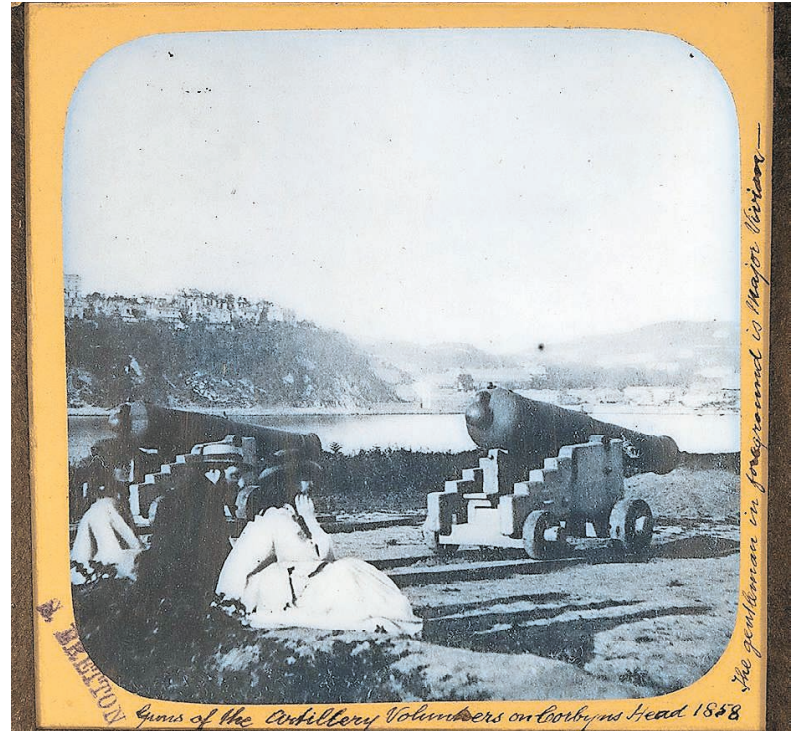




Castle Circus circa 1900 (PR32580)



Guns of the artillery volunteers on Corbyn Head from 1858. Seated in the foreground is Edward Vivian - a banker, magistrate, writer, artist, editor of the Torquay Directory and Major in the 4th Torquay Company Voluntary Artillery (PR26243)

Torquay Natural History Society creates Devon's first museum

On October 11, 1844, a group of friends met at Glen Cottage, Park Street and decided to found an institution with the aims of purchasing books on natural history and promoting the study of natural sciences.

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This became the Torquay Natural History Society. Among the 12 founding

members were the likes of William Pengelly, Edward Vivian, and Robert Battersby.

They very quickly decided to create a museum for Torquay.

Over its long history the society has had great influence on scientific thinking in Devon, especially the Torbay area, where the new scientific theories on the 'Antiquity of Man' were generally accepted by 1859 – almost 50 years before the rest of the country.

Little could the founding members have known that the society would continue to flourish right up until the present day – 176 years after its creation.

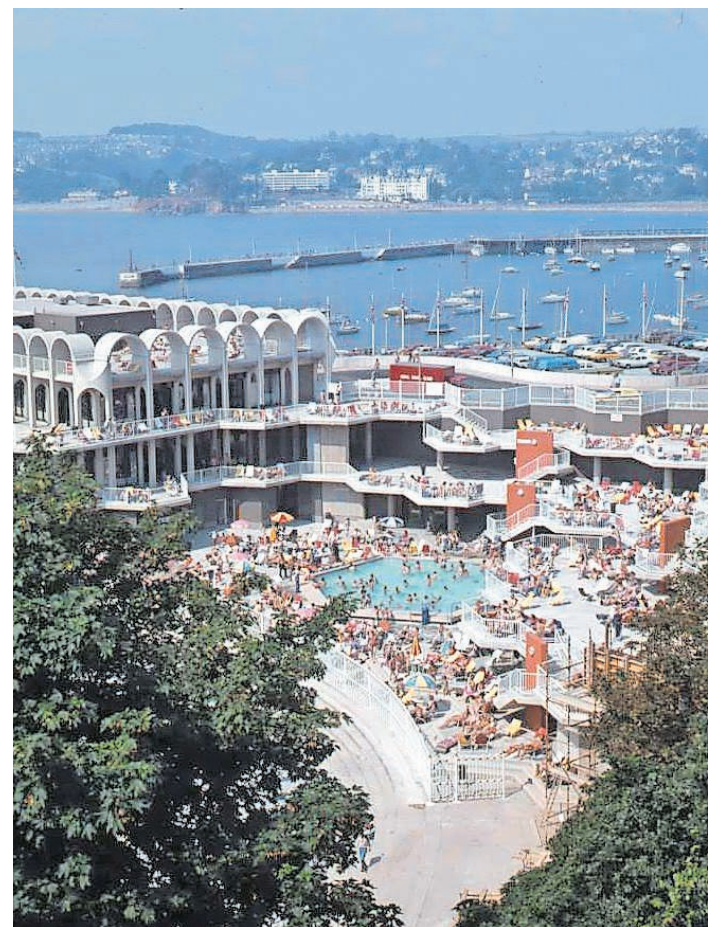
Today, the members are active in many different sections of the society and some play a crucial role in the running of the museum.

As well as organising an extensive range of events, rambles, lectures and fund raising activities, members also assist greatly in the day-to-day running of the museum, many being volunteers who take on such tasks as documentation, assisting in the shop or café; as well as guiding visitors.

Photographs from the museum's archive can be purchased by quoting their PR number to enquiries@torquaymuseum.org. The museum is a registered charity and the money raised from purchasing images goes to supporting vital work looking after the collections.



Corbyn Head in 1953 (PR4871)



Coral Island, Torquay (PR16960)

Pictures: ARCHANT