



# AVON LOCAL HISTORY & ARCHAEOLOGY

Registered charity 270930

**Newsletter 170**      **31 March 2022**

**Material for Newsletter 171 by 12 noon 23 June 2022 please:**

*Magazines and books to reviews editor*  
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Other news, comments and changes of contact details to newsletter editor and membership secretary, 5 Parrys Grove, Bristol BS9 1TT  
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Website: <http://www.alha.org.uk>

Events: <http://www.alha.org.uk/events.html>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/AvonLocalHistoryandArchaeology>



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CAN YOU HELP?

and the EVENTS LIST

## **ALHA NEWS**

### **ALHA BOOKLETS**

More copies of Peter Malpass's ALHA booklet no. 10, *Redland: the making of a Victorian suburb* are now available. The booklet can be bought off the ALHA website, or from the treasurer, price £3.95 if collected or £4.60 post free.

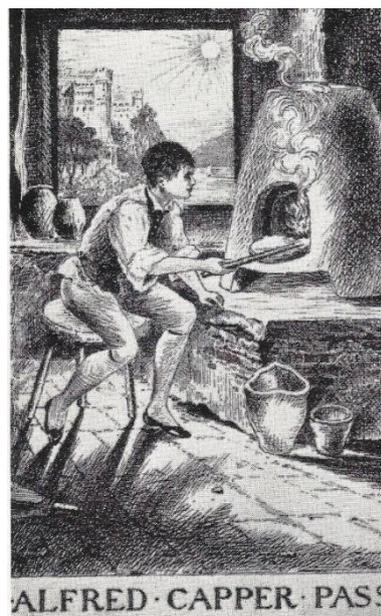
### **NEW ALHA BOOKLETS: SUSANNA MORGAN AND CAPPER PASS**

Two new ALHA booklets are now available.

No. 34 is by Mike Whitfield about the nineteenth century campaigner and reformer **Susanna Morgan**. No portrait of her on the front cover: please see **Can you help?** below.

No.35 is by Brian Vincent about the nineteenth century metal smelter **Capper Pass** and his company and family connections.

A flyer and order form for both books accompanies this e-Newsletter.



### **LOCAL HISTORY DAY 2022**

As previously reported, the committee had been planning to put on in the spring of 2022 the local history day that was planned for 2020 but postponed because of the corona virus. The intention was to have the same topic - the experiences of the local population in wartime - and with the same speakers as originally booked. A combination of circumstances, including some speakers no longer being available, has led the committee to rethink that plan. A more recent consideration has been a majority view that now was not an appropriate time to address the chosen theme. (The minority view was that now is just the right time to remind ourselves of what the civil population experiences in war.) The committee has decided not to hold the local history day in April 2022 but to defer further consideration until local, national and international circumstances become clearer. The present intention is to explore the possibilities of the local history day being held in the autumn of 2022, perhaps with a different theme yet to be chosen.

### **LAUNCH OF NEW ALHA WEBSITE**

*Bob Lawrence writes:* In September 2020 ALHA's Executive Committee agreed that it was time for a new website. The existing site had been designed in 2016, but it was inflexible in operation and the software was obsolete and no longer supported. The appearance of the site was dated. A working-group was set up of Bob Lawrence (current webmaster), Jan Packer and Veronica Bowerman, and over the following months the websites of similar organisations to ALHA were looked at. A new webmaster was also needed for ALHA, and Tina Lane was interviewed and appointed. She then took part in short-listing the possible design companies. Quotations were requested and CommunitySites was selected. They have extensive experience of working with charities and community groups, and designed the current B&GAS website. All these stages were progressed, despite covid, through zoom meetings and e-mail. Tina Lane and Jan Packer worked in detail on the design of the site, adding information and text.

The new website is now ready, and we hope to launch it on 1 April. Our web address (alha.org.uk) will be unchanged, but the new website is completely different, with more colour and better design. Functionality is much improved, and there is now space for more detail about the

forthcoming meetings of our member groups, together with information about where groups meet and how to join. Please send details of forthcoming meetings to [webmaster@alha.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@alha.org.uk), with plenty of notice if possible. The new website is based on the information we already have, so please check and let us know if any of it is now incorrect. The more we can advertise your meetings, the more you will increase your membership and attendance.

We look forward to hearing your comments, and if you find something that is wrong or doesn't work, please let us know. Contact details are on the site.

## GRANTS

**The Gordano Society** has appealed for contributions towards the cost of restoring Lorymers Park, a small Victorian public open space in **Portishead**. The restoration is intended in part to commemorate the late Sandy Tebbutt. ALHA's committee has offered a grant of £750, on condition that the rest of the money required is raised and the project proceeds.

