

AVON LOCAL HISTORY & ARCHAEOLOGY

Newsletter 153 January to April 2018

Website: www.alha.org.uk

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

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Material for **Newsletter 154** by **20 March 2018** 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

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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

NEWS FROM THE COMMITTEE

Professor Peter Malpass and Dr Jonathan Harlow have stood down from the ALHA committee.

Alterations to ALHA's constitution were proposed to the annual general meeting. These included reducing the minimum number of committee meetings per year from 4 to 2; establishing the principle of one member, one vote at general meetings; reducing the quorum of a general meeting to 10; and providing for the constitution to be amended by a simple majority of those present and voting. All the amendments were agreed at the 2017 AGM.

The committee have agreed that Mike Hooper should buy new amplification equipment in time for ALHA's 2018 summer walks.

A grant was awarded to ALHA member **Community Archaeology on the Mendip Plateau** towards the cost of energy dispersive X-ray fluorescence testing by Durham University of a crucible found in archaeological investigations at a Norman building next to **Chewton Mendip** church.

The events subcommittee planned the annual general meeting and Joe Bettey lecture, and is working on plans for the 2018 local history day, a flyer for which accompanies the paper version of this newsletter.

The committee has supported a call for amendment to the law to protect buildings being considered for listing.

The committee is exploring the possibility of offering free associate membership of ALHA to museums and similar organisations.

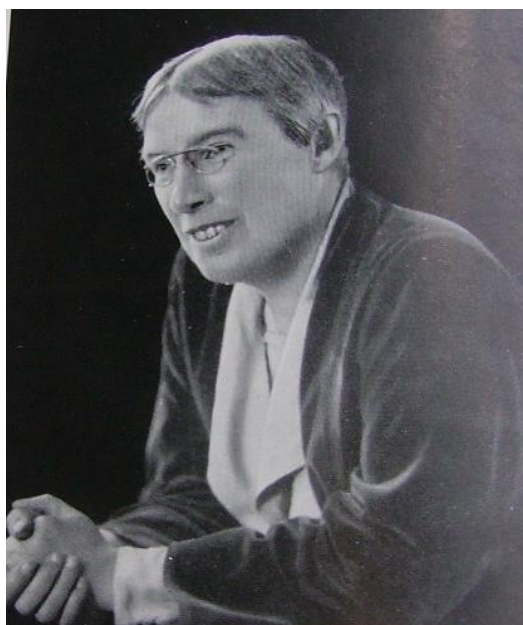
The committee welcomes offers from member groups and societies to host the 2018 annual general meeting and Joe Bettey lecture.

ALHA LOCAL HISTORY DAY 2018 –The theme for next year’s local history day, again at UWE’s Frenchay campus, **Saturday 21 April**, will be around **religion and change**. A flyer and booking form accompanies the paper version of this newsletter and is on ALHA’s website.

THE 2017 JOE BETTEY LECTURE

was delivered by Professor Helen Meller, born in **Freshford**, formerly professor of history at Nottingham University and author of *Leisure and the changing city, 1870-1914*. Her lecture, titled *How to live in the modern city: women's contribution in Bristol 1860s-1930s*, examined the role of women in trying to make Bristol a good place for women to live in and bring up children, looking in particular at the life of **Hilda Cashmore** (1876-1943). Born at **Norton Malward**, the fifth of six sisters in a Quaker, public-spirited family, she was in the first generation of women to have both a secondary and a tertiary education. HC decided not to get married, because until 1919 the marriage bar eliminated all jobs for a professional woman. She studied modern history at Somerville College Oxford, and then trained as a teacher at Homerton College. She went to work in a pupil teacher centre in Chesterfield, but was not happy with the framework of philanthropy there. She moved to Bristol in 1904 as history lecturer at Bristol’s day training college. She was the key creator and first warden of Bristol University settlement at **Barton Hill** from 1911 to 1926. She developed new approaches to social work, appropriate to modern conditions, especially making housing good for women and families. An outstanding teacher, in 1911 CH inspired 105 out of 120 students to join a social guild dedicated to promoting social service. She considered that a local university might be an umbrella for research into social services, local powerhouses for addressing economic and

social problems in its city and region. This was a revolutionary idea, but apt for a new



university, where in the University College of Bristol a tradition of social service had been established. By the 1920s she was leading the Bristol settlement movement, devising programmes for social work students.

