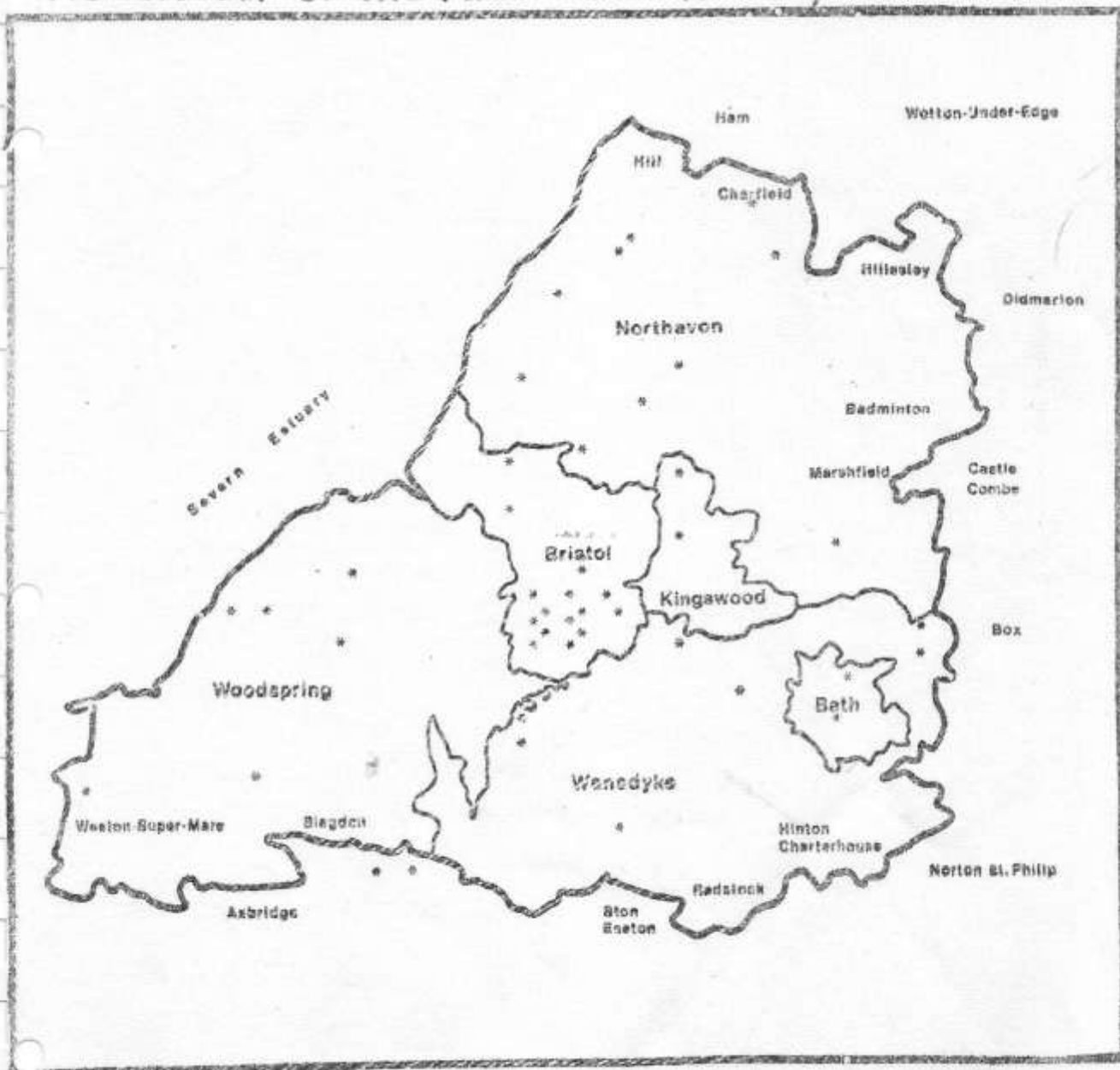


QUEST



Issue No. 3

Newsletter of the Avon Local History Association



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Q U E S T is the official newsletter of the Avon Local History Association. Articles appearing in QUEST must not be reproduced without written permission from the Association.

EDITORIAL

The Avon Local History Association is not yet one year old, and so it is pleasing to be able to report that the first Conference at Newton Park in September aroused considerable interest and attracted about 270 people during the day. A review of the event appears elsewhere in this issue.

It is also my pleasant task to report that a wider circle of readers are writing to the Editor, and supplying news of events and activities among the Societies. News of helpful contacts between readers which result from items in QUEST are particularly encouraging, and should encourage even more members to use QUEST.

In this issue, I would draw your attention to an article by Miss Vicky Airey of the Bristol City Museum, which gives an insight into the services which a museum can provide for local historians.

This is the last issue of QUEST which I shall edit, because I am leaving Bristol to work elsewhere. My thanks go to all those who have contributed to, advised on, or criticised QUEST, and to the staff of the Avon Community Council for all the work they have done in producing the final product. Thanks also to all who bought QUEST; we need to sell many more!

JOHN WILSON

The Editor will welcome details of forthcoming events, news of Societies articles and comments. Communications should be addressed c/o The Avon Local History Association. All other correspondence on Association matters should be addressed to the Secretary, Avon Local History Association, c/o Avon Community Council, 2 Berkeley Square, Clifton, Bristol, BS8 1HL. Telephone: Bristol 26420 or 25951.

FORMING A LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

Living in your community are people who are interested in the history of their neighbourhood, its crafts, industries and architecture, its traditions and folk-lore. Some will be knowledgeable, others will be keen to learn; all could benefit from the information, guidance and encouragement a local history group could give them. A group can be the starting point for helping people to understand the basic character of their local places and communities in a period of unprecedented change, for gathering and recording information, for initiating study and research and for preparing the ground for future historians by documenting contemporary life.

If you think a local history group would be beneficial to your community, try to estimate the support it is likely to receive, talk to people who might give a similar interest - librarians and archivists should be of help to you, as might heads of schools and colleges and local Authority Further Education Officers. Your County Local History Committee, if you have one, or the Standing Conference for Local History will advise you about the initial stage in the formation of a local history group, that is, the inaugural meeting.

Basically, it will be necessary to fix a date and time, hire a hall (free, if possible, with the aid of a sympathetic local authority or church), obtain a local 'personality' to take the Chair and secure the services of a speaker on local history who might talk on a general topic such as "Discovering your Local History", or "The Aims and Activities of a Local History Group".

Having made the initial arrangements, it is vital that every effort should be made to ensure that the meeting receives sufficient publicity through local newspapers, parish magazines, women's and youth organisations, any libraries, museums or church bodies. Anyone interested should be invited to attend.

If the inaugural meeting decides that a group be formed, a small provisional Steering Committee should be appointed with a Chairman and Secretary to work out details of organisation, subscription, and to draw up a constitution. The Standing Conference for Local History will provide a draft constitution on request.

The group's first meeting following that of the inaugural meeting is very important. The constitution should be present for approval, a subscription agreed, and a committee elected in accordance with the terms of the constitution. But to maintain enthusiasm it is also highly desirable that specific ideas should be presented for possible future activities. Perhaps the group might arrange a programme of talks and visits, or compile a photographic record of the locality, or record the dialect and reminiscences of older people, or arrange an exhibition, or produce a local history of the community.

