

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 29

MAY 2026

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Latest News of the Museum

Exmouth's very own Shirley Valentine

Pauline Collins was born in Exmouth on 3rd September 1940. Her mother was a schoolteacher, and her father was a headmaster. With Irish ancestry on both sides of her family, she was brought up as a Catholic. Pauline attended school in London and later went on to study at drama school. Before turning to acting, she also worked as a teacher until 1962, when she took part in her first stage performance.

In 1966, Pauline made her film debut in *Secrets of a Windmill Girl*. She appeared in several episodes of the iconic *Doctor Who* and was offered the opportunity to continue in the series as a new companion, but she declined the role. Her early television appearances included the medical soap *Emergency – Ward 10* and the pilot episode of *The Liver Birds* in 1969. Pauline Collins later went on to star in the acclaimed drama series *Upstairs, Downstairs*, among many other productions.

She achieved widespread recognition for her most celebrated role as Shirley in *Shirley Valentine*, a performance that brought her international acclaim. Pauline married fellow actor John Alderton in 1969. Together, they lived in Hampstead, London, and raised their three children. However, in 1964, prior to her marriage, Pauline gave birth to a daughter named Louise, whom she placed for adoption. The two were reunited 21 years later in an emotional meeting. Pauline later documented this deeply personal experience in her autobiographical book, *Letter to Louise*, which reflects on their separation and eventual reunion.

Sadly in November 2025 Pauline passed away having battled against Parkinson disease, at the age of 85.

In an Exmouth local paper the Town Mayor had said "he was saddened to hear of the death of the actress Pauline Collins, adding that he was "proud" to call her "one of ours".



Pictures from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Diary Dates May 2026

Monday 4th May 2026

May Bank Holiday Museum open as Normal 10.00 - 16.00

Thursday 21st May 2026 Museum Coffee Morning

10.15 - 12.15 at the Axis Centre, Market Street, (behind the cinema)

Monday 25th May 2026

Spring Bank Holiday Museum open as normal 10.00 - 16.00

Thursday 28th May 2026 Museum Quiz night

7.15 for 7.45 start, at the Wings Bar Imperial Road, Exmouth

Community Displays, “Battle of the Somme”,

This year we are pleased to have a display put on by the Royal British Legion, in one of our cabinets in the Cottage gallery, “The Battle of The Somme”.

The Battle of the Somme, Fought from July 1st to November 13th, 1916, it was a costly and largely unsuccessful battle resulting in significant casualties during World War 1.

There were over 1 million men wounded or killed, and while British and French forces managed to penetrate over 6 miles into German-occupied territory, this was their largest territorial gain since the First Battle of Marne in 1914. Ultimately, the battle became a symbol of the futility and high human cost of war.

opening day of the Battle of Albert. The attack was made by five divisions of the French Sixth Army on the east side of the Somme, eleven British division of the Fourth Army north of the Somme to Serre and two divisions of the Third Army opposite Gommecourt, against the German Second Army of General Fritz von Below. On the south bank the German defence was made incapable of resisting another attack and a substantial retreat began, on the north bank the abandonment of Fricourt was ordered. The defenders on the commanding ground north of the road inflicted a huge defeat on the British infantry, who took an unprecedented number of casualties.

The Battle of the Somme lasted 141 days beginning with the

(This information was taken from Wikipedia)

Attendance figures each month

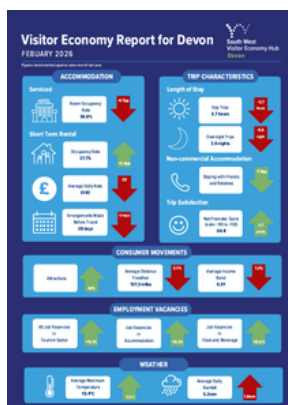
At the museum, we keep a daily record of visitor numbers. At the end of each month, these figures are submitted to a notational database for the South West. The February results combine our data with information collected from various other sources.

As the museum is classified under the “Attractions” category, it would normally be included in these figures. However, since we were not open in February, our data is not included in the results for that month.

Also, each month, we receive notifications from social media platforms and search engines such as Google, providing valuable insights into how

people are finding and interacting with our website. This information makes for particularly interesting reading, as it helps us understand how the public engages with the sites to which we subscribe.

On Facebook, over the past 28 days, of February we had: 19,450 views, 33% were 2/3 second views or more, 300 interactions, 684 engagements and now 1790 followers.



Volunteer of the year

Each year in June, as part of **Volunteers' Week**, ACED (Arts & Culture East Devon) hosts the ACED Volunteer of the Year awards. In 2025, Pete Hayes was nominated for the award, and in 2024, Jacky Stockhill was also nominated; both were runners-up.

This year, we are delighted to open this up to our volunteers to make their own nominations for a person they feel has gone above and beyond.

This year (nominations due before Thursday 7th May 2026) the Museum Committee decided to throw the nominations to All of the volunteers at Exmouth Museum & Heritage Centre.

If you would like to nominate one of the Volunteers you work with to be Honoured by ACED for 2026, please email Pete Hayes and/or Jacky and we will assist you to complete the form.

Nomminating is easy. Just submit up to 250 words about your volunteer and three words to describe them.

Deadline: Thursday 7 May, 5pm