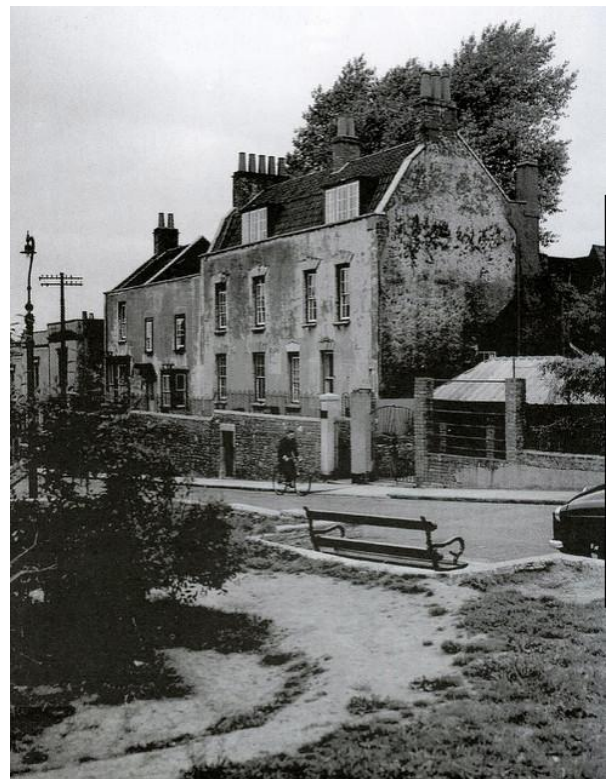
The settlement movement had been launched in 1883 by Samuel Barnett and Benjamin Jowett. Barnett, whose father made iron bedsteads for poor law institutions in Bristol, made no progress in London. He wanted his organisation, Toynbee Hall, to give students direct experience of London’s east end, sharing in the culture of the people, eg in working men’s clubs. This was not a new idea. Public schools such as Clifton had been sending pupils into poor parishes a decade

earlier. At Toynbee Hall Barnett challenged students to look at big political problems, eg Beveridge to look at poverty. His students were an Oxford-educated elite; all his volunteers were male. Barnett wanted to spread his movement to the provinces.

These influences were not available to women wardens or to provincial settlements. Hilda Cashmore thought they were counter-productive. She did not agree that only the rich could teach the poor how to improve their lives. HC wanted special policies and social work that would be effective for all people, especially women, irrespective of party or religion. About 1911 she felt a new strength of concern about social issues, stated in the 1912 *Year Book of Social Progress*, written from Bristol University. HC was working within a well of popular local support. There had been a tradition of social work in Bristol from the 1860s, and from 1876 in the University College. TH Green the social philosopher was often in Bristol, because he married a daughter of John Addington Symonds. Ideas about social service were alive in the city. Many women reformers had links with HC: Mary Clifford, one of Bristol's first poor law guardians; Emily Sturge on the school board after 1870: she died 1892 still campaigning; Catherine and Susannah Winkworth wanted decent housing. Women however were excluded from discussion of national policy: in 1884 the royal commission on the housing of the working classes, chaired by the prince of Wales, contained no women.

Clifton college, which drew its boy pupils from local families, had been founded in 1862, led by a dynamic 28-year-old head who helped found the University College and Clifton high school for girls, and the Clifton association for the higher education of women, which founded three bursaries for women taking degree level courses. One of the recipients was Marian Pease, who later became director of the University's day training college, and appointed HC to her post there in 1904. MP, whose brother Edward helped found the Fabians, collaborated with HC, and appointed her to the **Barton Hill**

settlement running a girls' club, many of whom worked at the Great Western Cotton Factory. After big strikes in 1889 at the cotton factory, women unionised by trade union representatives from London had got some wage increases. In 1892 MP had been given responsibility for setting up the day training college and was appointed mistress of method. By 1902 it was teaching 60 students a year, compared with 20 in the University itself. The (Balfour) Education Act 1902 gave grants to support attendance at such colleges, the rate for men being double that for women. Five times more men than women enrolled. HC as director was paid £400 a year, MP



£300. The men had better hostels, obtained better jobs. HC put students up in her own home.

HC sought options for paid work for women. One was to use the settlement to train social workers. During the campaign to get Bristol a university charter, in 1908 the students' gazette asked what was meant by a modern university. Provincial universities sought to distinguish themselves from Oxbridge by being local, democratised, teaching liberal arts and sciences and practical subjects. This aim was supported by the principal C Lloyd Morgan and GH Leonard, professor of

history, former warden of the Broad Plain mission and president of the Bristol Workers' Educational Association. They got support from trade unions, the local trades council, the WEA and London. Mabel Tothill, quaker, paid for new settlement buildings at **Barton Hill** in 1911, and was one of three pioneer residents. A donor to the settlement, William Wills, objected to Mabel Tothill's pacifism, and withdrew funding. MT lived at a house nearby. HC obtained study leave, and went to Northwestern University, Chicago, and Canada. She saw settlements acting as centres for action, connecting public effort. On returning to Bristol HC was instrumental in forming the settlement at **Barton Hill** but refused to be a leader. She was impressed by the trust and affection local people showed towards the settlement, trust which she earned locally. In 1912 the cotton factory, the area's main employer, was making losses. To keep the factory open, managers cut wages. The workers went on strike, which affected the whole neighbourhood. Workers could not pay trade union subscriptions, so there was no trade union support, and no strike pay. Margaret Bondfield, the first woman cabinet minister in 1923, wanted the factory closed. HC was on the side of the workers, invited MP to stay, but opposed shutting the factory down. HC tried to devise strategies to help families to cope: feeding and providing a soup kitchen were priorities. After the strike HC worked without leave for five years. In WW1 she volunteered to work with the Society of Friends' war committee and went to France as secretary and organised 33 people on direct relief work. After the war she offered leadership and support and her particular skills towards (1) dealing with local emergencies, especially the measles and flu epidemics 1918-1919; (2) a training syllabus for inspectors of public health, medicines, forestry, poor law institutions, education, health visitors, and apprenticeship committees: all jobs which women could do and paid salaries: Dorothy Johnson was later appointed HM inspector of factories. HC served on several trade bodies, eg for corsets

