



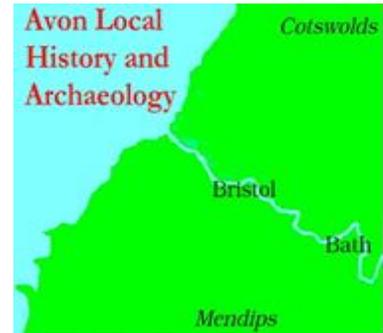
Not the Black Boy

**AVON LOCAL HISTORY AND
ARCHAEOLOGY**
registered charity no. 270930

**NEWSLETTER ONLINE
UPDATE
31 August 2017**

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CONTENTS

ALHA items

- Tell Bob
- AGM and Joe Bettey lecture
- Local history day 2018 call for papers
- Facebook
- Summer walks 2017
- B&AFHS fair 2017
- New Room, Bristol
- Archaeological day schools
- Oldwood pits open day
- CAG conference
- UWE IT consultancy
- CBA WW1 workshop
- S Glos C grants for trails

Events and sources

- *A Forgotten landscape*
- *Doors Open days*
- *Know Your Place*
- WsM museum reopens
- Staple Hill exhibition at Kingswood Museum
- Westbury on Trym church
- VCH Old Sodbury

Books etc noticed

Suspense

Commentary and responses

- POTUS in Bemi
- Blackboy Inn gets it wrong
- utopial

ALHA ITEMS

MEETINGS AND EVENTS OF MEMBER GROUPS AND SOCIETIES

ALHA publishes on its website, and tries to keep up to date, a list of talks and other events arranged by ALHA member groups and societies. This does depend, however, on information being supplied by member groups and societies, so if you are now arranging your meetings for your next year, please send your list to ALHA's website manager, Bob Lawrence, Flat 1 Chartley, 22 The Avenue, Bristol BS9 1PE. If you e-mail him, Bob is having problems with his usual e-mail address, and messages are not currently getting through. If you have sent him a programme for the events diary, or any other communication, since Monday 21st August, it is likely that it has been lost. Please re-send it to his alternative

address – lawrence.chartley@btinternet.com. That address is already the one shown and used on the ALHA website.

Veronica Bowerman writes: The number of ALHA facebook viewings continues to increase when ALHA member societies submit photos that epitomise their area or ones that relate to a forthcoming event and/or society logo if in existence. You don't have to post to facebook yourself - contact us at avonlocalhistoryandArchaeology@gmail.com and we'll do the job for you and hope you attract extra visitors. We can usually react within 24 hours to help you advertise local history-related events.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND JOE BETTEY LECTURE

ALHA's 2017 action-packed annual general meeting and Joe Bettey lecture will be at the **Friends' Meeting House, Beckspool Road, Frenchay on Wednesday 18 October 2017, starting at 7pm**. The lecturer will be Professor Helen Meller, formerly professor of history at Nottingham University and author of *Leisure and the changing city, 1870-1914*, which in spite of its general title is about the Bristol area. Her lecture is titled *How to live in the modern city: women's contribution in Bristol 1860s-1930s*. ALHA is grateful to ALHA member **Frenchay Tuckett Society** for agreeing to host the event.

ALHA LOCAL HISTORY DAY 2018 – CALL FOR PAPERS

The theme for next year's local history day, probably again at UWE's Frenchay campus, and probably on Saturday 14 or 21 April, will be around **religion and change**, broadly interpreted. We hope to look at how religious beliefs changed, how religious organisations changed within themselves, and how those changes affected local people at large. Our area is rich in religions and their impact: two abbeys of historical importance; a battleground of the reformation and of the religious ferments on the 17th century, which both had political consequences; a hotbed of nonconformity in the 18th century, with Moravians, Unitarians, Baptists, Quakers, Independents and Methodists prominent, and driving political and social reforms in the following century. Sects (Lady Huntingdon's in Bath?) have come and gone. Religion declined in Victorian times, yet it was then that it was prominent in public life. Church buildings have dominated our towns and villages for centuries, but not all are still in use and the uses of some have changed. Wesley's new room has been revamped, but Whitfield's tabernacle is at risk. In the 20th century we have seen gurdwaras, mosques and other buildings to meet the needs of immigrant communities, while St Werburgh's is used for climbing, St Paul's for circus training, and St George's for concerts. Highbury chapel, originally Congregationalist, became Anglican. Some chapels, in villages as well as towns, are now flats. Topics could include the importance of religious beliefs and practices at various times; how they changed; and how they changed the lives of people, places, and politics. **ALHA invites proposals for talks, presentations and displays:** max 500 words please to Bob Lawrence, Flat 1 Chartley, 22 The Avenue, Bristol BS9 1PE, lawrence.chartley@btinternet.com or William Evans, 5 Parrys Grove, Bristol BS9 1TT, 0117 968 4979, wm.evans@btopenworld.com.