Only basic information can be provided here, since every local group is unique and to try to offer hard and fast rules would not only be foolish but would belie the principle of "stimulation by participation" which applies to all local history work.

Further enquiries should be addressed to: Standing Conference for L.H.
26 Bedford Square,
London WC1B3HU

NEWS FROM LOCAL SOCIETIES

Downend Local History Society

Mr. R.S. Howlett writes: With the amalgamation of the Kingswood Urban District, Mangotsfield Urban District and Warmley Rural District into the Kingswood District, it was felt by the above Society that the Area might be large enough now to support a Kingswood Folk Museum. The Society was well aware of the obstacles and difficulties, such as the present financial crisis and lack of storage and display buildings, but felt that what should be examined were the possibilities. These could be the compilation of a catalogue of historic items in Kingswood, the use of disused schools for storage and a commitment from the local Authorities that when circumstances permit it would consider the setting up of a Kingswood Folk Museum.

With the help of an interested Councillor, publicity for these ideas was obtained in the local press and a meeting was arranged with officials and elected members of the Kingswood Council and the Kingswood Local History and Natural History Society. At this meeting it was agreed that the Council would consider the setting up of a Folk Museum as a long term aim, that a catalogue should be compiled and that to start a publicity campaign an exhibition should be staged. It is hoped to hold this exhibition some time in the new year. Meanwhile, the compilation of a catalogue has started.

Items already listed include a pair of bellows from a Downend forge, a farm waggon (which has been dismantled by members and put in store), Douglas motor bikes, bricks from three defunct local brickworks, thatching tools, two butter churns, Friendly Society emblems, school sewing samples of 1899, and gas lamps. Further, the Bristol Museum and the John Wesley Museum, Broadmead, have indicated their willingness to loan items for the exhibition.

A Kingswood Folk Museum was envisaged as a long term aim - ten years was mentioned. Already, we feel a good start has been made and that if the momentum can be maintained our object might be realised sooner.

Malago Archives Committee

The latest edition of the magazine MALAGO is now available. Copies may be obtained from:

Mr. Ian Lillington,
42 St. Peter's Rise,
Headley Park

(PRICE 15p)

OR

Anton Bantock,
131 Queens Road,
Bishopsworth,
Bristol 3

Barton Hill, Bristol

Colin Thomas of 5 Old Ashley Hill, Bristol 6 is interested in contacting anyone who has been studying the above area, because he has been organising a course called, "Bristol - as we remember it" through the W.E.A. He is particularly interested in the period since 1850.

Woodspring Museum and Art Gallery

This was opened at a new site in Burlington Street, Weston-super-Mare, in 1975 which are the former premises of the local Gaslight Company Workshons.

The contents including a Victorian seaside gallery, an old chemist's shop, dairy and cider rooms, the Banwell fire engine, costume, toys and Victorian jewellery. It is open weekdays 10 am - 6 pm and from 10 am to 5 pm on Saturdays. Inquiries should be directed to:

Miss Jane Evans,
Curator,
Woodspring Musuem,
Burlington Street,
Weston-super-Mare
(Tel. Weston 21028)

Bristol and Avon Family History Society

Members of this Society are prepared to speak to interested Societies. Inquiries should be directed to the Secretary,

Mr. S. Emlyn-Jones,
108 Newbridge Road,
St. Annes,
Bristol

Filton Historical Research Group

Mr. W.L. Harris writes: The group began its first full winter programme with a most interesting talk from Mr. Eric Garrett of the Olveston Historical Association. Mr. Garrett spoke of the formation of the Association, and then of the old village of Olveston, showing some exciting slides of the Parish as it was.

In October, members of the group visited the Central Library, where Mr. Langley, the County Reference Librarian, took them into the Bristol Room. He traced the history of Bristol Library from its earliest days, and then fascinated his guests with his description of old books, how they were written and bound, and producing examples for them to look at and to handle.

In November the group organised an illustrated talk at Filton Folk Centre on the history of the Churches of Filton, which was open to members of the public. The room was filled for the occasion, and the audience showed its interest by the questions asked at the end of the evening.

Three meetings have so far been arranged for next year. In January Mr. Roy Hawkins of Filton will talk on the Early Development of the Postal System in Britain. In February a member of the Bristol and Avon Family History Association will speak on the work of that Society. Miss F.M. Blandford, Area Librarian of Northavon, will visit the group in March and talk on some aspects of Filton History.

LIST OF SPEAKERS

By courtesy of the Local History Sub-Committee of Gloucestershire Community Council, the following list is being circulated to constituent Societies of the ALHA in the hope that it will assist them in arranging their future programmes. The Chairman will be glad to receive any comments on speakers who are either on this list or suggestions for additions: the latter should give the address, subjects and fee of the speaker concerned, and should be accompanied by a statement from the speaker that he is happy to be included on this list.

<u>NAME AND ADDRESS OF SPEAKER:</u>	<u>SUBJECT(S) AND FEE:</u>
DAVID ADDISON, B.A., Dip.Ed., The Director, A.M.A., Art Gallery & Museum Service, Clarence Street, Cheltenham, Glos. Tel: Cheltenham 37431/2	The History of Art. The Role of Art Galleries and Museums. Fee: Travelling expenses (if travelling any distance) and as arranged.
Mrs. E.M. AIRY Upper Mill, Woodchester, Glos. Tel. Amberley 2544	Wide selection of coloured transparencies of Fine Grade II Buildings, Cotswold Villages etc. No fee, but travelling expenses and donation to Speakers causes gratefully received.
Mr. LAWRENCE ALDERSON Lower Eastrip Farm, Colern, Chippenham, Wilts.	Historic breeds of Farm Livestock Travelling expenses and as arranged.

Mr. J.H.A. ANDERSON
"Kelsey", Aldergate Street,
Stonehouse, Glos., GL10 2QQ
Tel: Stonehouse 2070

(1) The History of Stonehouse;
(2) Life and Work of Capability Brown
(general, not just Gloucestershire)

Fee: (1) Travelling expenses and as arranged
(2) £4.00

Mrs. S. ATKINSON-FLEMING
The Wing,
40 Bathwick Hill, Bath, BS2 6LD
Tel: Bath 5026

Very varied repertoire, including talks on
Bath, England's loveliest City (with slides);
A Lecture on the historical, sociological
and comical impact of tea on our lives:
The Story of Buckingham Palace:
A thousand Years of the English House
(slides), etc.

Travelling expenses, plus £6 for talk, or
£7.00 for illustrated lecture.

REV. W. AWDRY
30 Rodborough Avenue,
Stroud, Glos., GL5 3RS
Tel: Stroud 2321

Local Transport History (particularly
Railways)

Fee: £10.00 (within 15 miles radius of
Stroud) or £10.00 plus travelling expenses.

MICHAEL AYLAND (AND JOHN STEPHENS)
Riverside,
Priding, Saul, Glos.
Tel: Saul 385

Illustrated lectures on The Stroudwater,
Thames and Severn Canal Trust.

