



Really interesting, these archives – Nicolaes Maes, 1655

AVON LOCAL HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY

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ALHA ITEMS

SANDY TEBBUTT

It is with deep sadness that ALHA's committee mourns the death of Sandy Tebbutt, who died 9 May 2021. Sandy served as **The Gordano Civic Society's** representative on ALHA's committee for many years. Of recent years she edited ALHA's *Walks, Talks & Visits* list, formerly the speakers list. She edited or wrote a number of books and articles about the past of her area, and edited *Posset Pieces*, a regularly published collection of articles. She had been the secretary of, and leader in, a number of organisations in Portishead as well as the

Gordano Civic Society, of which she was deputy chair, including the Portishead *Britain in Bloom* effort, for which she received a community award in 2017. A former school librarian, she was interested and active in every aspect of local history and conservation in her area, and will be greatly missed.

SPEAKERS LIST

Before her terminal illness Sandy was intending to start revising ALHA's *Walks Talks and Visits* list for a new edition, to be published when member groups and societies resume activities once government restrictions on indoor gathering are relaxed. Member groups will understand that there will be some delay before the new edition is issued. ALHA's committee will be seeking an editor to take over responsibility for the publication. If interested, please contact the secretary, Catherine Dixon, 01275 849 200, blackrockcfd@hotmail.com

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Thank you to all members, individuals and groups, who have paid their 2021-2022 subscriptions so promptly. That helps ALHA's cashflow no end. And a double thank you to those who have added something by way of a donation: really appreciated.

BOOKLETS

ALHA has sold its 5,000th booklet. It is not possible to say which title was the 5,000th, because ALHA member **Bristol & Avon Family History Society** bought a batch of booklets for sale via its new webshop. Congratulations and thanks to editor Dr Jonathan Harlow, and the publications team, which over the years has included Mike Leigh, Peter Malpass, Jane Bradley, and Bob Lawrence, now ALHA's chairman.

ATTRACTING YOUNGER MEMBERS

Jan Packer writes: Since this last year of lockdowns has kept me inside I have come to appreciate all the offerings of online attractions. The choice of theatre, arts and culture available has given me lots of variety. One of my favourite sources has been the ALHA website that has advertised plenty of free and affordable online sessions from across the UK. When I saw a webinar advertised for 19 May by the Council for British Archaeology titled *Attracting younger members (Aged 25-45)*, I thought it might be useful for my local group as we are mostly (all?) more senior than that!

I made some notes of ideas and lessons learnt from attenders from urban and rural groups. Some may seem obvious (and it is not an exhaustive list by any means). I hope they may be of some use if only to focus your thoughts. If you try any new ideas it would be great to hear back from you and maybe we can inspire some younger people to get involved. I believe there is a hurdle to overcome to grow from what we have always known (gatherings, talks etc) to what is no doubt the future (virtual groups, less formality) but it would be good to keep the "community" feel that many of us still appreciate.

- Don't be prescriptive. Allow younger people to do it "their" way
- A core group can seem too controlling – set out equal opportunity principles for good "organisational health"
- Make it easy to join. Few younger people have a cheque book: allow online/direct payment (Paypal?) and online joining. Could be a webform or ask for e-mail with specific information (name, [email]address etc)
- Allow new joiners time to settle with the group before over-encouraging them to get more involved. Let them join and enjoy in their own way. Encourage "individual" interests as opposed to group interests. Allow things to build.

- Ask a local museum advice on engaging an audience. They have paid employees with just this expertise
- Recruit a youth rep to committee
- Younger people respond to activities (family and individual) however trivial. Organise and advertise events around school times to encourage parents with time commitments (during school hours or on their way to or from the school run) or small family groups to an activity (after school)
- Allow / encourage people to ask the simple questions without feeling silly (I think Facebook is great for this)
- Encourage people to engage in a flexible way that suits them. Offer ways for them to choose to become involved (users of the society). Offer non-hosted activities that a family/individual can pick up and follow in their own time.

I'd be delighted to hear from anyone who tries new ideas and what successes and failures you've had. We can all learn from sharing our experiences. You can contact me at info@knowleandtottonhistory.org.uk or through the Newsletter editor.

ALHA SUMMER WALKS

Because it is uncertain when it will be safe or permissible for people to gather for walks, and whether enough people will want to attend any that are organised, ALHA's summer walks team has decided not to organise any walks at least not until later in the year, but will keep the position under review.

ARE YOU A WEBSITE WANNABE?

Jan Packer writes: A short while ago we advertised for help on our website team. We had no offers so this is a **massive plea** for someone to step up to help us out. The current team of three have been tasked to come up with ideas to replace our site that is dangerously close to falling off the edge of the technology cliff as it's using unsupported software. We'd really like someone younger and/or fitter to take part in this exciting development to bring a fresh view.

Maybe you saw the ad and decided there would be others who'd jump at the chance or be better at it than you? Perhaps today you'd be prepared to rethink and offer us some help. If you have some basic website awareness, a flare for communicating and are prepared to learn alongside us as we build a new website, we'd love to hear from you. You might expect to spend 6-7 hours a month at times to suit you. We use email to share the design ideas with an occasional Zoom meeting..... and of course, the task is shared with team members so we can even cope with more than one volunteer. So if you think you can help, don't be put off, the team can share the load and where ideas are concerned, we learn so much more from having a diverse team.

