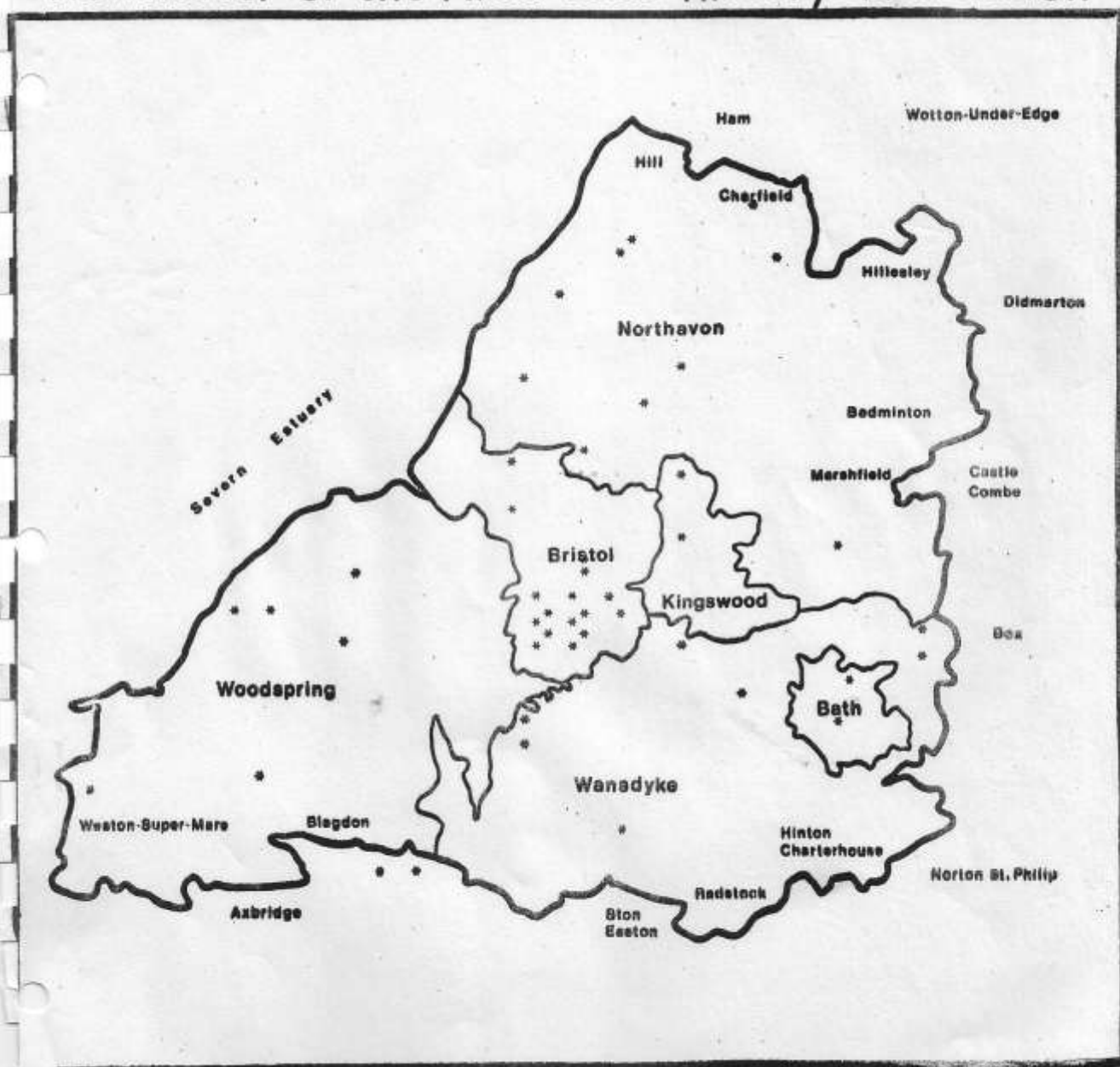


QUEST



Issue No. 4

Newsletter of the Avon Local History Association



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EDITORIAL

I have taken over as Editor in collaboration with Harry Dommett and John Moore.
We should all like to take this opportunity of thanking John Wilson for steering
QUEST through its first year. Unlike John Wilson, Harry Dommett and I are
strictly amateur local historians and have very much welcomed John Moore's
support. However, we do hope that some advantages may accrue from keeping a
magazine designed to serve the needs of local Societies out of the hands of
the professionals !

We have been particularly pleased to have 'follow-up' items. Batheaston and
Westbury-on-Trym have again made generous contributions and we hope that Fred
Rapsey will continue with a series of articles on heraldry. Harry Dommett
has written a welcome appreciation of Malago and we should be pleased to receive
more comments on articles and events publicised through QUEST.

SUE BARRANCE

The Editor will welcome details of forthcoming events, news of Societies, articles
and comments. Communications should be addressed to Mrs. S.C. Barrance,
120 Manor Lane, Charfield, Wotton-under-Edge, Gloucestershire, GL12 8TN. (Tel:
Falfield 572). 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, Tel: 26420 or 25951.

NEWS FROM LOCAL SOCIETIES

Nailsea Local History Society

Although having been in existence for just under two years, the Nailsea Society has emerged as an active and well organised group. During this time members have been engaged in research projects and have exhibited work at Newton St. Loe and at the Woodspring Museum in Weston-super-Mare. Two exhibitions in Nailsea attracted interest and new membership.

Completed research projects include the construction of a model of the Nailsea Glassworks by J. Bowen, sketches depicting a working glassworks by Harry Dommett, the completion of a topographical index by Mr. J. Pullan and a comprehensive photographic record by Mr. D. Cains. Miss J. Atkinson is involved in the immense task of producing an index for the large collection of documents for the archives.

During the winter, under the watchful and expert eye of Mr. M. Costain, a series of projects are under way, including not only the photographic and index work, but also the analysis of the Poor Law Settlement documents, the indexing of the 1851 Census, a study of the Parish Registers, Overseers reports and Parish Council Minutes.

At the A.G.M., Miss J. Atkinson was re-elected Chairman; Mr. P. Wright Secretary; Mr. S.O. Phillips Treasurer; and Mr. H.E. Dommett the Co-ordinator of Research.

