

AVON LOCAL HISTORY & ARCHAEOLOGY

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Material for Newsletter 166 by 20 March 2021 please
Magazines and books to reviews editor, Hardings Cottage,
Swan Lane, Winterbourne BS36 1RJ
jonathan.harlow@uwe.ac.uk
Details of events to website manager,
Flat 1 Chartley, 22 The Avenue, Bristol BS9 1PE
roblawr1944@googlemail.com
Other news, comments, and changes of contact details to
newsletter editor and membership secretary,
5 Parrys Grove, Bristol BS9 1TT
wm.evans@btopenworld.com

ALHA NEWS

HARRY LANE

David Hardill writes: Harry Lane was an immensely influential figure in the development of local heritage in the **Yate** area over the last 40 years, and leaves a huge legacy for us all to enjoy.

It is difficult to visit, not only **Yate Heritage Centre**, but also other museum and heritage venues and not see something of Harry's there. One of Harry's greatest legacies was the numerous map creations he produced, accurately derived from the original tithe maps, bringing to life this key period in local history. These have adorned numerous museums and heritage venues since their production in the 1980s.

Harry was clearly a real mover and shaker in local heritage in the 1990s. YHC is chocked full of his historic material, resources and images on all manner of industrial, transport and social subjects too numerous to mention.

Arguably his greatest achievement was leading on the creation of the original **Yate Heritage Centre**, which opened at **Poole Court** on Tuesdays between 1995 and 1998. This established the idea that **Yate** warranted a heritage museum to celebrate its rich history. Harry was able to lead on a wide variety of exhibition projects from Poole Court producing a rash of fascinating and popular local history displays on social and industrial history subjects. The original heritage project was also responsible for developing a social history collection for **Yate**, which subsequent visitors and schools using the current heritage centre have been able to use and enjoy.

When I first arrived at **Yate** Harry had naturally become an almost legendary figure, but one which I presumed I would never see as he was comfortably ensconced in Budleigh Salterton. By 2003 Harry had returned and proved eager to refresh his vigour for local history.

Since returning in 2003 Harry applied himself to meticulously researching a myriad of different subjects, which he made available to YHC and the wider community. Harry's early passion on returning was the Victorian families and he produced a booklet on the local worthy of worthies, squire Robert Hooper of **Stanshawes Court**. Harry continued in the same vein and began uncovering evidence of the Berkeleys of **Yate Court** and put together invaluable material on the local Tudor period.

Harry was always happy to share information and expertise and was always happy to join forces with other historians. In recent years he worked with David Hardwick in producing a booklet on the history of celestine. He was always generous with his collections and bequeathed much of his research to YHC in the last few years.

Finally, Harry was a model local historian. He was always enthusiastic and always helped when he could. He supported local heritage in general, attending collections meetings at YHC and regularly attending public lectures here and with history groups in the area. He remained positive to the end and hoped to continue research into **Kingsgate Park** as soon as YHC re-opened. Almost needless to say, he will be sorely missed.

ALHA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

ALHA's annual general meeting will be held online using Zoom, hosted by **Frampton Cotterell & District Local History Society**, at **7.30pm on Monday 18 January 2021**. **Notice of the meeting, agenda and papers accompany this Newsletter**. Attenders are requested to register with the secretary, who will send joining details and link nearer the date. Groups and societies wishing to make a short presentation on their current work, or to ask questions about ALHA, are also asked to book a 5-minute slot with the secretary.

ALHA WEBSITE

The appeal in the last e-update for volunteers to take over management of ALHA's website from Bob Lawrence, who wishes to stand down, produced no response. As an interim measure Jan Packer and Veronica Bowerman, members of ALHA's facebook team, have volunteered to help in maintaining the existing site.

The committee has reviewed the existing website and Bob Lawrence has identified the following problems:

- As the website is held on the webmaster's own personal computer, so that is the only place changes can be made. Only one person, the webmaster, can make changes.
- The current software is obsolete, and no longer receives updates. It could cease to function at any time if there are changes to the operating system (currently Windows 10).
- Although much of the website is straightforward, the diary of events, which needs frequent updating as member groups and societies notify the webmaster of events, is awkward to maintain and amend.
- The current website would benefit from review of what content it should have, and how it should be presented.

More modern software could offer improvements:

- a website held on a central server where it can be updated by anyone with the appropriate permissions. This would remove the reliance on a single individual and the vulnerability of a single home computer.
- greater security of the website itself.

- better functionality for website users.

The committee is exploring possibilities. Offers of assistance would be welcomed.