Get in touch before 21 June by email if you're happy to help. For a chat with no obligation, contact us at ALHAWebmaster@gmail.com leaving a phone number and preferred time to receive a call.

EVENTS AND SOURCES

LOCAL AUTHORITY EVENTS – GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE

Jane Marley draws attention to guidance published by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport relating to events in Step 2 and Step 3 of easing lockdown restrictions across England. It contains guidance for local authorities to use when assessing whether to give permission for events to take place and will also be useful for museums and organisations planning their heritage events. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus->

[covid-19-organised-events-guidance-for-local-authorities/coronavirus-covid-19-organised-events-guidance-for-local-authorities](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-05/Contested_Heritage_in_Cathedrals_and_Churches.pdf)

CHURCH OF ENGLAND GUIDANCE ON CONTESTED HERITAGE

The Church of England's Church Buildings Council and the Cathedrals Fabric Commission for England have published statutory guidance for parishes and chapters in *Contested heritage in cathedrals and churches*, text at

https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-05/Contested_Heritage_in_Cathedrals_and_Churches.pdf . A short version of the guidance is at https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-05/A_Brief_Guide_to_Contested_Heritage_in_Cathedrals_and_Churches.pdf .

GLOUCESTERSHIRE ARCHIVES

Gloucestershire Archives is now open Tuesdays to Fridays, 9am to 4.30pm. Booking essential, as is an Archives and Records Association (ARA) card (replaces CARN). Up to 10 documents can be ordered, but at least 3 days notice is required.

<https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/archives/plan-your-visit/preparing-to-visit/>

BRISTOL ARCHIVES

Bristol Archives is now open **Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays**. Booking is required.

<https://www.bristolmuseums.org.uk/bristol-archives/plan-your-visit/> . The first two items must be ordered in advance. A further four items can be ordered up during your session.

BATH ARCHIVES

Bath Archives is open **Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays**, 10am to 1pm and 2pm to 5pm. Booking required. <https://www.batharchives.co.uk/>

SOMERSET ARCHIVES AND LOCAL STUDIES

Somerset Archives are now open **Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays**, 10am to 1pm and 2pm to 4.30pm, maximum 6 people per session. Booking required.

<https://swheritage.org.uk/archives-reopening-information>

BRISTOL & AVON FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY SEARCHROOM

Bob Lawrence writes: The BAFHS Research Room has been closed for the past year because of Covid, but will reopen from **Wednesday 2 June** onwards. From that date, and in line with the opening hours of Bristol Archives, it will be open Monday afternoons - 2 – 4, and Wednesday mornings - 10 – 12.

Booking will be essential, and the number of visitors will be limited because of social distancing. To book a space, e-mail rbbooking@bafhs.org.uk with the date you wish to come, your name, and if you will need a parking space. Masks must be worn throughout the building, so please bring your own. Please also wash your hands before coming into the Research Room. BAFHS volunteers will be there to help you, but will not be able to provide close support or assistance.

The Research Room is housed at “B” Bond, as part of **Bristol Archives**, and is open to all. The Society has subscriptions to family history websites such as Ancestry, Findmypast and The British Newspaper Archive, as well as books, maps, and other resources. Further details can be found at www.bafhs.org.uk.

A NIGHT OUT IN YATE

David Hardill writes: **Yate & District Heritage Centre** is opening to the public for bookings. If you'd like to see our forthcoming display *A Night out in Yate* or come and do some research or look round, we'd love to see you. We will be open **Tuesdays to Thursdays** up to **21 June** and **Saturday** thereafter. We are operating a booking system up to e 21 June at least. Please book at info@yateheritage.co.uk or phone 01454 862200.

STOKE LODGE, BRISTOL, ADULT EDUCATION

As mentioned in *Newsletter* 166 of 31 March 2021, ALHA individual member John Stevens reminds that he hopes to give a four-hour day course on **26 June 2021** entitled *Britain's road to democracy*, on the political background to the Reform Acts of 1832, 1867 and 1884 and the granting of the vote to women in and after 1918. This will include some reference to the riots of 1831 and to Mr Berkeley's campaign for the ballot (more about that under COMMENTARY below) and possibly to suffragette activities in **Bristol**. If restrictions on gatherings allow, this will probably be at Stoke Lodge, with people bringing their own lunches. Booking is open; booking by **18 June 2021** requested. Stoke Lodge Adult Learning Centre, Shirehampton Road, Bristol, BS9 1BN; e-mail: StokeLodge@bristol.gov.uk Tel: 0117 903 8844 <https://www.bristolcourses.com/courses/history/>