Clevedon Civic Society

The Clevedon Civic Society Local History Group has embarked on this years research projects with renewed energy. A visit to Clevedon Fire Brigade, founded by Sir Edmund Elton and Mr. Alonso Dawes after a fire at Clevedon Court in 1883, proved most interesting, and 2 members are at present writing a short history of the Fire Brigade in Clevedon from its record books. Other members are making a tracing of the Tithe Map of 1839 so as to be able to produce dyeline working copies for research work - the Tithe Award gives field names, whether arable, pasture etc., owners and tenants. Many of the field names of Clevedon date back 300 or 400 years, one of the farms to 1318 ! The Group entertained the Civic Society on the 16th of March, 4 members giving talks on the Census of 1841, the Clevedon Improvement Society of the 1860s, the History of Mount Elton, a gothic 'cottage' built in the 1840s, and the History of the Clevedon Farms from leases and the 1630 Survey made for Elizabeth Wake.

Researches into Clevedon's mediaeval past have revealed in the Somerset Record Society's publications in the Central Reference Library, Bristol, many gems. The Muster Roll of 1569 (in vol. 20) gives a list of 120 ablemen, who despite the fact that their armor consisted only of a 'tething corslet and pair of Almain rivets, a bow and a sheaf of arrows' had a 'Gonnor' in their ranks. The Quarter Sessions in later volumes reveal the entertainments of the times before such sophisticated equipment as the television was in use - resulting in an apparently endless series of requests for support for 'reputed' children !

Records of open land fast disappearing under new estates in the Strobe Road are being kept in the form of coloured slides by Mrs. Hedger. The groups most active campaigner, she has compiled lists of street names for many of the new estates around Clevedon, and also tries to have preserved the various natural features such as the very old hedges, by persuading developers to incorporate them into plans. She will be giving a slide talk in our April meeting.

The Local History group will be arranging a history walk as part of the town's Jubilee celebrations in June.

JANE LILLY

Bristol Workers History Project - see article in QUEST 1

Ian Bild informed us that this project consisted of two series of WEA courses, both of which were quite successful but that the group is no longer in existence.

However, a new organisation has been set up called the BRISTOL PEOPLE'S PUBLISHING PROJECT which has run a series of meetings at the University Settlement, Ducie Road, Barton Hill, entitled 'Bristol as we Remember it'. At each meeting, 15 to 20 people from the Barton Hill area came along and talked about their lives and each meeting was tape recorded. The tapes have been transcribed and edited, and it is hoped that a booklet entitled 'Bristol as we remember it' containing memories of work, childhood, schooldays, entertainment, war and so on, will be published shortly.

Any local history groups who have carried out, or who are contemplating attempting similar projects, may wish to contact Ian Bild whose address is now 137 Ashley Road, Montpelier, Bristol 6.

Frampton Cotterell and District Local History Research Group

NEW SECRETARY: Mr. T.W. Crowe,
130 Watley's End Road,
Winterbourne,
Bristol

Telephone: Winterbourne 778830

Filton Historical Research Group

The Group has just completed its first full year, and members are eagerly looking forward to the various activities being organised for the coming period. It is hoped to hold two outings in the summer. First, arrangements are being made for an evening trip to Gloucester for a conducted tour of the Cathedral, followed by supper in the historic New Inn, and secondly Mrs. Barrance has kindly offered to show the group round Old Charfield.

The group will welcome new members and visitors. The Programme Secretary, Mr. J. Jones, 2 Wrington Close, Little Stoke, Bristol, tel. Almondsbury 614001, will be very pleased to receive offers of talks, or to hear of anyone who may be willing to address the group.

W.L. HARRIS
Hon. Secretary

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

EXHIBITIONS

OF

DECORATIVE MAPS

by Harold Lane

Yate Library	: March 4th - April 1st
Filton Library	: May 14th - June 11th
Kingswood Library	: August 13th - September 10th

Mr. Lane's first Exhibition of Decorative Maps, held in Filton Library last September, was noted in QUEST 2, and aroused a great deal of interest.

In addition to the Parish Maps shown in 1976, the 1977 Exhibition will introduce a new series of maps which "describe" either a specific historical, archaeological, industrial or geographical aspect. Initially, the following will be shown:-

Turnpikes in the City of Bristol 1726 - 1867; the Severn Tunnel;
the River Frome. Others planned are based on:- The Bristol Coalfield; The Royal Forest of Kingswood; The Cirencester to Bath Turnpike, etc.

The number of Parish Maps, based on the Tithe Apportionment Awards of circa 1840, has increased and the maps on exhibition will be drawn from:

Chipping Sodbury	Pucklechurch
Dodington, Codrington & Wapley	Rangeworthy
Filton	Siston
Frampton Cotterell	Stoke Gifford
Frenchay	Westbury-on-Trym
Iron Acton	Westerleigh
Lacock (Wilts.)	Wick cum Abson
Mangotsfield	Winterbourne
Nailsea (Somerset)	Yate
Oldland	

Further information can be obtained from:-

Harold A. Lane,
'Cwmtudu',
9 Lower Chapel Lane,
Frampton Cotterell,
Bristol

Forthcoming Events cont.....

Bathford Local History Society:-

As part of the village Silver Jubilee celebrations the Society has undertaken to stage an Exhibition of events connected with the village during the 25 years of the Queen's reign. It is hoped to be able to show, for instance, how the village has developed and notable events which have occurred during that time. The exhibition will be staged at Eagle House on Sunday 5th June.

The Committee is also endeavouring to organise a visit to some place of historical interest at the end of April or early May. Please contact them for details.

Keynsham and Saltford Local History Society:-

Non-members will be charged 15p.

There is no charge for children accompanied by adults.

Confirm all visits from posters in box outside Keynsham Public Library.

Saturday May 14th 2.30 pm

Saltford Conservation Area - meet in Queen Square, (close by Church Hall)
ERIC LINFIELD & PERCY SIMS will conduct the tour.

Saturday June 18th 2.30 pm

Darps Hill/Steel Mill Conservation Area - Meet at top of Darps Hill. Tour conducted by CONNIE SMITH.

Thursday September 8th 7.30 pm

Bristol Central Docks Area - Meet at the Statue of Neptune in the City Centre.
JOAN DAY will conduct this tour.