ALHA SUMMER WALKS 2017

The programme organised by Mike Hooper and Jan Packer has concluded, with a walk around **Clevedon** led by Jane Lilly. The committee is grateful to Mike and Jan for making the arrangements, and to the leaders of the walks.





Veronica Bowerman writes: Events hosted by ALHA e.g. Summer Walks and the Local History Day have benefitted from the additional Facebook coverage. The last of the 2017 Summer Walks at **Clevedon** in August was really enjoyed. It is good to have prompt feedback on these important events. Photographs by Jan Packer.

HOW TO CONTACT ALHA FACEBOOK REMINDER

As always, the ALHA Facebook team is seeking to increase the number of visitors to the page. They welcome any suggestions e.g. copy and non-copyright photos. The latter should be submitted as jpegs to the dedicated ALHA Facebook email, avonlocalhistoryandArchaeology@gmail.com

EVENTS AND SOURCES

A FORGOTTEN LANDSCAPE PROJECT

Latest at <http://www.aforgottenlandscape.org.uk/latest-news/> or <http://mailchi.mp/85f1f516cf31/9ra2vzxib8-1379645?e=%5bUNIQID%5d>. The next set of Tuesday talks will be at **St Peter's Church, Cross Hands Road, Pilning BS35 4JB**. All talks start at 7:30 and run for about an hour. They are FREE but you MUST book. The programme includes **Tuesday 5 September 2017**, Lyn Carnaby *The Anatomy of a Village, based on Using Littleton on Severn*; **Tuesday 3 October 2017**, Martin Morgan on *traditional salmon fishing on the Severn*; and **Tuesday 7 November 2017**, Manda Forster on *Digging the Toot: results from the community excavation at Oldbury-on-Severn*. For more details on these and other events, and for booking, please go to www.aforgottenlandscape.org.uk/get-involved/events.

DOORS OPEN DAY

The national website is at <https://www.heritageopendays.org.uk/visiting> : most events are **7 to 10 September 2017**. The search function on 17 August did not work for Bath and Northeast Somerset or for North Somerset, and a search for heritage open days on North Somerset Council's website produced nothing. Bristol's details are at www.bristoldoorsopenday.org.uk. A booklet with helpful details, maps, timings, accessibility information and so on is free at public libraries. For South Gloucestershire see <http://www.southglos.gov.uk/leisure-and-culture/museums-and-galleries/heritage-open-days-2017/>

KNOW YOUR PLACE WEST OF ENGLAND

KYP has issued a Key Stages 2, 3 and 4 learning pack for teachers: www.kyp.org.uk/learning-pack/ There is also a film: www.kypwest.org.uk

KINGSWOOD HERITAGE MUSEUM

Kingswood Museum has an exhibition about **Staple Hill**. Kingswood Heritage Museum, Tower Lane, Warmley, BS30 8XT: 0117 960 5664; e-mail kingswoodmuseum@gmail.com. Opening hours and other information at <http://www.kingswoodmuseum.org.uk/museum/forthcoming-events/>

WESTBURY ON TRYM ANNIVERSARY TALKS

Holy Trinity church, **Westbury on Trym** offers a series of talks to mark the supposed 1300th anniversary of the foundation of the church. Canon John Rogan kicks off **Thursday 7 September** with *The Reformation*. This year marks the 500th anniversary of the beginning of the Reformation which in due course was to have a profound effect on the church in Westbury, it says. Talks to be held **in the church at 7.30 pm**; tickets for each talk £2, including light refreshments. Tickets for the talks in church are available from the Parish Office: Church Road, Bristol. BS9 3EQ: 0117 9508644, open 9.30am to 12.30pm Monday-Friday. Tickets will also be on sale in church at coffee after the 10 am Sunday eucharist. Parking is available at the Westbury Hill car park. The churchyard has very limited parking, for vehicles, that is. The full programme of talks – speakers include Jinx Newley, Jon Cannon and ALHA booklet author Richard Coates – will be on the ALHA website under **Events**.