and tobacco; (3) housing: Bristol was late to invest in social housing. The war had kick-started new action, an estate at **Kingsweston** for munitions workers. That convinced HC that the government could support housing development. To help women cope, HC set up contacts between settlements and new estates, with a settlement worker living in the estate. HC joined the garden cities movement, because she wanted to influence standards of building. After the Town Planning Act 1919 HC pressed Bristol city council to build housing. It had little professional local knowledge of housing design. The council set up a housing advisory committee, which included representatives from settlements. Their detailed recommendations were shelved because of the Geddes cuts in 1921. HC was angry and started a campaign to fight for housing, as a result of which the city council accepted that housing must be a priority. HC visited London more frequently, and served on a national housing estates committee, which included representatives of settlements and of the National Council for Social Service. HC's input was on social context, not of inner city areas but of the new estates. HC helped found Bristol Community Council, chaired by Miss Orpen. HC saw a need for of community centres and tenants' associations, whose members would need experience and training, and backup in their dealings with government departments and local authorities, outside of the political system. They would need experts to sustain the community centres, and social skills, learning locally. HC thought that the individuals involved could be connected with a university settlement. When HC left Bristol in 1926 three estates had links with the **Barton Hill** settlement.

HC was at the peak of her powers in the 1920s. She was making new contributions to social work, and worked with Patrick Abercrombie on regional planning. In 1926 a plan was devised to bring miners from south Yorkshire to open up the Kent coalfield. HC worked on the social and community issues. In 1926 HC left the Bristol area, but returned later to continue in voluntary work

NEW ALHA BOOK

A flyer for ALHA's next booklet, no.25, on the Victorian model farm in south Gloucestershire and north Somerset, accompanies this Newsletter. Reduced price if you order before 15 February 2018.

EVENTS AND SOURCES

SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE HERITAGE OPEN DAYS 2018

Jane Marley and Alison Catlin write: 'Heritage Open Days will take place across TWO weekends next year - **6-9 and 13-16 September 2018**. As always, you can pick just one weekend, day or even hour. The main theme for Heritage Open Days 2018 will be *Extraordinary Women*. Partly in recognition of the centenary of the Representation of the People Act, which gave the vote to certain women over 30, HODs will focus not just on the iconic suffragettes, but women from all walks of life, whose achievements should be celebrated. Alternatively, 2018 will also be the [European Year of Cultural Heritage](#) and you could use this as inspiration for your event.

SGC intends to publish a timetable for all partners well in advance. These are the key dates:

- Registration opens **30 March**. Applicants invited to submit new photos separately by email.
- Registration closes **1 May**.
- 1st proof for checking to participants by 6 June; deadline for alterations 19 June.
- Final courtesy proof sent out 26 June; any final responses by 3 July
- Website info goes live by **26 June**.
- Leaflets sent to distribution list including libraries by 30 July at the latest
- Council will issue general press release issued w/c 27 August. Facebook and Twitter posts on Council pages.
- Events **start 6 September and finish 16 September**.
- Evaluation returned by 8 October.

As you will all be aware, capacity and resources at the Council have reduced over recent years. Please be aware that we will promote your events as a whole to raise the profile of Heritage Open Days across the area. However, this will not replace your own local publicity and we do recommend that you also carry out all the publicity that you usually would for any event, whether this be contacting your local schools to put info in their newsletters or issuing your own press releases. If there is any training that would support you all, please do let us know and we can see what we can include in our Heritage meetings.

If you have any further comments or questions, please do get in touch with us,' Jane Marley, Museums and Heritage Officer Tel: 01454 865783, MOB: 07808 364704; Alison Catlin, Public art & Cultural events co-ordinator, South Gloucestershire Council.

THATCHING TIME AT HENLEAZE

Veronica Bowerman writes: The thatched cottage at 166 Henleaze Road, Bristol has been a private dwelling for some years. It is a Grade II listed building and also perhaps the best-known landmark in **Henleaze**. The property was originally one of two lodge houses for Henleaze Park House. It is believed to be the only thatched home in a Bristol suburb, with the exception of Blaise Hamlet. Its architecture is very similar to the **Blaise Hamlet** properties designed by John Nash in the early 1800s. Henleaze Park House became St Margaret's School which was demolished in the 1960s and replaced by chalet bungalows in Henleaze Park, Longleat Close, Henleaze Park Drive and St Margaret's Drive. The previous re-thatching took place in 1994. The view, courtesy of the Sylvia Kelly collection, of the





cottage standing in its own grounds after the completion is one rarely seen.

The current re-thatching was started in November 2017 and has caused a lot of interest in the area. This photo is courtesy of local resident Liz Loeffler.

SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE WAR MEMORIALS

Cherry Hubbard writes: South Gloucestershire in the First World War Project: 2014 – 2018 exhibition no.3 can be seen at the following libraries:

27/11/2017 - 15/12/2017 **Thornbury** ; 02/01/2018 -

19.01.2018 **Staple Hill**; 29/01/2018 - 16.02.2018 **Emersons Green** ; 26/02/2018 - 16.03.2018

Hanham ; 26/03/2018 - 12.04.2018 **Winterbourne** ; 23/04/2018 - 11.05/2018 **Bradley Stoke**;

21/05/2018 - 08/06/2018 **Filton** ; 18/06/2018 - 06/07/2018 **Kingswood** ; 16/07/2018 - 31/07/2018

Cadbury Heath ; 11/09/2018 - 21/09/2018 **Patchway**. More at www.southglos.gov.uk/ww1.

Cherry Hubbard, Project Engagement Officer, cherry.hubbard@southglos.gov.uk

KNOW YOUR PLACE SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE

An interactive legacy exhibition featuring *Know Your Place: South Gloucestershire* is on display at:

Downend Library from 6 February 2018, and at **Patchway** Library from 13 February to 16 May 2018.

RECORD OFFICES STOCKTAKING CLOSURES

- **Bristol Archives** will close from **Tuesday 16 January to Friday 26 January 2018**. <https://www.bristolmuseums.org.uk/bristol-archives/opening-times/>
- **Somerset Heritage Centre's** annual Closed Period will be from **Monday 22 January 2018 to Friday 2 February 2018**. Normal opening hours will resume from **Tuesday 6 February 2018**: <http://www1.somerset.gov.uk/archives/>.
- **Gloucestershire Archives** will be closing at 4.30 pm on **Wednesday 28 February 2018** to move into the newly refurbished Heritage Hub. We will be reopening at **9.00 am on 13 March 2018**: <http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/archives/plan-your-visit/gloucestershire-archives/>

A FORGOTTEN LANDSCAPE PROJECT

Latest from the project at [https://us11.campaign-](https://us11.campaign-archive.com/?u=5a1c4370a35827939f3c8d02b&id=916479b633#Oldbury)

[archive.com/?u=5a1c4370a35827939f3c8d02b&id=916479b633#Oldbury](https://us11.campaign-archive.com/?u=5a1c4370a35827939f3c8d02b&id=916479b633#Oldbury), including a report on the excavations at Oldbury on Severn. The project's Tuesday talks resume **Tuesday 6 February 2018**.

All talks will be at **St Peter's Church, Cross Hands Road, Pilning, BS35 4JB**. They start at 19:30 and last about an hour. They are free but you must book your place. The first one will be by the project's oral history volunteers on Tales of the Vale.

BRISTOL & AVON FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY COACH TRIP TO KEW – NATIONAL ARCHIVES OR KEW GARDENS

B&AFHS will be running a coach trip to Kew on **Saturday February 17th, 2018**. Drop-offs will be at The National Archives and also Kew Gardens (there is an orchid exhibition). Cost is £25 per person or £20 if place reserved and paid **before January 1**. Pick-up points will be Chipping Sodbury car park at 7.10a.m. and BAWA, Southmead Road Bristol at 7.30 a.m. Please contact Patricia Holmes on 0117 9561881 or pat12acres@hotmail.co.uk for further details and to book.

The First Atlantic Liner. Brunel's Great Western Steamship by Helen Doe (Amberley 2017, 304 pp hb, £20) *Review by Chris Harlow*

Senior readers may recall the dramas which attended the first jet airliner flights across the Atlantic, with the Boeing 707 and the Comet 4 competing for public applause nearly sixty years ago. Not so well known is that the drama was a re-run of the passenger steamship contest 120 years earlier. Helen Doe paints the drama of steamship rivalry in the late 1830s, making the story a thriller, but using her highly-honed skills as an academic researcher and a technical writer to add depth to the tale. Her credentials in maritime history and scholarship shine out in the narrative, telling it with accuracy, making the ship itself into a character to inspire the reader's loyalty.

Europeans had been taking passage to the New World for more than 300 years before the Bristol colleagues made their plans. By sailing ship, it was a voyage requiring determination, some nerve, perhaps an overriding need for escape, but inevitably also patience. Reaching New York in less than 7 weeks was not to be relied upon, even though the east-bound trip could be shorter. Sailing ships were only bearable for the stoic, or the seasoned crew members. Cramped quarters, damp berths, fetid air, food that quickly became rank, these were the conditions which called for determination. And a strong stomach. So the benefits which the members of the steamship company felt they could offer when they came together in 1835 would be the comfort, better food, the greater certainty of arrival time, a much shorter voyage, projected at less than 20 days.

Mixing together these inducements, it was actually the Board of the Great Western Railway which decided on the ship project as a natural extension of the rail line already being built to reach Bristol from London. Brunel was a natural focus for the specification and the design of the new ship. He had worked on marine projects with his father, and as the engineer for the rail line, he was widely connected with trades people, business people and engineers who had the

vision for a venture and the ability to raise financial support. Helen Doe brings together the parties who carried through the creation of a special ship very much as the writer of a Western brings together the cowboy *dramatis personae*.