Sodbury & District Historical Society:-

May 13 7.30 pm

Annual General Meeting in Town Hall.

June 10

Visit to Dodington House, with evening view and anniversary meal.

Chew Valley Local History Society:-

Friday/Saturday/Sunday May 6th/7th/8th
(2-10 pm on Friday, 10 am - 6pm Saturday and Sunday)

In the Old School Room, Chew Magna.
Entrance: 10p adults, 5p for children (not admitted if unaccompanied)

AVON LOCAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION:-

Annual General Meeting on 22nd April 1977
in Room 1, Avon House, at 7.30 pm

Forthcoming events cont.....

Filton Historical Research Group:

28th September 7.30 pm

The History of the Post Office - talk by
MR. R. HAWKINS

All three meetings will be held
in Filton Folk Centre.

26th October 7.30 pm

The History of Aircraft made in Filton -
talk and slides presented by MR. J. OUGHTON
(this is open to the general public)

30th November 7.30 pm

"Railway Lines to Avonmouth" - talk given
by MR. G. NICHOLLS

AVON VILLAGE HALLS CONFERENCE - Saturday 30th April 1977

For those interested, the second Avon Village Halls Conference (run by the Avon Community Council) will be taking place at the Cossham Hall Thornbury on Saturday 30th April from 2-6 pm.

There will be a number of static displays, including one from Local History Societies in Northavon. The stands will be from:

- Avon Federation of Women's Institutes
- Avon Local History Association
- Department of Health and Social Security
- Kennet and Avon Canal Trust
- National Playing Fields Association
- Performing Rights Society Ltd.
- Council for the Preservation of Rural England
- Avon Community Communications Association
- Avon Youth Service
- National Trust

There will be two speakers: Miss Jackie Dods, from the National Council of Social Service, to speak on the subject of Rural Transport and its problems and Mr. Mike Dawson, leader of Landscape and Conservation Group of the Avon Planning Department who will speak on landscape and Conservation.

Tea will be provided during the afternoon, and anyone wishing to attend should send 50p to the Avon Community Council to cover the cost of tea and publications before the Conference if possible.

I am sure you will agree that this Conference is of general interest to everyone.

HOW WE LIVED THEN

written by Mr. L.T. Hilliard

The Batheaston Museum was sponsored some five years ago by the Batheaston Society. From a modest start with a few pieces of local rural or domestic interest, it has grown into a varied collection of 400 items ranging from peels and trammels to pieces of 1935 Silver Jubilee soap 'as purchased by H.M. The Queen'. The exhibits are displayed in four rooms in the Tudor basement of Batheaston House, the upper part of which was rebuilt in 1712 with a Queen Anne front, and the owner of which acts as curator. Nearly all the items have been presented to the museum by members of the Society, and have been used by, or are connected with, Batheaston people which gives them added interest to local visitors.

The exhibits date from the last war or earlier and recall to senior citizens the days of their childhood, or what their grandma had told them of hers, while people under 35 years of age have difficulty in identifying quite a number of the objects unless they are museum fans. For today's children, notices such as 'Fire Guard Assembly Point', 'Stirrup pump kept here' or 'Remember the blackout' have little meaning. A cigarette machine which used to sell 20 cigarettes for 4d makes strong smokers grieve for the past.

Many of the exhibits are small and can be accommodated in glass-fronted cases or cupboards, but the larger and more robust items, such as a massive dough cutter for buns, are free-standing or hang on the walls or are placed on open shelves. The largest items are in what was the old stable and include a market garden cart made about 70 years ago in the old Batheaston Forge from which we also have one of the large double-acting leather bellows. There are some ploughs and other implements from local farms and a five bushel sack dated 1875, still in good condition. There is a collection of old iron tools and implements and household equipment not now made or used.

The older objects benefit from being seen in old rooms with bare stone walls. One room has a wide fireplace and also a stone cooking stove, another has a stone vault and a third has the old house well in the floor.

Our museum's unique feature relates to the early days of Women's Lib. From 1910 to 1912 suffragettes came down to Batheaston to recuperate in Eagle House, the home of Colonel Linley Balthwayt whose daughter Mary was a keen suffragette. During this time, some 40 suffragettes came there, from prison or after strenuous demos. Each one planted a tree in the grounds of Eagle House, and Col. Balthwayt photographed these events and placed a metal plaque recording the name of each suffragette, the tree and the date. When the garden was later being built over, some 18 of these plaques were rescued and these are now in the museum with the photographs from the Colonel's original negative plates showing the lady and the plaque. His camera is also in the museum.

Publicity for the museum is given in the Batheaston Society's Newsletter, in the Bath Information leaflet and on local notices. It has had favourable reports in the local press and on Bristol Radio.

The Museum is at present open to the public from 3 to 6 pm on the second Sunday of each month at 290 High Street, Batheaston. Groups from other Societies, Women's Institutes etc. or school classes are welcome on other days by prior appointment (Tel. Bath 858106). Refreshments are available and a catalogue (15p) lists each exhibit.

THE MEDIEVAL ALMSHOUSE AT WESTBURY-ON-TRYM - Further excavations during 1976

A follow-up to the article in QUEST 3 by James Russell of the Westbury-on-Trym Local History Group.

In the previous issue of QUEST, I described excavations carried out by the Westbury-on-Trym Local History Group since June 1975 on the site of a late-medieval almshouse adjacent to Westbury-on-Trym Parish Church. Since this account was written (in June 1976) further work has been undertaken and a certain amount of additional information obtained, on which the following revised description of the site is based. A number of problems regarding the site still remain to be solved, and it is therefore intended to carry out a final short season of excavation this year.