BRISTOL MUSEUMS AND ART GALLERY

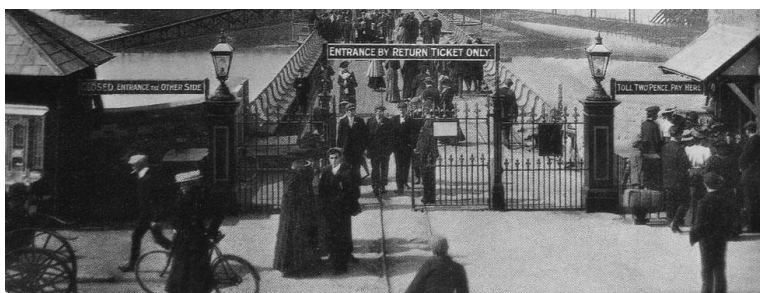
The museum and art gallery are now open, but booking a time is required:

<https://www.bristolmuseums.org.uk/bristol-museum-and-art-gallery/plan-your-visit/>

PIERS

Brief histories of this area's seaside piers – **Clevedon**, **Weston-super-mare** Grand, **Birnbeck** – at <https://piers.org.uk/pier-type/surviving-piers/>; click on southwest north. More about **Birnbeck** at

<http://www.birnbeck-pier.co.uk/> from which the image is taken.



BRISTOL LIBRARIES

Kate Murray writes: We now have seven of Bristol's libraries open for browsing and borrowing, as well as pre-booked computer use, and some of those libraries are now open more hours. A further twelve libraries are providing Call and Collect services, as well as Book Bundles, returns, and reservations collection, with four more libraries to be added in the coming weeks.



Open libraries

You can visit **Central, Fishponds, Henbury, Henleaze, Junction 3, Knowle and Stockwood** libraries to:

- Return your loans
- Browse and borrow
- Use pre-booked computers

If you want to use a computer, you must phone the library first to book your session.

For more details about services available at Central Library, please see

www.bristol.gov.uk/libraries-archives/coronavirus-library-information

Open library hours

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Central	9.30-5	9.30-7	9.30-5	9.30-7	9.30-5	10-5	1-5
Fishponds	11-4	11-4	Closed	11-4	11-4	11-4	Closed
Henbury	11-5	Closed	11-5	Closed	11-5	11-5	Closed
Henleaze	11-4	11-4	11-4	11-4	11-4	11-4	Closed
Junction 3	1-4	11-4	1-4	Closed	11-4	11-4	Closed
Knowle	1-5	11-5	Closed	11-5	11-5	11-5	Closed
Stockwood	1-5	1-5	1-5	1-5	1-5	11-5	Closed

Call and Collect libraries

The Call and Collect service is now available from **Bedminster, Bishopston, Bishopsworth, Clifton, Filwood, Horfield, Marksbury Road, Redland, Sea Mills, Shirehampton, Whitchurch and Wick Road** libraries. You can also return your library items. The reservation service is available (www.librarieswest.org.uk) and reserved items can be collected from any open library or Call and Collect library. For Call and Collect:

- Call or email the library you wish to collect your books from (see contact details below) to ask for up to 5 adult items and up to 8 items for under 18s
- If you tell us what type of books you like to read (favourite authors, genres, subject areas), and how many you'd like, we can make selections for you
- We will issue the items to your library account and put them in a washable and reusable bag
- We will telephone or email you to let you know when your items are ready to collect
- You can leave any items you don't want to take home
- You can then bring your books back in the same bag when you are finished, and it will be placed into quarantine. However, if you'd like to keep the lovely library bag, please do!
- For specific items, please use the free reservation service at www.librarieswest.org.uk if you can.

Call and Collect library hours

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Bedminster	Closed	Closed	11-3	11-3	11-3	11-3	Closed

Bishopston	11-5	Closed	11-5	11-5	11-5	11-5	Closed
Bishopsworth	10-5	Closed	11-5	Closed	10-5	11-5	Closed
Clifton	10-2	1-5	Closed	1-5	10-2	1-5	Closed
Filwood	11-3	Closed	11-3	Closed	11-3	Closed	Closed
Horfield	Closed	11-5	Closed	11-5	Closed	11-5	Closed
Marksbury Rd	Closed	10-5	Closed	10-5	Closed	11-5	Closed
Redland	Closed	11-5	11-5	11-5	11-5	11-5	Closed
Sea Mills	10-2	10-2	1-5	1-5	10-3	10-3	Closed
Shirehampton	1-5	Closed	1-5	10-2	1-5	Closed	Closed
Whitchurch	Closed	10-2	10-2	Closed	10-2	10-2	Closed
Wick Road	Closed	Closed	10-5	Closed	10-5	10-2	Closed

Future opening plans

Three more libraries will open for Call and Collect in the coming weeks. From the week beginning **31 May 2021**, **St George, Southmead and Westbury** will start offering this doorway service. Please note, all libraries are closed on **31 May** for the bank holiday.

Call and Collect hours from w/b 31 May 2021

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
St George	12-4	Closed	12-4	Closed	Closed	11-4	Closed
Southmead	Closed	11-3	11-3	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Westbury	11-4	11-4	Closed	11-4	Closed	Closed	Closed

Then, from **Tuesday 8 June**, **Hillfields** will join the list of Call and Collect libraries.

Call and Collect hours from 8 June 2021

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Hillfields	Closed	11-4	11-4	Closed	Closed	11-4	Closed

We will continue to review the government guidance as we work towards opening more libraries and increasing services all in a safe and controlled way. For updates, please check our library webpages and social media.