Fee: none, but donations to Speakers causes
gratefully received, plus travelling expenses

DANIEL BARBER
15 Barley Hill, Poulshot,
Devizes, Wiltshire

Antiques; "Going for a Song" - BBC 1;
Enjoyable Moments in Films and Television

£15 plus 10p per mile travelling expenses

BERNARD BAKER
The Wheels,
76 Allstone Road, Lydney
Gloucestershire
Tel: Lydney 2649

Forest of Dean - London - Church Architecture
(including wood carving & stained glass);
Brewing (including Inn signs):
Glass Manufacture

£3.00 plus travelling expenses

J.H. BETTEY
Extra-Mural Department,
University of Bristol,
32 Tyndalls Park Road, Bristol 8

West Country Parish Churches;
Projects in Local History;
The Local Historian and The Parish Church

Travelling expenses and as arranged.

STEVEN BLAKE
Cheltenham Art Gallery & Museum,
Clarence Street, Cheltenham
Tel: Cheltenham 37431

History of Cheltenham

Travelling expenses, plus a moderate fee
as arranged.

Mrs. BARBARA BLATCHLEY
Edge Farm Cottage,
Edge, Stroud, Glos. GL6 6NG
Tel: Feinswick 812476

Antiques (note: not high powered)
Cooking;
Warden Service of Cotswold Area of Out-
standing Natural Beauty.

Travelling expenses, plus a moderate fee

MARK BOULTON
Brocklebank,
Butts Lane, Woodmancote, Glos.
Tel: Bishops Cleeve 4839

Wildlife Conservation;
Natural History, etc. All lectures illu-
strated by film or audio-visual materials

Basic travelling expenses plus donation to
World Wildlife Fund (U.K.)

Miss M. BOWEN 36 Park Place, Cheltenham Tel: Cheltenham 56538	History of Painting - English (Tudor Period - 19th century) £5.00 and travelling expenses
GEORGE HENRY BURROWS Hidcote Manor Gardens, Nr. Chipping Camden, Glos.	Hidcote Manor Gardens (with slides) £5.00 plus travelling expenses
B.V. CAVE The Wilderness Field Centre, Mitcheldean, Glos. Tel: Drybrook 542551	History and Landscape of Forest of Dean, including Geology; Natural History; Conservation Variable fee according to circumstances - normally free locally, but £10 for distant evening talks.
Miss AMINA CHATWIN 6/7 Montpelier Street, Cheltenham Tel: Cheltenham 25086	Ornamental Ironwork; Cheltenham's Ornamental Ironwork; Tewkesbury Manufacturers. Fee: £5.00
WILLIAM CHOULS 18 Highwood Court, Forest Green, Nailsworth, Glos.	Aspects of Roman Gloucestershire; } - with The Roman Army in Gloucestershire; } The Roman Army, Conqueror & Coloniser } - slides £3.00 plus travelling expenses
Mrs. E. COLES The Moat House, St. Briavels, Lydney, Glos. GL15 6TA Tel: St. Briavels 509	Buried Treasure - Old Bottles; Victorian Christmas; Cosmetics - Cleopatra to Victoria; Jane Austen in Bath; Jane Austen and Her Times; Victorian Shopwindow; Two Grandmothers. £10 including travelling expenses within Glos.
E.A.H. COLLINS Mermaid Cottage, Minsterworth, Glos. Tel: Minsterworth 469	Saxon Art in Gloucestershire; Norman Doorways in Gloucestershire; Wood Carving in Gloucestershire; Wall Paintings, Painted Glass, Mosaics and Medieval Stone Carving. £10 plus travelling expenses.
Miss M. COMING c/o Cheltenham Museum & Art Gallery, Clarence Street, Cheltenham. Tel: Cheltenham 37431/2	Applied Arts; History of Design. Donation to Holst Museum.
G.N. CREWFORD, B.Arch.(L'pool), ARIBA, Culpepers, N. Woodchester Stroud, Glos. GL5 5PD Tel: Amberley 2421	Industrial Archaeology (general and specific, e.g. street furniture, including letter-boxes and milestones). £2.00 to include travelling expenses.

Mr. and Mrs. E.J. CRUSE
"Sylgato",
19 Yewstock Crescent West,
Chippenham,
Wilshire,
SN15 1QX

Arts and Crafts of the West Country;
Country Homes and Country Mansions;
Some Inn Signs and their Stories;
More Inn Signs and their Stories;
The Doone Valley and Legend;
A Tour of Historical Wilts.; and various
travel talks.

£2.50 plus travelling expenses. All Lectures
are illustrated and full equipment provided.

DEAN OF GLOUCESTER - see Thurlow

ADRIAN DIGBY, CBE, FSA,
The Paddocks,
Eastcombe, Stroud, Glos.
Tel: Bisley 409

Mexican Archaeological subjects (Mays,
Toltecs, Aztecs, especially their astro-
nomical methods).

Fee: £10.00

Miss ALLEEN FISHER
1, Brook Court, The Park,
Cheltenham, Glos.
Tel: Cheltenham 23683

The History of Cheltenham.

£2.00 plus travelling expenses.

REV. J.E. GETHYN-JONES
Canonbury House,
Berkeley, Glos.
Tel: Berkeley 294

The Impact of Jenner;
Berkeley Plantation, Virginia - its back-
ground and early days.

Fee by arrangement, plus travelling expenses.

Miss ANGELA GIBSON
9 Park Street,
Stow-on-the-Wold,
Glos.
Tel: Stow 30259

The Sealed Knot (the Civil War);
Cotswold Churches;
Women's Costumes 1066-1600 and 1600-1900

£2.50 plus travelling expenses.

J.D.F. GREEN
The Manor Farm,
Chedworth, Cheltenham
Tel: Fossebridge 233

Village History;
History of Agriculture.

Donation to be sent to the Council for the
Protection of Rural England.

Miss ANNE HARRIS, BA,
2 Cheltenham Corner,
Willesley,
Broadway, Worcs.

History of Costume - Beginnings to 1520;
1520 Onwards;
Development of the Theatre.

£3.50 plus travelling expenses.

W.H. HAWKINS
307 Stroud Road, Gloucester,
GL1 5LF
Tel: Gloucester 24643

Historic Buildings - within 4 miles of Glou-
cester Cross (illustrated with colour slides);
Gloucestershire Born and Bred - selected
stories of famous men & women of the County.

Travelling expenses plus a donation for
Charity.

Miss CAROLYN HEIGHWAY
4 Widden Street,
Gloucester

Archaeology in Gloucester.
(Please note; NO school lectures)

Travelling expenses only.