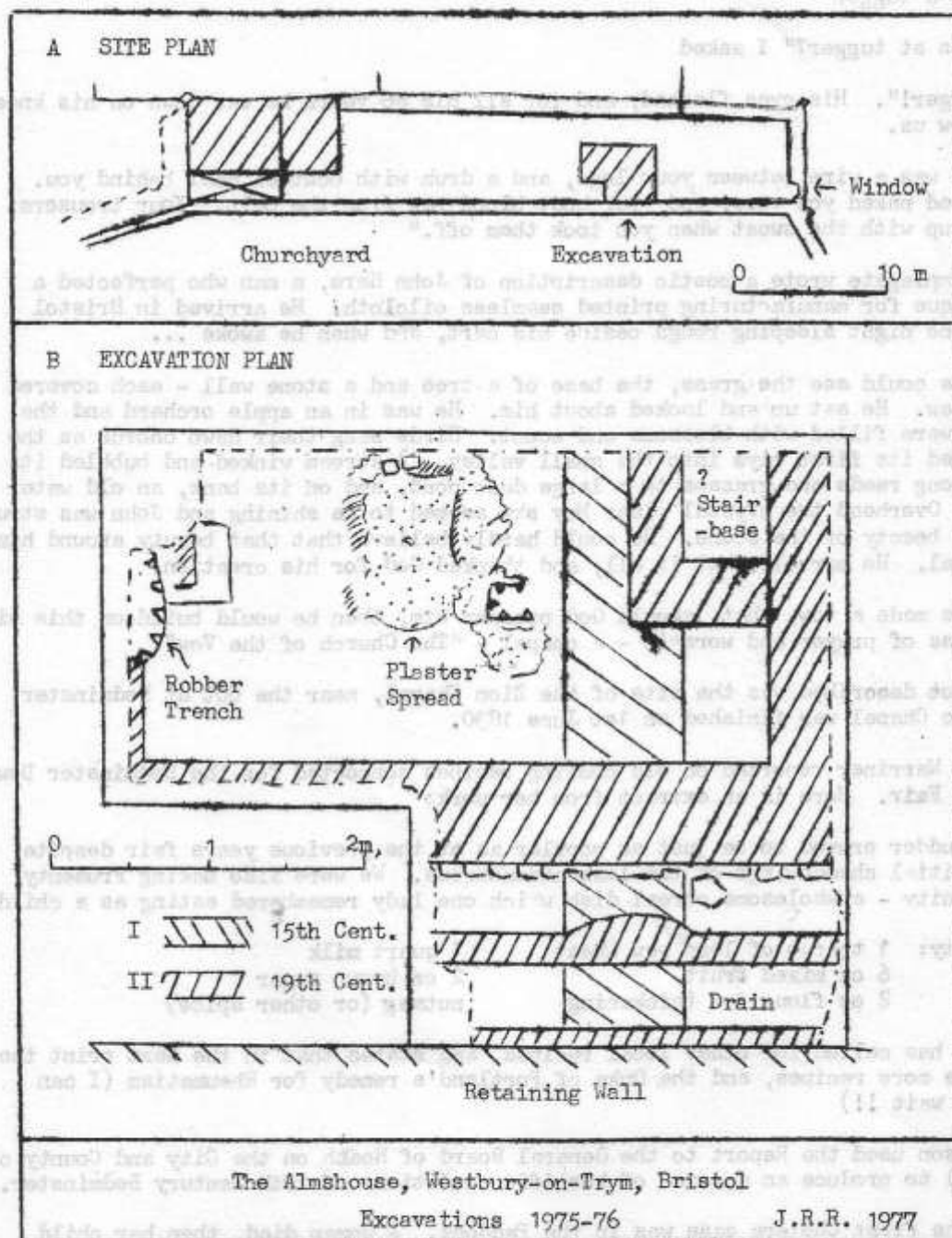
The original almshouse building, which probably housed six poor widows, appears to have been founded during the late 1460s by Bishop John Carpenter of Worcester. It occupied a cramped, sunless terrace on the north side of Westbury churchyard, about 40 metres long from east to west but less than 6 metres wide. After the Reformation, the almshouse, which had previously been associated with Westbury College, was handed over to the parish of Westbury. It continued in use until around 1800, when a survey revealed severe structural defects and a new workhouse was constructed a short distance away. At some date between 1800 and 1840 the original almshouse building was pulled down and reconstructed as a row of eight cottages for the use of the poor. These cottages in their turn were demolished in the early 1850s; since this time the greater part of the site has remained waste ground, and thick deposits of rubbish have accumulated.

During 1976 the excavated area, which initially consisted of a trench only three metres square, was nearly doubled in size. Beneath a massive accumulation of comparatively recent debris, over a metre in thickness, almost half the ground-plan of one of the eight early 19th century cottages has now been recovered, with parts of the east, west and south walls being located. A section of the east-west corridor giving access to the cottages has also been examined, together with a large stone-lined drain running beneath it. The cottage had a raised timber floor which has now entirely disappeared; beneath it was a cavity at least 30 cm deep, the base of which was covered by a layer of clean light-brown mortar. The filling of this cavity, which consisted of loose mortar mixed with fragments of rubble and tile, produced a brass 'jetten' or counter minted by Hans Schultz of Nuremberg in the late 16th century. Adjacent to the east wall of the cottage was a rectangular foundation flimsily constructed from oddments of brick, rubble and roof-tile; this is unlikely to have risen above floor level and probably supported a timber structure such as a staircase. The foundation of the west wall of the cottage had been partly robbed out after demolition; protruding from it was a stone slab supporting two courses of brickwork, which probably formed the base of a fireplace.

The layer of mortar forming the base of the underfloor cavity in the cottage sealed beneath it the foundations of a north-south internal wall of the original 15th century almshouse. In 1975 it was found that this massive foundation, over 80 cm thick, had had packed around it successive deposits of red clay interleaved with pockets of limestone flakes. The base of these clay layers, which in 1975 were followed downwards around the 15th century wall for nearly a metre, has not yet been reached, and at present it is not yet possible to date them conclusively. In 1976 it was, however, possible to examine a series of thin deposits resting on top of the clay layers to the west of the 15th century wall. These deposits, which contain a high proportion of ash and charcoal, have produced a number of pottery and glass fragments of 18th or early 19th century date; it seems likely that they were laid down during an intermediate phase between the demolition of the original almshouse around 1800 and the construction of the row of cottages shortly afterwards. Associated with these deposits is a substantial spread of white plaster partly covered by patches of charcoal. This feature has not yet been fully examined and is somewhat difficult to interpret; it is possible, however, that it formed the floor of a temporary oven constructed by workmen engaged in building or demolition operations. Between the plaster spread and the 15th century

wall is a shallow rectangular socket formed by plaster setting around the base of a now vanished post or stone block. Resting on one edge of the plaster spread was a worn Irish halfpenny dated 1742, while on the ground surface to the south of it were found scattered many fragments of a salt-glazed stoneware tankard with the revenue stamp GR (possibly George III).

