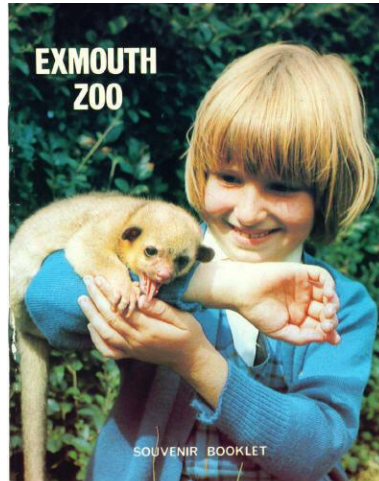


1952-1962 (1957)

Exmouth Zoo



<https://exmouthhistory.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/exmouthzooguide1977.jpg>

This building and some of the surrounding land housed Exmouth Zoo, which opened in 1957. In May 1961, there was a bad fire in which many birds and a number of reptiles died. Most of the other residents were saved, and one monkey took the opportunity to wander into town! The zoo housed a wide variety of animals, ranging from a fox cub and terrapins to monkeys, pumas and a five-foot long African python. There was a baboon who, although apparently a non-smoker, snatched a cigarette from a customer. At Christmas 1963, a couple of penguins decided to follow the example of the monkey after the fire. One was apprehended going for a stroll with a cat, but the other was spotted sailing past Teignmouth on a nine-foot plank, and eventually landed on a beach in the Isle of Wight some three months later. The zoo eventually closed in 1980.

The building itself was previously the clubhouse of Exmouth Golf Club, which, from 1884, had played on eighteen holes spread across the Maer and up Foxholes Hill. It was one of the founding clubs of the Devon Golf Union, and one of its members was Lionel Palairet, who had played Test cricket for England. In 1931, he became President of the English Amateur Golf Union, the highest position the sport has to offer. Devon's inter-club team championship is still played for the Palairet Trophy. Unfortunately, the club did not own the land and, as various bits were taken away from it over the years, it became impossible to keep going, and the course closed early in 1952.

Now, the building has become Exmouth Leisure Amusements.



Exmouth Journal

After the closure of the zoo, the site was occupied by “Family Fun”, from which it was a logical progression to Exmouth Amusements, providing for holidaymakers and locals alike a relaxing change from the searing heat of the beach, or even from the occasional shower of rain.