## SUBSCRIPTIONS DUE

ALHA's financial year starts 1 April. We hope you will renew your membership. **Application forms accompany this newsletter and are downloadable from the website.**

# EVENTS AND SOURCES

## BREAKING THE NEWS

*Breaking the news – Bristol, city of protests* was an exhibition at Bristol central reference library until 27 March 2022. *Sophie Evans, Heritage development librarian, writes: Bristol* has a long and rich history, often divisive and complicated. 'Throughout its past we see stories of people taking a stand and letting their voices be heard. This exhibition, curated by Bristol Libraries, looks back at some of the major public protests and how they were reported in the local press. From the Bristol Bridge Riot to the Black Lives Matter movement, we take a look at how Bristolians have stood their ground and opposed the status quo for over 200 years. The exhibition included original newspapers and news footage from the BBC archives, on display from 24 February - 27 March 2022, but we have also created an online version of the exhibition, which includes additional material and footage: <https://sway.office.com/mBl0LC5D6Vn4aTak>

**Bristol Central Library** is one of many public libraries across the country organising displays and events as part of the British Library's Living Knowledge Network national exhibition *Breaking The News*:. <https://living-knowledge-network.co.uk/library/introducing-breaking-the-news>

## EVERYDAY HERITAGE GRANTS

*Jane Marley draws attention to* Historic England's announcement of its *Everyday Heritage Grants: Celebrating Working Class Histories*, 'which will fund community-led and people-focused projects that aim to further the nation's collective understanding of the past. These grants will focus on heritage that links people to overlooked historic places, with a particular interest in recognising and celebrating working class histories,' it says. Historic England invites applications from community or heritage organisations for grants up to £25,000 to fund projects that will celebrate the built or historic environment near them. **They are particularly interested in funding smaller grass roots projects of less than £10,000.**

The closing date for submission of proposals is **Monday 23 May 2022**. More at <https://historicengland.org.uk/services-skills/grants/our-grant-schemes/hpc/proposals/>, or email [EverydayHeritage@HistoricEngland.org.uk](mailto:EverydayHeritage@HistoricEngland.org.uk)

## FRENCHAY VILLAGE MUSEUM

South Gloucestershire Council has granted planning permission for an extension to **Frenchay Village Museum**: [https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-bristol-60693708?at\\_medium=RSS&at\\_campaign=KARANGA](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-bristol-60693708?at_medium=RSS&at_campaign=KARANGA) . The application was for an extension to provide additional storage and a lavatory. The professional planners' view was that the cladding material proposed was not appropriate and there was "insufficient substantial public benefit" to outweigh the harm caused to what is a heritage asset and the surrounding conservation area; the building is also within the curtilage of a listed building, **Frenchay Park House**.



## SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE HERITAGE OPEN DAYS 2022

*Jane Marley writes:* 'The theme for South Gloucestershire's **Heritage Open Days 9 to 18 September 2022** is *'Astounding Inventions'*. Join us in celebrating South Gloucestershire's rich history of invention, industry and innovation. Whether it's transporting visitors back to the industrial revolution, examining the inventions that power our daily lives, highlighting the legacy of a local inventor, or showcasing cutting-edge innovations - this year we are inviting our festival community to showcase the diverse tapestry of English inventions that make our world go around. This theme fits so well with South Gloucestershire's industrial past; mining, the aeronautical industry, William Champion's brassworks, and even the Death Ray claimed to have been invented by Henry Grindell Matthews.

'This year the national Heritage Open Days 2022 run for ten consecutive days from 9 to 18 September; you can open your doors for as much or as little of this time as you want; you can pick just one weekend, one day or even one hour. There are lots of different things you can do **as long as your event is free and accessible to all**. You can find out about how to organise your Heritage Open Day at <https://www.heritageopendays.org.uk/organising/how-to-get-involved> . A starter pack is at [https://www.heritageopendays.org.uk/uploads/document-library/Get\\_Started2022.pdf](https://www.heritageopendays.org.uk/uploads/document-library/Get_Started2022.pdf) . You can organise your event and register it there to start to advertise it through the national scheme here and then plan your own publicity to maximise the number of people visiting your event.

'I will be organising the **South Gloucestershire Heritage Open Days 2022** marketing through a listing on the South Gloucestershire Council web site and through our social media platforms. **I will ask for details of your event in the first week of May with responses required by 23 May 2020 at 17.00.'**

Jane Marley, Museums and Heritage Officer, South Gloucestershire Council; [Tel: 01454 865783](tel:01454865783), MOB: 07808 364704

## HISTORIC ENGLAND AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS

HE has issued some more aerial photographs: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/archive/collections/aerial-photos/> . A search on '**Bath**' returned 89 images.

## NEW WORK

### SOCIETY OF CHIROPODISTS' CONVENTIONS IN BRISTOL

*Sue Hardiman writes:* In 1935, the Incorporated Society of Chiropodists held their Autumn Convention in **Bristol** for the first time. This took place between Friday 4 and Sunday 6 October, the

latest in a regular cycle that had begun in the early 20th century. The pattern usually consisted of one main convention in London during the spring then one in the provinces during the autumn. The President and Council believed that holding such provincial conventions would increase the awareness and influence of the ISC across the UK.