- N.M. HERBERT, Ph.D., Editor, Victoria
History of Gloucestershire,
Shire Hall,
Gloucester. The History of Gloucestershire;
The Study of Local History;
(also possible) The History of a specific
Parish.
- Fee as arranged and travelling expenses.
- SIMON HERRICK
25 West Bromwich Street,
Caldmore,
Walsall, Staffs. Buildings of the Woollen Cloth Industry in
Wotton-under-Edge; etc.
£10.00 plus travelling expenses, or as arranged.
- MAJOR J.H. HODDINOTT
Crowhill,
Mildenhall,
Marlborough,
Wilts. The Arthritis and Rheumatism Council for
Research - Problems and Activities (with a
film.)
Travelling expenses only.
- JOHN HORNE,
10 Haysum's Close,
Chipping Camden,
Glos. Chipping Camden;
Memories of the Early 1900's;
History of the Parish Church, Chipping Camden.
GL55 6EH Available for the locality - within 10 miles.
Travelling expenses only.
- REV. J.D. HOW
64 Parklands,
Wotton-under-Edge,
Glos. Granville Sharp - Champion of Slaves in England.
Ancestor of the Lloyd-Bakers of Hardwicke
Court, Gloucester.
Tel: W-u-Edge 2480 Travelling expenses only.
- J.R. HOWE
The Green, Sheepscombe, Stroud, Glos. Local politics and history since 1870.
Tel: Painswick 812122 Travelling expenses and as arranged.
- PAUL HUMPHREYS
Langley Cottage, Winchcombe,
Cheltenham,
Glos. GL54 5AB The Golden Age of the Wireless;
Putting the Countryside on the Air -
BBC experiences.
Tel: Winchcombe 602704 Travelling expenses and by arrangement.
- Mrs. JANET JARVIS, MA,
Payne's Cottage,
Broadwell,
Moreton-in-Marsh,
Glos. The Abbeys of Gloucester and/or Tewkesbury;
Cotswold Wool Merchants and their buildings;
The Medieval Glass of Fairford;
Christopher Wren's Cotswold Masons.
Tel: Stow-on-the-Wold 30693 (all illustrated with slides)
£6.00 plus travelling expenses.
- BRYAN C. JERRARD
16 Grafton Road,
Gloucester,
GL2 0QW Gloucestershire Police in the 19th Century;
Crime in 19th Century Gloucestershire;
(both illustrated)
Education in Nazi Germany.
Tel: Gloucester 37178 Travelling expenses and as arranged.
- Miss JOAN H.S. JOHNSON, MA,
3 The Bank,
Broadwell,
Moreton-in-Marsh,
Glos.,
GL56 0TZ Gloucestershire in English History;
Gloucestershire in the Middle Ages;
Gloucestershire in the 16th & 17th Centuries;
Gloucestershire in the 18th Century;
Enclosures in Glos. in the 18th Century.
£7.50, or as arranged plus travelling expenses.

A.R.J. JURICA, BA, Ph.D.,
Assistant Editor of V.C.H. Glos.,
Shire Hall,
Gloucester

The History of Gloucestershire;
The Study of Local History;
(also possible) Study of a Specific Parish.

Fee as arranged, plus travelling expenses.

W.E.W. LLOYD
42 Shepherds Way,
Cirencester,
Glos.

Water Supply;
The Study of Local Government Finance;
Tourism;
Coin Collecting (Amateur Status!)

Travelling limited to 20 mile radius of
Cirencester.

£5.00 plus travelling expenses.

Mrs. M.E. LUDLOW-HEWITT,
Pound Farm,
Lower Moreton,
Thornbury,
Bristol,
BS12 1 LD

Collecting Inexpensive Antiqués;
Staffordshire Figures;
Recollections of My Childhood in Various
Country Rectories.

£1.50 plus travelling expenses.

Mrs. MILLICENT MANN,
Field Cottage,
Chedworth,
Glos.

Stained Glass (with slides);
Chateaux of Loire (with slides);
Impressionist Painting (with slides);

Tel: Fossebridge 279

£2.10 plus travelling expenses.

REV. R.J. MANSFIELD
The Vicarage,
Newnham,
Glos.

The Forest of Dean (several different talks);
The Story of Gloucester Cathedral;
Stories of Gloucestershire Churches;
Gloucestershire Customs; etc. etc.

Tel: Newnham 277

Fee as arranged, plus travelling expenses.

A.D. McWHIRR
37 Dovedale Road,
Stoneygate,
Leicester LE2 2DN

The Urban Archaeology of Cirencester;
Most topics concerned with Roman Archaeology.

£10.00 plus travelling expenses.

S. MOORE, BA, F.R.Hist.S.
Department of Economic & Social
History,
67 Woodland Road,
Bristol
BS8 1UL

Sources and Methods of Local History;
South Gloucestershire History;
History of: Population;
Social & Occupational Structure;
Agriculture;
Industry;
Housing;
Internal Trade and Transport.

Fee as arranged plus travelling expenses.

J.P. NELSON
Sedgecombe House,
Chipping Camden,
Glos.,
GL55 6UX

Waterways of the South West Midlands
(with slides)

Travelling expenses and fee as arranged.
Note: will lecture in 15 mile radius only,

I.M. PARSONS, ARIBA,
Zanetta House,
Church Road, Churchdown,
Glos., GL3 2ES

English Railway Architecture;
Italian Cities.

Fee as arranged (to include hire of slide
and projector) plus travelling expenses.

R.W. PATERSON
Craigslope Cottage,
Leckhampton Hill, Cheltenham,
Glos.
Tel: Cheltenham 24341

Architecture through the Ages;
Local Churches.

Fee to be arranged and travelling expenses.

J.H. PENNINGTON
20 Harp Hill,
Cheltenham,
Glos.
Tel: Cheltenham 21027

Local Government at District Level;
Population, Pollution, Amenity Work;
China Today (visited in 1974);
Water Conservation.

Travelling expenses and fee to be arranged.

KENNETH POVAH, MA, B.Sc. (Econ.)
4 Chesterton Park,
Cirencester,
Glos.,
GL7 1XII
Tel: Cirencester 4230

Looking at Cotswold Buildings;
Building in Timber, Stone and Brick;
Fifty Windows.
(all with colour slides - please supply, if possible, a blackboard).

Travelling expenses and fee to be arranged.
Note: will only lecture within 16 miles of Cirencester..

Mrs. N.B. PRINGLE
The Halfyard,
8 Brookway Drive,
Charlton Kings, Cheltenham GL53 8AJ
Tel: Cheltenham 59328

The Civil War in Gloucestershire (17th Century);
The Story of Cheltenham as a Spa.

Travelling expenses only.

C.T.O. PROSSER
8 Prince Edward Road,
Brooky Hill,
Hereford,
Tel: Hereford 2094

Kilverts Diary and the Countryside it Covers -
(there are many slides available for this lecture).

£5.00 plus travelling expenses.

Mrs. BARBARA RAWES
11 Trowscod Avenue,
Cheltenham,
Glos.
Tel: Cheltenham 24461

Local Archaeology;
Gloucestershire Fields and Field Names;
Recording the Archaeology of a Parish -
(Parish Check-lists).

Donation to an archaeological cause.

BERNARD RAWES
11 Trowscod Avenue,
Cheltenham, Glos.
Tel: Cheltenham 24461

Local Archaeology.

Donation to an archaeological cause.

PETER RIPLEY
355 Painswick Road, Gloucester.
Tel: Gloucester 27160

Gloucester in the 16th, 17th & 18th Centuries.

Travelling expenses and fee as arranged.

REV. MICHAEL SEACOME
Barnwood Vicarage,
27a Barnwood Avenue,
Glos. GL4 7AD
Tel: Gloucester 66265

The Conjurer through the Ages.

