



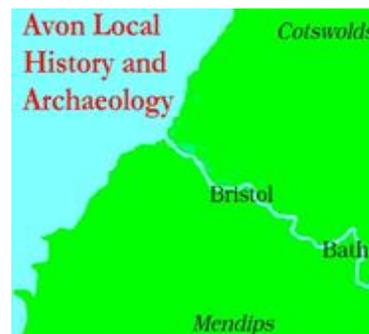
AVON LOCAL HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY

registered charity no. 270930

UPDATE
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ALHA ITEMS

ALHA LOCAL HISTORY DAY 2018 – CALL FOR PAPERS

The theme for next year's local history day, again at UWE's Frenchay campus, on **Saturday 21 April**, will be around **religion and change**, broadly interpreted. ALHA's events subcommittee has received a number of proposals, but it is not too late to offer more. **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 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2018

In the hope of improving attendance at ALHA's annual general meeting, the events subcommittee is toying with the idea of holding the AGM during the lunch break at the April 2018 local history day. Comments to Peter Fleming, Bob Lawrence or William Evans welcome.

EVENTS AND SOURCES

MEDIEVAL FAKE NEWS

Bristol University's centre for medieval studies has issued a call for papers for its 2018 conference, on *Hype, transmission and truth in the middle ages*, **23-24 February 2018**. Deadline **1 December**. Details at <https://cmsconference2018.wordpress.com/about/>

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/>

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). Various Christmas-themed events in December. <http://westonmuseum.org/>

THE NEW ROOM, BROADMEAD, BRISTOL

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL DAY SCHOOLS, BRISTOL

Can't find the details of the archaeological day schools on the **Bristol City Museum** website, but the rest of the programme is on the website of *Bristol Decorative and Fine Arts Society*, which has changed its name to *The Arts Society Bristol*: <http://bristoldfas.co.uk/Archaeology-day-schools.pdf>.

ACTON COURT 2018

Acton Court is now taking bookings for groups (guided tours only) for selected dates in 2018. Details at <http://www.actoncourt.com/tours-of-house-and-grounds> or 01454 228 224.



STOKE LODGE ADULT EDUCATION CENTRE, BRISTOL



Booking now open for history and other courses at Stoke Lodge, **Stoke Bishop**, itself a building of some historic and architectural interest. Courses include Gordon Strong on *Stone Circles and Neolithic Monuments of Wessex*, ten lectures Fridays 1pm to 3pm beginning 12 January 2018. ALHA individual member John Stevens also offers various history topics, but not local. Prospectus

on paper at local public libraries, or online at

<https://www.bristol.gov.uk/documents/20182/239062/Bristol+adult+learning+course+guide+2016+to+2017/249376be-e393-4f1c-9445-011ba984f0f0>; or www.bristolcourses.com.

SMALL GRANTS FOR COMMUNITY GROUPS

South West Foundation in partnership with the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation is currently running a small grant programme for grants up to £1,000 aimed at supporting small charitable organisations. Criteria at <https://www.the-foundation.org.uk/grants-and-resources-for-groups/>
For more information, 01373 813088 or email: info@southwestfoundation.org.uk

PUBLICATIONS NOTICED

M Kaufmann, *Black tudors: the untold story*, One World 2017, £18.99. Gives accounts of 10 Africans of whom traces survive from tudor England. One was Cattalena of **Almondsbury**, a black single woman who, according to an inventory of her possessions when she died in 1625, (Gloucestershire IPMs) owned ‘one cow, one bed, one bolster, one pillow, one pair of blankets, one sheet, one quilt,’ from which MK writes a whole chapter. Now there’s a challenge for local and family historians: how did a black woman end up in **Almondsbury** (not famed for ethnic diversity: Mary Willcocks/Baker came from near Tiverton) and owning enough property to warrant an inventory, and owning a cow. Must be a story there somewhere: captured slave? Name sound a bit Spanish? Drake or Hawkins? Widowed? Inheritance? In the 18th century some slaves got given Roman names, but in republican Rome Catalina was a male (and Pero was female). https://oneworld-publications.com/media/wysiwyg/PDFs/Autumn_Catalogue_ForWeb.pdf

Martin Powell and Clive Burlton, *Harry Dolman: The Millionaire Inventor Who Became “Mr Bristol City”*, Bristol Books 2017, £12 from the Bristol City shop.
<https://www.bristolbooks.org/news/2017/10/12/how-mr-bristol-city-achieved-his-goals-for-the-football-club-he-loved>