The headquarters for the 1935 convention were the Berkeley Rooms on Queen's Road. This was a café/tearoom/function room at the time and was owned by Cadena Café's Ltd. They owned many across the Southwest including two more in **Clifton** and one on College Green.<sup>[1]</sup> The Queen's Road premises is now part of the Wetherspoons chain.

A selection of hotels was suggested to potential attenders including The Royal Hotel on College Green at 10s 6d per night and the Colston Hotel, College Green at 7s 6d per night.

The programme for the convention was as follows:-

- Day one consisted of an address by the Society's President John Hanby, then a morning visit to the Wills tobacco factories. The afternoon involved a trip to **Bath** – where there was a visit to the Pump Rooms and Roman Baths, as well as a lecture on spa treatments relating to the work of chiropodists. The evening consisted of lectures back in **Bristol**.
- Day two began with a series of lectures and chiropody demonstrations at the BRI. The afternoon consisted of a visit to the City Museum and Art Gallery. The dinner and dance was held at Berkeley Rooms, where the Right Hon. Lord Mayor of Bristol Ald. H.J. Maggs and other distinguished guests were present. After the meal there was dancing between 9 and 12. The dinner itself consisted of eight courses which included turtle soup, apricot sorbet with a cigarette russe with roast Surrey capon sausage as the main course. A buffet of ices and lemonade was served at 11pm.
- Day three involved an organised trip to Cheddar Valley (sic) and caves and Wells Cathedral.
- Post 1945, the ICS become known as the Society of Podiatrists and held further conventions in the city. A convention planned to be held in 1971 at **Bristol** had to be cancelled owing to a postal strike – which made it impossible to reach a sufficient number of potential attenders. It was due to be take place between 31 March and 3 April, at the University of Bristol Union with the dinner and dance at the Grand Hotel. There was to be a civic reception at the Council House. Hospital visits were planned to **Frenchay** and **Bath**, and other visits to Wells, Clarks Ltd, **Bath** and Bristol Zoo. 'The Chiropodist' commented in their March/April edition that this was the first time the Society had ever had to cancel a convention, although the 1947 annual dinner was cancelled last minute owing to a strike by waiters at the Savoy Hotel in London.

The next event was held between 31 March and 3 April 1976 at the University of Bristol Union on Queen's Road. Proceedings were opened by Lord Mayor of Bristol Cllr. Hubert J. Williams. There were hospital visits to **Frenchay** and the BRI on the first day. A civic reception was held at the Council House on 1 April. A dinner and dance was held at the Dragonara Hotel, Redcliffe Way on 2 April.

In 1998, Bristol hosted another conference, which convened at the Grand Hotel 30 April to 2 May. The dinner was held in the hotel ballroom and the principal guest was Claire Rayner who was President of the Patients Association at the time.

During the last 15 years, the Society of Chiropodists has become the Royal College of Podiatry and has held just one annual convention per year, alternating between larger venues in Bournemouth, Glasgow, Liverpool, and Harrogate.

### Footnotes

With thanks to Dawn Dyer at Bristol Reference Library for her help. This piece is based on a collection of ephemera related to chiropody conventions which is held at the Royal College of Podiatry Archives.

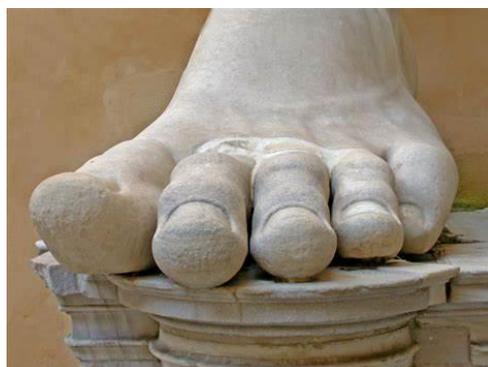
<https://rcpod.org.uk/about-us1/archives/archive-contact-details>

[Image

Capitoline Museum, Rome – added by Ed.]

[1]

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cadena\\_Cafes\\_Limited](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cadena_Cafes_Limited)



## **REVIEWS** by Dr Jonathan Harlow unless otherwise said.

*The Regional Historian* 3 (2021-2022) £12

A lot to enjoy here. Joyce Moss examines Lollardy in the Forest of Dean, ‘Slippery Tongues of Heresy’. Although of course the official accounts deal in terms of theology, one may readily suppose that Wycliff’s Lollardy often merged into a subculture of lay opinion and resentment of ecclesiastical control.

Adam Mead accounts for the story of ‘Charles I at Black Rock’ a fine example of appealing folk/fake history, with interconnections to the true story of the ferry from Black Rock to **New Passage**.

Peter Cullimore’s account of ‘Quaker doctors in Georgian **Bristol**’ is in some ways better than the larger treatment in his *Pills, Shocks and Jabs* (reviewed in NL 168) in that the subject is clearly identified and adhered to. Moreover the claims are more for the care and concern evinced by Quaker practitioners than for the novelty of their practice, so the absence of medical background is less important.

