minute's silence to remember David and then took the opportunity to share personal memories.

Members stressed David's role in supporting and participating in Heavitree Community Association.

Secretary Terry Bound recalled David's role as a lecturer at St Luke's teacher training college. David led a party including Terry over the old bridge at Clyst St Mary to the

banks of the river Axe. There they saw all the layers in the shingle cliff and David said "Gentleman this is geography being enacted before your very eyes". Terry said he will never forget those words.

Terry also paid tribute to David's role in researching the historic boundary of Heavitree Parish and how Heavitree Urban District Council celebrated Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897 by erecting additional boundary stones and reviving the beating of the bounds ceremony when some even rode round on horseback.

Society representatives attended David's funeral on 28th February.

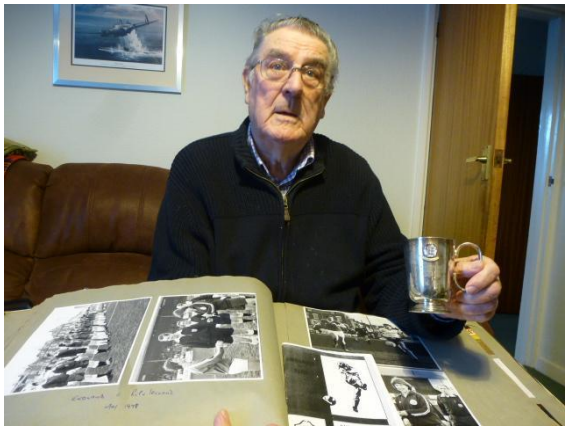
David Morrish RIP.

* The Society was very saddened to hear of the death of David's wife Joan on 31st March just six weeks after David's death. Joan was also a big supporter of the Local History Society as well as being a long serving local councillor and teacher.

It was fitting that Martin Weiler gave a talk on Heavitree's history to the residents of Pegasus Court on 9th May. In recent years Joan had lived at Pegasus Court, so Martin and the residents were able to remember Joan with fondness.

Martin Weiler

Remembering Ron Crabb



Ron Crabb, long-time resident of Kingsway, Heavitree and outstanding contributor to an amazing array of roles, died on 23rd April, aged 87. He had been due to speak at the Society's September meeting about his life of rich experiences. Ron had given Society members a guided visit around the Guildhall on 8th March 2016. Our newsletter reported that Ron had given a 'lively and knowledgeable tour'.

It says it all about Ron's stature in the City that his funeral was held in (an appropriately packed) Exeter Cathedral on 22nd May. Well-known Heavitree figure, Rev Paul Morrell, was one of those officiating. The Eulogy was given by Todd Gray.

Originally from Dorset, Ron first came to Exeter in 1949 as a young Royal Marine. He served with them for eight years mainly in the Mediterranean aboard HMS Cleopatra and HMS Ark Royal. Despite then becoming a civilian he continued to act as a mentor to new recruits and was active in the Exeter Royal Marine Association branch.

Ron joined the Prison Service and worked at Haldon Camp and Exeter Prison. He had a double life as a leading football referee becoming the first and only Football League referee from Exeter to officiate at the top level in England and in Europe. The images here show Ron, and one from his scrapbook showing when he refereed a women's international between England and Republic of Ireland at St James' Park, Exeter.

In 1994 he became the City's Mace Sergeant serving a total of 23 Mayors and Lord Mayors of Exeter, only hanging up his robes in 2017. In 2014 he was elected Prime Warden for Great Britain, the highest position within the Guild of Mace Bearers. He was made a Freeman of Exeter in January this year.

If all this was not enough Ron was active in the local twinning movement - visiting Exeter's twin city, Yaroslav, 34 times. Much respected there, he was awarded the Russian Veteran's Medal. Back in the UK he received the Imperial Service Medal and British Empire Medal.

Ron gave great service to the local scouting movement receiving a Certificate of Merit from the Exeter 3rd Scout Group.

I first met Ron in 1978 when I interviewed him for the Exeter Flying Post about his refereeing career. His spirit shone through as he summed up his football journey.

"When I think back to the beginning: of hitchhiking to grounds when there were no buses; of having to walk from Cowley Bridge to ref at Cheriton Fitzpaine; of herding cows off the pitch at Lapford (and all the pats they left behind); and this in the cold and wet and all for about five bob; and then the other extreme to my trips abroad, the marvellous people I have met, and the Manchester Uniteds and West Hams, then I have to say that I wouldn't have missed it for the world. Money just doesn't buy the memories that going from the bottom to the top has provided. It's been a dream".

A true Heavitree legend. Ron Crabb RIP.

