

# AVON LOCAL HISTORY & ARCHAEOLOGY

*Newsletter 158*  
*31 March 2019*

Website: [www.alha.org.uk](http://www.alha.org.uk)

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

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Material for **Newsletter 159** by **21 June 2019** please  
Magazines and books to reviews editor, Hardings Cottage,  
Swan Lane, Winterbourne BS36 1RJ  
[jonathan.harlow@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:jonathan.harlow@uwe.ac.uk)  
Details of events to website manager,  
Flat 1 Chartley, 22 The Avenue, Bristol BS9 1PE  
[lawrence.chartley@btinternet.com](mailto:lawrence.chartley@btinternet.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](mailto:wm.evans@btopenworld.com)

## ALHA NEWS

### NEW ALHA TRUSTEE

Welcome to **Lucy Hamid**, who has joined ALHA's executive committee. Re-joined might be more accurate, because at one time LH was secretary of ALHA when it was called Avon Local History Association. LH is secretary to ALHA member Southern Brooks Archaeology and Local History – website at <https://southernbrooksarchaeology.wordpress.com/>, which concentrates on the area around **Filton, Patchway Stoke Gifford, Harry Stoke, Little Stoke, and Bradley Stoke**. SBA's recent work includes geophysical surveys at **Little Stoke Park**, and investigations near a Roman site in **Stoke Gifford**.

### LOCAL HISTORY DAY 2019

As UWE says it is not able to offer ALHA the same accommodation for the local history day as in previous years, and has not offered satisfactory alternatives, ALHA's committee has decided that the event should be held somewhere else. The venue now booked is **Thornbury Leisure Centre**, and the date is **Saturday 27 April 2019**. The topic is transport and getting about. **A flyer and booking form for the event accompanies this newsletter.**

## ALHA EVENTS TEAM

Bill Evans is standing down from the team that organises ALHA's events (usually, the local history day and the annual general meeting and Joe Bettey lecture). If you would like to join the team (Bob Lawrence and Peter Fleming), do contact either of them or the secretary. New ideas are always welcome.

## EVENTS AND SOURCES

### SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNCIL GRANTS

*Jane Marley, Museums and Heritage Officer, South Gloucestershire Council*, draws attention to the Chair's Community Awards. 'Heritage organisations in South Gloucestershire are doing great work and there are many people volunteering and contributing greatly for many years. This award is a good opportunity to draw attention to individuals and the work/projects they and your organisation are undertaking.' The link for information is: <http://www.southglos.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/councillors-democracy-and-elections/council-chair/chairs-community-awards-2018/>  
Tel: 01454 865783, MOB: 07808 364704

### A FORGOTTEN LANDSCAPE PROJECT

Congratulations to the *A Forgotten Landscape* team, whose 'Tales of the Vale' initiative has been highly commended in the Best Heritage Research Interpretation or Recording category in the Historic England Angel Awards: <https://www.aforgottenlandscape.org.uk/historic-england-angel-awards/>.

### SALTFORD BRASS MILL PROJECT

*Tony Coverdale writes*: In the autumn of 2018 volunteers from the **Saltford Brass Mill** project had the head-race leat dammed to dewater the subterranean watercourses to enable inspection of the masonry and survey and repairing of the penstock gates. A laser scan of the watercourses and a drone survey of the external structure was also carried out, and the project now has over 300GB of data to interpret. A report on the survey is at [http://brassmill.com/dsaltford\\_brass\\_mill\\_021.htm](http://brassmill.com/dsaltford_brass_mill_021.htm).

Three of the penstock gates are now operational, and show how the river would have been controlled when the mill was in use. We also have a series of working scale models to show how different waterwheels work, and the real working waterwheel driving a 1920s dynamo and circular saw.

Within the mill, the project has created a display describing the mining and smelting of copper and the melting of brass. The project has also built a replica battery hammer and a replica set of rolls to complement the real annealing furnace.