What to expect when you visit an open library

- We're limiting the number of people allowed in libraries at any one time it is possible that you will have to queue outside at busy times so, if you can, please limit the number of family members visiting in a group.
- No unaccompanied under 12s please
- Computer sessions will be shorter than usual and must be booked in advance over the phone - contact details below
- We've added signs and floor markings to help maintain social distancing
- You might be unable to browse all our library collections due to current social distancing rules, but our knowledgeable staff will be able to help and advise you if you phone or email ahead
- Toilets will be closed
- Photocopiers will not be available

- It is not possible to collect reserved items from closed libraries, or request them to be moved from a closed to an open library
- Some libraries' children's areas will be closed, but children's books will be available for browsing and borrowing
- All meeting rooms are closed (**Clifton, Junction 3, Central, Bishopston**) and use of the library as a venue is suspended until guidance changes. We are not accepting any bookings for library space at this time

Protecting you, and our staff

Please do not visit the library if:

- you've had coronavirus symptoms in the past 10 days
- a member of your household has had coronavirus symptoms in the past 14 days
- you've been in contact with someone who's had coronavirus symptoms in the past 14 days

There will be safety measures in place, including Perspex screens at staff desks to minimise contact between staff and our customers. We have supplied staff with masks, gloves, face guards and hand sanitiser, and hand sanitiser units will also be available for you to use in key locations around each library.

All computers will be wiped clean with alcohol wipes between each session. Unfortunately, we will not yet be able to offer an enquiry or reference service or any assistance with computer use.

All returned items will be quarantined for at least 72 hours. When visiting the library you should wear a mask or other face covering if you are able to do so.

NHS Test and Trace

If you visit an open library, we ask that you check in using the QR code and the NHS COVID-19 app (you will find these displayed at the entrances of the libraries) or use the simple form available to give us your contact details, to support NHS Test and Trace. Any contact information you give us will be kept securely and destroyed after 21 days.

Online services

We are continuing to offer extensive online services, including eBooks, eAudio, eComics and online magazines and newspapers (see www.bristol.gov.uk/libraries). We will also be continuing with our online events: children's story times and quizzes; author events; a virtual book club, a virtual Lego club and the Bristol Libraries podcast.

Keep up to date with the latest online goings-on via:

Twitter - [@BristolLibrary](https://twitter.com/BristolLibrary) Facebook - [Bristol Libraries](https://www.facebook.com/BristolLibraries) Instagram - [bristollibraries](https://www.instagram.com/bristollibraries)

Contact details

Please phone ahead to use a public computer at open libraries. Please phone ahead if you have a specific query about a service.

Library	Email	Telephone
Bedminster Library	bedminster.library@bristol.gov.uk	0117 9038529
Bishopston Library	bishopston.library@bristol.gov.uk	0117 3576220

Bishopsworth Library	bishopsworth.library@bristol.gov.uk	0117 9038566
Central Library	lending.library@bristol.gov.uk	0117 9037250
Central Library for computer bookings	<i>please telephone if possible</i>	0117 9037234
Clifton Library	clifton.library@bristol.gov.uk	0117 9038572
Filwood Library	filwood.library@bristol.gov.uk	0117 9038581
Fishponds Library	fishponds.library@bristol.gov.uk	0117 9038560
Henbury Library	henbury.library@bristol.gov.uk	0117 9038522
Henleaze Library	henleaze.library@bristol.gov.uk	0117 9038541
Hillfields Library	hillfields.library@bristol.gov.uk	0117 9038576
Horfield Library	horfield.library@bristol.gov.uk	0117 9038538
Junction 3 Library	junction3@bristol.gov.uk	0117 9223001
Knowle Library	knowle.library@bristol.gov.uk	0117 9038585
Marksbury Road Library	marksburyrd.library@bristol.gov.uk	0117 9038574
Redland Library	redland.library@bristol.gov.uk	0117 9038549
St George Library	st.george.library@bristol.gov.uk	0117 9038523
Sea Mills Library	seamills.library@bristol.gov.uk	0117 9038555
Shirehampton Library	shirehampton.library@bristol.gov.uk	0117 9038570
Southmead Library	southmead.library@bristol.gov.uk	0117 9038583
Stockwood Library	stockwood.library@bristol.gov.uk	0117 9038546
Westbury Library	westbury.library@bristol.gov.uk	0117 9038552
Whitchurch Library	whitchurch.library@bristol.gov.uk	0117 9031185
Wick Road Library	wickrd.library@bristol.gov.uk	0117 9038557

Further information can be found on our website www.bristol.gov.uk/libraries-archives/coronavirus-library-information. We are very much looking forward to seeing you back in libraries and thank you for your patience as we continue to reopen.

BOOKS AND OTHER ITEMS NOTICED

Fred Gray, *The architecture of British seaside piers*, Crowood Press 2020, hb colour illustrated, £27.50; £22.00 via the website <https://crowood.com/details.asp?isbn=9781785007132>. Relevant to **Clevedon** and **Weston super mare** (Grand and Birnbeck).