Shirley Hodgson, *Bristol's pauper children; Victorian education and emigration to Canada*, Bristol Books 2017, £12.00. <https://www.bristolbooks.org/new-products/bristols-pauper-children-shirley-hodgson>

Doc Watson, *Exposed: the major and the Roman Baths*, Ex Libris Press 2017, £8.99. Biography of Major Charles Edward Davis, **Bath** City Surveyor of Corporate Works, who directed the excavation of the Roman baths, opened in 1897. Author is a local tourist guide.
<http://www.doc-watson.com/page16.html>

Steph Gillett, *Bristol and Gloucestershire aerospace industry*, Amberley 2017 £14.99. Not just about **Filton** and **Patchway**: Bristol Aircraft, Parnall, Gloucestershire Aircraft Company and component manufacturers including Aircraft Components (Dowty), Rotol, Dowty Equipment, Smith’s, Messier, Hoffman, Safran and GE Aviation.

COMMENTARY

Social care for older people

We are all getting older, the media keep telling us, in the sense that the proportion of the population over the age of 65 is increasing. The effects of that across the nation are well-known: deferment of the retirement age in order to pay for pensions for people who live longer; pressures on the

NHS and pension funds; a crisis in social care, exacerbated by government austerity policies forcing local authorities to cut back social services (or giving them an excuse not to provide them); and horrifying individual experiences.

There have been some studies of how the UK looks after, or fails to look after, its older people, but most have been written by sociologists rather than historians. One example is **Bristol** sociologist and public policy academic Peter Townsend's *The last refuge* (Routledge & Kegan Paul 1962), which studied elderly persons' homes in the 1950s. In *Residential care transformed: revisiting 'The last refuge'* (Palgrave Macmillan 2010) Julia Johnson, Sheena Rolph and Randall Smith, with the help of nearly a hundred local history volunteers, looked at what had happened to the 173 homes Townsend had visited, identified what had changed, and explored why.

Local history people might consider examining how the care of older people has changed in particular localities, perhaps their own. Apart from the numbers, obvious topics worth examining include changes in household sizes and patterns of family life; local authorities' policies, priorities and budgets for housing and residential homes, and for care in the community; the outsourcing and privatisation of local authority services and NHS functions; the growth of private sector care homes, especially by adapting large single family residences, run by not-for-profit and by for-profit organisations; the rise of elderly-

Networks

In *The square and the tower: networks, hierarchies and the struggle for global power* (Allen Lane 2017) Niall Ferguson looks at how networks have influenced the past. Some networks have been structured and hierarchical: the armed forces; institutions of national government; churches; political parties; educational institutions including schools; nationalised industries; private businesses; professional bodies; trade unions; the NHS; the self-styled new caliphate.

Less organised, non-hierarchical, networks have included enlightenment thinkers in Scotland and France, the Lunar Men, the movement for the abolition of the slave trade in which local people like Hannah

targeted commercial brands like Saga; and the emergence of private housing sold with forms of personal support ranging from a lift and an alarm neither of which work to skilled care and nursing, professionally managed and supported. It would be interesting to look at how charitable almshouses, many in ancient buildings and soaked in local history, adapted or did not adapt to modern care standards set by government agencies, and how organisations like Bristol (Municipal) Charities and St John's in **Bath** reacted, resisted, backed away, or rose to the challenge. Another phenomenon worth looking at might be the retirement village, such as those at **Westbury-on-Trym** in Bristol and **Sandford** in north east Somerset run by St Monica Trust, which started off in a large house in **Clifton**, moved in the 1920s to the site of Cote House on **Durdham Down**, and later established retirement villages containing over a hundred purpose-built flats with a range of supporting social and medical facilities including special provision for residents with dementia. One is on a former suburban cricket ground, the other a village railway station and its yard; about to open is a conversion of Fry's chocolate factory at **Somerdale**. A topic worth investigating.

More were active, corresponding societies, the tractarians, the Bloomsbury group and so on. One might also include The Thing (William Cobbett), The Establishment (Ralph Waldo Emerson), The Blob (Michael Gove), and Them (us). If you lack networks, conspiracy fantasists will invent some for you.

Local history people would point out that nation-wide and international hierarchical networks have local counterparts, or subsidiaries, on a smaller scale: religious congregations; schools; organs of government; businesses and so on. Less organised, and not always so obvious, are the more informal networks that have influenced local affairs, conditions and

events. Some, such as **Bristol's** Society of Merchant Venturers, trade union branches, business associations and the like, have had commercial objectives. Some, like agricultural societies, friendly societies, freemasonry and rotary, have had mixed motives, combining private economic advancement with selective altruism, not always disconnected. Some local networks have changed, in size or purpose: the Bristol & West building society, the Bath & West society, for example, and, as the late Peter Harris delighted in pointing out, almost every **Bath** or **Bristol** medical institution you can think of. Some local networks have expressed shared interests, especially in leisure or charitable activity: local history groups and societies are an obvious example.