Martin Weiler

Lost Shops of Heavitree

Throughout the 1800's to the 1950's, independent shops could be found on almost every street. There were no supermarkets, and in Heavitree you would have had to go all the way into Exeter to visit larger shops like the Devon and Somerset Stores, Marks and Spencer or Woolworths. Most people would visit shops daily, and were served at the counter, rather than helping themselves. Goods would be weighed, sliced and parcelled up by hand, until branded, ready-packaged goods began to become available.

Rationing due to WWII tied people to their local corner shops, but by the 1950s, self-service stores (later known as supermarkets) had begun to open. This, in addition to more and more people owning fridges and cars, led to the idea of the 'weekly shop', and the beginning of the decline of the small corner shops.

Heavitree holds the ghosts of many lost shops. Many live on only in the memories of people who used to shop there (for example the corner shop that used to be at the bottom of my street, Regent Square. It shows no evidence of ever being anything other than a house, but many older residents still remember shopping there). Others still reveal clues that they were once shops, be it in the shape of a window, or an old advertisement on the side of the building.

I've put together a few examples for you **(please note - I might not be right about all of them, and will certainly have missed many out!)**

After searching the Exeter Memories Facebook page, I've also included some people's memories of shops that have since disappeared. I haven't included Fore Street, as we have our retailing records for that (available on our website) and wanted to concentrate on smaller, corner shops. Thank you to Ray Hall for taking some of the photos, and for helping me identify many of the shops.

Do you remember shopping in any of these, or recall any others?

BAKER STREET

- A shop at the top which was run by a Jewish lady and her husband.

BARRACK ROAD

- Dykes.

BONNINGTON GROVE

- A little grocery shop at the bottom. Called Mizens in the 50s and 60s. I think it became H A & M A Jones grocery.

CHARD ROAD

- Tellings grocery shop on corner with Nicholas Avenue (photo on the left) 'J.P. Telling did some super magic tricks, and apparently had half a thumb missing. He also had a hobby of breeding exotic fish. As a kid I could only ever afford a basic goldfish from him, but they generally lived a long time.' Later known as Chard Road News.
- Chards sweet shop on corner of Whipton Lane, now Quickprint. At various times run by Col. Himbury, Philps, Bissex. Also sold fireworks. At one time had a small library you could borrow books from!

- Dawsons grocery, to the right of Chards (photo on the right). Existed until early 2000s, when Quickprint expanded from neighbouring premises.
- Chard Road Post Office on the right hand corner of Chard Road and Nicholas Road, opposite Tellings. (photo below)

EAST WONFORD HILL

- The former chemists on East Wonford Hill, now an aquatics shop (photo below).
- Fitzroys 'the little shop with the big stock.'

FIRST AVENUE

- A grocers and butchers.

HOKER ROAD

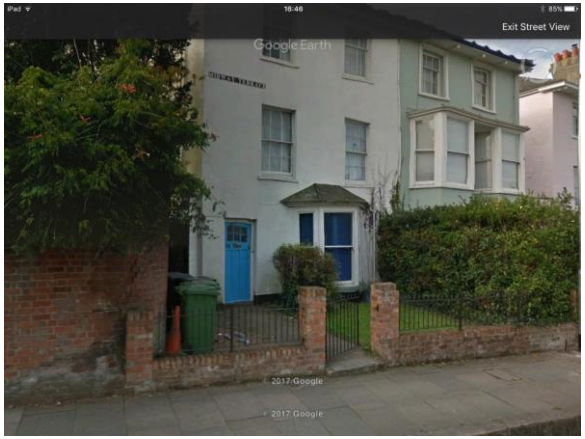
- David's.

HOMEFIELD ROAD

- Capels or Castles, then Fortes Chip Shop - open until around 1970 or so. One lady remembers 'Used to get 6d worth of chips and gribbles after Guides.'
- A bakers - short lived 'but the lady made the BEST doughnuts.'
- Hodgsons shoe repairs. Just around the corner from Fore Street, by the church. 'He used to sit in the window of the shop with his assistant, next up to Thornes'

Ironmongers. When he spoke to us young boys he always had a mouthful of tacks that he took out one at a time to nail in the shoes. He also had a cigarette in his mouth at the same time.'

LADYSMITH ROAD



- Post Office and Newsagent (closed 2015).
- Yandells sweet shop, opposite the Post Office.
- Roseland Stores - homemade ice-pops for 5p.

LIVERY DOLE

- Clarks and Bonners

LOWER AVENUE

- A joinery workplace behind the post office.

MIDWAY TERRACE

- Sutton dairy/grocer/greengrocer. Mr Sutton had a milk round (green house on right of photo above).

NEWCOMBE STREET

- Newcombe Dairy - sold ice-lollies in 1970s.