Jo Edwards sets out the controversy surrounding the staffing of Hannah More’s school at **Nailsea**, ‘The Aftermath of the **Blagdon** Controversy’: in effect how to keep evangelical enthusiasm from the taint of Methodism.

In ‘The Waterscapes of the Wiltshire Moonrakers revisited’ Brian Edwards explores an urban myth: the yokels who claim to be raking a pond to haul in the reflection of the moon. Widely promulgated as an example of yokel stupidity; or more plausibly, as an example of that affectation of stupidity by which the lower classes have throughout history fooled their ‘betters’.

Eugene Byrne gives us a very relevant account of Victorian anti-vaxxers in South West England, ‘Mischievous and Senseless Propaganda’. One must allow that the limitations of science and of access to data in that age gave them more excuse than their like today.

In ‘Following in Jennings’ footsteps’ Kate Brooks and Ben Cattle make a Victorian tour of **Bristol** following a guidebook of 1872. They well show how such a guide reveals not only the landscape but the concerns and perceptions of its time.

Julian Lea-Jones discusses the marking of boundaries not only by stones and inscriptions but by annual processions to preserve folk memory: 'Why a parish? Ancient boundaries and marker stones in **Bristol**'. Some good marker pictures here (but 6d then is 2.5p today, not 5p, n.7).

Peter Malpass explores the development of the **St Andrew's** estate in 'Housing & Property Development in Victorian Bristol'. The article shows his customary skill in using the sources to reveal the process and the purpose, but also draws attention to the big gaps which remain when the sources themselves are not comprehensive – 15 acres to seek here.

Steve Poole has an enjoyable account of the long struggle between the Miles family as landowner and the villagers led by John Virgo over the enclosure of common land – or was it? – at **Walton in Gordano**. This was the late 19th and early 20th century and the villagers received much support from the great and the good. So they won. A valuable reminder that the administration of the law does tend to reflect public opinion.

Ian Chard fills in the background to a cheerful photo of some **Bristol** troops engaged in the Battle of the Somme: 'Late July 1916'. Have times changed or is it merely distance that lends enchantment? War is always vile, but this photo makes the footage from the Ukraine today seem even more barbaric.

Jane Howells gives us an interesting portrait of 'Rose Pender: well-heeled traveller yet a woman of contradictions'. Lady Rose travelled in fact in Africa and in America, but perhaps tended to see the people in terms of available stereotypes. In her views she was perhaps less contradictory than half-hearted in her sympathy for progressive views.

In 'Have they a Sense of Justice?' Holly John looks at 'Britain's first female jurors at the **Bristol** Quarter Sessions' just after WW1. This article does well with contemporary perceptions and opinions; but there would be room a statistical treatment to indicate whether or not there was a significant difference in the prosecutions and convictions by type of offence.

Mike Esbester examines the faulty procedures which allowed 'The 1921 **Stapleton Road** railway accident' to kill 6 railway workers; and which were yet not substantially changed and led to more deaths. Yet in legal terms it was treated as an accident: railway companies were not sued and government was inert.

Libby Sharp pays a well-deserved tribute 'Fem FM – the UK's first all-female radio station' which ran for a week in March only 30 years ago.

There is also an enthusiastic 1970s memoir of 'Black Music in **North Somerset & Bristol**' by David Chapple; a well-deserved tribute to Andy King by Peter Malpass; and an account of the **Bristol** Folk House, which being unreferenced is best taken as a trailer for a forthcoming book by Eugene Byrne. But there are no reviews and as Reviewer I can only say that Covid complications seem to have disrupted communications.

Altogether a valuable collection.

#### *The Local Historian 52.1 (Jan 2022)*

No articles or reviews of Avon interest here; but Heather Falvey's description of 'The probate process in medieval England and Wales and the documents which it generated' may be generally useful.

The accompanying *Local History News 142* (Winter 2022) has an interesting article by Barry Shurlock: 'New Opportunities for 'Citizen Historians''. It is about a medium for promoting discussion of local history questions: I was not left very clear as to what format he had in mind, but it looked like a sort of on-line forum or discussion group. I guess ALHA, Bristol & Gloucestershire

Archaeological Society, Bristol Record Society, UWE and Bristol and Bath Universities might all support such a scheme, but it needs a host and a controller. There is also a notice of a forthcoming publication on 'Manorial Documents after 1500' which sounds useful.

*Bristol & Avon Archaeology 28* (2018-2020) catches up on a missing year. There are reports on ongoing work in **Bristol's** Castle Street; the minster precinct at **Chewton Mendip**; civil war remains in Ashley Road, **Bristol**; the stable block wing at **Ashton Court**; and **Woodspring** Priory. No big surprises here, and most are on-going with no final conclusions. And there is the invaluable brief update survey for the two years by Bruce Williams.

The Journal leads with a most interesting article by Bev Knott on 'The Roman Market Economy and Local Roads; Regional Land Transportation of Goods for North Somerset'. The author has interesting proposals for specific roads, eg from **Congresbury** to **Gatcombe**; but one of his most welcome points is that we should not suppose an economy operating for four centuries with only military roads and traffic.