Still less recognised, and less researched, are the nameless informal networks that pervade local communities, many deriving from family and kinship, business connections, and other forms of inter-relationship. In *The Roman revolution* (OUP 1939) Ronald Syme identified and charted the family relationships (through birth, marriage and adoption) of individuals known to have been politically and economically influential in late republican and early imperial Rome. Disclosing otherwise hidden connections can be a powerful tool for explaining why some things happened, or why what might have been expected to happen did not. The technique has produced results from other

Colston, Pinney and Wilberforce

Just when the controversy over commemorating Edward Colston seemed to have gone into hibernation – Rename the Colston Hall? Block Bristol cathedral's Colston window? Relocate EC's statue from the Centre? – the headteacher of Colston's Girls' School writes to pupils' parents telling them that the school is not going to change its name:

<http://www.colstongirls.org/631/news->

periods, eg Tudor and mid seventeenth century England, and is now standard in biographies of big names in politics or literature. There is no reason why local historians, using family history methods, should not use these techniques too. They will be particularly useful in studying incipient political movements, which may operate in fear of suppression or worse; religious sects which may go underground to avoid persecution; the networks that immigrants form to support each other in an unfamiliar and often hostile society; social reform movements whose members may fear social ostracism or government repression; and the various scenes which can be lumped under the description 'alternative.'

To apply these techniques to local history has been made easier by the burgeoning popularity of family history, the improved availability of records and publications, and easier search facilities, eg via the internet. Public records are only part of the story: it is the unseen and often unspoken local interconnections that are often most influential and would be of historical interest. Social media now offer a further means of networking. It is sometimes difficult to get information about online networks other than ones the researcher belongs to. There are privacy and data protection considerations that might not have been constraints twenty years ago. No doubt data cultivators and harvesters will sell the crop if the price is right.

blog/post/304/cgs-and-its-historic-connection-to-edward-colston Hardly surprising: the Society of Merchant Venturers has entrenched membership of the school's governing body, and has sponsored the school as an academy since 2008. The letter, printed in local newspapers, prompted a flurry in correspondence columns and unedited media, repeating the known arguments, for and against.

One contention aired (not by the school) was that there is no evidence that EC actually owned or traded slaves. Records show that EC drew large sums from his membership of, and offices in, the Royal Africa Company. But EC's involvement, goes the argument, was only indirect. It is all right, goes the argument, to profit from an immoral activity so long as you do not yourself actually perform it. The bishop of Winchester did not personally manage brothels in Southwark; Mary Tudor did not personally set protestants alight; Goebbels did not personally turn on the gas taps; and shareholders in tobacco companies do not personally kill smokers.

The same sort of special pleading crops up in some unexpected places. In 1826 William Wilberforce and his wife Barbara negotiated arrangements for their daughter Elizabeth to marry Charles Pinney, owner of the Georgian House in Great George Street, **Bristol**. CP was a wealthy descendent of a transported felon (wrong side in the Monmouth rising) who had made a sugar fortune on Nevis. CP inherited, and drew a large income from mortgages on slave-worked plantations, foreclosed when mortgagors defaulted, and traded in what their slaves produced. It is inconceivable that

WW did not know where and how CP got his fortune and the income it produced. Barbara W rationalised that, 'West India possessions are not at all like the Slave Trade ... a man



having been born to such possessions [must] do his duty in and by them.' Only when WW's brother-in-law James Stephen pointed out the inconsistencies, Mary Ames wrote a tart and explicit letter to BW, and WW and BW consulted longstanding friend Thomas Babington, did WW change his mind and manoeuvre Pinney into breaking off the engagement. Elizabeth, whose views are not recorded – she seems to have acted as the stereotypical Victorian unmarried daughter, submissive to her parents' wishes – married a low-income low-status clergyman in 1831 and died 1832, of tuberculosis.

CAN YOU HELP?

WarGen

WarGen, founded by broadcaster and historian Dan Snow, and author and broadcaster James Holland, hopes to create a crowd-sourced online repository of oral-history from people who lived through World War 2. Website <https://war-gen.com/>. It is 'looking for individuals willing to volunteer as interviewers and to go out into local communities and record these important stories of a fast disappearing generation or to tell WarGen if they have a family member or friend or even know of someone who they believe would like to have their stories recorded'. Contact shane@wargen.org