WESTON-SUPER-MARE MUSEUM

After refurbishment and updating, WsM museum is now open again, free-entry, 7 days a week 10am – 5pm (closed 25-28 December, New Year's Day and 15-21 January).

<http://westonmuseum.org/>

VICTORIA COUNTY HISTORY: OLD SODBURY

ALHA has given Gloucestershire County History Trust two of ALHA's largest-ever grants towards the research for the projected VCH volume on Grumbald's Ash hundred, which includes the **Sodburys**. *Philip Baker, lecturer in architecture at Oxford Brookes University and former contributing editor of VCH Gloucestershire, writes:*

Researching the social history of the three Sodbury parishes provides a good excuse for writing about, and even visiting, some of their numerous pubs. The Cross Hands hotel in **Old Sodbury**, which is situated next to the A46 to the east of the main village, is a former posting house with a history that can be traced back to the fourteenth century. The building takes its name from the inscription on an ancient coin that was found in the nearby Roman encampment in **Little Sodbury**, and during the seventeenth century its cellars were used to house criminals convicted by 'Bloody' Judge Jeffreys. The local court of petty sessions was convened well into the nineteenth century in what is now the hotel's main dining room, and friendly societies used the venue for their meetings in the early 1800s. The building served as a post office during the mid-nineteenth century and was also a working farmhouse on the Beaufort estate into the early decades of the twentieth century. Fortunately, it retained its licence throughout this period as the Cross Hands proved a popular 'watering hole' for the many navvies who built the local section of the Wootton

Basset to Bristol **Patchway** railway line and tunnel. Another **Old Sodbury** pub, The Dog on the Badminton Road in the village centre, was also frequented by the navvies, where the barman allegedly saved time serving his thirsty customers by dipping mugs into a bath of ale!

Although many UK pubs maintain that Queen Elizabeth I once stayed under their roof, the Cross Hands has a very genuine claim to fame in terms of royal visitors. On the evening of 13 December 1981, over 100 people packed into the building when motorists were forced to abandon their cars and seek shelter during a blizzard, one of whom was Queen Elizabeth II. Unable to drive back to Windsor Castle after visiting Princess Anne at Gatcombe Park, the Queen and a small royal entourage were forced to make an extremely rare unscheduled stop at the hotel for some seven hours. To keep her presence unknown to all but the staff of the Cross Hands, the Queen entered the building via the service steps, which also served as the fire escape, and ate her dinner – allegedly chicken liver pâté and Dover sole, washed down with a gin and tonic – in the manager's

private apartment. The Queen left the hotel just before midnight but her visit is celebrated in a commemorative plaque in the building, where guests can still ask to stay in the room that was once fit for a queen. I will be finishing off my work on the social history of the **Sodburys** over the next few months, after which I will be leaving the VCH, somewhat reluctantly, in order to concentrate on other work commitments. Although my time working for the project

has been only fairly brief, it has been an immensely enjoyable and educational experience, learning much about an area of the country that was relatively unknown to me. I wish my fellow editors, the volunteers and everyone else associated with the VCH Gloucestershire Academy my very best wishes for the future, and I much look forward to seeing the planned VCH 'Short' and red book volumes in print over the next few years.

BRISTOL & AVON FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY FAIR 2017

B&AFHS's family history fair, titled *Open the door on your family history heritage* will be on **9 September 2017** at **British Aerospace Welfare Association (BAWA) Leisure Centre, 589 Southmead Road, Filton, BS34 7RG**. 'The day will be an opportunity for anyone who needs help or advice on family history matters to have face-to-face sessions with local experts and representatives of B&AFHS (including the Sodbury Vale Group) and other societies including Devon, Gloucestershire, Gwent, Hampshire, Dorset, Somerset & Dorset, Weston-super-Mare & District, and Wiltshire. Over 30 exhibitors have signed up to attend. Representatives from Bath Archives and the Somerset Heritage Centre will be on hand to give advice. A number of local history societies and museums will also be attending to allow visitors to gather more information on the work and living conditions that their ancestors may have experienced. New and second-hand books, postcards, maps, family history CDs, software and accessories will be available from a range of commercial exhibitors.