There are also proper and well-deserved tributes to several great regional archaeologists: Bob Williams; James Russell and Jenny Pennington, his frequent companion; Mike Baker; and Reg Jackson.

*The Harptreenian 22* (September 2021)

Good for the **Harptrees History Society** to be producing a Journal! This edition contains a number of potentially interesting stories but nearly all are unreferenced. The exception is Andrew Sandon's 'Excommunication of Thomas de Gournay of East Harptree' pp 28-32, which has 7 of the total of 17 notes in the entire issue.\* Sadly, although there are some interesting items, it is hardly clear what the story is. The excommunication comes at the end and seems without connection to the rest, except as bearing out the violent behaviour of Sir Thomas, albeit in Wales. But neither the origins nor the consequences of this incident appear. Nor does there seem to be an explanation for the transfers of land to Sir Thomas made earlier by Thomas ap Adam – which needs some explanation in view of his previous charge that Sir TdeG had 'attacked and wrecked his principal castle of Beverstone, abducted his wife, Margery, and stolen charters and other documents that were evidence of his property rights.' So more questions than answers here; and perhaps the author or someone else will follow up.

\* The editor has numbered all notes through the whole issue in one sequence. It is probably better practice, especially in view of possible reprints or extracts, to number the notes separately for each article.

*Housing the people in Victorian Bristol*, Peter Malpass, Redcliffe/Regional History Centre UWE 2021, ISBN 978-1-911408-79-6, 207pp, b&w illustrated, sb £20. Reviewed by William Evans

Nineteenth century **Bristol** had a housing problem: not enough houses to accommodate a population that grew fast. This book describes how new private housing met some of that demand and helped shape extensive tracts of the city as we know it today.

PM sets the scene: population, transport, industry, commerce, changes in municipal government. Successive chapters describe in detail how and where the town grew, with the bulk of the expansion after 1860; who the principal entrepreneurs and builders were; how they went about acquiring sites and building on them; the sorts of houses they put up, differentiated to target different sorts of purchaser; what purchasers or tenants got for their money; and how the

processes were affected by local politics. Some of the material readers may already have come across in PM's ALHA booklets, no.10 on the development of Redland and no.19 on David Davies the medical officer of health, and in PM's articles in the *Transactions* of the Bristol & Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, *The Regional Historian* and elsewhere on the development of areas such as Clifton, Bedminster, Redfield and Horfield, and in his *The making of Victorian Bristol* (Boydell, 2019). This book draws all that and much else together and gives a comprehensive and insight-packed view.

Two points stand out. First, that Bristol's nineteenth century housing problem was not solved, and that what housing was erected was promoted not by the city's elected representatives (although powers existed from 1851, council housing on a large scale did not appear in Bristol until the Addison reforms of 1919) but by landowners, funders and builders, mostly small and often short-lived outfits, developing plots of land and as and when opportunity arose and market conditions seemed favourable. Hence the unplanned, uncoordinated, haphazard nature of many of Bristol's private sector suburbs, with streets unconnected, awkward corners and dead ends, and incongruous juxtapositions.

Second, some remarkable parallels with our present predicament, when there is again a shortage of housing, and what is built cannot be afforded by many people, especially younger working ones. Then, as now, there was no political will on the part of national government or the local authority to intervene in a failing market, with the result that the free market (but free only from the point of view of landowners) failed to meet demand for an essential commodity, especially at the cheaper end, with unpleasant social consequences.

This is an important book, warmly recommended.

## **BOOKS AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS NOTICED**

### **THOMAS CHATTERTON**

Thomas Chatterton: the myth of the doomed poet, first broadcast in 2015, was re-aired on BBC4 28 February 2022. Michael Symmons Roberts looked into how artists and engravers, particularly the pre-Raphaelite Henry Wallis with his famous painting now in the Tate gallery, started a myth that TC killed himself because his talents were not recognised, and led to the stereotype of the unappreciated genius artist suffering in poverty for the sake of art. Some local material, and a sound debunking of the myth. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/b05z5hc0/secret-knowledge-thomas-chatterton-the-myth-of-the-doomed-poet>

### **WILLIAM HERSCHEL**

BBC 4 6 March 2022 showed a repeat of a programme about Joseph Haydn in a series The birth of British music, first shown in 2009. Haydn visited England twice, on his first visit staying in Bath in New King Street with Frederick William Herschel (1738-1822), who as well as being an astronomer was an accomplished musician, playing several instruments (he had been trained in a Hanover military band) and composing symphonies, concertos and church music. From 1766 WH was organist at the Octagon chapel in Bath, and from 1780 director of the Bath orchestra, with his sister Caroline singing soprano. The programme paid more attention to Hershel's astronomy than to his music, and there was no examination of whether Herschel influenced or plagiarised from Haydn or vice versa. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/b00kt738/the-birth-of-british-music-3-haydn>

### **BRISTOL RECORD SOCIETY VOLUME 74**

Alison Brown and Jonathan Harlow, ed., *Atlantic venture accounts of eighteenth century Bristol*, BRS vol. 74, 2021, but only now available in portable document format to BRS members online. Pdf free to BRS members (annual subscription £15), otherwise price on application.