NEW ALHA BOOKLET

As foretold in the last ALHA e-update, Michael Whitfield's latest, *Surgery in eighteenth century Bristol* has now been collected from the printers. **A flyer and order form accompanies this Newsletter.**

BRISTOL IN 1480 MAP

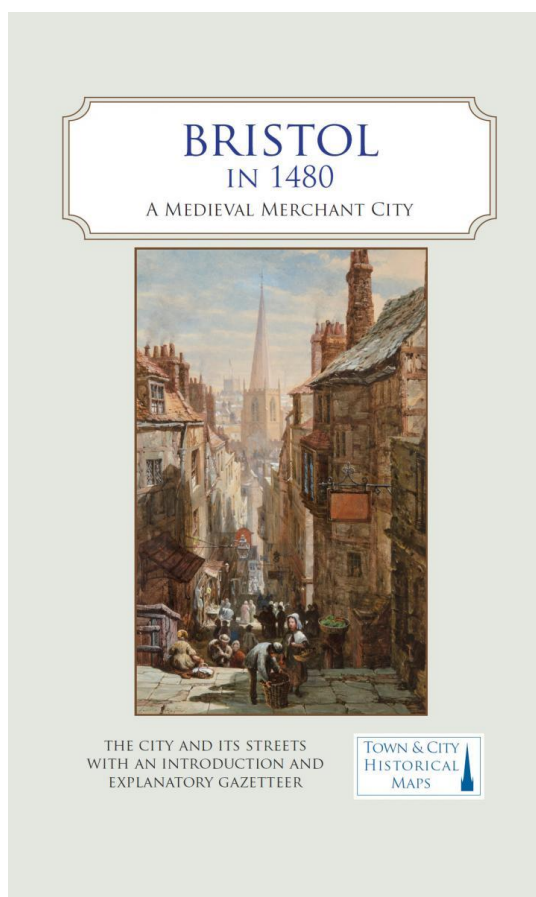
ALHA and other local history charities have made grants towards the publication by the Historic Towns Trust of a revised map of historic **Bristol**, which by the time you read this ought to be available from your local bookseller, eg Stanfords. The title is *Bristol in 1480: a medieval merchant city*; ISBN 978-0-9934698-7-9; price £9.99. The publication is in the form of a modern map overprinted with the locations of medieval sites (*Know Your Medieval Place?*), plus an introduction and a gazetteer.

NB the website www.historictownsatlas.org.uk takes you not to the new map but to .pdfs of the 1975 publication by MD Lobel and EM Carus-Wilson.

EVENTS AND SOURCES

BRISTOL HISTORICAL MAP

Bob Jones, formerly archaeologist at Bristol City Museum and presently a vice-chairman of ALHA member **Bristol & Gloucestershire Archaeological Society**, will be giving a talk titled *Mapping the medieval town: Bristol in 1480* via Zoom on **Thursday 7 January 2021**, as part of the series of late lunchtime talks for Bristol City Museum. This talk is linked to the publication of the Bristol historical map by the Historic Towns Trust, as mentioned above. Both ALHA and B&GAS have supported the publication, with the bulk of the funding coming from Bristol University. Tickets via <https://www.bristolmuseums.org.uk/bristol-museum-and-art-gallery/whats-on/late-lunch-talks-mapping-the-medieval-town-bristol-in-1480/>.



BRISTOL UNIVERSITY SHORT COURSES

Siân Goldharber writes:

Ways into History

Ways Into History is a 15-week online short evening course running **6-8:45pm Wednesdays 20 January – 26 May 2021**, with breaks for half term and Easter. This pathway course is for mature students who wish to return to study. This course will consider the history of slavery, with a particular focus on the city of Bristol and its role in the slave trade. We will consider what exactly slavery is, and how slavery on the West Indian and American plantations compares to other historic slave systems. We will also look at the broader impact of the slave trade and how it has been remembered in Bristol and elsewhere, thinking about how commemoration has become intertwined with modern day political concerns. No prior qualifications required.

Deadline for applications: was 11 December 2020, but it might be relaxed.

Course fee: £350. Students on a low income can apply for funding support.

Click here to find out more: www.bristol.ac.uk/history/study/part-time/.

Climbing up the tree: exploring history through genealogy

This is an online course running **13 January – 3 February 2021, Wednesdays, 6-8pm.**

This 4-week course will explore genealogy as a method of historical research. Genealogy is progressively being used by historians to reconstruct the lived experience of communities which are now lost, to explore, question and challenge diverse notions of race, politics, religion and agency. This course will combine both historical and genealogical research techniques to understand where we come from and the historical experiences which have shaped our families.

Course fee: £70. Click here to find out more: www.bristol.ac.uk/english/study/part-time/short-courses/genealogy-courses/.