There will be a free seminar on 'Starting your F.H. Research'. This will last for a couple of hours plus a break halfway through. There will also be four talks during the day on the subjects of:

- *'Giving Your Research The WhoDoYouThinkYouAre? Experience'* by Sarah Williams, Editor of the magazine of the same name
- *'The Know Your Place West of England Historic Mapping Project'* by Peter Insole, the lead officer of the original project started in Bristol but which now covers historic Glos, Somerset and Wilts as well as Bristol and Bath
- *'Researching Adoption'* by Penny Walters, professional genealogist, and
- *'The Importance and Value of Ephemera in your Research'* by Jane Howells of the British Association for Local History.

Doors open at 10.00 a.m. and admission is FREE. This gives access to the fair and entrance to the seminar and talks. The Fair closes at 4.00 p.m. There is ample free parking and good public transport to the location. A range of refreshments will be available or you can bring your own.' For more information, a full list of exhibitors and details of the seminar and talks please visit the B&A FHS website: www.bafhs.org.uk

THE NEW ROOM, BROADMEAD, BRISTOL

Latest at <http://www.newroombristol.org.uk/>

ARCHAEOLOGICAL DAY SCHOOLS, BRISTOL

Booking is now open for **Bristol City Museum's** next batch of archaeological day schools. Topics include local finds; the art and architecture of **St Mary Redcliffe** (repeated); dating (if

in doubt, ask), relative and absolute; and maritime archaeology. Details, costs and booking at <https://www.bristolmuseums.org.uk/m-shed/whats-on/art-architecture-st-mary-redcliffe/>

OLDWOOD PITS OPEN DAYS

ALHA member **South Gloucestershire Mines Research Group** is arranging open days at Oldwood Pits, Tanhouse Lane, **Rangeworthy, BS37 7PZ, 2 to 5pm Saturday 9, and 11 to 3.30 Sunday 10 September 2017**. More at www.heritageopendays.org.uk/visiting/event/oldwood-pits-coal-mine-open-day and www.sgmrg.co.uk/oldwood where there is an interview when the site owner spoke to Radio Bristol some years ago, but all still relevant, *says Roger Gosling*.

COMMITTEE FOR ARCHAEOLOGY IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE CONFERENCE

The Committee for Archaeology in Gloucestershire's annual conference is on **Saturday 21 October 2017 in the Guildhall, Gloucester 10am to 5pm**. The theme is *The Historic Landscape of Gloucestershire: Prehistoric to Industrial*. Speakers include: Dr Keith Ray, *Offa's Dyke in Gloucestershire*; Dr Tom Moore of University of Durham, *Becoming the Dobunni: the Middle and Late Iron Age in Gloucestershire*; Prof Tim Darvill of University of Bournemouth, *Abbey Home Farm, Cirencester - one land: many landscapes*; Neil Holbrook of Cotswold Archaeology, *The countryside of Roman Gloucestershire*; Prof Jennifer Tann, *Walking into the picture: the woollen industry through contemporary artists' eyes*; Jon Hoyle of Gloucestershire County Council, *Hidden Landscapes in the Forest of Dean*; Prof Christopher Dyer of University of Leicester, *New light on the medieval Gloucestershire landscape; using field work and documents*; and Steve Crowther and Amanda Adams of Historic England, *From bomb dump to rubbish dump? The legacy of twentieth century military infrastructure in and around Gloucestershire*. Tickets cost £15 including tea/coffee and booking is essential. A booking form can be found on the B&GAS website www.bgas.org.uk or send a cheque made out to CAG to the CAG Secretary, John Loosley, Stonehatch, Oakridge Lynch, Stroud GL67NR, johnloosley40@gmail.com

IT CONSULTANCY FOR COMMUNITY GROUPS

UWE offers free IT Consultancy, through UWE's Community Action and Knowledge Exchange program, to local community, voluntary and social enterprise sector organisations, in exchange for hosting a final year student project team. Deadline **11 September 2017**. <https://www.cvs-sg.org.uk/news/free-it-consultancy><https://www.cvs-sg.org.uk/news/free-it-consultancy> Help with your group's website?