During 1977 it is intended to complete the excavation by a further examination of the plaster spread and its associated burnt deposits, and of the deep clay layers beneath. I am very grateful to my fellow members of the Westbury Local History Group for their continued help and support in carrying out this lengthy project.



"MALAGO" - An appreciation of a School Magazine in Local History

It is always a pleasure to read the publication of a school historical group, for the young have an approach that is fresh, enthusiastic and capable of unusual results. Bedminster Down School is no exception and the fifth edition of their publication MALAGO is excellent entertainment.

The first item was a report of a get together of old folk, organised for the Malago Archives Committee, and contained delightful conversations. Most of them nostalgic, some interesting facts emerged including confirmation of the use of the crook and gussett in the South Liberty Lane Pit before World War I.

"I was a tugger"

"What's at tugger?" I asked

"A tugger!". His eyes flashed, and for all his 86 years he was down on his knees to show us.

"There was a wire between your legs, and a drum with 6cwt of coal behind you. Stripped naked you were, and your body blood raw from the belt. Your trousers stood up with the sweat when you took them off."

John Anplegate wrote a poetic description of John Hare, a man who perfected a technique for manufacturing printed seamless oilcloth. He arrived in Bristol late one night sleeping rough beside his cart, and when he awoke ...

"... he could see the grass, the base of a tree and a stone wall - each covered with dew. He sat up and looked about him. He was in an apple orchard and the trees were filled with blossoms and scent. Birds sang their dawn chorus as the sun shed its first rays into the small valley. A stream winked and bubbled its way among reeds and grasses to a large duck pond, and on its bank, an old water mill. Overhead the crystal clear May sky seemed to be shining and John was struck by the beauty of the scene. He could hardly believe that that beauty around him was real. He marvelled at it all, and thanked God for his creation.

Then he made a vow, that, should God prosper him, then he would build on this site a house of prayer and worship - a chapel - "The Church of the Vow".

The spot described was the site of the Zion Chapel, near the Cut at Bedminster, and the Chapel was finished on 1st June 1830.

Sandra Warriner reported on old cooking recipes concocted for the Bedminster Down School Fair. Here is an extract from her work:

"Cows udder proved to be just as popular as at the previous years fair despite the initial shaddowings of the less adventurous. We were also making Frumenty or Furnity - a wholesome cereal dish which one lady remembered eating as a child.

Frumenty: 1 teacup of lean new wheat	1 quart milk
6 oz mixed fruit	2 oz brown sugar
2 oz flour for thickening	nutmeg (or other spice)

Sandra has called for other local recipes, and states that in the next print there will be more recipes, and the Duke of Portland's remedy for Rheumatism (I can hardly wait !!)

E. Benson used the Report to the General Board of Health on the City and County of Bristol to produce an account of horrific conditions of 19th century Bedminster.

"... the first Cholera case was in the Paddock. A woman died, then her child also; under the bed on which she lay was found putrid meat, bones and maggots; the woman herself was a drunkard with a husband twice in delirium tremens. Then died a man named Wilnell who lived next door. Then a woman, Wilcox; two or three pigs

just at front door. Burnell and son-in-law died, three feet off front door was a muck heap of course. Number four, one woman sold fish and kept pigs which tainted the whole neighbourhood.

Ian Lillington and Mark J. Powell wrote about "The Stone Circles of Stanton Drew," and both have shown their virtuosity by each writing the history of local public houses. Mr. North described how "War came to Knowle West", and Martin Powell contributed a further piece on the Plague Pits opposite the Cross Hands on the Bridgwater Road. However, the legend and the fact does not always tally and with a fine sense of circulation, the legend is printed in one copy, with the factual history in the next.

A serial appears on the subject of Ashton Court, and the contribution in Malago 5 describes the end of the Court under the Smyth family. N.J. Allway comments on the Court as it is today and what is planned for the future.

Anton Bantock writes of a shop at the corner of North Street and Merrywood Road, Bedminster:

"Above the door is carved in stone the head of an old Bard - so old and weathered that it is difficult to know who it is. Underneath is inscribed the words, 'Poets Corner 1872'. What is written thereon is pure local history, but as fascinating as all the other contributions.

Mrs. Lillington, a parent, has a lot to do with the production of MALAGO and is persuading Ian to write on how the Society and its magazine came into being. Judging from the standards of Edition 5, this should be quite interesting.

HARRY DOMMETT

HERALDRY FROM THE AVON AREA - No. 1 in a series by Fred Rapsey

Somerset

The Coat of Arms - or shield, as it is correctly - of Somerset County Council was granted in December 1911 'to be borne by the Chairman, Aldermen and Councillors ... in their corporate capacity and their successors' by the College of Arms. The High Sheriff of the time, W.E. Broadmead, supplied the necessary cash and the Council - (and by extension, the County) - was suitably dignified. The shield was brought into active use in December 1912 and has remained unchanged, despite the loss of a fair amount of Somerset's territory to the new County of Avon. An interesting point in heraldic law would be that the retention of the undifferenced arms by Somerset implies a claim to administration over the lost portion!

The dragon of Wessex - in shades of pink - is seen standing erect on a golden shield. The civic mace, eye, tongue and claws - including the one on its nose - are all blue. The dragon is particularly appropriate as it appeared (though not pink but probably scarlet) on Harold II's banner at Hastings in 1066, alongside that of the 'Fighting Man'. Harold had been Earl of Wessex until his election as Cyng in succession to St. Edward. Further back, Alfred the Great took refuge in Athelney to regroup before attacking the Danish invaders and pushing them out of Wessex.

The blazon (or heraldic description) has the dragon gules (red) rather than pink, so there has been an artistic mishap 'twixt grant and pic!

Blazon "Or, a dragon rampant guardant gules facing dexter, langued, eyed, armed and nasally armed azure, holding in its claws a mace erect azure."

The motto, "SUMORSAETE EALLE", was taken from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle and means 'all the men of Somerset' (genus MAN nowadays!). It refers to a battle fought by Somerset men but unfortunately I have not been able to find out which one. By the language I would say post - 800 but I cannot be sure.