Siân Goldharber, Short Courses Administrator, Department of English Faculty of Arts
B11, 3-5 Woodland Road, University of Bristol BS8 1TB

Sian.Goldharber@bristol.ac.uk; 0117 928 8924; Working days: Tuesday-Thursday

BRISTOL CITY LIBRARIES

Kate Murray writes: ‘Bristol city council has reopened 7 of **Bristol’s** libraries for a Call and Collect service. In addition, public computers will be available at Central Library. The opening hours are:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Central	10-4						1:30-4:30
Henbury	10:30-4:30		Closed		10:30-4:30		Closed
Henleaze	10:30-4:30						Closed
Bishopston	10:30-4:30						Closed
Fishponds	10:30-4:30						Closed
Marksbury Rd	11-4						Closed
Stockwood	1-4:30						Closed

Services are limited to the following:

1. Call and Collect

At all 7 libraries

- 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, per library card.
- 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

2. Book bundles

- At all 7 libraries
- This is a new service
- You can drop in to the library to pick up a ‘lucky dip’ selection of books to borrow that have been preselected by our experienced library teams
- Don’t forget to bring your library card
- There’ll be a variety of popular categories for both adults and children
- No need to pre-book – just drop in

3. Returns

- At all 7 libraries

- If you just want to return your items, it's easy. There'll usually be a place for you to leave your returns near the door of the library
- We'll quarantine your returns, and they'll be removed from your account 4 days later
- Don't worry about overdue charges for the quarantine period – we'll make sure you're not charged for those days

4. Reservations collection

- At all 7 libraries
- You can make reservations online at www.librarieswest.org.uk or using the LibrariesWest app, or call an open library (contact numbers below)
- If you're collecting the items from a Bristol Library, this is a free service
- We'll let you know when your request is ready for collection
- Reservations might take a little longer to arrive than usual – not all libraries are open and van services are reduced

5. Public computers and printing

- Only available at Central Library
- You'll need to call the library on 0117 9037234 to book a session

6. Basic reference enquiry service

- Only available by email or phone – there is currently no access to the Reference Library to view items
- 10am - 1pm, Monday to Friday
- Ring 0117 9037202 or email refandinfo@bristol.gov.uk.

BRISTOL ARCHIVES

Bristol Archives is closed and all bookings are cancelled, but they will try to answer e-mails: <https://www.bristolmuseums.org.uk/bristol-archives/>

SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE LIBRARIES

Information at <https://www.southglos.gov.uk/leisure-and-culture/libraries/changes-to-library-services-during-covid19/> **Filton** library is due to reopen **Saturday 2 January 2021**.

BATH & NE SOMERSET LIBRARIES

Bath Central, Keynsham and Midsomer Norton Libraries are open for browsing and collecting items you have reserved, from **10am to 4pm, Monday to Friday**. If you don't have access to the LibrariesWest website, you can reserve an item - call Council Connect on **01225 39 40 41** (select option 5) and tell library staff which items (maximum of 10) you want to reserve and your library card number. 'We will let you know when your items are ready to be collected.'
<https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/library-and-information-services>

BATH ARCHIVES

Bath Archives has a new system. You have to get a membership card, and for visits you have to book. Details at <https://www.batharchives.co.uk/reopening-information>

GLOUCESTERSHIRE ARCHIVES

Gloucestershire Archives is now open Tuesdays to Fridays 9 to 4.30. Booking is required: <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/archives/plan-your-visit/preparing-to-visit/>

NORTH SOMERSET LIBRARIES

North Somerset libraries are mostly open (restricted service at **Congresbury**). Details for individual libraries at <https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/my-services/community-safety-crime/emergency-management/emergency-closures/libraries-emergency-closures>

REVIEWS by Dr Jonathan Harlow unless otherwise said

The Bristol Poll Book for 1852 Edited by John Stevens (Bristol Record Society Volume 72, 2020, 243 pages, £20 inc p&p from the Society or £15 RRP local booksellers).

It was only in 1872 that voting in English parliamentary elections became secret. At the time, many Liberals as well as Tories were against, and many historians today may be too, however unavailingly. Here John Stevens has taken on one of the last records of the traditional system. In fact, though there were other elections before 1872, this is the last **Bristol** one for which a poll book is available – they were not official publications. So the last time we can get to grips with the correlation of votes with occupation age and status; and so make an informed assessment of the considerations that counted in that enduring tension between local and national interests which enlivens or confuses our electoral system.

But alas, even with the skilled guidance and analysis of John Stevens, the insight is limited. All the voters were male of course and nearly all were what Stevens calls middle-aged – at any rate few were either young or elderly. But the real bugbear is ‘Occupation’. First of all, how ascertained at the time? It was no part of a vote, however open, to state one’s occupation. Then descriptions are typically far better at indicating the line of work – eg baker – than the level at which it was carried on. So while it was true, by virtue of the franchise qualifications, that all were ‘middle class,’ that was a very wide category and without other sources we cannot allocate many to a place in it.

It was a principal objection to the open ballot that an employer could tell his men how to vote and see whether they did. But even when we are sure that a man was an employee and not an employer, whose employee was he? Without this, we can’t really assess how far people did vote with the boss.