She also picks out the factors in the wider British business environment which were probably those essential to the ship's success. Expansion of population and of engineering production, sudden increases in the amount of coal mined and thus reductions in its relative price, burgeoning interest in trade with the US, the memories of war fading, these meant that the market for Atlantic travel was ready to grow.

Nor is the competition neglected. The *Great Western* was prepared to a high specification, sailed by leading professionals and managed by people of some integrity, but there were enough rival entrepreneurs in 1830s Britain who could also detect the scent of a rapidly expanding market. There were sufficient other steamship building projects for success in the GW venture to be far from assured.

So, the author sets up the characters, lays open the direction the plot will take, enlightens the reader to the encounters and hazards to which the heroine, the *Great Western* herself of course, will be subject, and then she delivers the action in satisfying measure. The challenges of the first voyage, the questions of whether timing will be met, the effects of rival attempts, whet the appetite. But further chapters add the understanding of what types of people the passengers were, even giving named lists, the competences of the crews, the to-and-fro of praise and complaints and the fortunes of the GW Company as an entity. Twelve detailed appendices give detail, some spice and even meal menus, adding dimensions to the great ship's whole life. In upwards of 70-80 voyages, she must have covered two or three hundred thousand ocean miles. Short of

taking a voyage on the ship herself, little greater value can be found than buying and

reading the account given.

John Cossins of Redland Court by Caroline P Bateson (Redland & Cotham Amenities Society 2017, 32 pp sb, colour illustrated, ISBN 978-1-78808-175-7) *Review by William Evans*

From 2006 to 2015 the author, a former history teacher, was headmistress of Redland High School, which until its recent merger with the Red Maids' occupied Redland Court. That house was built for John Cossins, about whom little is known except that he was a wholesaler based by St Paul's in the City of London. CB's booklet starts by summarising what has been published about JC, not all of it true. She then presents her own research. In particular, she has mined references to JC in the records of the Worshipful Company of Bowyers, a City livery company, of which JC's father Roger was a member and was master 1698-1700. JC himself was admitted a member in 1705 and became master in 1724 but, for reasons not known, only for a week. An inset recounts JC's frequenting of Child's coffee house, also visited by Isaac Newton, Christopher Wren and Edmund Halley, whose comet the author links with the representation of one on the wind vane above Redland Court.

CB then gives a brief account of JC's acquisition of the Redland Court estate in 1732, and his commissioning of his new house and Redland chapel. A few pages describe the contract JC entered into in 1758 for the building of houses on Redland Road. It is not clear whether the purpose of this section is to suggest what sort of building design, construction and architectural features JC may have specified for the building of Redland Court: the author does not say so.

Nor does she explain that the building on Redland Road was one of several erected as part of JC's endowment of Redland chapel and its minister. CB quotes the Westbury-on-Trym vicar and historian HJ Wilkins's* description of the chapel as a miniature St Paul's. The booklet concludes with JC's appointment as sheriff of Gloucestershire 1755-1756 and his 1756 will, which included gifts for the poor of WoT and £100 to the Bristol infirmary, bequests mirrored in his wife's will.

The book is illustrated throughout with excellent sharp photographs of archive sources, the house and chapel, portraits and architectural details. The back cover reproduces in colour and publishes, for the first time, I believe, Fanny Sarah Hodges's watercolour, about 1860, of Redland Court and its grounds. The booklet still leaves much unexplained, such as what trade or trades JC made his money from, whether he had any connection with the East India Company, what made him demit his mastership of the bowyers' company, what made him decamp to this area, and so on. But this is a valuable and meticulous account which extends what is known about JC and, more importantly, corrects errors, misrepresentations and misunderstandings in earlier publications. Highly recommended.

*ALHA books no.24, £3.50 from the ALHA treasurer

Bristol from Below: Law, Authority & Protest in a Georgian City by Steve Poole & Nicholas Rogers (Boydell Press, 2017, c 400pp, illustrated, £70).

This is a substantial book in terms of quality as well as quantity: a dozen fully documented case-studies of public disturbance and unrest in eighteenth-century Bristol by two well qualified and lively historians. I say case-studies, because the various chapters do seem more like separate papers (even to the point of having each its

own numbered notes) than an organised narrative or analysis. For this, one must look to the brief Introduction and Postscript. The overall message seems to be that, despite its very wide freeman franchise, Bristol's potential voice for reform was typically, and increasingly, choked by an oligarchic civic government.