For a list of the open days, see [www.brassmill.com](http://www.brassmill.com); 01225 317 277; registered charity 1174901; scheduled ancient monument 1004607; listed building grade II 1384676.

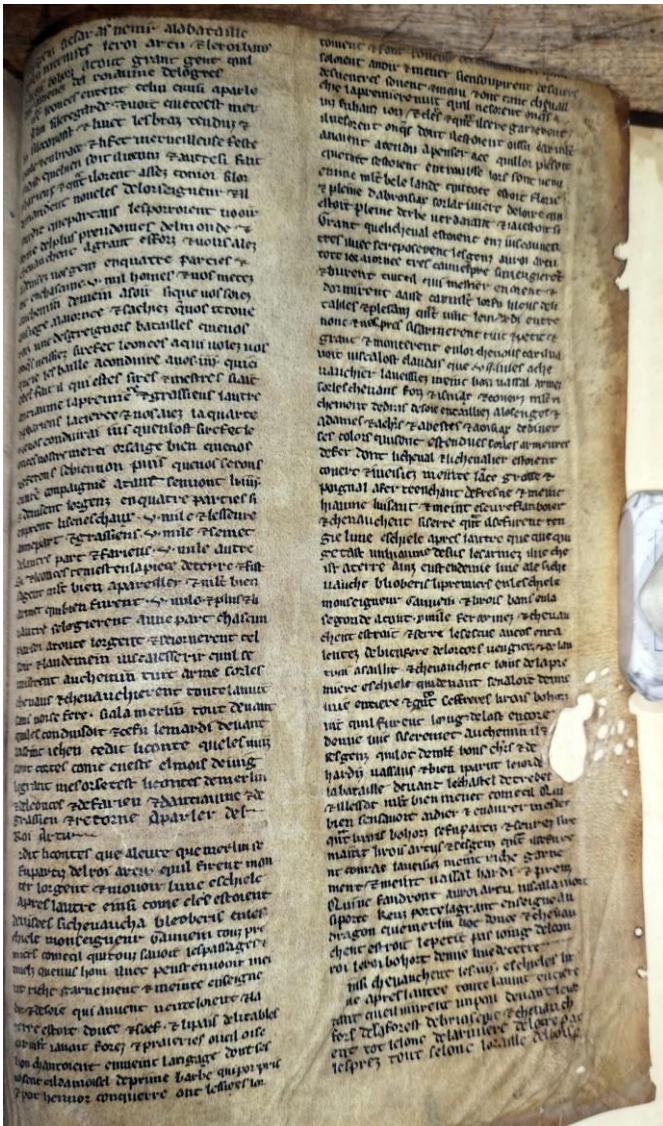
### BRISTOL CENTRAL LIBRARY OPENING HOURS

From a date towards the end of May, Bristol City Council plans to restore the opening of the central library, **including the reference and local sections upstairs**, on Wednesdays and Sundays. Planned opening hours will now be **9.30 to 5 Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays; 9.30 to 7 Tuesdays and Thursdays; 10 to 5 Saturdays and 1 to 5 Sundays**.

### GAUDIER-BRZESKA EXHIBITION

*Gaudier-Brzeska: disputing the earth* is the title of an exhibition at the **Royal West of England Academy** of animal-inspired works by the former student of **Bristol's Merchant Venturer's College**. RWA Queens Road, BS8 1PX, until 2 June, closed Mondays. Concessions £6.75. More about the local connection under **COMMENTARY** below.

## BRISTOL MERLIN



Jane Bradley writes: **Bristol Reference Library** is currently collaborating with the University of Bristol to identify fragments of medieval manuscripts bound into some of its collection of Early Printed Books. The advent of the printed book made many older manuscript volumes redundant and bookbinders often re-used these old volumes as binding materials. When the library volumes were repaired these fragments were found and rebound into the volumes where they were discovered. Michael Richardson, Special Collections Librarian at Bristol University, initially contacted the library about old bindings and asked if we knew of any fragments of old manuscripts reused in our early printed books. After identifying several examples he took photographs of the volumes to circulate amongst the academic staff.