Peter Davenport, *Roman Bath: a new history and archaeology of Aquae Sulis*, The History Press 2021, £20, £16.50 off the website <https://www.hive.co.uk/Product/Peter-Davenport/Roman-Bath--A-New-History-and-Archaeology-of-Aquae-Sulis/25303074>

John Preston: *Fall: the mystery of Robert Maxwell*, Viking 2021, hb £18.99. Relevant to **Paulton** after Purnell. <https://www.penguin.co.uk/books/312953/fall/9780241388679.html>

Julian Holder, *Beauty's awakening: Arts and Crafts architecture*, Crowood Press 2021, hb colour illustrated, £22; £18.50 via the website <https://www.crowood.com/details.asp?isbn=9781785007965&t=Arts-and-Crafts->

[Architecture---Beauty%27s-Awakening](#) . Relevant to housing at **Sea Mills** and much else; commentary in e-update 30 April 2020.

Advance notice:

Peter Malpass, *Housing the People in Victorian Bristol*, Redcliffe Press, October 2022, softback £20.
<https://redcliffepress.co.uk/product/housing-the-people-in-victorian-bristol/>

COMMENTARY AND RESPONSES

ALHA grant to Victoria County History for West Littleton

*James Hodsdon, Chair of the Gloucestershire County History Trust, responds to the piece in ALHA e-update 30 April 2021 by TF questioning the ALHA grant towards research by VCH on **West Littleton** and the response by ALHA's treasurer:* I feel TF is being a touch hard on the VCH as it is today. Older volumes certainly bear out his comment about advowsons etc, but the template has evolved with the times, and he will find more life (and more colour) in recent VCH productions, not just in our area but also in neighbouring active counties like Wilts and Oxon. Why do we carry on? It's not just to 'complete the set', though that would be nice. It's to give every community in the historic county the same access to a really well-researched reference-quality local history. Why **West Littleton**? Because that parish was always in our plan for Volume 14 (in which **Yate and Chipping Sodbury** will feature largest). We were able to start earlier than expected because of encouragement and practical support from history-minded residents in the village – now complemented by some Member-Awarded Funding from local councillors, and of course the very welcome grant from ALHA itself. The **West Littleton** research is nearly complete. By the time this newsletter comes out, we should have been able to access the last locked-down archive sources, and drafts should be available online. Comments will be welcome.

Rita Lees also writes: **Marshfield & District Local History Society** has the aim of including all neighbouring villages, such as **West Littleton**. Currently, we have no members from **West Littleton** but we have a named contact who kindly circulates our programme to all residents. We had already booked a talk by the two local historians involved with West Littleton, Dr John Chandler and Dr Simon Draper, when this item appeared in the ALHA e update. The result of their findings will be presented at **Marshfield** Church Hall on Tuesday 21 December 2021 at 7.30 pm, all being well. We understand that the VCH project in **West Littleton** has generated much interest in the community, which may create further enthusiasm. Our own very small social history research group necessarily concentrates on **Marshfield** at present, with the intention of providing an eventual social history of **Marshfield**. We have been pro-active in recording the oral histories of senior **Marshfield** residents from 2018-20. More recently, we produced a questionnaire relating to people's experience of the covid pandemic. Information gathered from both projects is now available from Gloucestershire Archives for further research. Additionally, the 19th-20th century social history content relating to **Marshfield** in the former C of E parish magazine, has now been analysed and catalogued but not yet printed. Rather than question the choice of **West Littleton** as an object for VCH research, we can only admire their good fortune in funds being made available for historic research within their community. Rita Lees, **Marshfield & District Local History Society** www.marshfieldhistory.uk

Berkeley of the Ballot

The elections on 6 May 2021 led John Stevens to write: **Bristol's** long-serving MP of the mid-nineteenth century, (Francis) Henry Fitzhardinge Berkeley (1794-1870) is worth studying. He was a politician of contradictions: to the left of centre in the Whig/Liberal party coalition, he was staunchly patriotic during the Crimean War (1854-56) and in support of the nascent volunteer movement of the 1860s. He was also a strong backer of the 'Trade,' although many of his key non-conformist supporters in **Bristol** were temperance men.

Henry Berkeley was the bastard son of the fifth Earl Berkeley and some said his illegitimate birth had left him with a chip on his shoulder, manifested in a leaning to political radicalism. Outside politics, Berkeley was a noted amateur pugilist in his youth; his love life may also be of interest. All in all, he should be written up.

The issue with which Berkeley was most associated was the advocacy of secret voting at elections. He presented a motion on the subject almost every year of his time as one of Bristol's members (1837-70) and was almost always heavily defeated. Exceptionally in 1862, the motion passed, and he was able to introduce a bill which was, however, defeated by 211 votes to 126 on its second reading.

Berkeley deplored the use of inducements, like drink and cash payments, at elections and also the pressures which, for example, tradesmen might use on customers. After the 1852 election in Bristol, for example, Henry Reed, a Liberal bookseller in the out parish of **St Philip's**, complained that a Conservative neighbour, the timber merchant Samuel Braine, had withdrawn his custom and returned a consignment of newspapers. Tenant farmers in the counties were thought vulnerable to similar pressure.