Travelling expenses plus a donation to
Barnwood Church.

PROF. C. CURTIS SHEARS, B.Sc., D.J.,
Milberry Tree Hall,
Brookthorpe, Glos.
GL4 000
Tel: Painswick 813471

Living Food;
Self-Healing;
Nutritional Therapy;
Health Education;
Cancer.

Travelling expenses only.

R.W. SIDWELL
Bredon Springs,
Ashton-under-Hill,
Nr. Evesham,
Worcs.

History of Commercial Horticulture in the
Vale of Evesham;
Garden History.

£7.00 plus travelling expenses.

PETER SKINNER
18 Waverley Road,
Redland,
Bristol,
BS6 6EX
Tel: 311242

Tramways and Railways of The Forest of Dean.

Travelling expenses and £1.00 donation to
Dean Forest Railway Society.
Note: Any request should give alternative
dates as Mr. Skinner is heavily committed.

ERIC SMART
Hyetts,
Quenington,
Glos.
Tel: Coln St. Aldwyns 376

Introduction to the Cotswolds;
Cotswold Stone and its Architecture;
The Cotswold Wool Trade,
History across the Cotswolds;
The Countryside through the Year;
How to look at Country Churches;
Gloucester Cathedral and Royalty;
Abbeys and Cathedrals;
The Development of the Timbered Houses;
Scenic Areas of Britain;
The Berkshire Downs;
What about Heraldry;
The Lure of East Anglia;
Scotland, Old and New;
The Seeing Eye in Scotland.

Travelling expenses and fee as arranged.

BERNARD C. SMITH
Rushmere,
Staunton Road,
Coleford,
Glos. GL16 8NS
Tel: Coleford 2288

History of Gardening;
History of Bridges;
History of Inn Signs;
History of Tombs and Monuments.

Travelling expenses and fee as arranged.

BRIAN S. SMITH, MA, PSA,
The County Record Office,
Shire Hall,
Gloucester.

Local History;
Archives;
Gloucestershire Landscape;
Gloucestershire Houses;
Gloucestershire Churches;
Gloucestershire Personalities.

£5.00 upwards and travelling expenses.

JOHN STEPHENS (see also AYLAND)
Riverside,
Pridding, Saul, Glos.
Tel: Saul 385

Illustrated Lectures on The Stroudwater;
Thames and Severn Canal Trust.

Donation to Mr. Stephens' causes gratefully
received, plus travelling expenses.

STEPHEN WILLIAM STOKES
25 Thompson Drive,
Letchampton,
Cheltenham.

Conservation in Cheltenham; and
Associated Subjects.

Travelling expenses and fee as arranged.

VERY REV. GILBERT THURLOW
Dean Of Gloucester
The Deanery,
Gloucester,
GL1 2BP

Gloucester Cathedral (treated in various ways);
Cathedrals of England;
Rome;
Pompeii and Herculaneum;
Church Bells and Ringers.

£20.00 plus travelling expenses.

A.C. TURK
Box Corner,
Box, Stroud, Glos.
Tel: Nailsworth 2520

Box in the Mid 19th Century;
Minchinhampton Poor in the Early 19th Century;

Travelling expenses and as arranged.

DAVID VINER
Corinium Museum,
Park Street,
Cirencester,
Glos.

Corinium Museum, Cirencester;
Archaeology in Cirencester;
Preserving our Past;
The Thames and Severn Canal, etc.

£6.00 plus travelling expenses.

W.C. VIRGO
Whitehall Cottage,
Highweek,
Newton Abbot, Devon.

Early Christianity in Gloucestershire,
and the West Country.

Travelling expenses and as arranged.

LIONEL F.J. WALROND
The Curator,
Stroud and District Museum,
Lansdown,
Stroud,
Glos.

Strange Cures and Strange Beliefs;
Farmhouses and Cottages;
Fossil Hunting;
Mills of the Stroud Valleys.

Approx. £4.00 plus travelling expenses.

BRIAN WEBSTER
A Partner in The Heart of England
Countryside Tours,
79 Gordon Street,
Northampton,
NN2 6BY

Set of 70 Slides on the Wildlife in Robinswood
Hill Country Park;
(also other Wildlife Sets available).

£3.50 with printed commentary -
£4.50 with tape recorded commentary,
plus travelling expenses.

DR. J.R.S. WHITING
15 Lansdown Parade,
Cheltenham.
Tel: Cheltenham 35677

Gloucestershire Prisons, Frampton-on-Severn's
18th Century "Dad's Army";
Gloucester in the Civil War;
18th Century Glos. Agriculture;
Thames and Severn Canal; Chartist Land
Settlements at Snigs End and Lowbende;
Gloucestershire Turnpikes.

£10.00 and travelling expenses.

A.R. WILLIAMS
St. Mary's College,
The Park,
Cheltenham.

The Civil War in Gloucestershire;
Travellers' Tales in Gloucestershire;
The General Strike in Gloucestershire;
The Village Schools.

Travelling expenses and fee as arranged.

Mr. and Mrs. A.D. WITHEY
53 Stratford Road,
Stroud,
Glos.
GL5 4AJ
Tel: Stroud 4948

The National Trust;
Looking at old Country Churches;
Church Curiosities;
From Stepping-stones to Severn Bridge;
Some fascinating Features of Britain.

Travelling expenses and fee as arranged.

A MEDIEVAL ALMSHOUSE AT WESTBURY-ON-TRYM

by James R. Russell (Westbury-on-Trym Local History Group)

Throughout the medieval period, from late Saxon times onwards, the otherwise insignificant village of Westbury-on-Trym on the outskirts of Bristol was an ecclesiastical centre of some importance. During the tenth century the first Benedictine monastery in England was briefly established there, while in the late fourteenth century the College of Priests, founded in 1194, was graced, albeit somewhat infrequently, by the presence of the religious reformer John Wycliffe and the pioneer writer of English vernacular prose, John Trevisa. In the mid fifteenth century the college and its associated church attained a peak of status and prosperity as a result of the lavish benefactions of Bishop John Carpenter of Worcester. This energetic and benevolent prelate, who may have been born in the neighbourhood, seems to have had an almost obsessive concern with the development of Westbury. He rebuilt and reendowed the college on a massive scale, and, for a brief period, turned the collegiate church into a cathedral serving the southern part of the Diocese of Worcester. In recognition of its new rank the early thirteenth century church was provided with a new West tower and a remodelled East end, terminating in a noble polygonal apse, beneath which Carpenter was interred in 1476. Another example of Carpenter's work is the well-preserved Church House, or Priest's House outside the West gate of the churchyard, which still bears on its front door a wrought-iron version of the Bishop's heraldic device, the crossed crosslet.