NORMANDY ROAD

- At the top of Normandy Road was the Drill Hall (photo to the left), used in the war by the home guard, later bought by Leylands Paints which sold wallpaper and paint for some years, then sold and converted into flats as shown now.

NORTH STREET

- Moores pork butcher - sold 'the best pies and pasties.'

OAKFIELD STREET

- A barbers run from the front room. The owner also ran a newspaper delivery service.

PARK ROAD

- Stamps, ' they would deliver for you; I used to see people sat on a chair while they put the groceries in their bag for them. They did boxes of broken biscuits as well. Anything loose was wrapped in brown paper.'

REGENT SQUARE

- There was a shop at the bottom of the left side of the square, which has now become the only double fronted house.

ROSELAND CRESCENT

South Lawn Terrace end - The Candy Shop (photo right, house on the left). Later moved to South Lawn Terrace and became Robinson's News. 'Rainbow sherbet in cone shaped bag for 1d; fruit salads were 4 for 1d on way to school.'

- Thackers (photo right, house on the right) 'I used to deliver customers' grocery orders on Saturday mornings for 3/6 + tips. (1950 - 1953)' ' My mum used to get her shopping there, it took all afternoon!' After this it was the Roseland Dairy, then Roseland Stores (?) selling groceries and a greengrocery. Closed 1982.

- Magnet Stores (photo to the left)- opposite the other shops and turning into Roseland Avenue. Sold groceries, fruit and veg in the early 1960s.

SALTERS ROAD

- At the junction with Peryam Crescent was a shop built in the 30s. It was initially two shops owned by the Pike family - a fish and chip shop and a grocers. The Co-op took over and changed the chip shop into a butchers, which they later closed when the two shops merged, and counter service was replaced by self service.

- Across the road was a Wickhams paper shop and Mr Coneybeare, a chemist who apparently used to make his own tinctures on the premises.

- Tom the butchers - opposite an orchard 'Remember PC Gumm catching me scrumping in there and took me back home to Peryam Crescent. God I got a hiding!!!'
- Dykes general store, previously Tootell's shop (picture to the right)

'I was remembering Tootells shop, when we were kids we always called it Tootell's Hill.

Used to go there a lot, can remember being fascinated when the lady used to make 'cones' from paper for our sweets, feeling rich if I had a penny-worth instead of a farthing or halfpenny.'
- Opposite Dykes a handyman store.

SHELTON PLACE

- An off-license run by Mrs Stuckey.
- Opposite The Windsor Heavitree Handyman 'I remember taking mowers, scissors and other tools to be sharpened up the little alley opposite the Windsor Castle, the old chap always used to do magic with coins for my kids , lovely man.'

SIVELL PLACE

- Gupa P - a chap who sold cheap car tyres!
- Panel Beater Spray Workshop - next door to Gupa P, run by Steve Norman Plum.

SOUTH LAWN TERRACE

- Robinson's News was previously a video shop, Shauls bakery, hairdressers and gym.

STUART ROAD

- Big grocery shop called Birds where children used to return Corona bottles to top up their pocket money! On the South Lawn Terrace end.
- Ropers, first on the right coming in from Hanover Road.

WARWICK ROAD

- Courtney and Son butchers.

Sally Robinson

NON HISTORY SOCIETY EVENTS

Alternate Fridays 10-12 - Heavitree Friendly Library - St Michael's Church. All welcome for books, tea, coffee cake and story time.

Tues 5th Jun 2018 - Friends of Higher Cemetery - Jan Stewer. A talk by Rev. Chris Pidsley about A. J. Coles and Jan Stewer.

Wed 13th Jun 2018 - Exeter History Society - Women and the Vote. A talk by Dr Julia Neville at Jurys Inn.

Tues 3rd Jul 2018 - Friends of Higher Cemetery - Sold by Force: A talk by David Force, estate agent.

Wed 8th Aug 2018 - Exeter History Society - Exeter Workmens' Dwellings. A talk by Richard Holladay

Wed 8th Aug 2018 - Friends of Higher Cemetery - History of Slater's Nurseries. A talk by Graham Sclater.

Sat 15th Sep 2018 - Friends of Higher Cemetery - The American Soldier. A talk by Michael Parrott.

Sat 6th Oct 2018 - Friends of Higher Cemetery - Walter Daw. A talk by Christine Trigger.

Sun 11th Nov 2018 - The End of World War 1. A talk by Todd Gray.

If you know of any events that you think members might appreciate, please contact me and I will include them in this section.

This Newsletter was published by the Heavitree Local History Society
Editor: Sally Robinson, 48 Regent Square, Exeter, EX1 2RL
email: sallykernick2@ yahoo.co.uk
Tel: 01392 757004
www.heavitreelocalhistorysociety.co.uk