All in all, a pleasant, dignified emblem; but unfortunately it is generally displayed too small on the County's notepaper and vehicles to realise its potential. It is good heraldry because it is simple and instantly recognisable, unlike some of the non-heraldic emblems or 'logos' now in use. Incidentally, the fee for designing an emblem or 'logo' is often higher than that charged by the College of Arms!

FRED RAPSEY

ACP, LCT, AICS, MMS

Picture and details kindly supplied by Somerset County Council.

SEVERN PASSAGE

Written by Christopher Jordan

Except at times of high wind the River Severn no longer represents a barrier between ourselves and South Wales and since the opening of the Severn Bridge in 1966 we have become used to the ease with which we cross to the opposite shore.

It was not always so. Until comparatively recent times a traveller from Bristol would take a circuitous route via Almondsbury, Tockington, Olveston and Elberton before striking across the marshy land to the red cliffs of Aust which rose like an island beside the Severn. Here he may wait days for suitable weather conditions to allow him to cross the turbulent Severn Sea. There is strong evidence for the Romans having an established crossing point between here and a land-fall near Portskewett. The route between Aust and the Beachley Peninsular, commonly known as Old Passage seems to have been the most frequently used, but in later times a lower route between Portskewett and New Passage near Pilning became popular.

Between 1724 and 1726 Daniel Defoe in his celebrated 'A Tour through England and Wales' stated that "we came to the ferry call'd Ast Ferry, or more properly Aust Ferry, or Aust Passage, from a little dirty village call'd Aust the sea was so broad, the fame of the Bore of the tide so formidable, the wind also made the water so rough, and which was worse, the boats to carry over both man and horse appear'd so very mean, that in short none of us car'd to venture'. And they didn't.

John Wesley was made of sterner stuff, as you might expect. His Journal for Monday 15th February 1748 relates:

'I set out for Ireland. We came to the New Passage at ten. After waiting about five hours, we found (which they did not care to confess) that the boatman did not dare to venture out; it blew a storm. We then made to the Old Passage; but the boat was just gone off.

Tuesday 16th. They talked of passing early; but the storm was too high. I then walked to Aust, where I preached about ten to a small serious congregation. Between four and five, the wind somewhat abating, a boat ventured out and carried us over'.

His persistence saved him a fifty five mile journey via Gloucester. New Passage saw the first steam-boat service with the 'St. Pierre' in 1825. Soon after, Old Passage responded with the 'Worcester' but there was not room for both of them and after a considerable fight New Passage went under. Success had its price and on 15th March 1830 Secretary J.A. Evans of Old Passage wrote ... 'it would require an advance of at least £40 on each share'. The ferry continued so presumably the outcome was successful.

Prior to the opening of the Severn Tunnel, the Bristol and South Wales Union Railway laid a line from Bristol to New Passage and from Portskewett to the Gloucester-Newport Railway. Passengers were numerous but the break in transport to ferry-boats caused the early projection for a tunnel to enable freight in particular to be rail-borne throughout.

In this century the sea crossing was revived by Enoch Williams in 1926 at Old Passage. Passengers only crossed to begin with but in 1931 a full blown car ferry was inaugurated with the Princess Ida supplemented later by the Severn Queen, Severn King and latterly the Severn Princess. The service ceased in 1966 but the Princess survives in Ireland as a salvage vessel.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Some Societies may also have received copies of the following letter from ACCA, but, for those who have not come across the Association before, the Editor has visited their garrett at the University Settlement and adds a little more explanatory information.

COPY

University Settlement,
43 Ducie Road,
Barton Hill,
Bristol

Tel: 559219

AVON COMMUNITY COMMUNICATIONS ASSOCIATION

Dear Sir/Madam,

We are a non-profitmaking organisation formed to promote and improve communications within the community through advice, the loan of video and audio equipment, information and encouraging greater access to the professional media.

Two members of the team have an interest in local history. This coupled with an interest shown by the community prompted them to produce a film entitled 'Women at Work, 1913 - 1939'. This film has now been completed and consists of interviews with local women who worked at that time, and also material kindly loaned to us from the archives of Fry's and Wills. This tape is available for any group to see. We see many values in work of this nature.

1. Local history is often by passed. Information from people who have memories of more recent times provide interesting anecdotes.
2. We feel that so many worthwhile projects are completed and then shelved after the initial viewing. Information on video tape will be there for others to see and use as they would a library.

If you think that your group would like to join us in this work with or without our co-operation, or if any individual has work or contacts that may be of use to us in illustrating history to others, we would be delighted to hear from you.

Yours faithfully,

FAITH WILCOX

ACCA came into being about two years ago with the closure of Bristol Cable Company (a television station) whose equipment was then lying idle. An open public meeting was called by those anxious to prevent the equipment and the local expertise going to waste. Their aims were:-

1. to give local community organisations and individuals access to equipment
2. to provide training courses
3. to undertake long term planning.

The initial enterprise was then supported by a Youth Media Project, designed to give unemployed 16 to 19 year olds a ten week course in using video equipment and later, in November 1976, by the employment of five extra staff through a Job Creation Scheme with a grant for equipment from the Gulbenkian Foundation. Their aim is to promote the use of video equipment to explore the area of communication needs within the community and to this end they have been setting up training courses and television workshops. They have been used mostly by urban community groups but they are anxious to establish abroad and firm a base as possible before the present scheme ends in September. Two members of the scheme, Faith Wilcox and Graham Rawlings, have a particular interest in local history and would very much welcome the use of their equipment and their films by local history societies. ACCA will be at the Village Hall Conference on April 30th 1977.

COPY OF A LETTER FROM: Mary Glasgow Publications Limited to the AIHA's
P.R.O. Fred Rapsey

Mr. F. Rapsey,
9 Arley Park,
Cotham,
Bristol 6

Dear Mr. Rapsey,

Thank you very much for your letter of 20 January 1977 to our Managing Director Mr. Barry Clifton. He has, in fact, passed the letter on to me as I am responsible for Environmental Science publishing.

As you can imagine, we did not arrive at the title by simply pulling names out of a hat. We have a large panel of advisers, scientists, and academics who all approved the title, even though we knew that there are many QUESTs in existence. Despite the Christian organisation which you mention, there is a journal produced by the City University, a Radio London programme which I myself take part in, a primary schools magazine and, so I am told, a pornographic magazine. There must be many, many more, and we chose the name simply because it is frequently used; if there was only one other in existence in the whole world, then we might have thought twice, but since QUEST seems to be as common as any newspaper called 'The Express' or 'The Advertiser', then there is no need to print a list of disclaimers, acknowledging anything else called QUEST.