Dr Leah Tether, Reader in Medieval Literature, has already identified an early version of the Arthurian legend bound in a copy of Jean Gerson's complete works published in Strasbourg 1492-1502. Alongside colleagues she is undertaking further research into the dating and provenance of these manuscript fragments.

The Library is hoping that others interested in medieval studies will identify further fragments held in our collection, I have since had an expression of interest in a fragment from a Book of Hours.

Jane Bradley, Local Studies Librarian, College Green, Bristol, BS1 5TL, Telephone 0117 903 7202.

## ROBOTS FOR ARCHAEOLOGY

**UWE's Bristol Robotics Laboratory** unveils its new archaeology robot **1 April**. The prototype is called Bob, but a gender-neutral version is planned once the software can be adjusted. As with many modern appliances, the robot combines several different technologies. The operator (who need not be an archaeologist) keys in the GPS co-ordinates of the northwest corner of the area to be excavated, and its dimensions. On the command 'Hey, Bob, dig,' the machine removes the top layer of turf and topsoil, stacking it to one side for later replacement or for bagging and sale to a garden centre. The operator having set the depth of each scrape (from 1 millimetre to 10 centimetres) and the number of scrapes, the robot then traverses the site boustrophedon, in straight lines for Roman sites, but with a subtle reverse S curve for medieval. As it goes, the robot excavates layer by layer. If the robot detects metal objects, animal bones, ceramics or masonry, it stops, a red light on top of the robot's pole flashes, and a recorded voice (choice of presenters of TV archaeology programmes available) announces, 'Unidentified object in the digging area.' The operator can then remove the object detected, before giving the command, 'Hey, Bob, dig.' When the robot has excavated the site to the depth specified, it prints a report, which can be formatted to meet editorial requirements of selected journals. The operator can select, from drop-down lists, key words to be included, together with tickbox phrases guaranteed to trigger pavlovian responses from grant-making bodies. The operator can choose styles from traditional, marxist, post-colonial,

feminist, pre-processual, processual, post-processual, post-post-processual and plain English. Up to 12 logos can be accommodated. Other outputs can include a conference paper, a press release and, for archaeology contractors and subcontractors, an invoice. A final option allows delay in publication for any period the user specifies, up to 95 years. Places at the launch are limited. To book, please ring 0777 359 3878 and ask for Washington Irving.

## **SOUTH GLOS HERITAGE OPEN DAYS 2019 – REGISTRATION NOW OPEN**

*Alison Catlin writes:* I am writing to invite you to register your events for **Heritage Open Days 2019 in South Gloucestershire**. Join us in sharing the fantastic buildings and heritage of our area with its residents and visitors. You can register your event for South Gloucestershire [here](#). Our registration closes at **9.00am on Wednesday 1 May**. If you have a photo of your venue that you will like us to include in our publicity, please email this directly to [Alison.catlin@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:Alison.catlin@southglos.gov.uk)

This year the national Heritage Open Days scheme is running for ten consecutive days from 13 to 22 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. If you register with South Gloucestershire, we will promote your event on our website and in a South Gloucestershire leaflet that will be distributed to libraries and other Council venues. We will also promote Heritage Open Days in South Gloucestershire as a whole on our social media platforms. After you have registered with South Gloucestershire, the on-line link will take you to the National Heritage Open Days website. Please register your event on the national Heritage Open Days website [www.heritageopendays.org.uk](http://www.heritageopendays.org.uk) and carry out your own publicity to maximise your chances of attracting a good audience for your events.