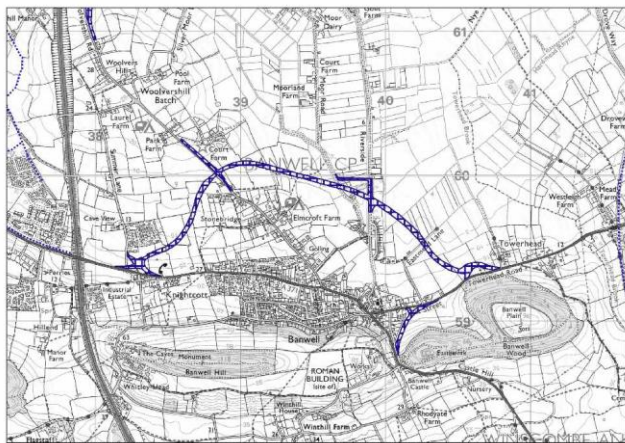
Debates were wide ranging. Berkeley pointed to what he saw as the success of the ballot in certain of the United States; his opponents contended that it had led to Louis-Napoleon's dictatorship in France, established in 1850. In general, Conservatives and many conservative Whigs opposed the ballot on the ground that an Englishman should not be afraid to cast his vote openly; this was the line taken by Berkeley's Conservative opponent in 1852, FA McGeachy, and by Whig leaders like Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell. This might suggest that the ruling class simply wished to keep power in their hands; some of Berkeley's fellow radicals, however, also opposed the ballot on the ground that, the franchise being limited, the vote was a trust held by those who were entitled to it, and should be exercised in full view of those who were not.

Berkeley's shoulders seem to have been broad, for he introduced his subject with a jaunty good humour which even his opponents enjoyed, viewing it as a harmless eccentricity on his part. It was a parliamentary joke that Berkeley's motion for the ballot came round year by year, 'like garden peas' (Captain Birdseye's frozen variety were as yet unheard of.) It is ironic that secret voting was introduced by Gladstone's Liberal government two years after Berkeley's death, in 1872. It may be the near doubling of the size of the electorate after the Second Reform Act of 1867 made the "trust" argument less potent, but there were high political considerations too; Gladstone was anxious to have the firebrand radical and ballot supporter John Bright, in Lyndon Johnson's words "inside the tent", rather than making a nuisance of himself on the back benches.

The outcome was that, for better or worse, the British people were to vote in secret, as we do to this day.

Bypasses

North Somerset Council says it has commissioned design of a **Banwell** bypass, with a view to its completion in 2024: <https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/business/regeneration-development/housing-infrastructure-fund/banwell-bypass> . [Image from NSC]. A route was proposed in the 1930s. The council's consultations on the environmental effects – though the



decision appears to have been taken – might prompt local history people to think about bypasses in our area and how they brought about changes.

As with other topics, it helps to start with defining what we mean by the word. A bypass is a road on a through route constructed to divert traffic away from an existing one, usually when the existing one is old and runs through a built-up area. Examples in our area include stretches of the A4 north of **Keynsham**, of the A370 south of **Long**

Ashton; of the A367 Roman Way east and south of **Peasedown St John**, and of the A420 north of **Marshfield**. Would you include the length of the A370 Bristol Road that skirts the old centre of **Congresbury**? Or Central Way and Southern Way around the southern edge of **Clevedon**? Or Morton Way and Midland Way on the northeast and southeast quadrants of **Thornbury**? Is Somerset Avenue and Herluin Way between **St George's** and **Weston super mare** a bypass? **Bristol's** New Cut is a by-pass of a different sort, as is **Bristol's** northern stormwater interceptor.

A question related to definition is whether the road was constructed deliberately to provide a different route from the one bypassed, or was built for some other purpose or with some other motive but had the side effect of creating a bypass. That seems to have happened with some lengths of turnpike, which attracted traffic that would otherwise have gone along the old road. Is an example of that at **Thornbury**, where the alignment of what is now the A38 east of the town meant that vehicles travelling between Gloucester and **Bristol** no longer went through **Thornbury**? Similarly, people use lengths of the M4 and M5 to bypass routes in **Bristol**, **Patchway** and **Filton**, just as the M4 is so used north of Newport.

There is little point in looking for bypasses before volumes of vehicular traffic came to be perceived as a problem. Turnpikes offered an opportunity to re-route traffic, and in some cases had to because of landowner influence. But the idea that new roads might be constructed to avoid urban bottlenecks or congestion (and move them somewhere else?) seems not to have arisen until motor traffic increased in the first half of the twentieth century.