CBA WW1 WORKSHOP

The Council for British Archaeology's Home Front Legacy team working with Living Legacies offers a community workshop on how to research, record and get funding for your own First World War project. **Saturday 21 October 2017, 10-5.30, St James's Priory, 1 Whitson Street, Bristol BS1 3NZ**. <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/cba-and-living-legacies-first-world-war-workshop-bristol-tickets-36609878131>

SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNCIL GRANTS FOR HERITAGE TRAILS SUPPORT 2017/18

Jane Marley writes: South Gloucestershire Heritage and Museums section is allocating £2000 for 2017/18 for grants of up to £200 to local heritage organisations to produce heritage trails for their locality. We plan to allocate a sum for 2018/19, if funding is available. The conditions are that:

- the South Gloucestershire logo is added to the leaflet and support is acknowledged on the leaflet
- all copyrights and contributions are acknowledged, where appropriate
- we agree the standard of the leaflet prior to publishing/printing
- we require a pdf of your leaflet for adding to our web site page about heritage walks and trails.

In addition, if your society is interested, there is a facility to add images and information relating to your heritage trail on <http://www.kypwest.org.uk/>. Details of how to upload trails to the site can be provided.

Please apply, using a form, which ALHA can supply, **by the end of October 2017** for the year 2017/18. If you wish to express interest in applying for the year 2018/2019, funding permitting, please let me know so that I can plan ahead.

If you have an up-to-date heritage trail, I would be grateful if you could send me a pdf copy. If you are happy to have this displayed on the South Gloucestershire Council web site under heritage trails, please let me know. Subject to the quality of the trail, we would be happy to provide a public access to a copy: <http://www.southglos.gov.uk/leisure-and-culture/museums-and-galleries/heritage-walks-and-trails/>. Jane Marley, Museums and Heritage Officer, South Gloucestershire Council, 01454 865783, MOB: 07808 364704

BOOKS ETC NOTICED

George Thatcher, *Suspense*, a historical novel set in Clifton in the 1830s, drawing on local history sources, says the author, who also offers a talk: https://www.amazon.co.uk/Suspense-Mr-George-Thatcher/dp/1788087860/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1502292911&sr=8-1&keywords=george+thatcher

COMMENTARY

POTUS IN BEMI

Readers alarmed by media reports that the president of the USA was holidaying in one of his golf courses in Bedminster, can be reassured that mayor Marvin has not sold Victoria Park or Greville Smyth Park. The president was holed up, or holed out, not in **Bedminster** BS3, but in Bedminster New Jersey. ALHA individual member John Stevens enquires whether there is a connection that might interest local history people. That suggests other questions. As Bedminster NJ, a township (a technical term in USA local government and constitutional law) of just over eight thousand people, is in Somerset county, could it be that it was settled by emigrants from our Bedminster, which was in the county of Somerset before the **Bristol** boundary extension of 1897? If so, what impelled them? Prices at Ashton Gate? Smyth rent increases? Demographic

changes in **Southville**? Mayor George's residents' parking scheme? Asda? None of the above, because the earliest New Jersey settlers were early 18th century Germans, Scots and Irish. None had been barred from Bedminster pubs or cider houses.

One candidate for a Bedminster connection is the first baron Berkeley of Stratton (1602-1678). What is now New Jersey was first settled from Europe by the Dutch. In 1664 the English were at war with the Dutch and William Penn I (baptised 1611 in **St Thomas's**, Redcliffe, commemorated with a memorial in **St Mary Redcliffe**, and not a quaker) was fighting them at sea. His wife, whom he had married only a couple of years before, was Dutch. Their conversations on the issue are not recorded. In that war the English annexed what is now New Jersey, and refused to hand it back. Charles II, deep