John Watts, ed., *Bristol administration bonds 1661-1780*. A new transcript from ALHA member Bristol & Avon Family History Society. Includes surname index, introduction and notes. Compact disc £9 or download £7 from [shop@bafhs.org.uk](mailto:shop@bafhs.org.uk).

BAFHS *Journal*, March 2022, no.187. Includes pieces on Portland Methodist chapel, **Kingsdown**, Bristol [image from Churchcrawler]; the Parfitt pilots of **Pill**; and the second instalment of a piece about watermen at **St George and Hanham**. An editorial and a piece by Bob Lawrence recount experiences of using the 1921 census data now on Findmypast. Both pieces include useful tips and hints on saving time - and money - in searching online, which may be of interest to local history enquirers generally.



Richard Middleton, *Cornwallis: soldier and statesman in a revolutionary world*, Yale UP 2022, hb £25, <https://yalebooks.co.uk/display.asp?K=9780300196801>. Biography of the general who surrendered at Yorktown but went on to govern India and Ireland, becoming a respected national figure, which may explain why **Clifton and Cliftonwood** have an avenue and a crescent named after him. But not Cornwallis House (Thomas Paty 1760), which Donald Jones reckoned was named after the bishop's wife. Cornwallis Avenue, **Worle**, looks a bit later.

## **RESPONSES**

### **Colston statue**

*Ruth Hecht writes:* It's important that people understand the impact of Bristol's history on people living in the city today, and that many people from across the city are "trying to find a 'process of repair' to re-examine the reality and impact of Afrikan enslavement and its ongoing impact on communities today" (quote from the City Council's recent motion – see below).

Two reports have been published in **Bristol** in the last year which look at how the city should respond to both the legacy of the city's history in relation to the transatlantic slave trade and the falling of Colston's statue. There was also a motion passed by the City Council in March 2021 'Atonement and Reparation for Bristol's role in the Transatlantic Traffic in Enslaved Afrikans'.

The two reports are:

'The Colston Statue: What Next?' by the We Are Bristol History Commission (a partnership between Bristol City Council, UWE and University of Bristol) – two versions of the report (long and short) can be found here: <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/policies-plans-strategies/we-are-bristol-history-commission>

'Project T.R.U.T.H' - a report commissioned by Bristol City Council and the Bristol Legacy Steering Group, produced by Black South West Network in partnership with Afrikan ConneXions Consortium. The full report and Executive summary can be found here:

<https://www.blacksouthwestnetwork.org/reports/research-reports>

The motion passed by Bristol City Council can be found in the minutes of the meeting here:

<https://democracy.bristol.gov.uk/documents/g8692/Printed%20minutes%2002nd-Mar-2021%2016.00%20Full%20Council.pdf?T=1>

## Price comparisons

*JJ writes:* Whilst in Britain prices generally have risen on average by about 2% a year over the last 150 years, that average hides wide fluctuations in the prices of specific things. In our own day, house prices have risen at far higher rates than the prices of just about all else. So if we want to compare money values, it could be misleading to do so by reference to just one commodity or service. The wider the group of things whose prices are compared, the fairer the comparison. So the price of a loaf of bread is not as good a comparator as the price of a basket of goods; agricultural wages are not as good a comparator as wage rates across a range of employments; the price of a basket of goods (such as retail and consumer price indexes) is not as good a comparator as the total of the prices of what people buy (as would be the case if house prices and rents were included in the RPI or the CPI); and a retail prices index is not as good a comparator as gross domestic product, which is supposed to include everything to which people have attached a money value. So to get over the problem of prices of specific items fluctuating, I would like to suggest that in making price comparisons of a general nature we ought to use the widest measure available.

## COMMENTARY

### Highway uses

The government has published a new edition of the *Highway Code*. It is downloadable from <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-highway-code>, but shops will not be selling paper copies until some time in April 2022. The new edition propounds a ‘hierarchy of road users.’ Provisions of the new code work out that concept in more detail. Thus in certain situations drivers of vehicles, horse riders and cyclists must give way to pedestrians (which includes users of mobility scooters), lorry drivers must look out for cyclists, and so on.

These rules about priority might remind us that nowadays there are many different sorts of highway user, and that the sorts of highway user and the uses to which people have put the highway have increased and changed over time. Local history people will not find that surprising. We tend to think of highways as solid structures, engineered from stone, bitumen and concrete, with drainage, lighting, signs, and road markings, and governed by traffic control measures that are part of the law of the land but are implemented and enforced by hardware, some of it electronically complicated. But for centuries highways were, and for legal purposes still are, a right of the public to move over privately owned land. As local communities have developed and become more complicated, the categories of highway user have changed and multiplied.