Besides reendowing Westbury College, Carpenter also founded two almshouses in the village, one for six poor men, and one for six widows. The site of the men's almshouse has not yet been positively located; contemporary records describe it as being opposite the gateway of the College, with its own walled garden (1). The women's almshouse, almost certainly a separate foundation, is mentioned in a document in the Great Red Book of Bristol (2) as being adjacent to Westbury Church: the remains of this structure, with which this account is mainly concerned, still survive in the form of a terrace along the North side of the Churchyard, and are currently being investigated by the Westbury Local History Group under the author's direction. The site of the building (National Grid reference ST57347743) is curiously cramped and inconvenient; the terrace on which it stood is about 40 metres long from East to West by 6 metres wide, and is overshadowed on the South by a massive retaining wall, over 5 metres high, supporting the churchyard.

In 1539 Henry VIII's Commissioners carefully recorded the provisions made for feeding and clothing the almsmen and women in their "Valor Ecclesiasticus" (3). Five years later Westbury College was dissolved, and all its associated properties, including the two almshouses, fell into the hands of Sir Ralph Sadleir, one of Henry's favourites. Sadleir's grandson, another Ralph, presented the almshouse by the Churchyard, together with the Church House, to the Parish of Westbury for the use of the poor (4). It continued in use until 1800, when a survey revealed severe structural defects, and a new workhouse was put up a short distance away at the top of Waters Lane (5).

At some date between 1700 and 1840 the old almshouse was demolished and reconstructed as a row of "eight houses occupied by the poor of the Parish rent free", entered by a narrow East-West corridor running alongside the churchyard retaining wall. These cottages were in turn pulled down in 1852-3, allegedly due to misconduct by the aged inhabitants (6). They were replaced by the still existing Vestry Hall at the West end of the site, to which a boiler house was added in the present century. The remainder of the terrace was left as a piece of waste ground, which has since become covered to a considerable depth with debris of every kind.

Since June 1975 the Westbury Local History Group has been carrying out a limited programme of archaeological excavations on the almshouse site, with the permission of the Vicar and the Parochial Church Council (7). As the work has proceeded traces of the successive stages in the development of the site have been revealed, as it were, in reverse order. First, overlying everything else, is a series of recent rubbish deposits, ranging between one and two metres in thickness. These layers, consisting of ash, clay and stones, are thought to have built up since a known clearance of earlier accumulations in 1905. The only interesting feature within them was an oval pit thought to have been dug some 15 to 20 years ago by an as yet unidentified individual vainly searching for secret passages.

Below the modern debris part of the ground-plan of one of the eight early 19th century cottages came to light, together with a section of the East-West access corridor. The sandstone slabs forming the floor of the corridor had disappeared, revealing the top of a large stone-lined drain, probably for rainwater. The upper filling of the drain, deposited during demolition work in the 1850's provided a useful sample of the materials used in building the cottages - brick, slate, wall-plaster, and roof-tiles similar to those still in place on the houses surrounding the site on the North and East. The drain also contained a small deposit of nineteenth century pottery, clay pipe-stems, pins and buttons, including a fine brass livery button with an unidentified crest.

Beneath the foundations of the nineteenth century cottage and corridor the base of one of the North-South internal walls of the original fifteenth century almshouse came to light; this was over 80 centimetres thick, almost twice the width of the crude nineteenth century walling overlying it. An archway through the wall, occupying the same position as the nineteenth century corridor, is indicated by an arch-spring in the churchyard retaining wall and some worn stone blocks apparently forming part of a threshold. On both sides of the wall, sealed by the nineteenth century construction layers, were thin "occupation deposits" containing some fragments of late eighteenth to early nineteenth century pottery and porcelain, as well as a good deal of burnt material. Below these, packed in around the foundation of the wall, were thick deposits of red clay, interlarded with pockets of limestone flakes and chippings. The base of these clay layers has not yet been reached, and at present it is uncertain whether they were laid down in the 1460's when the almshouse was first constructed, or in the 1800's when it was pulled down and the cottages put up in its place. Apart from the excavated foundations and the churchyard retaining wall, several stretches of the southern and eastern outer walls of the original almshouse are still standing, although much reduced in height. At the Northeast and Southeast angles of the building diagonal buttresses can be seen, while in the East wall a complete fifteenth century window-recess, retaining its arched head of dressed freestone, is now wholly visible after being cleared of the rubbish which had largely submerged it.

The excavation began in June 1975, consisting of an area three metres square, which is being doubled in size during the current season. The small scale of the work, compared with most modern excavations, is due partly to the limited manpower available and partly to the very constricted nature of the site, which greatly reduces the area available for depositing spoil. As with all archaeological excavations, digging is carried out slowly and methodically, and recorded as fully as possible. As each layer is removed photographs are taken and comprehensive notes are kept in which every deposit and "feature" (wall, drain, posthole etc) is numbered for clarity. At every significant stage of the excavation detailed plans are made at a scale of 1:10, while section drawings of the sides of the excavation, made to the same scale, show the vertical relationships of the successive deposits. Finds from each numbered deposit are separated and marked accordingly. A number of Group Members have given up a good deal of their spare time to help with the often tedious work of excavation, and I am extremely grateful to them and to the Group leader, Dr. D. Egdell, for their help and co-operation. Work will continue throughout the summer of 1976, mainly on weekday evenings, and it is hoped to supplement the information gained through excavation by further documentary research.

REFERENCES

- (1) H.J. Wilkins - Westbury College 1194-1544 A.D. p 154
- (2) E.W.W. Veale ed. - The Great Red Book of Bristol (Bristol Record Society Volume IV) Part 1, pp 72-73.
- (3) H.J. Wilkins - Westbury College 1194-1544 A.D. p 126
- (4) Sir R. Atkyns - The Ancient and Present State of Gloucestershire (2nd edition, 1768) p 803
- (5) M.J. Moss - "The building of ... the Westbury-on-Trym Workhouse, near Bristol"
Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society
Volume 86, pp 151-172
- (6) H.J. Wilkins - The Poor Book ... of Westbury-on-Trym, Stoke Bishop and Shirehampton 1656-98.
Introduction, pp XVII - XIX. (The fullest published account of the almshouse).
- (7) For a slightly fuller account of the 1975/76 excavations, with a site plan, see the second Annual Report of the Westbury Local History Group, pp 2-4. Copies are available from the Author at:

3 Priory Avenue,
Westbury-on-Trym,
Bristol

Please enclose a stamped addressed envelope when ordering.

READER'S QUESTIONS

Village Pounds

Mr. B.J. Greenhill of Nailsea has written to say that he has received news of Village Pounds from as far afield as Wiltshire and Worcestershire, following his appeal in Quest 2. He also reports that David Elliott of 2 Whitlocks Road, Hanham, knows of a pound in Abbots Road, Hanham, which apparently needs attention. Interested readers should contact Mr. Elliott.

Hanham

Mr. David Elliott is also interested in other aspects of the history of Hanham, and would like to hear from anybody who shares his interest.

BOOK NOTICES

Among the books and booklets submitted for review, the following may be of interest to readers:

Discovering this Old House (2nd. imp., 1970) and

Discovering Local History (1973), both by David Iredale, give guidance to beginners wishing to find out more about these subjects.