I do not have the qualifications to appraise the work properly. Three things struck me however. First, the belowness of the title is relative. Householding tradesmen were below councillors, yes, but they were well above the servants and immigrants and dock-roughage that made up a substantial portion of the population. In the chapter called *Voices in the Crowd*, I could only find two utterances from the lower sort, while the rest were representations or reports by the literate. Secondly, I did not find much attention paid to the apprentices, that body of teenagers with the nominal status of servants but the background and expectations of freemen and householders. They were only too ready to turn out for trouble in the seventeenth century. Had they become tamer in the eighteenth? These considerations bear on the third. The episodes examined here seem to occupy a range between two rather different types of disturbance. On the one hand were those grievances which understandably animated the meaner sort

Bristol from the Post and Press by Maurice Fells, Amberley 128 pages illustrated £12.99

This is much in the familiar Amberley format but longer - 128 pages not 96; and more text than pictures. It consists of 85 excerpts from the *Western Daily Press* and the *Bristol Evening Post* nominally between 1899 and 2017; but in fact there is one extract for 1899 and then nothing till 1921, so nothing on Bevin or WWI. (The gap can be filled by John Lyes' *Bristol 1901-1913*, and *Bristol 1914-1919*, BBHA 104 and 107.)

The editor states that he 'aims to give the reader a flavour of the atmosphere of the city that often dares to be different'; while the blurb says that the events recorded 'have helped to make Bristol one of Britain's great cities'. The selection in fact favours visits, whether by royals or other celebrities; WWII; Brabazon, Britannias and Concord; openings and closings. It certainly does not tell 'the story of this great and vibrant city' as the blurb promises. Indeed there is very little to reflect Bristol's development. The story of the (dire) reconstructions of the 60s is neglected, apart from a piece on the plans of 1944 and a

irrespective of party, such as food prices and bridge tolls. On the other were the party issues - Jacobitism, the American War - over which the political clubs waged war, enlisting the support of mobs who might clash as joyfully and mindlessly as Rover fans v United. Is there a case that the pre-occupation of the political elite with these partisan issues, along with distrust of the vulgar mob and fears for property, disabled them, Whig and Tory alike, from registering any real concerns. Coleridge and Orator Hunt were outsiders.

However one views the conclusions or tendency of the collection, there is no doubt that all serious historians of this period will have to engage with it; or that they will enjoy doing so. The price will put it outside the pockets of many individual readers, but they can at least try to make sure that it is on all serious library shelves.

A flyer and order form with a discount for ALHA members and affiliates accompanies this newsletter.

paragraph on the Cumberland Swing Bridge. Only the opening of Portbury Dock suggests the transition from active port to recreational/residential harbourside. No politics at all - the flavour of the city? Two rugby stories, no soccer- ditto? Nor does one get any sense of the editorial policy or views of these two papers.

The illustrations mostly seem not to be from the pages of the newspapers concerned and are often anachronous to the story illustrated. It would have been good to see the parachutist hanging from a house in Park Street in 1938, not a bland picture of the street some 20 years later. Ditto the bungee jumpers from Clifton Suspension Bridge, totally absent from the stock photo printed. 'Fans besiege Frankie Vaughan' gets no picture of fans besieging Frankie Vaughan, just a photo still of Vaughan from a film. Perhaps this is because the publishers have not been able to do much with more authentic images: the front pages from the *Evening Post*'s 1st edition and the VE day edition are both very

muddy. (The first compares poorly with the same in John Penny's *All the News that's fit to print*, BBHA 101 p 29.)

The book is good value for the price, for those who will find interest in the contents. But it is not easy to know who they

Exposed: the Major and the Roman Baths by Doc Watson (Ex Libris £8.99 160 pp, ill.)

This book tells the story of Major Charles Edward Davis, architect, and his work in Bath. Davis's great achievement was the discovery, and uncovering, of the Roman Bath complex; but the main theme of the book is rather the tussles and controversies in which Davis seems regularly to have embroiled himself. Most of these were about buildings and the award of contracts by the Council, but Davis's large collection (packs?) of poorly controlled deerhounds also figure prominently. As Watson tells it, the central problem was Davis himself: arrogant, ready to give and quick to take offence, unwilling to operate an acceptable boundary between his private practice and his work as Surveyor of Corporate Works. (It is a pity that having carefully made the distinction between this post and that of City Surveyor, p 54, the author then frequently calls Davis 'City Surveyor' in subsequent pages.)

As the author says, the background to the story is Bath's struggle back into top

will be. It does not give any coherent view of Bristol's 20th century history for the general reader; and local historians will go straight to the extensive newspaper files in the Central Library.

tourist rating in the later nineteenth century, in which the Roman Baths might be seen as the key item. So altogether the material here is interesting and Doc Watson (himself a guide at the baths) is to be congratulated on putting it together. More vigilant proofing might have been in order. We can cope with 60, for 160 years (p 6); 'publically' (p 53); and 'boast' for 'boost' (p 60). But 'commendation' for 'condemnation' (p 71) is more confusing; and 'fulsome' (p 109) is the opposite of what is intended. And I found the author's decision to refer consistently to 'the Major' from the time when this rank was conferred on Davis, was troublesome on the many pages where we had also 'the Mayor'. But the chief complaint must be that the book is not only without an index but completely unreferenced. It is a shame that while this book will be read with interest, other historians cannot cite it but will have to do all the work over again.