The two reasonably secure findings are first that denominational allegiance is fairly clear: Anglicans were mostly Tory (including just about every ordained minister); non-conformists were usually Liberal. And if customary loyalty did not determine the matter, it does look as though free trade (Liberal policy) or protection (Tory) was the dominant issue. Not surprisingly, since for Bristol it was both a local and a national one; but for this very reason we miss another interesting line of analysis.

But the first step in all analysis is to secure data. Mr Stevens has done an admirable job in giving us that; and few will wish to embark on using the statistics without his well-informed and illuminating commentary.

Orphans, Widows and Guardians in Medieval and Early Modern Bristol: The Register of Recognizances, 1333-1594 Edited by Susan Scott (Bristol Record Society Volume 73, 2020, 405 pages, at £28 inc p&p from the Society or £23 RRP local booksellers).

A recognizance was a legally binding undertaking, in this case to care for someone, and in those ages of high mortality there were many widows and orphans to be cared for. Susan Scott has done a great job in bringing together all that survive in summary form, translating those in French or Latin. Her very full and well organised discussion reflects what must have been a good, indeed a masterly, Master’s dissertation. This work is a must for any social historian of Bristol in these two and a half centuries, not to mention a treasury for family historians.

I am not the best person to review these two books. The best people would have been Prof Peter Malpass and Prof Peter Fleming. But they were the managing editors whose contributions are handsomely acknowledged in the works. At any rate, I am happy to testify to the very good production standards maintained by local printers 4word for these as for preceding volumes.

Dr. Geoffrey Irwin Culank: A Biographical Sketch by Alan Freke is published on-line (.pdf free from alanfreke@hotmail.com). Dr Culank was a child of a Polish refugee family who came to England at the end of the 19th century. He practised as a GP in **Bristol** from 1934 to 1971 and continued to take a caring interest in his patients until his death in 1978. This is a comprehensive and fully-documented account from a grateful ex-patient (albeit at child-birth). It is a very good reminder of how much we owe, not just in Covid times, to refugees and to all the millions of people who, day by day and year by year, give so much more than we have any right to expect.

History & Heritage Matters 17 (**Nailsea** & area, May-Nov 2020) has a piece from Margaret Thomas bringing us up to date on her continuing local history work since she left ALHA and the area – very good to hear from her. And there are enticing extracts from a memoir of **Nailsea** schooldays in the 1870-80s – the first years of the new Education Act. There are several other stories but as they are unreferenced, so they shall be unreviewed.

The Local Historian 50.4 (October 2020) has an article on ‘Johannes Kip (1652 -1721) and the Gloucestershire engravings’ which is of double interest. Not only did Kip contribute to that celebration of county landed gentry which is such an important element of early modern English local history; but among the seats he pictured for posterity was that of Sir Robert Atkyns, himself a major historian of Gloucestershire. And how delightful that his seat was ‘Swell’!

There is also a full and very positive review of the two volume set of *Depositions in the Consistory Court of the Bishop of Bath & Wells 1601-1606* edited by William Husband for the List & Index Society – an important source for the social history of Somerset in those times.

And there are ‘Two Responses to William Evans’ on the end of local history – both rather unsurprisingly well-persuaded that local history will endure.

B&AFHS Journal 181 (Sept 2020) publishes the results of a members’ survey. Bob Lawrence’s ‘On the Internet’ seemed to come out as the most liked feature. Cheers of agreement from us. In this issue he also has a piece on aspects of the poor law that you may not find on the internet. And good to see DP Lindegaard still active though no longer a regular.

Robert Parfitt has the second part of his-three part on ‘The Owners of **Midford** Castle’ (a folly castle in Bath). The Conolly family appear to have contributed little to history except births, marriages and deaths together with property transactions, but a Roman Catholic family of good standing is not so common in the 19th century. And the article is referenced which none of the rest seem to be.

B&AFHS Journal 182 (Dec 2020) concludes Robert Parfitt’s survey of ‘The Owners of **Midford** Castle’ bringing it into the 20th century when it passed from the hands of the Roman Catholic family and church. And Bob Lawrence is back On the Internet.

The reviews include *Keynsham & Saltford 1945-2020* (K & S LHS £15); and *The Gloucestershire Court of Sewers 1583-1642* ed Rose Hewlett (B&GAS £30) – in effect the drainage of the **Severn coast** and those who were involved. *Dr Geoffrey Irwin Culank* (Alan Freke, free pdf from alanfreke@hotmail.com) is about a Russian Jewish family who arrived in Bristol in the 1890s. And two **Wrington** items: *Early Records of Wrington* by John Gowar & Frank Thorn, a scholarly and valuable guide; and *The Reverend John Vane – Rector of Wrington 1828-1870 Pt I* John Gowar – a man of social distinction.

BOOKS AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS NOTICED

Podcasts: *Ruth Hecht draws attention* to some podcasts: ‘I thought ALHA members might like to know about a series of 12 podcasts each featuring a different area of Bristol, called ‘12

Communities, 1 Bristol’ – a mixture of oral history, and a *little bit* of local history... they’re available on various platforms such as Spotify, [Bristol 24/7](#), [Podbean](#) (me neither) and [BCfM](#). I’ve just listened to the **Hartcliffe, Fishponds and Easton** episodes, and learnt stuff I didn’t know – can’t ask for more than that!!’