An early adaptation was the use of highways for markets. In many places in our area such as **Thornbury, Bath, Bristol, Weston super mare, Marshfield, Wickwar** and so on, markets were held in thoroughfares. Only when congestion conflicted with the highway’s original and basic purpose were steps taken to move markets to sites off-street. Such moves happened in those places mentioned, and also in **Radstock and Clevedon**, resulting in some places with purpose-built market halls of architectural distinction. Where there is no market, conflict between traders and public still persists, as shopkeepers obstruct the highway with advertising boards and café proprietors extend their premises at no cost by appropriating space in the highway.

From medieval times highways in towns were used as open sewers. **Bristol and Bath** were notorious examples. In the nineteenth century concern for public health and attempts to remove the nuisances resulted in highways being used for, or becoming the sites of, underground drainage. After a time a distinction was drawn between foul and surface water drainage. Water mains and pipes followed. If a highway contained a drain or sewer, it is not surprising that when gas and

electricity arrived, their mains and cables should be put underground alongside drains and sewers, and most public utility undertakings obtained statutory powers to do that. In the twentieth century telecommunications were added. One reason for the highway being so used is that despite the irritation and disruption that road works cause, it is cheaper and easier to lay pipes and cables in the highway than over private land. Hence conflict between road users, who want unimpeded journeys, and the utility companies, who want cheap land.

Highways have been used for public assembly. Proclamations of the accessions of monarchs, political rallies, and public meetings of one sort or another have been held in streets in our area, partly out of convenience but sometimes because there was no public open space, such as **Bristol's Queen Square**, available off-street.

Highways have been used for processions. Some have been traditional expressions of religious feeling or civic pride, or to mark special occasions, or to assert political or commercial ascendancy, or to remind people of the military, or to ritualise and publicise a punishment. Some processions have expressed protest: the processions in late nineteenth century **Bristol** that resulted in violence come to mind. The procession has been a traditional mode of expression for



trade unions. A recent development has been the obstruction of major highways by demonstrators, partly to attract publicity, but also to bring their cause to the attention of a wider public, not just immediate road users. Parliament is reported to be looking at legislation to reduce such disruption. [Image ITV].

Highways have been used for community events of various sorts. After WW2 parties were held in streets to celebrate

victory. Nowadays roads get closed for local celebrations, ranging from royal event parties to local fetes and other community frolics.

Perhaps the most significant extension of highway use (misuse?) has been for the parking of vehicles, which goes beyond the basic common law right to move to and fro. No problem when traffic was light, but nowadays we have traffic regulation, parking controls, payment for parking (from the motorist's point of view: local authorities may see it as a source of revenue akin to a local tax), parking meters (first patented in the USA in 1928, though the first one was not installed until 1935, and they did not appear in the UK until 1958 in London, and in **Bristol** in 1960), residents' parking zones, and the removal and impounding of unlawfully parked vehicles (analogous to the impounding of stray animals in earlier times?).

Highways are contested space. How those conflicts have arisen locally and how the community, or its elected representatives, have resolved them (or failed or neglected to solve them) is worth looking into.

### **Some plantswomen**

Garden history is not just about garden design. It is also about the plants in gardens, and the people who introduced them. A large proportion of the plants in modern gardens are not native species, but were originally imported: tomatoes and potatoes from South America via Spain, camellias from the far east, tulips from the East Indies via Holland, and so on. Some plants were introduced from abroad by sailors, merchants and other travellers, as a by-product of their journeys, and one would expect that with **Bristol** being an international port, there was a lot of

that going on. Other plants were deliberately collected by explorers, some of whom were commissioned by plant collectors, some of whom lived in our area.

Mary Capel of **Badminton**, the first duchess of Beaufort (1630-1715), was mentioned in ALHA e-update 28 February 2022 in connection with the Gloucestershire plot, in which she very nearly got her husband beheaded. She amassed a large collection of plants from various sources, many abroad. She seems to have been particularly interested in the phenomenon of variegation. That she studied plants as well as collecting them is suggested by her having kept a catalogue of plants she owned, and by her collection of dried specimens. The 12 volumes are now in the Natural History Museum in London. MC supported naturalists including Edward LLwyd, who later became keeper of Oxford's Ashmolean museum, and William Sherard, who worked at **Badminton** for about 15 months to tutor MC's grandson and to look after MC's greenhouses. He later founded Oxford University's chair of botany.

According to her catalogue of 1699, MC raised or kept in her greenhouses some 750 species, including an early zonal pelargonium, a guava tree (which she claimed fruited for Christmas) and a cotton tree. Her catalogue mentions many books about plants. It is not clear whether she owned them or borrowed them from others. Many were foreign imprints, and most in Latin. Her other garden was in Chelsea.