History & Heritage Matters (Nailsea & District LHS Journal 12 November 2017)

The best of this journal are the memoirs. There is a further instalment of Admiral Lt Col. Tweedie's account of the 7th Somerset Battalion Home Guard: 'Neither I, nor probably anyone else, had ever studied the area from the point of view of invasion, or not at least since the time of Napoleon.' While these present a record of what was done, they also point to the counterfactual story of what might have been. And veteran Peter Wright's personal memoir of 40 years in Nailsea, including his recent First Aid training: 'I had to lay the instructor in the recovery position.

He got up, I couldn't!' Two interesting reprints: Margaret Thomas on Station Road; and Jack Lawry on local snail-eating. But an article on the Bristol Constabulary by David Cairns loses much of its potential value by complete lack of references or sources. Why will local historians so insouciantly throw away their chances of being recognised and cited by others? And elsewhere two old press cuttings are printed without vouchsafing the names of the papers in which they appeared. Heigh ho!

Journal of the BAFHS 170 (December 2017) has all the usual good things for family historians, under new editor Penny Walters. With my known predilections (see above) I was especially struck by Mike Gould's article 'Professionalism and Standards in Family History'. His first principle

should be inscribed in letters of gold on the notebook of every historian, or branded on the forehead of every defaulter: "All statements concerning a person who is one of the subjects of the report shall be accompanied by references to the source material that enabled the statement to be asserted . . . sufficiently detailed to enable the reference to be checked." An article by John Chappell on a family bible mostly complies; but articles on the Lodge family and on Joseph Alexander Muir don't. Heigh ho! x 2. Useful and mostly positive reviews, including Shirley Hodgson's *Bristol Pauper Children; Historic England: Bath* by Simon McNeill-Ritchie; *The Matthew of Bristol* (not by the way a 'replica') by Clive Burlton; and *The Cradle of Methodism 1739-2017* (rather prolonged infancy?) by Gary Best. All these are of much wider than family history interest.

Dr Harlow welcomes reviews of recently published books or articles relevant to ALHA's area and objects

BOOKS NOTICED

Jonathan Harlow, ed., *Religious ministry in Bristol 1603-1689: uniformity to dissent*. Bristol Record Society 2017, volume 69.

Our editor interviewed Dr Harlow:

What led you to this topic?

Two paths crossed. We in **Bristol Record Society** wanted to present a volume to Dr Joe Bettey, whose forte is religious local history. I had done work on ministry in the middle of the 17th century as part of my thesis on the merchant turned Quaker, Thomas Speed.

What is the local historical significance of the topic and the documents you have edited?

The 17th century saw an upboiling of religious and political dissension, locally as well as nationally. In Bristol, religious ministers ranked next in importance to the aldermen and councillors who ruled the city. The pulpit was the place for pronouncements and polemics, - the TV studio of the day. I set out to do two things. First, to identify the people who ministered and where and when they did so - a rather murky area which I believe I have to a large extent sorted by reference particularly to parish records. Secondly to exemplify, by extracts, what they said - mostly from published sermons. We may be acquainted with the religion of the great writers: Donne and George Herbert, Lancelot Andrewes and Bunyan; but here we have it as spoken and heard every Sunday in every part of the town.

I'm not familiar with this period, but the impression I get is of intemperate, even vicious, language, and some nasty characters.

Is that a fair view?

The language of controversy in that age tended to be personal and unpleasant; and on the whole the material I drew on was

relatively mild. Those who saw the right religion as the key to personal salvation and to national prosperity were going to be heavy handed in denouncing error, but mostly they abstained from personalities. The Presbyterian Ralph Farmer and the Baptist turned Quaker Dennis Hollister were two notable and nasty exceptions. It is also difficult to think kindly of the three or four Anglican ministers who attended dissenting services in order to lay information for the prosecution of ministers and congregation: nobody loves a nark.

Was what was going on in Bristol during this period typical of elsewhere?

Yes indeed, notably in the transition from unity and consensus at the beginning of the period to dissent, and party politics by the end.

Did any of the people you mention influence the future of this area?

Individually, I should pick out Baptists like Thomas Ewins and Robert Purnell, and Quakers like George Bishop and Dennis Hollister, as having done much to make Bristol a notably non-conformist city through into the 18th century. But collectively the Anglican ministers, the voice of learned establishment opinion, held their own with the conservative majority, and not only among the better sort. Overall the religious divisions of this century carried over into the party conflict, often violent, of the next. (See my review of *Bristol from Below*, above.)

How much does your work change or challenge previous work?

I would claim to have filled out rather than transformed the work of others; and that especially in the period before the Restoration. After that, the main work has been done by Jonathan Barry, my colleague in this volume.

Any general conclusions we ought to draw from religious events during this period?

I should rather think of it as making one face a very difficult question for many histories: just what is meant by ‘belief’? How far can we see into the minds of men (mostly men here) long since dead, even when we read the words they heard and endorsed - sometimes gave their lives for?

Melvyn Bragg, *William Tyndale, a very brief history*, SPCK 2017, £12.99.