Gary M Best, *Slavery and Bristol*, New Room Publications 2020, £19.99.
info@newroombristol.org.uk; 0117 9264740.

Andrew Adonis, *Ernest Bevin: Labour's Churchill* (Biteback 2020, 368 pages, £20).
<https://www.bitebackpublishing.com/books/ernest-bevin>

COMMENTARY AND RESPONSES

The Beacon

Bristol Music Trust has announced the Colston Hall’s new name: <https://bristolbeacon.org/about-us/bristol-music-trust/>. It is to be *The Beacon*. Some will regret that the word has no associations with the site. Some will welcome the word’s association with celebration: beacons were lit in 1977 and 2012 for the anniversaries of the queen’s accession. Some will be uneasy with the word’s association with danger and threat: for centuries beacons were lit to warn of imminent invasion, though the limited technology never matched the Vatican’s concise Yes/No or native Americans’ sophisticated messaging. Some will approve of the name’s association with excellence: in 1998 the government designated as beacons 75 schools (one of them **Cadbury Heath** county primary school) whose successful practices in teaching, behaviour and so on made them examples from



which others could learn. Some will see the name as a dig at Bristol’s attitude to culture: a light shining in the philistine darkness, analogous with methodists’ 1951 beacon on **Hanham** Mount. [Image from Hanham Methodist church]. Most people however will applaud the BMT trustees for hitting upon a name that is not likely to offend anyone, no mean feat in these selectively over-sensitive times.

It is difficult to think of examples of a local building or institution being named deliberately to avoid controversy or offence.

Bristol’s Cabot Circus might be considered an example, but that was a re-naming in response to reaction against the first insensitive (uninformed?) attempt. One rare clutch is at the University of the West of England’s Frenchay (ie **Stoke Gifford**) campus. Early buildings there in the days of Bristol Polytechnic were named after internationally famous scientists like Faraday and Darwin, but dropped out of use, as the University dropped out of physics and as biology evolved from explanatory to applied sciences. A library and a lecture theatre commemorate a former director and a chairman of governors, both liked, admired and respected by hundreds of staff and perhaps by the one or two students who came across them in disciplinary proceedings. By the 1990s buildings simply bore letters: A block, B block and so on through to S: neutrality to the point of banality. When in 2006 UWE built new blocks of student flats, it saw the risk of reputations changing: if at some time in the past you had named a building to commemorate someone called Saville or Shipman, nowadays you might wish you hadn’t. So UWE resorted to names of local hills: Cotswold, Mendip, Quantock and Brecon (beacon again), half a nod to the

geographic area the University seeks to serve, and misleadingly reassuring to green-welly parents helicoptering their incapable offspring, but, above all, incapable of giving offence.

In Eric Hobsbawm's terms, we have had the age of revolution, the age of capital, the age of empire and the age of extremes. Are we now in the age of selective over-sensitivity? If so, is that to be welcomed as a return to considerate understanding of other people's feelings, or deplored as a retreat into inoffensive blandness for fear of upsetting someone even though their conduct or utterances are morally unacceptable? Histories of most parts of our area suggest that improvements, whether in government, religion, the economy, education, health, working and living conditions, and virtually every public service came about as a result of determined contrariness, which involved getting up the noses of people who disagreed, particularly those in power. An adage about making omelettes comes to mind.

Empty plinth

Darth Vader's appearance on the Colston plinth – not a guest appearance: our elected representatives did not invite him, though Dave Prowse had died a couple of days before - warns us what we could be in for if **Bristol** city council does not soon decide what to do with the empty space. There are four choices:

1. Remove the plinth altogether, and reinstate the paving. That would cost money, would deliver no public benefit, and would erase traces of events, both long ago and recent, important in **Bristol's** history.

. Leave the plinth as it now is. An empty structure, like a cenotaph, can be loaded with whatever symbolism those who see it make of it. Those who wish to do so could treat it as a memorial to EC and his benefactions. Those who detest what EC did, was responsible for and stood for could treat it as a memorial to those who suffered at the hands of his agents and their successors, and as a reminder of how and why the plinth came to be as it now is. Those who have no view on the subject could have it explained to them why they should have one. Win-win all round. One objection is that the space would be abused, just as paint-sprayers deface bare walls belonging to other people or the public's representatives. Where Marc Quinn (with Jen Reid as model) led the way and Darth Vader followed, Wonder Woman, Daenerys Targaryen and the latest Disney 'character' cannot be far behind; or something or someone more sinister.