EXTRA-MURAL STUDIES

Many people have found that the classes organised by the Extra-Mural Department of the University of Bristol have been helpful in extending their knowledge of a subject, in introducing them to new subjects, and in teaching them new techniques. For details of the classes below, readers should contact the Extra-Mural Department, University of Bristol, 32 Tyndall's Park Road, Bristol, BS8

Bath

"The Country Houses of Somerset" (Roger Ashley)
Ten Tuesdays, beginning 11th January 1977, 7.30pm

S76 J07 SX

Bristol

"The Decorative Arts in the 19th Century 1830-1930"
(Cleo Witt) Ten Tuesdays, beginning 11th January 1977
7.30pm

B76 J08 SW

"Further Studies in Manuscript Illumination" (M.Q. Smith
and Mrs. M.A. Smith) Ten Wednesdays, beginning 19th January
1977. 7.30pm

B76 J07 SW

Marshfield

"The Development of Artifacts and Tools" (A.C.A. Wright)
Ten Wednesdays, beginning 12th January. 7.30pm

G76 J65 SC

Nailsea

"Transport and Communications in 19th Century Britain"
(M. Doughty) Ten meetings, beginning 5th January 7.30pm

S76 J55 RC

FROM SQUARE ONE

George Davey, Secretary of the Sodbury and District Historical Society, has sent the following encouraging advice:

How does one start a Local Society?

If you are at this stage, perhaps this small contribution may assist you. I have lived around this area all my life, and like many others had not paid too much attention to the historical fabric of the town. However, during the Spring of 1972 a book on our local history was published, being the result of many years' research by the author Mr. P.A. Couzens. Since then I have discussed various aspects with local people and have formed the opinion that there is a growing interest in the subject.

In January of this year I enquired at the local library if there was a Local History Society. The assistant's answer was; "Sorry, but why don't you start one".

This was the signal for action. A Public Meeting was advertised in the local newspaper and half a dozen posters placed around the town. A guest speaker was invited from the Wotton-under-Edge Historical Society. We awaited results with mixed feelings. The meeting was attended by around seventy people from all walks of life, with the result that a Steering Committee was formed.

An inaugural meeting was held in May, when the recommendations of the Steering Committee covering, Society objectives, society officers, Constitution and Subscriptions were agreed upon. A report of this meeting was published in the local newspaper. Further posters were placed in local shops and library, inviting anyone interested in local history to attend our monthly meetings. We have since held three meetings, and present membership is ninety. After much discussion and many phone calls we now have a programme planned up to June 1977. Our experience is short, but our hopes are the same as yours.

In conclusion, may I suggest four golden rules in setting up your internal organisation.

1. Define the objectives
2. Delegate the action
3. Keep accurate records
4. Ensure good lines of communication with your membership

If you feel that we could assist you in some way, please contact me, George Davey at:

3 Hounds Close,
Chipping Sodbury,
Bristol

Tel: Chipping Sodbury 314053

THE MUSEUM AND LOCAL HISTORY

A museum and its resources are always full of potential for the local historian: but what sort of resources might he expect to find? There are displays in the galleries, of course, and museum publications; but there are less obvious sources of information. In most museums only about one-third of the collections are on display, while the rest are in store. The reserve collections, therefore, may also include material which will be useful. There may also be allied collections of photographic and documentary material, and a reference library too. A Curator will always be willing to help with a run-down on the resources available, and will very probably be able to contribute from his own unwritten knowledge on a particular subject or area. He is also available to identify objects which the public bring in for opinions, although he will not give a valuation. If there is a museum education service, teachers are well advised to seek advice and information from that department, since much information is readily available on the history of an area, and a museum education Officer will know the right direction in which to point a teacher for further information.

The main local history collections at the City Museum, Bristol, may be found in the Department of Social and Agricultural History at Blaise Castle House Museum, Henbury, but other Departments with relevant collections and interests are Archaeology, Technology, Fine Art, and Applied Art: the Archaeology Department is mainly responsible for St. Nicholas Church Museum and the local archaeology collections there. The Fine Art Department has a very good topographical collection. Curators are very pleased to help with any serious enquiries provided an appointment is made first.

The main relevant collection at Blaise includes collections of domestic life, costume, toys, and games, corporate and agriculture and trade union items. The Technology Department deals with transport, urban life and industrial history, and includes many useful records relating to shipping and shipbuilding in Bristol. While many items are from Bristol itself, the museum has always had a policy of regional collection, and material from all over Avon have been received.

The Schools Department produces information sheets on sites of different periods in Bristol and Avon, and has also recently done a series with local radio on the history of the central area of the old city of Bristol, together with packs of slides and notes. There is also a local history sheet available for teachers on a project called "History in the Churchyard".

Members of staff are always willing to speak at local history meetings, and a number of them run Extra-Mural Classes. Several Societies meet at the Museum in Queens Road, including the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, and the Bristol Archaeological Research Group.

A public museum not only has facilities for the storage of collected objects, but also for its conservation; not only for information but for processing it on record cards and in publications. Local historians and Societies are therefore urged to think of the Museum as a repository both for material and information in Avon. The role of the local historian could be a very active one - not only in collecting items, but also in such ways as tape-recording reminiscences of local craftsmen about their work, or recording local customs and folk-memory.

- March 11 Sodbury and District Historical Society - "Local Industrial Architecture" by Mr. O. Ward - 7.30 pm at the Town Hall.
- March 11 Keynsham and Salford Local History Society - Annual General Meeting, followed by "Vanishing Keynsham" by Mary Fairclough - 7.30 pm at Ellsbridge House.
- April 15 Keynsham and Salford Local History Society - "Old Quarries of our Area" by Dr. P.C.B. Roberts - 7.30 pm at Ellsbridge House.
- April 15 Sodbury and District Historical Society - "Toll Roads in Sodbury Rural District Council" by Mrs. Shiles - 7.30 pm at the Town Hall.
- May 13 Sodbury and District Historical Society - Annual General Meeting - 7.30 pm at the Town Hall.
- June 10 Sodbury and District Historical Society - Visit to Dodington House, with evening view and anniversary meal.

PLEASE NOTE - The Annual General Meeting of the Avon Local History Association will be held on 22nd April 1977 at 7 pm in Avon House, The Haymarket, Bristol. The number of the Conference Room will be notified later.

Entrance is by means of the door from the Avon House Car Park and NOT through the front door on the Haymarket.

The Editor feels that there must be more Society events in the next few months than are listed above. Please make an effort to notify us of forthcoming talks, film showings, lectures, outings etc. so that other people interested in Local History know what you are doing!

Many thanks to all contributors to this issue of QUEST - let's try and make every issue as good as this one, so please do your best to prod Society members into action. We all want to know your movements and activities!

AFFILIATION FEES

It was decided at a meeting of all the Societies of the ALHA on Friday 26th November 1976 to change the affiliation fees and place them on a graduated scale from £1.50 for Societies with under 50 members, rising by 50p for each additional 50 members to a maximum of £5.00, this change to take effect from April 1977. A form for affiliating to the ALHA will appear in the next issue of QUEST.

AN ARRANGED MARRIAGE

(extract from The Langtons at Newton Park, by Graham Davis)

Joseph Langton died in 1799, leaving his 17 year old daughter, Bridget, the heiress to the estate. A marriage was arranged in 1782 between herself and William Gore of Barrow Court, Somerset. Both families had merchant backgrounds: the Gores could point to a Lord Mayor of London, and the Langtons to a Mayor of Bristol, in the seventeenth century. Both families had become country gentry, expanding their estates through a careful marriage policy.