Bypasses have caused controversy. Usually they have involved acquisition of farmed land, and have disrupted agricultural operations. Sometimes they have divided a farming unit, hence the accommodation roads and bridges that often accompany a bypass. Motoring organisations, claiming to represent motorists, a term calling for definition if ever there was one, have generally been in favour of bypasses because they have avoided congestion and delay and have cut journey times. In urban areas bypassed, opposition has come from businesses who perceive themselves as relying on passing traffic for trade, though how drivers stuck in a traffic jam contribute to the local economy is not always explained. Urban conservationists have tended to favour bypasses, on the ground that they take away arguments for demolishing old buildings to improve urban roads, and help extend the life of buildings otherwise threatened by traffic noise, vibration and atmospheric pollution. More recently, concerns about how atmospheric pollution affects humans as well as masonry have

led to calls to remove traffic from urban routes, which bypasses do, though transferring the pollution elsewhere. Rural conservationists tend to object to bypasses because of the loss of open land. That may be exacerbated if the road is funded by developers' payments pursuant to agreements under s.106 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 or s.278 of the Highways Act 1980 or by community infrastructure levy under the Planning Act 2008 when agricultural land gets planning permission for housing or commercial development, as appears to be the case at **Banwell**. Did any bypasses in our area become sites of political protest?

A more interesting and challenging question for local historians is what effects bypasses have had. During construction, did the bypass boost the local economy by creating jobs? Or were bypasses, like canals and railways, built by roving workforces from elsewhere, employed by, and delivering profits to, companies based miles away? In the longer term, did the A4 bypassing **Keynsham** help or harm the prosperity or the social fabric of the town? Any effects on road casualties, motor mechanics, crime, or journey to work patterns? What about **Marshfield** and **Peasedown**?

History of neglect

'The well has a history of neglect,' says Michael Manson, writing about St Anne's well, **Bristolington** in his *Bristol Miscellany no.1* (Bristol Books 2021).

Now there's a concept local history people might make use of. A history of neglect, from a local history viewpoint, sounds interesting. The first thing would be to define neglect. It means not bothering about something (or someone), not looking after it, leaving it to the forces of nature and the hazards of whatever may happen. Neglect is not the same as just doing nothing: it implies ignoring, putting out of mind, not caring. You cannot be said to neglect something if you do not know it exists, or if there is no reason why you should bother about it in the first place.

The next issue would be why something or someone gets neglected. Reasons might include not having the time or resources (including money) to look after it; not giving any priority to looking after it; having the time or resources, but deciding to apply them elsewhere; not appreciating, or not understanding, why something should be looked after.

Neglect is at the heart of many things that get local history people annoyed, especially when it involves neglect of old buildings or results in land becoming unsightly. In the case of buildings, neglect can be deliberate. There are two main approaches to building maintenance. One is always to keep a building in good repair, and even to do repairs before they are needed in order to prevent deterioration later, applying the old adage from clothing to buildings. Another theory is to delay doing any repairs or maintenance until the building is collapsing, uninhabitable, unsafe or lethal: you then abandon it or, if you can afford it, knock it down and replace it with something else, which might not need much maintenance for a few years.

Local and other public authorities tend to favour the latter policy: one political party does not want to spend money on anything unless it has to; another party does not do repairs or maintenance so that scarce resources can be applied to other purposes. Public sector trade unions support neglect of buildings so that the money can be directed to saving jobs. If budget cuts need to be made, buildings maintenance goes first. After training, that is.

Some neglect can be put to constructive use. Remember bomb sites after WW2? Lying neglected because of restrictions on the use of building materials and general weakness of the economy exhausted by war, they were not neglected by children, though: marvellous places to play in, perhaps with a touch of danger, and who knew what you might find?

Some historians see neglect as the inevitable consequence of economic cycles, of changes in people's wants and habits, as if a certain percentage of neglected land or buildings is inevitable at any one time, especially as living standards improve and people abandon the old for the new. Local examples abound. [Image *Bristol Post*]



Another aspect might be neglect, not of buildings or vacant land but of people. Civil disorder and protest may be provoked by a perception that a particular section of the population has been ignored or neglected. Local examples abound.

Consequences of neglect are many and various. It can lead to falling masonry and death, as at a school in **Clevedon** within living memory; to loss of a building that ought to have been preserved or conserved; to a feeling of alienation on the part of groups or descriptions of people. If we neglect, there are consequences.

Extinctions

In the 1950s a general history student might be asked a question along the lines of 'No nation/empire/civilisation lasts for ever.' Discuss. The student might mention the ancient civilisations of the Maya and of Persia, Assyria, Egypt, Greece and Rome; the later Aztecs and the Incas; and perhaps the Roman, Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, French and Belgian empires. The elephant in the room would be the British empire: few students in the 1950s would have risked appearance in a Bateman cartoon by observing that two world wars and much else had knocked the stuffing out of Britain's military, naval, diplomatic, colonial, political, manufacturing, commercial and cultural supremacy. The student might mention Ozymandias, pointing out that Shelley's fiction was a poetic proxy for many defunct despots and their grandiose claims.

In his morale-boostingly titled *Why most things fail* (Faber & Faber 2005), Paul Ormerod generalised the idea into an argument that all human institutions are doomed to extinction. He notes, for example, that something untoward happened to the dinosaurs (modern palaeontologists now think there were several major extinctions); that few of the largest industrial companies dominant in 1912 now exist; that between 1900 and 1920, of the 2,000-odd firms involved in car manufacturing over 99% disappeared; that in any year in America about 10% of all companies fail; and so on. He argues that Darwinian theories of evolution in the natural world apply also to human organisations, that extinction and failure is built into the system. This encouraging theory, just the thing to cheer us up during a pandemic, is bound to be of interest to historians.