If there were another QUEST teaching environmental science to 13 - 14 year old children, then we might have second thoughts.

Yours sincerely,

BRISTOL RECORD OFFICE

LIST OF PRINCIPAL ACCESSIONS 1976

FAMILY, ESTATE & PERSONAL

Adams, Francis: terrier of estates in Clifton 1884
Brain, Cool and Treasure families: deeds, wills, corres. 1749-1972
Bullock, G.T. (Sheriff 1958): diaries, corres. inc. NATSOPA 1920s - 60s
Henbury: survey of estates in hundred 1805
Langley, Dr.: diaries, corres. etc. inc. service in South Africa 1892-1950
Pegler, Ald.A. (Lord Mayor 1974-5): diaries, corres. etc. 1965-75
Skeates, Cllr. H.E.G.: corres. papers etc. 1975-6

DEEDS

Bristol 1563-1974; Clutton 1836; Paulton 1873-98; Temple Cloud 1857

BUSINESS

Bristol Docks Co.: minutes etc. 1791-1848
Bristol Gas. Co. (addnl.): minutes of Bristol United Gas Light Co. & Bristol Gas Co. 1918-24, Bristol United Gas Co. & Bristol United Gas Light Co. 1830-1865, Bristol Gas Light Co. & Bristol United Gas Light Co. 1827-72, Bristol United Gas Light Co. 1870-88, Bristol United Gas. Co. 1842-47
Courage (Western) Ltd: minutes, accounts, registers etc. of Bristol Brewery
Georges & Co. Ltd. 1803-1962, Bristol United Breweries Ltd. 1889-1957, Daniel Sykes and Co. Ltd. 1889-c.1897, Oakhill Brewery 1889-1963, Charlton Brewery Co. Ltd. 1894-1959, Coombs Brewery Radstock 1884-c. 1931, Dunlop Mackie & Co. Ltd. 1905-63, Wigmore & Co. (Bristol) Ltd. 1937-63, Crocker Bros. Ltd. 1944-54, Lakeman's Brewery Brixham 1839-57
Denning Smith & Co. accountants: ledgers 1864-1947
Hoopers glasshouse: wages sheet 1768
Miles Bank: minutes, corres. etc. 1832-1913
Ridgeway Park Cemetery Co. Ltd. : minutes, accounts, registers etc. 1877-1951
Theatre Royal (addnl.): paintings 1793-1899
Western Wagon Co. Ltd.: Minutes, accounts, registers etc. 190-200.

NONCONFORMIST

Congregational: Registers, minutes, accounts etc. of Penn Street Tabernacle 1765-1958, Gideon Chapel Newfoundland Road 1853-1930, Whitefield Church Ashley Road 1876-1907
Methodist: Deeds of Redcliffe Crescent Church 1844-75; registers, minutes, accounts etc. of Downend, Winterbourne, Thornbury, Frampton Cotterell 1838-1959, Kingswood Bourne 1932-70, South Gloucestershire 1961-63, Staple Hill and Fishponds 1956-71, Circuits; Alveston Down 1941-63, Alveston (Greenhill) 1941-62, Coalpit Heath Bethel 1954-67, Downend 1846-78, Fishponds Ebenezer 1947-56, Trinity 1951-71, United Free Methodist 1862-1973, Zion 1943-54, Frampton Cotterell 1881-1948, Frenchay 1916-72, Iron Acton 1934-55, Mangotsfield 1862-1952, Olveston 1867-88, Rangeworthy 1906-64, Soundwell 1930-1953 churches.

ROMAN CATHOLIC

Registers of missions at Shepton Mallet 1765-1883, Shortwood St. Michael 1795-1888, Gloucester 1808-56, Prior Park Bath 1832, 55, Midford Church of Mary Immaculate 1827-92, Cottles Attworth St. Francis de Paula 1858-76, London 1726-72, Diocese of Clifton 1857-1903

ANGLICAN

Church of Good Shepherd Bishopston 1927-64; Holy Trinity Horfield 1543-1965, Holy Trinity Kingswood 1823-1974, St. Agnes 1886-1970, St. Andrew Mont-Pelier 1845-1956, St. Augustine 1669-1792, St. Bartholomew 1861-1956, St. Chsd Patchway 1939-71, St. Edyth Sea Mills 1922-65, St. Gregory Horfield 1926-75, St. Katharine Redland 1898-1954, St. Luke Brislington 1705-1969, St. Mary Henbury 17C-20C, St. Mary Yate 1660-1950, St. Matthew Kingsdown 1836-1974, St. Nathanael Redland 1875-1971, St. Paul Clifton 1859-1966, St. Simon 1845-1955, Holy Trinity St. Philip (addnl.) 1903-49, St. Gabriel (addnl.) 1902-47, St. George (addnl.) 20C, Abson (addnl.) 1742-1826, Olveston (addnl.) 1560-1702

Chaplaincy to Bristol Maternity Hospital 1899-1975,
Chaplaincy to Southmead Hospital 1922-71

SOCIETIES

Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen: pamphlet post 1937
Bristol & Gloucestershire Archaeological Society: minutes, corres. etc. 1876-1971
Bristol Co-ordinating Committee of International Women's Year Appeal: minutes accounts etc. 1975-76
Bristol Festival of Music: corres. 1905
British Association: literature for Bristol Meetings 1898, 1930
Clifton Club Co. Ltd: minutes, accounts, registers 1818-1967
Colston Fraternal Association Friendly Society: report 1862
Merchant Tailors (addnl.): royal licences, accounts, 1408-1883

CHARITIES

Bristol Female Penitentiary: minutes, reports, deeds etc. 1585-1966
Bristol Refuge Society: report 1815
Edmunds' and Cole's Charity (Henbury): minutes, accounts, deeds etc. 1509-1972
Henbury Benefactions: ledger 1931-60
Lady Haberfield's Almshouse Trust: minutes, accounts, deeds etc. 1880-1950
Mrs. Ann Peloquin's Charity (addnl.): accounts 1815-19
Mrs. Sarah Ridley's Charity: accounts 1726-1891
Queen Elizabeth Hospital (addnl.): minutes, proceedings etc. of Congresbury enclosure 1807-16.