3. Erect on the plinth some other piece of sculpture. For the city council to decide what should go there would take years. It would become a party political issue, so any decision would displease half the population, or would be a compromise that would displease everybody. Events surrounding the statue of prime minister Thatcher, intended for Westminster but now moved to Grantham, show what could happen. If a permanent statue is put up, we and future generations will have to put up with it for years.

4. Follow the precedent set by how the empty plinth in Trafalgar Square in London has been put to use. Our elected representatives could procure installation of a succession of works by living artists, each for say 6 months or a year. The changes would add interest to a focal if traffic-violated area of the city. Different forms, styles and registers would stimulate, challenge, inform or entertain. An occasional Banksy or Aardman would attract visitors, with the economic benefits that the government seems to think the only justification for the arts. Local artists could be showcased and their work seen by people who could not tell their Arnolfini from their Elgin marbles. To take the decision-making out of party politics, the selecting of artists and works and the making of engineering and financial arrangements could be delegated to a neutralish group such as Bristol Civic Society or the local cultural development partnership, which might be able to give the informed cultural leadership that our elected representatives have not always found time to attend to. Worth a try?

Zoo relocation

Bristol zoo's move from **Clifton** to **Cribbs Causeway** in the parish of **Compton Greenfield** - <https://bristolzoo.org.uk/latest-zoo-news/> - will be seen by many as the end of an era – in several respects, and not just for the zoo. Many reactions will be emotional and sentimental.

Rosie and Alfred's successors must move because the zoo is not financially viable. For several years admission charges – higher than many families can afford – plus income from investments and commercial activities such as hosting weddings and conferences, have not been enough to cover expenditure on staff, premises, research and the care of the animals. The result has been annual losses, which over time are not sustainable. Better to stop the losses now by moving elsewhere, rather than face compulsory winding up and the debtors' court in 2025.

In this respect, the zoo's predicament is like that faced (or denied?) by other cultural organisations and spectator sports. Theatres, sports facilities, art galleries, museums and so on all have the same problem of income not meeting expenditure. If these organisations are to continue, they require subsidy, which can come only from taxation (national or local) or private benefaction. Government policies and party political dogmas as well as genuine economic constraints make public subsidy unlikely. Private charitable support is selective and reflects the personal preferences, priorities, prejudices and ulterior motives of donors, is unreliable, and is rarely (never?) a free lunch.

In the past many charitable organisations were made viable by the donor endowing the organisation with enough capital to generate enough income to fund the organisation's annual net expenditure. Many of **Bath** and **Bristol's** charities, particularly schools, were originally so endowed, often by rents from farmland or town houses.

The zoological society is able to put itself in a position similar to what it would be in if it had an endowment, because it owns land in an expensive part of Bristol that ought to sell for a high price. That ought to raise enough, after the percenters have taken their fees, to fund both the move to **Hollywood Farm** and the continuation of a zoo there. Not every organisation can do that. A few football clubs (Arsenal twice, Everton, Manchester City, Yeovil) have funded their new grounds out of profits from the sale of their old ones. Supermarkets have been involved in several relocations. **Bristol's** major football clubs both tried, both thwarted.

The zoo is an example of a wider problem: how to make public facilities pay their way without public subsidy or charitable donation. That the zoo has a get-out-of-gaol card in the form of high value land ought not to mislead us into ignoring the obvious, that if cultural public institutions, including museums, are to survive, they must be funded by the public or the wealthy.

Relocation, relocation, relocation

The proposed relocation of Bristol Zoological Society from **Clifton to Compton Greenfield** will be a big event, a break in a long tradition. A relocation may be unusual for the family or business concerned, but there have been lots of them.

Workers in domestic service and agricultural labourers on annual engagements often had to move, with their families, to get work, or different work. Many in the countryside were forced to become economic migrants by inclosures, as John Rutter deplored in the case of **north Somerset**. **Clifton** began as a residential area when merchants and manufacturers left the smoke, soot, smells and noise of the city from about 1720 onwards. Few families stay in one house all their lives. Some were bombed out in WW2, so had to move. Others have been forced to move by slum clearance, area redevelopment, or road schemes such as **Bristol's** inner and outer circuit roads, the M32 and the Cumberland basin flyover at **Hotwells**.

Businesses have relocated. Large-scale removals include the migration of **Bristol's** city docks to **Portishead** and **Avonmouth**, which took with them individual businesses such as flour mills, warehousing, timber yards and connected activities. Other individual businesses that have moved include Fry's from the **Pithay** area to **Somerdale**; Wills from **Bedminster** to **Hartcliffe**; Sun Life from **St James's Barton** to **Stoke Gifford**; John Lewis from **Broadmead** to **Cribbs Causeway**; what was left of Butlers from **Crews Hole** to **Avonmouth**; Stothert & Pitt from the **Newark** works to a site towards **Newbridge**.