At local level, which is where most of the interesting things go on, we can probably think of some examples that corroborate and some that contradict Ormerod's argument. There are archaeological traces of what once were human settlements, from **Lawrence Weston** to **Woodwick** in **Freshford** and from **Camerton** to **Charfield**. Many of our villages have traces of outlying settlements that are no longer inhabited. What were once prosperous towns have declined. **Sea Mills** is no longer a strategic port; the late James Russell's opinion of it might have been a little harsh. Populations have shifted, as at **Langridge**,

Winterbourne and **Backwell**, and perhaps at **Oldbury on Severn**. Monasteries from **Woodspring** to **Hinton Charterhouse** got dissolved. Football clubs have gone bust, mostly on their own initiative. Woolworth's is no longer on high streets, which some people think will themselves decline towards extinction.

Many communities and organisations that go back a long way still exist and show no signs of going under. A less polarised view (that is, one that does not demand that we choose between two extremes, not one expressed in subcultural slang), might be that many organisations have survived but have changed in various ways: churches, towns, villages and voluntary organisations are ready examples. The big estate may have been broken up, but its land is still farmed and its great house may have been recycled as a hotel, school, asylum,



care home, museum, or flats. The canal and the stage coach may no longer exist or be used in their original forms, but transport by other means lives on, and what was once a hard-nosed commercial operation may now be given a public subsidy as a cultural inheritance or to allow it to be used for leisure. After the pandemic restrictions have been relaxed, some pubs, cafes and entertainment venues will not have survived, but others will; some will have adapted or

diversified to accommodate change, and so will survive. There must be local history perspectives on this.

Carnavalet

The Carnavalet museum in Paris has re-opened after a five-year restoration and re-ordering: <https://www.carnavalet.paris.fr/musee-carnavalet> . Outside our area, but worth noting for two reasons.

Most civic and national museums collect and display items from many different places and cultures. As well as items from their locality, they look at the nation or the world as a whole. **Bristol** city museum, for example, exhibits items from Assyria and Egypt. (Given Bristol's many international connections, could it usefully display more?) The Carnavalet is concerned with artefacts from the past of Paris only. It was the first major deliberately local museum. In that respect it was the forerunner of the Museum of London, **Bristol's M Shed**, and many other local museums, many of recent origin, that concentrate on the past of their own locality.

The other aspect of the Carnavalet worth noting is why it was founded. In the 1850s Louis Napoleon wanted Paris modernised. Various motives are attributed to him. Was he impressed by how the City of London had been replanned after the great fire 200 years before? Did he aim to obliterate neighbourhoods likely to foster opponents of the (his) government? To improve public sanitation and health? Or to make it easier for the military to move fast and command the streets in the event of civil unrest or insurrection? His executant was Georges Eugène Haussmann, prefet of the Seine department. Haussmann demolished areas of the city that had not changed much since medieval times, and laid out wide straight avenues and boulevards, distinctive features of the city today. That involved clearing whole communities, demolishing large numbers of buildings, destroying their contents, and ending many activities that went on in them. At some stage Haussmann realised that in creating the new Paris, he was destroying for ever the old one. In 1866 he arranged for the city to collect relics of the old city and display them in a museum, now the Carnavalet, which opened in 1880.

What motivated Haussmann to act as he did? Nostalgia? Repentance? Guilt? Whatever his motives, the founding of the Carnavalet was a rare act of foresight. In the UK hardly any large-scale urban destruction has been accompanied, let alone preceded, by

conscious effort to save and preserve examples of what has been destroyed. Isolated blips such as the incongruous preservation of Normanton church on Rutland Water, the relocation of a medieval house in Exeter, and the removing of Stratford Mill from **West Harptree** to **Blaise Castle** estate <https://catalogue.millsarchive.org/stratford-mill-west-harptree> were one-offs. When the Victorians and the twentieth century drove railways and motorways through urban areas, few if any attempts were made to record, let alone conserve, examples of what was being destroyed. Nowadays most museums struggle to recover, after the event, artefacts from pasts now lost. The law protects, to some extent, remains in the ground and traces of old buildings that could be disturbed by development, but not much thought is given to artefacts and displaced or curtailed activities above ground. Modern governments, public authorities and developers contemplating large-scale destruction and redevelopment would do well to follow Haussmann's enlightened if repentant example.

QUOTE

'Papa,' Giannina asked once again, 'why are old tombs less sad than new ones?' ...
'Well,' he replied, 'the recent dead are closer to us, and so it makes sense that we care more about them. The Etruscans, they've been dead such a long time ... it's as though they'd never lived, as though they were always dead.' ...

'But now that you say that,' she gently put it, 'it makes me think the opposite, that the Etruscans really did live, and that I care about them just as much as about the others.'

Giorgio Bassani, *The garden of the Finzi-Continis* (1962); Penguin Classics 2007

EVENTS

A trickle of ALHA member group and society events is now appearing on the ALHA website: <http://www.alha.org.uk/Events%20list%20by%20date.pdf>