It is difficult to ascertain what motivated MC into collecting. Was it conspicuous consumption? Or competition with other plant collectors? Or what a later age would term an obsessive-compulsive disorder? Is there an analogy with collecting paintings, or the gentleman's cabinet of curiosities, or collections of stamps, cigarette cards, or football stickers? MC's writings suggest a religious motivation, but was that a disguise in much the same way as funereal monuments in churches claim to be 'to the glory of God' but in fact are advertisements for the deceased and his or her family? Scientific curiosity might be one explanation, but MC will have



been hampered by scientific ignorance. Microscopes had been invented about 1590, but Hooke's *Micrographia* did not appear until 1665. Plant physiology was not understood until Stephen Hales's *Vegetable staticks*, published in 1727. Carl von Linné's classifying did not become current until the 1730s. Gregor Mendel's work on hybrids was not published until 1866. Perhaps, like many gardeners, MC just was fascinated by, liked, and appreciated plants. Her importance to botany was acknowledged and commemorated when Robert Brown (1773-1858), the first keeper of the forerunner of the Natural History Museum, named after her

the genus *Beaufortia*, an evergreen myrtle from Australia with red bottle-brush-like flowers.

[Image from <https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/ornamental/shrubs/beaufortia/beaufortia-growing-conditions.htm> ]

Another collector was Elizabeth Berkeley neé Norborne, wife of John Symes Berkeley of **Stoke Gifford** and mother of Norborne Berkeley, later lord Botetorte. She had an orangery at **Stoke Park**, which survives. When Norborne Berkeley was on his grand tour at Angers in France, knowing his mother's interest in plants, he sent seeds to Lamplugh, the gardener at **Stoke**.

Norborne Berkeley's sister, also called Elizabeth, seems to have inherited her mother's interest in plants. When she married Charles Noel Somerset who inherited the dukedom and **Badminton**, she developed a collection there. Some of her plants were sent home by one of Norborne Berkeley's sons, Charles Thompson, who in spite of Horatio Nelson's malice had a career in the royal navy. Letters show CT consigning plants (and birds) from America and the Caribbean.

Gloucestershire Archives and Badminton muniments contain several documents relating to her collection, including a 1789 catalogue of her greenhouse plants and the nurseries which had supplied them.

There must have been many other collectors in our area, though no doubt gardeners like Lamplugh at **Stoke Park** did most of the work.

### **John Till Adams**

John Till Adams was a pharmacist and doctor who practised in **Bristol** from about 1770 to 1786. A member of the Society of Friends, he attended many of the quaker families in and around **Bristol and Bath**, but also attracted patients who were not quakers. Apart from a eulogy there are only a few traces of him in documents. They say little about him, except that he was held in high regard throughout his life; and afterwards: in 1813, 27 years after JTA died, local quakers subscribed to an engraving of JTA's 'profile' by the **Bristol** printer and engraver John Ames.

The eulogy of JTA was written and published by Ebenezer Sibly, an astrologer and occultist who was living in **Bristol** when JTA died. As Sibly was a freemason and at the wackier end of the rational spectrum, one would not have expected him to be on the same religious wavelength as JTA. Perhaps JTA treated Sibly as a patient, and made an impression: Sibly went on to study medicine.

In his *Pills, shocks and jabs* (reviewed by Dr Jonathan Harlow in ALHA Newsletter no. 168, 30 September 2021) Peter Cullimore points out that Joseph Fry started off as an apothecary, chocolate being then sold as a medicine; that Abraham Ludlow, who offered medicines to poor people in **Bristol**, was a quaker physician; that JTA and his wife Ann (a Fry) were friends of Ludlow; that Ann was related by marriage to the untrained doctor Shurmer Bath; and that Edward Long Fox of **Brislington House** fame took over JTA's patients when JTA died. Mr Cullimore concludes that they were in a 'rich melting pot of quaker doctors who all knew and helped each other.'

JTA is one of many people in communities across our area who were socially and practically important, did much good, were respected and perhaps even regarded with affection, but who have left few traces. There must have been many such. Identifying and reconstructing what can be found out about them would be a useful exercise.

## **CAN YOU HELP?**

### **PORTABLE SOUND SYSTEMS**

Jane Lilly would appreciate advice on choice of portable sound systems for use in guided walks.  
j.lilly@btinternet.com

### **SUSANNA MORGAN**

Readers will have noticed that the cover of ALHA's booklet no.34, Susanna Morgan: campaigning for reform in early nineteenth century Bristol, does not, as might have been expected, show a portrait of the woman the subject matter of the book. In spite of diligent searching and enquiring by author Michael Whitfield, no portrait of SM could be found. If any reader knows of a portrait of her, or can offer suggestions for enquiry, the author mikewhitfield@blueyonder.co.uk and the editor of ALHA booklets Jonathan.Harlow@uwe.ac.uk would be grateful for any information.

## **QUOTE**

There's a terrible temptation for historians to tidy up excessively after the event.

Peter Hennessey, *Observer* newspaper 27 February 2022.

## **EVENTS DIARY**

*Events notified to ALHA's website manager are listed on the ALHA website. If you want your event to be listed, please send details or a copy of your programme to the webmaster, contact details on page 1 top right (Please note changed e-mail address). Please notify any changes of regular venue or timing.*

Because of the coronavirus, events may be cancelled at short notice.

Links or directions to **online events open to the public** appear on ALHA's website.