

**ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW SUMMARY FORM**

<b>Date of Interview</b>	29 August 2024
<b>Location of Interview</b>	Ilfracombe Museum, Ilfracombe, Devon
<b>Name of Interviewee</b>	Stephen Palmer
<b>Name of Interviewer</b>	Abi Obene, Sharyn Hedge
<b>Length of Interview</b>	00:38:20
<b>File format, storage format</b>	WAV 44.1/16 XY STEREO

**Tags:**

Ilfracombe Museum; Mervyn Palmer: Central America; Ilfracombe Field Club; Spreacombe Woods; The Ilfracombe Railway; Capstone

**Interviewee's wishes regarding interview use:**

None

**Interviewer's notes / any issues with recording:**

NOTE: The original interview was recorded in three parts which were edited together during post-production. Some timestamps on the original transcript may not correspond with the final recording on the website.

**Linked objects / photographs:**

A variety of photographs provided

**Key Themes and topics covered in interview**

**Timestamp on recording**

# Telling Our Stories Finding Our Roots

DEVON'S MULTICULTURAL HISTORY  
ILFRACOMBE

Stephen Talks about his father, Mervyn Palmer, the originator of Ilfracombe Museum, What led to the founding of the museum	[00:00:54]
The start of the Museum, His father's early travels to Central America	[00:03:28]
The extent of the Museum's collection, Why his father chose Ilfracombe	[00:06:16]
Stephen's father's manuscripts and plans to digitise, How his character comes across in the manuscripts	[00:08:50]
The extent of the manuscripts	[00:15:33]
Beyond the museum - Ilfracombe Field Club, Spreacombe Woods	[00:17:32]
Moving into the Ilfracombe section of the Gallery	[00:20:26]
The Ilfracombe Railway, Proponents and opposition, The Ilfracombe Riot	[00:22:00]
The effect of the railway on Ilfracombe - boost to tourism and trade	[00:27:10]
Tourism tails off in the 70s with competition from European package holidays, Sun recorder on the top of Capstone	[00:31:18]
The Railway is shut down, Leads to a downward spiral in the town	[00:32:47]
Would your father be proud of the museum?	[00:37:56]

## Interview Highlights:

Discussing Stephen's father - founder of the museum and why he retired early to Ilfracombe to set up the Museum **[00:00:54 - 00:08:41]**

The Museum as 'The world in one space', mention of Spearcombe woods and ancient standing stones **[00:15:58 - 00:19:17]**

Ilfracombe Railway, Ilfracombe as a tourist town **[00:22:00 - 00:30:10]**