Public institutions have moved: police headquarters from **Bridewell** to **Kingsweston** to outside **Portishead**; Bristol maternity hospital from the top of **Blackboy** to **Kingsdown**; Bristol children's hospital from the top of **St Michael's Hill** to the foot. **Bristol's** livestock market was moved from **St Thomas** to **Temple Meads**, from which the business migrated first to **Winford**, and is now done at a market outside Frome, which had moved from central a site in that town. Bristol

Nurses' Training Institution started in a house in **St Augustine's**, moved twice to addresses in **Clifton** before moving to **Clifton Hill**. Bristol Archives moved from the Council House to B Bond in **Hotwells/Rownham**. The Ministry of Defence moved procurement establishments in **Bath** eg at **Rush Hill** and **Lansdown**, to **Abbey Wood**. South Gloucestershire Council's headquarters used to be in **Thornbury** but was moved to **Chipping Sodbury** and now **Yate**.

Churches have relocated: **St Werburgh's** from the old city to Mina Road, where it has given its name to a whole suburb; Counterslip baptists from **Temple** to **Hengrove**; the catholic cathedral from one part of **Clifton** to another; **Redland** Park united reformed church was originally in **Cotham**.

Schools that have moved site include King Edward's in **Bath**, which started in Frog Lane, moved to St Mary's by the north gate, then to Broad Street, then to North Road. Bristol grammar school started in **St Bartholomew's**, moved to the **Gaunts**, then to **Tyndall's Park**. QEH was forced from **Gaunts** to **St Bartholomew's** to **Brandon hill**. Colston's moved from the centre to **Stapleton** when the buildings there were vacated by the bishop, who had moved there out of the centre after the riots: the bishop relocated to **Redland**, then to **Clifton**. **Thornbury** grammar school went to **Alveston/Marlwood**. **Kingswood** school went to **Bath**. The Red Maids moved from **Gaunts** to **Westbury on Trym/Henleaze**. Fairfield went from **Montpelier** to **Muller Road**; Badminton from **Clifton** to **Westbury on Trym/Henleaze**; St Barnabas from one site in **St Paul's** to another; the Blind School from **St George's Road** to **Henleaze**.

School playing fields also relocated, notably Bristol grammar school's from **Golden Hill** to **Failand**. Sports grounds that have moved include **Clifton** rugby club to **Cribbs Causeway**. Cleve rugby club moved from **Staple Hill** to **Fishponds** to **Downend** to **Mangotsfield**.

Local history people will want to identify why entities removed; sometimes there was more than one reason. Removals of businesses and schools may have resulted from success and expansion, or inability to expand on a confined site, as was the case with Fry's. Some removals were not voluntary, eg **St Werburgh's** because of road widening; Castle Street's shops by bombing and area redevelopment; others by slum clearance. Some removals were due to changes in technology, as in the case of electricity generation which needed deep water, rail access and space which **Portishead** offered but central Bristol could not. The zoo's removal is financially compelled; Bristol grammar school's playing fields move financially motivated. Was that why Bristol Rovers moved to **Twerton**? Would they have moved whether or not their **Eastville** premises had caught fire?

Sometimes there is a relocation of a workforce but not of premises. Examples are in construction and engineering: once the cathedral, church or factory was completed, the canal dug, the railway laid, or the quarry or mine was worked out or became uneconomical, the workforce would have moved on to the next job. Did some families stay behind, as in Glasgow?

Not all intended relocations happen. The Red Maids were to move from **Gaunts** to the top of Park Street, but the new building was considered too grand for girls from poor families. You could write an epic about Bristol Rovers FC's wanderings (Homer, except that Odysseus got there in the end) or quest for the promised land (Old Testament, except that in the case of Rovers prayers for miracles have not reached the fulfilment centre). The latest chapter would cover the planned move from the Memorial Ground at **Horfield** to UWE land at **Stoke Gifford** (vacated by the removal of Hewlett Packard), scuppered when Sainsbury's withdrew from the deal at the checkout. Bristol City FC, also involved with Sainsbury's, wanted to go from **Ashton Gate** to **Ashton Vale**, a move reported as thwarted by dogwalkers claiming that dog excrement makes a village green. There must be many instances of relocations that did not happen, which for reasons of commercial confidentiality and the shredder we will never know about. **Frenchay** hospital was merged into **Southmead**; at one stage it looked as if both hospitals might go to a site between **Stoke Gifford** and **Hambrook**. What is now Bath University on **Claverton Down** was intended at one time to go to **Kingsweston**.

Relocations can be informative. They may tell us about change within an organisation; they may be indicators of external changes, perhaps in population numbers, population movement, economic conditions, politics, the law, demand, taste, fashion. Relocations make us ask what else was going on. They may alter the look of a place (eg new buildings); transport networks (eg new

bus routes); the way people work. They will have social impacts, which will be interesting to identify and trace. In one sense every relocation is the end of an era. Depending on what metaphor you choose, it could be a new chapter or the taking of a different direction or a new opportunity. Once a relocation occurs, it becomes part of our area's past, and starts contributing to what was then the future but is now the past. Relocations are the stuff of local history, so are worth taking seriously.