in debt and ever short of money, swiftly granted it to two royalist loyalists, one of whom had been born in Jersey in the Channel Islands, hence the name of the modern state. The other was the first lord Berkeley of Stratton (1602-1678). Distantly descended from Robert Fitzharding, founder of **St Augustine's abbey** and the Berkeley dynasty, Berkeley of Stratton headed a branch of the Berkeley family based at Bruton in south Somerset. He himself had no connection with our Bedminster, but **Bedminster** was one of the manors his ancestor Fitzharding held in the 12th century. In 1674 Berkeley sold his share, in effect the whole of west New Jersey, to a syndicate of quakers for whom William Penn II (1644-1718, son of the admiral) acted as trustee. The quakers having suffered persecution in England, Penn was determined that there should be no religious persecution in America, and made sure that religious freedom was part of the local law and civic ethos. The venture ran into financial difficulties, and the syndicate had to sell up. Somerset county was not created until 1688, by which time Berkeley of Stratton was no longer involved, so any connection with him seems unlikely. In 1702 the two parts of New Jersey were reunited under one royal governor. At that date the Bedminster NJ land had not yet been settled by Europeans, but the whole area continued to be managed under quaker principles established by Penn.

The second candidate for a connection is William Penn II. In 1681 Penn II recovered and improved on his position. He and eleven other quakers bought east New Jersey at auction, with a view to establishing a quaker colony, loyal to the crown. He also claimed that his father, the naval officer, had lent large sums (variously reported by historians as £16,000 and £160,000) to Charles I. In 1681 Charles II, unwilling and unable to repay the loans he had inherited, granted William Penn II a huge tract of America, 40,000 square miles, that later became Pennsylvania. Historians are not sure about the story of the debt. They now believe that the king had political motives for so acting,

knew that Penn wanted to establish a quaker realm in America, and took advantage of that. The system of government that Penn devised for Pennsylvania was modelled on what he had established in adjoining west New Jersey. William Penn II was back in England by the time the first European settlers arrived in Bedminster NJ in about 1710, so they are not likely to have known him personally. Most were Dutch, German, Scots and Irish. Their common motive, apart from a

sincere and earnest desire to avoid starvation, religious

persecution and death,

was the attraction in New Jersey of the religious toleration, if not quite freedom, afforded by the quaker rule established by Penn.

It seems likely that Bedminster NJ was named after a supposed connection of William Penn II with our **Bedminster**. How strong was that connection? His father, according to his memorial, was born in Bristol, so may have been born in **Redcliffe** because he was baptised in St Thomas's which was then in the diocese of Bath and Wells and the county of Somerset. His son erected his memorial in St Mary Redcliffe (for years a disintegrating captured Dutch flag hung over it. Its modern replacement is blue and white, unusual for south Bristol). But William Penn II was born in London, and spent most of his life in Ireland, London or abroad. He is not certain to have lived in **Bedminster**, though he visited **Bristol** in 1669, 1678, 1694 and 1695. His second wife, whom he married in 1696, was the daughter of a Bristol merchant, and they lived in Bristol, but only until 1699, when they moved to Berkshire, where Penn died. But Bedminster NJ was settled in his lifetime, and settlers may have seen William Penn II as the author of the arrangements under which they were free to practise their



Presbyterian church, Lamington NJ, in the township of Bedminster

religions and may have wished to express their gratitude for that. There was certainly a quaker community in **Bedminster**: the burial ground survives, just about, today.

PS 1 John DeLorean, car engineer and designer of the gull-wing car, came from Bedminster NJ. His estate is now the Trump National golf establishment, and his house is now the 'club' house (below). But that is another story.

PS2 The Trump National Bedminster website

<http://www.trumpnationalbedminster.com/> does not say what the joining fee for the golf club is – you have to ring Dana - but according to <http://time.com/4765663/bedminster-golf-club-trump-visit-facts/> and https://therealdeal.com/issues_articles/trumps-new-jersey-successes-and-blunders/ it is \$350,000. ALHA's remains at £3/£5 for individuals, £5/£7 for groups, depending on whether you receive by e-mail or post. If you have not paid yet, please do so. Your sub is important to us.