The involved marriage negotiations were essentially about preserving the family inheritance. In this respect, it was a most fitting match between the two families with remarkably similar social backgrounds and closely allied social ambitions.

William's father, Edward Gore, made the first approach in recommendation of his son:

"With regard to Birth and Descent, very few young Men claim a better Title, in respect of Fortune I own to be very inadequate to Miss Langton's.

I wish it was more and was it less with less, will be sufficient to answer every convenience as well as splendor his life can give.

I am willing to settle my whole Estate upon Miss Langton and my Son, and his expectations hereafter are considerable, and I flatter myself pretty certain My son is your brother Wykeamist and is still a member of New College. What advantages he may have derived from both the Societies (1) is not for me to say, let the Sons of Wykeham speak for him."

Once engaged, young William felt compelled to write to Bridget calling it off. It was clearly no love match. The tone is distinctly cool:

"Dear Miss Langton, I think it is my duty to write to you on a subject of the greatest consequence to both of us, and that equally concerns us with respect to our future happiness. I hope you are satisfied, that it is very unpleasant to me, to say anything that will give you pain, as I have not too much reason to think this will, but as your welfare is materially concerned in what I have to say I should think myself much to blame were I to delay any longer telling you; in short our dispositions from the frequent opportunities I have had of forming a Judgement are widely different so much so, that it is utterly impossible we ever can be happy together" (2)

The letter continues in this vein at some length. It is received without private anguish, but rather a curious amusement, which she is eager to make public. This, in the same month, February 1782, Bridget writes to her guardian, Paul Methuen:

"There has happened a very disagreeable affair between me and Mr. William Gore. He was here about five weeks ago to spend a week. His behaviour then seemed to be just the same as usual about a fortnight after he was gone I received a very unaccountable a letter what has been the occasion of it, I know not, my eunt has taken the pains to copy it word for word with all the particular marks, and strokes, and I have taken the liberty to enclose it for yours and My Friends inspection only begging the Favour you will be so good and they as to keep it a secret, I have had a letter from his Father, and another from His Mother both of which express their great astonishment at the unhappy Event as He did not let them know a syllable of the affair till after he had wrote the letter to me, when he thought it proper to send them a Copy of it" (3)

The affair was the subject of gossip among the county families, and caused no little consternation to Edward Gore, eager to advance the family position by a good match for his eldest son. His efforts were eventually rewarded when the couple were married the following year.

NOTES:

(1) This would appear to be referring to the distant connection of the Gore family with the Royal House of Stuart. Langton Collection, Corsham Court, Wilshire.

(2) Letter dated February 1782, *ibid*...

(3) Letter dated 25th February 1782, *ibid*...

(Those who heard Graham Davis speak at the first Avon Local History Association Conference will be pleased to hear that the above account called The Langtons at Newton Park, can be obtained in booklet form from the Newton Park College, Newton St. Loe, near Bath, Avon. Price is 50 pence plus postage.)

BOOKS RECEIVED

Village Life 1883-1940 : Batheaston Remembers (The Batheaston Society, 1976, 79 pp, 1 map, 8 photographs, index) Price: £1.50

Batheaston is a Parish on the Southern edge of the Cotswolds, three miles from Bath, and its chief industries were, and remain, farming and market gardening. The Batheaston Society, in undertaking to produce this booklet of reminiscences of 51 inhabitants as its project of the year, has given a good insight into village life. The articles (24 of which were written by the subjects, 10 tape-recorded, and the remainder written up from interviewers' notes) each contain details to surprise and interest the modern reader, but as the Editor writes, it is a "collection to be nibbled and savoured, not swallowed at a meal" ! The descriptions of old customs and occupations are detaining, while the long hours of hard work described must be positively arresting. One notes too the rapidity with which the source for such details is diminishing: since this project was begun at least six of the contributors have died. Perhaps other societies could consider such projects?

(Village Life is available from Mr. B.M.W. Dobbie, Gattrell, Steway Lane, Batheaston, Bath, BA1 2EH. Price: £1.50 plus 15 p postage)

The Goods and Chattels of our Forefathers: Frampton Cotterell and District Probate Inventories, 1539-1804 edited by J.S. Moore (Phillimore and Co. Ltd, 1976) Price: £6.50

This is an impressive example of what can be done by a local history group, directed and supervised by a professional, in this case, the Frampton Cotterell Local History Group and John Moore, Lecturer in Economic History at the University of Bristol and a former winner of the John Nichols Local History Prize from Leicester University. Mr. Moore has edited over 400 probate inventories in this volume and has provided transcriptions of them with an introduction drawing out his conclusions on social structure, occupations, crops, food, clothing, housing and furniture, as revealed by the documents.

Probate inventories were lists of goods compiled under oath by neighbours and relatives of the dead, and so give an insight into the possessions of a wide cross-section of the community. They are to be found in Diocesan Record Offices, together with other testamentary records.

Those who have had to struggle with the variable handwriting of wills and inventories - particularly those before the Restoration and those written in rural Parishes - will be grateful for the material, which is indexed by name and place. Roman numerals have been replaced by arabic, and purely formal initial headings have been omitted. Columnar arrangement has given way to more economical paragraphs, while a forty page glossary helps the reader through the minefield of unknown or archaic words.

Phillimores have produced a neat, attractive book, and at today's prices £6.50 seems fair for 362 pages in hardback. It would be a useful reference to set alongside one's own work in other Parishes, and to broaden one's view as Mr. Moore does in pointing out as yet untapped sources of inventories in the Public Record Office, where he extends the list given by W.G. Hoskins in Fieldwork in Local History (1967).

THE FIRST AVON LOCAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION EXHIBITION AND CONFERENCE

18th September 1976

The title of this article is more than misleading, because in the end the day turned out to be a very pleasant informal open day. We were very lucky that Newton Park agreed to open its grounds and extend facilities in which the Societies could display their achievements, as this persuaded many people who otherwise might not have attended, to come, as there were interesting tours, ancillary to the Exhibition, of the recent archaeological dig and of the historic buildings. As one of the organisers, I must say that I was more than nervous a few weeks before the big day, since there were very few Societies who had offered to come forward and help, but as it turned out my fears were unfounded, and instead of the two rooms we had initially booked to display Societies' work, we had to extend to a further four, and I have received many letters from those of you who visited expressing your appreciation of and interest in the various exhibits, and I would like to, through this magazine, pass that on to all those Societies who were good enough to exhibit.

The day started with the President of the Avon Community Council, Sir John Wills' opening ceremony, and from then until 6.30 pm some 300 adults with apparent hordes of children walked around the exhibits and partook of two excellent tours arranged by Graham Davis and Fred Rapsey.

All in all the organisers felt that it had been a very worthwhile exercise, and I hope that those of you who attended will again, and those of you who did not attend will try to come next year.

The Conference for next year will, we hope, be based in Northavon and it has been decided, again, to hold it at a venue of historic interest so that it can again be a day out for the family, rather than merely an academic tour of other Societies' achievements.

JOHN ARBUTHNOT

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