“Showtime!” in Bristol

John Stevens writes: As we cannot visit our theatres and concert halls this festive season, some historic reminiscences of three of them may not come amiss.

St George's on Brandon Hill was one of the intended “Waterloo” churches which was actually built, with government funding, following the final defeat of Napoleon in 1815. Its galleries are relatively rare in an Anglican church, being much more common in Non-conformist chapels (many more of which were being built at the period). A congregation worshipped here until the 1980s, when the church became a concert hall and many of them migrated to Christ Church, City, including the distinguished academic and sometime President of the Bristol & Gloucestershire Archaeological Society Dr Basil Cottle. A world-renowned chamber music venue, St George's never seems quite right for the local orchestras who, wishing to show off all their instruments, offer patrons Mahler or Wagner in their full glory. These days, there seems to be an emphasis on “cultural relativity” and, if you are not careful, you are as likely to hear jazz or the currently fashionable “world music” as a Haydn quartet.

The Bristol Beacon (the former Colston Hall) has been for years the second home of the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and has also welcomed many continental orchestras of the highest standing. I shall say nothing of the recent controversy over the change of name, since for many, the place has anyway never been the same since the Little Theatre, beloved of Bristol “am dram” enthusiasts (and formerly hosting its own company), was closed to make way for the “new” bar area in the 1980s – the said area having now itself been replaced by the booking/bar/restaurant complex to the left of the old main entrance. The soul was ripped out of the place, to the sorrow of traditionalists, yet in no way satisfying those who are always boring on about a “proper modern” concert hall for Bristol.

The Bristol Hippodrome, built in 1912, originally included a water tank holding a hundred thousand gallons in front of the stage. The domed roof can be opened and still is sometimes, despite air-conditioning; the writer recalls one such opening during the last act of *The Marriage of Figaro* on a sweltering summer night in the 1990s (to have opened it earlier would have flooded the place with light). The “Hippo” is currently topped by an image of a French waif of indeterminate gender, suggesting that we shall shortly again be able to hear “*the cry/ Hear the cry of angry men*”.

Is this a threat or a promise? When I heard the cry, the angry men, supposedly suffering from malnutrition and consumption, were in remarkably full-throated voice. No method acting here, then. Nor has the impresario Sir Cameron Mackintosh exactly starved as a result of putting his brainchild before the public. It would however be wrong to end on an uncharitable note, for the musical sensation of the twentieth century undoubtedly did what it said on the tin for your correspondent – who left the theatre undeniably more *Miserable* than he had entered it.

QUOTE

Have yourself a merry little Christmas
Let your heart be light
From now on, our troubles will be out of sight.
Have yourself a merry little Christmas
Make the Yuletide gay
From now on, our troubles will be miles away.

Here we are as in olden days
Happy golden days of yore
Faithful friends who are dear to us
Gather near to us once more.
Through the years we all will be together
If the fates allow
So hang a shining star upon the highest bough
And have yourself a merry little Christmas now.
Blane Ralph, Martin Hugh (1943)

CAN YOU HELP?

BRISTOL RECORD SOCIETY SALES MANAGER

Bristol Record Society is looking for a Sales Manager to sell its books to libraries and other customers. The work is unpaid, but the manager will be entitled to a printed copy (or pdf) of each volume produced.

The Society usually produces a book every year, sometimes two. These need to be advertised to regular customers, invoiced to their requirements, and dispatched subject to payment arrangements. There is also a strong back list, against which orders are made. And, subject to Covid, there are occasional events at which it is good if we have a sales stand.

From 2021 we shall produce each new volume in two formats, digital pdf and printed card-cover, so that customers will have the opportunity of buying either or both.

The Sales Manager should keep records of customers, their orders and payments, and the items supplied. This does not call for any accounting or special IT skills, though being on e-mail is necessary, and keeping the records in spreadsheet form will make a lot of sense.

The Sales Manager will be an officer of the BRS Council (managing Committee; this carries the responsibility of a Trustee for policies and practice generally); and may be a member, but need not be an historian (though an interest in the Society's work will help).

The Sales Manager will be expected to produce a full report each year; and to keep BRS's Council informed of any special news or difficulties in between. The Sales Manager will also quite often be in touch, normally by e-mail, with BRS's Treasurer.

For our work and publications, see

<http://www.bris.ac.uk/Depts/History/bristolrecordsociety/index.htm>

Questions, expressions of interest or applications to
the BRS Treasurer, Dr J Harlow, Jonathan.Harlow@uwe.ac.uk or 01454 775731

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 Bob Lawrence, contact details on page 1 top right (Please note his changed e-mail address). Please tell him of any changes of regular venue or timing. The list is not attached to this newsletter because most events have been cancelled or postponed, and not all changes may have been notified to Bob, so ALHA may not have full information.