BLACKBOY INN GETS IT WRONG

John Stevens writes: Sharp eyed readers passing along Whiteladies Road in **Bristol** may have noticed a possible historical faux pas on the part of the current owners of the venerable Blackboy Inn. The pub sign is now a reproduction of the very fine 1628 portrait of Charles I by Gerrit van Honthorst. [*Page 1, top left*]. The idea that Whiteladies and Blackboy have something to do with slavery has now, I think, been exploded. More likely, however, is a connection with Charles I's son. The adjective "black" was frequently used of a person's hair or complexion in the

seventeenth century and Charles II was extremely swarthy. Roundhead "wanted" posters after the Battle of Worcester referred to him as "a tall black man, above two yards high" (this usage also occurs in Pepys's diaries slightly later on). I have not delved further, but Wikipedia suggests a number of Blackboy Inns in England, mainly dating from around the time of the Restoration (although the current pub building in Whiteladies Road is not the original one, which according to the *Bristol's Lost Pubs* website was demolished in 1874).

UTOPIAL

During August 2017 Newcastle cultural historian Richard Clay presented three BBC4 programmes titled *Utopia*. From Thomas More's 1516 satire, RC looked at examples of utopias from various times and places, such as the shakers in America, soviet communism, garden cities and so on; and in various genres, such as fiction, film, music,

painting, computer games (*Civilization*, *Minecraft*) and real life, alongside some examples of dystopic imagination, such as Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* and Eric Blair's *1984*.

In one sense anyone who proposes better arrangements for human society is to some extent utopian. Contemplative nuns,

commonwealth reformers, quakers, chartists, trade unionists, those who devised the League of Nations, environmentalists, hippy communes and all sorts of pressure groups have had visions of humans co-operating in a fairer and more peaceful world. Perhaps voters who hope that the next lot, local or national, will be less objectionable than the present bunch have a touch of utopia about them. Some utopias have been theoretical only; More's was imaginary. But if you define a utopia as arrangements for an egalitarian community put into practice in real life, examples are fewer.

One example with connections to our area was the project by William Penn and others to establish in America communities governed on quaker principles. In 1674 Penn, whose father was born in **St Thomas's**, acted as trustee for a group of quakers who bought the western part of what is now New Jersey. That venture folded, but in 1681 Penn obtained from Charles II a grant of a tract of land that later became the state of Pennsylvania. The constitutional arrangements Penn put in place were designed to offer settlers liberties such as freedom of religious belief and practice that they themselves were not accorded in their countries of origin. Critics disparaged these arrangements as utopian, but they worked, and they served well until different concepts of freedom took over.

In 1794 Robert Southey and Samuel Taylor Coleridge planned to set up on the banks of the Susquehanna in Pennsylvania or Maryland self-sufficient agricultural communities that they termed pantisocracies. Men and women would share work equally, but they would need to work only for a few hours a day. When Coleridge came to **Bristol**

in 1795, he stayed only for ten months, during which he did nothing to raise the necessary money. When Southey proposed an alternative scheme in Wales, Coleridge, who knew as much about farming as he knew about football and whose skills were not in planning or organising, lost interest in the project, took fright at Napoleon, and became a supporter of Pitt's repressive policies.

Bristol retains traces of the garden cities movement started in 1898 by Ebenezer Howard's *Tomorrow: a peaceful path to real reform*, later retitled *Garden cities of tomorrow*. In 1907 Elizabeth Sturge, Eliza Walker Dunbar and others promoted Bristol Garden Suburbs Ltd, to buy land at **Shirehampton** off Philip Napier Miles of **Kingsweston**. Housebuilding was interrupted by the war, and in 1923 the company was taken over by a commercial builder, but many of its distinctive houses, with generous gardens and wide leafy roads, remain today. A post-war garden suburb at **Avonmouth** on docks land failed through lack of capital, but a city council scheme at **Sea Mills**, also on land purchased from Napier Miles, was successful and is now among the more aesthetically pleasant of Bristol's former council estates. In the city council's later brick-built estates such as **Hillfields**, **Knowle West** and **Southmead** the garden cities ideal got diluted, though traces are still visible, down to the Gibbs surrounds in brick framing front doors. Fry's industrial estate at **Somerdale** had an air of garden suburb principles about it, though post-Cadbury they will no doubt be diluted as the land is redeveloped with high-density private sector modern housing, as well as the Avon overflowing its banks.