<http://spckpublishing.co.uk/product/william-tyndale-brief-history/>

Not a book, but a TV programme: on 14 December BBC2 showed episode 4 of *Blitz: the bombs that changed Britain*, concentrating on **Bristol’s St Peter’s and Castle Street**. Viewable from the BBC website **until 16 January 2018**.

COMMENTARY

Kip at Dyrham

Derek Oliver writes: I always enjoy visiting **Dyrham House** in south Gloucestershire. Victorian and Edwardian ‘improvements’ obliterated a lot of original work, and the National Trust has much to do on and in the building. I’m all in favour of buildings like this being restored, as far as is practicable and safe, to their original state, so I was interested to see, last time I visited, that what was an expanse of blank lawn has been divided into beds containing examples of the sorts of plants that might have been grown there in the house’s early days. It is part of a larger restoration project to return part of the gardens to something like how they must have been conceived by the Blathways. The NT has done similar work at Westbury (on Severn) Court.

A word of caution, if I may, if the NT is basing its garden restructuring on engravings of Dyrham House and its grounds by Johannes Kip, published in Atkyns’s history of Gloucestershire in 1712. Comparison of Kip’s drawings with what is known to have been built or laid out or still exists at other houses suggests that Kip cannot always be relied on. For example, at **Kingsweston** Kip shows the grounds and walks sweeping into a vanishing point somewhere beyond **Avonmouth** on a scale that would have

impressed Brunel or a modern motorway engineer: because of other land ownerships and the physical lie of the ground, let alone the amount of earthmoving required, it could never have been like that in reality. At **Henbury** Kip did two views, one of the Great House, and one of Henbury Awdelett. In his view of the Great House, Henbury Awdelett is shown as smaller and almost insignificant, but in his view of Henbury Awdelett, the latter towers over the Great House. Kip used artistic licence (ie a pictorial fib or what we might now call false views) to flatter his patrons, the owners of the properties portrayed. So it would not be safe to swallow Kip’s drawing of **Dyrham**, or of any other large house for that matter, as accurate in all respects. Luckily in the case of **Dyrham** there are near-contemporary written descriptions of the grounds, against which Kip’s grandiose extravagancies can be checked. And the NT has commissioned archaeological investigation, which has confirmed the location of some stone features, from which other features of the layout can be pinpointed. A comprehensive geophysical survey, using modern non-invasive technologies, might help this admirable restoration project get nearer to the truth.

BUBBLES

Reports that the market price of bitcoins, always suspect, has risen beyond the absurd, might prompt local history people to ponder what has happened in our area when bubbles go pop. Local effects of national and international events are always interesting, and the local ramifications can be unexpected. The tulip



mania in 1636-1637 was not just a Dutch event: bulbs were traded on the London stock exchange. The

collapse of the price will have ruined only those wealthy and fashion-obsessed enough to follow the fad, but it made delft ware popular, and we can enjoy examples at **Dyrham** house. It led to a mini-industry in **Bristol**, and local imitations of the style and method of manufacture are in the City Museum, from whose website the image is taken. In the 1720s the South Sea bubble did wider damage, because more people 'invested' and were caught out. The Berkeleys, the Beauforts, the Smyths and the Eltons were among families with members who held SS Co

stock. No doubt many **Bath** and **Bristol** merchants who considered themselves in the know found themselves in the red. One legacy of the South Sea bubble was the beginnings of tighter control of financial institutions by the Bank of England. In the 1820s it commissioned an impressive **Bristol** office in Broad Street, City, designed in solid-looking confidence-proclaiming Greek revival style by CR Cockerell (who also did Holy Trinity **Hotwells** and the Bristol Institution in Park Street); its 1964 successor by Mary le Port has more windows but fewer fans. Stricter bank regulation, though weak even by modern ineffective standards, helped maintain business confidence and nurtured the prosperity of our area. In the 1980s the technology stocks bubble will have stung many people locally, if only because of decisions made by those, many of them working in Bristol, paid to look after other people's savings and pension funds. The sub-prime mortgage bubble, which started in the USA but was spread to the UK by banks and other financial institutions buying and peddling worthless securitised debt, was one cause of the financial crisis of 2008- . Government responses to that, whether seen as attempting to cope with its effects or as taking advantage of an excuse to cut public expenditure and public sector employment, are still with us, and may result in the closure of your local branch library with its local history section.

CAN YOU HELP?

'The family and military history of each name on the SG war memorials is being researched. Each completed memorial is given a QR code which is placed close by so that the information can be instantly viewed, on the spot. Some have details that enable the identification of the local houses where they lived. This can be viewed at: <http://sites.southglos.gov.uk/war-memorials/> QR codes are now installed on 12 SG memorials with more in the pipeline. Fantastic work by current volunteers, but more researchers and collators are urgently needed for this part of the project. Please contact us for further information.' *Cherry Hubbard, Project Engagement Officer, cherry.hubbard@southglos.gov.uk*

DIARY

Events notified to ALHA's website manager to end of April 2018 are on the ALHA website, alha.org.uk. If you want your event to be listed, please make sure that you send details or a copy of your programme to Bob Lawrence, contact details on page 1 top right.