



The People of Devon and Their Identity: From Palaeolithic Roots to Tourism

Saturday 9 May 2026 9:30am registration – 4pm
Torquay Museum, 529 Babbacombe Road,
Torquay, TQ1 1HG

The Devonshire Association's President, Nick Powe DL invites you to his 2026 Presidential Symposium on the theme of 'The People of Devon and Their Identity: From Palaeolithic Roots to Tourism'



Nick is well known to the Devonshire Association as the former custodian of Kents Cavern prehistoric caves, which he ran from 2000-2023. He took up the role following a career in international finance and was the 5th generation of the Powe family to do so since the Victorian Excavations which provided scientific proof of the antiquity of humankind in the cavern. Nick encouraged a renewed interest in scientific research at the caves and obtained a number of Gold tourism awards including the Winner of Winners at the 2023 Devon Awards for Excellence. As the owner of such a significant site, he was a key player in the successful bid to obtain UNESCO status for the Torbay area. He chairs the management organisation of the English Riviera UNESCO Global Geopark, a designation covering the three towns, and marine areas, of Torquay, Paignton and Brixham. He sits on the European Geoparks Network Coordination Committee and undertakes Geopark evaluation missions around the World for UNESCO.

He has recently been appointed chair of Torquay Museum to oversee a change management programme to secure the Museum's future. He is a board director of **VisitDevon**, sits on Exeter Cathedral's Enterprise Board and is a Deputy Lieutenant for Devon.

About the Symposium

The symposium explores the rich and evolving identity of Devon's people from the Palaeolithic era to today. Through archaeology, history and cultural studies we will examine how geography, migration, trade, and socio-economic shifts shaped Devon's distinct regional character. The event will highlight key transitions, from early hunter-gatherers and Roman influences to medieval trade networks and the rise of tourism, offering a cohesive narrative of Devon's cultural legacy.

The Symposium is open to all, whether you are already a member of the Devonshire Association or someone who is interested in discovering more about Devon's heritage and the Association's activities. The event is likely to be popular so advance booking is essential (see over for details).

Tickets at £27.50 each for DA members and £32.50 for non members to include morning coffee, lunch, afternoon tea and free access to the museum galleries. Non-DA members are welcome.

devonassoc.org.uk

PROGRAMME FOR THE DAY

- 9:30 – 10:00am REGISTRATION and Coffee, , Torquay Museum
- 10:00 – 10:10am Welcome and introduction
Nick Powe DL, DA President
- 10:10 – 10:45am Same Caves, Different People:
Kents Cavern Through Deep Time
Dr Helen Fewlass, Lecturer in Archaeology,
University of Bristol
- 10:45 – 11:20am Roman Devon: Integration and resistance
Professor Stephen Rippon, Professor of Landscape
Archaeology, University of Exeter
- 11:20 – 11:35am BREAK
- 11:35 – 12:10pm The Archaeology of Regional Cultures in Medieval
Devon
John Allan, Exeter Cathedral Archaeologist
- 12:10 – 12:45pm New Horizons and Early Modern Devon
Dr Todd Gray MBE, Historian and writer
- 12:45 – 1:45pm LUNCH
- 1:45 – 2:20pm 'No lack of objects of curiosity': Travellers, Tourists
and Devon's cultural identity
Dr Rosemary Yallop, Architectural Historian
- 2:20 – 3:00pm PANEL DISCUSSION
- 3:00 – 3:30pm CREAM TEA

Images courtesy of the speakers
and Torquay Museum.

Dr Helen Fewlass



Professor
Stephen Rippon



John Allan



Dr Todd Gray



Dr Rosemary
Yallop



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I/We would like to book _____ tickets at £27.50 each for DA members and £32.50 for non-members.

Remittance enclosed for £ _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ Email _____

Do you have specific dietary requirements? _____

Make your cheque payable to the **Devonshire Association** and send to: The Executive Secretary,
(The Devonshire Association), Unit 10, Chitterley Business Centre, Silverton, Exeter, EX5 4DB.

Alternatively, you can book online at devonassoc.org.uk/booking

Cancellations received two weeks or more before the event start date will be refunded
in full, up to one week before a 50% refund will apply, no refund will normally
be offered for cancellations received within one week of the start
of the event.

Devon: our past, our future, our passion

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