STATUTORY AUTHORITIES

St. Philip and Jacob Burial Board: minutes 1868-75, Canford Cemetery registers 1940-47.

MISCELLANEOUS

Apprenticeship and burgess indentures 1803-1927; films 1902-74; postcards and photographs of Bristol c. 1919-20; patent for gas valve 1857; MS. calendar of events 1684-1792; album re Dame Clara Butt late 19C. - early 20C; photograph album of Coalpit Heath colliery early 20C; Xerox copy of poor relief applications in Bedminster 1850-52.

BOOK NOTICES AND REVIEWS

Available in May, 1977, a facsimile reprint by Alan Sutton (limited to 250 copies) of Samuel Rudder's "A New History of Gloucester"

"Severn Enterprise - the Story of Old and New Passage" by Christopher Jordan (published by Stockwell of Ilfracombe at £3) will be reviewed in the next issue of Quest. (See extract from it in this issue)

One of AIHA's constituent Societies, the Redland and Cotham Amenities Society, has published WITELADIES WALKS, Five Town Trails in a Victorian Conservation Area, by Stephen Jones, at 50p. It is a substantial piece of work, 44 pages long, about 9 inches by 5 inches, and incorporates a great deal of research including some from private sources and much from out-of-print books. There are 26 illustrations and three maps, which are not as clear as they might have been, unlike the illustrations, which are primarily of windows and doorways along the walks.

The area covered is "an unusually complete ... Victorian suburb .. (and) ... a Georgian industrial village." The text is concise and specific, sometimes so much so that one is compelled to re-read to gain the sense of the passage. This is not a criticism of the style - rather a tribute to the author's command of the language. One small criticism, however, is the use of specialist language. A glossary would have been very useful, and I for one had to look up the exact meaning of such words as pilaster, cornice and hipped (all from page 1!) let alone 'shouldered architrave', 'mansard roofs' and 'pennant stone sometimes rusticated in the Florentine manner'. Notwithstanding this semantic difficulty, I enjoyed Mr. Jones's turns of phrase, which enlivened the rather dry text and made clear his devotion to detail and scholarship, along with his passion for conservation. One of the problems with conservationists is that their extremists tend to become preservationists, and the "preserve at all costs" lobby should be regarded with caution. Inevitably, there appears a group such as this on the fringe of any movement, and preservationists are a very useful barometer. In many cases they tend to be on the side of the angels, and this is so with Mr. Jones who with his tendency to ascribe aesthetic motives to Victorian speculator-builders raises many interesting points, not the least of which being whether in fact there was a determination to build something of some artistic merit, as well as of commercial potential. He is scathing in his condemnation of most modern buildings, as are all of us, but gives praise where he thinks it is due, especially in the matter of elevation and materials. He includes pungent details of his sites, and appears to be particularly interested in executions, which, oddly enough, brings the sites to life

It would be quite impossible to travel around all the places mentioned in one day, and indeed it is not designed that one should. It would take a week of hard foot-slogging, which is marvellous for anyone with the time these days. However, having taken a sample of the walks, I can thoroughly recommend this book, but I suggest that the walking is done in the day-time when the light is good, or valuable details may be missed, which would be a pity.

Finally, the tone of the book may best be described as Victorian in its meticulous attention to detail and leisured approach. Floreat !

Copies available from Mrs. H.R. Bright, Secretary, Redland and Cotham Amenities Society, 6 Leyton Villas, Hampton Road, Redland, BS6 6JF
Tel. 32168, at 50p plus postage, who would welcome members for the Society as well. Copies also from the author.

FRED RAPSEY

Book Reviews Cont....

Avon County has published a slender booklet entitled BRISTOL TOWN TRAIL, which takes in Redcliffe Parade, Guinea Street, Redcliffe Hill, Commercial Road, Wapping Road, Bathurst Parade, Prince Street, King Street, Little King Street, and Queen's Square. The primary aim is to encourage children 10-13 approximately to "acquire skills of observation and critical appraisal of the urban environment". Unfortunately it "does set out to provide factual information of a (sic) historical nature..." - what a pity. It seems to me that the book underrates the ability of children to read and absorb information, but it is a step in the right direction. It can certainly be used in conjunction with historical material, and its robust nature (spiral bound) helps to make it worth thirty pence. It is mainly printed on recycled paper and has hard covers. One of its good features is the use of a map and aerial photograph of the selected area. This, with the limited number of sites to be visited gives the Town Trail some form of feasibility, which more substantial Trails lack because of their size. As will be noticed, the sites are widely differing, which again helps because of the contrasts offered both in style and time, and the Trail takes in one or two touristy places, which helps when dealing with younger children. However, one is left with the feeling that the idea, although good and covering a well thought-out route, has been underdone, and would have benefited from more thorough research and greater detail. Notwithstanding this, there are some nuggets of fair-quality silver mixed with the lead, and the book is worth the price for teachers to base a more intensive project on.

Title: Bristol Town Trail

Publisher: Avon County PR Department

Price: 30 p

Prepared by: Avon Education Service

Illustrated by: Mike Heywood, Pete Lawrence

FRED RAPSEY

AFFILIATIONS AND DONATIONS

The financial year of the Avon Local History Association now runs from 1st April to 31st March, and therefore it would be helpful if any Societies or individuals who wish to affiliate or make a donation to ALHA could do so promptly, and the affiliation year will accordingly run from April 1st to March 31st.

NEW AFFILIATION FEES:

For clubs with up to 50 members - £1.50

for each additional 50 members - 50p

Therefore, if your club or Society has 250 members, the cost of affiliating to ALHA will be £3.50 for one year.

If any clubs have more than 400 members, the fee is £5.00

If you wish to affiliate or make a donation, please fill in the form below and return to:

Avon Local History Association, 2 Berkeley Square, Clifton, Bristol 8, BS8 1HL

I enclose a cheque/Postal Order for the amount of £ as an
affiliation/donation to the A.L.H.A. on behalf of the
..... Society for the year 1977/78

Signed Date

Please cross cheques and Postal orders and make them payable to:

Avon Local History Association