## **ARCHAEOLOGY IN REDCLIFF**

*Emily Taylor of Cotswold Archaeology writes:* Whilst full details of our forthcoming lectures will be available to view soon (<http://cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk/redcliff-quarter/>), we would like to invite ALHA members to join us for the first lecture on **Thursday 2 May, at 7.30pm in the Church of St Thomas the Martyr, Bristol**. Pete Insole will provide a fascinating insight into archaeological investigations in **Redcliffe** since the 1980s. With over 20 years' experience of working in the heritage sector in Bristol, Pete is currently Bristol City Council's Principal Historic Environment Officer and maintains Bristol's Historic Environment Record. [Emily.Taylor@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk](mailto:Emily.Taylor@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk), 07889 811396

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

***Bristol, a worshipful town and a famous city: an archaeological assessment.*** Nigel Baker, Jonathan Brett and Robert Jones (Oxbow Books) pp573, £50. Review by James Russell.

This monumental volume is one of a series of urban archaeological assessments sponsored by Historic England. (The corresponding volume for Bath appeared in 2015.) It has been many years in gestation and suffered a severe blow when Jon Brett, a talented and industrious young scholar who had done much of the groundwork for the project, died suddenly and unexpectedly in 2007. Steering the book through these difficulties to successful publication has proved a crowning achievement for Bob Jones, City Archaeologist until 2016. The assessment does not cover the whole of modern Bristol, the study area comprising only the historic core of the city and the Floating Harbour as far west as Cumberland Basin.

The volume falls into three parts, the first comprising three introductory chapters of background material. Chapter 1, a brief overview of the growth of Bristol, is followed by a discussion of the geological and sedimentary substructure of the city. Chapter 3 provides a fascinating account of the development of archaeological and topographical studies in Bristol, starting with William Worcestre's remarkable street by street survey of 1480. In the Georgian era the civic histories of William Barrett and Samuel Seyer were supplemented by the superb visual record compiled by George Weare Braikenridge, who made good use of the many fine artists then resident in the city. During the early 20th century the auctioneer John E Pritchard kept a close watch on development work in the city, salvaging and recording a wide range of artefacts and architectural features. Little formal excavation, however, took place in

central Bristol before the late 1940s, when Kenneth Marshall undertook work on bombed sites in the Castle and Wine Street areas. The appointment in 1968 of Mike Ponsford as Field Archaeologist at the City Museum was followed by a series of major excavations on sites such as the Castle, Greyfriars and the Redcliff Street waterfront; unfortunately these were rarely backed up by adequate funds for finds processing and publication. Matters have improved since 1990, with the introduction of developer-funded archaeological fieldwork by commercial units as an integral part of the planning process. Inner city developments such as Cabot Circus and Finzels Reach are now, as a matter of routine, accompanied by elaborate programmes of excavation and research, promptly published in society journals or splendid monographs.

Part 2, the core of the volume, deals in detail with the development of Bristol in a series of five period based chapters. Chapter 4, covering the Prehistoric and Roman periods, is relatively brief and, unlike the rest of the volume, pays some attention to sites outside the city centre. Chapters 5 to 8 are all much longer and chart the growth of the town from its foundation around 950 until 1900. They are exemplary in their thoroughness: this reviewer could find few obvious omissions and much detail that was unfamiliar. The range of illustrations, including a series of specially drawn period plans, is equally impressive, and the reader is left with a powerful sense of the cultural richness and complexity of this burgeoning mercantile metropolis.

Part 3 is the "assessment" proper, summarising what is known and setting out research objectives period by period. Attention is drawn to the regrettable backlog of uncompleted excavation reports running back to the 1960s. It is followed by a lengthy gazetteer of archaeological "events" in the city, categorised as excavations, watching briefs, evaluations, observations and building surveys and linked to numbered location plans. A bibliography and index conclude this magisterial work, which will undoubtedly form a cornerstone of archaeological research in Bristol for the foreseeable future.

***The Making of Victorian Bristol*** Peter Malpass (Boydell & Brewer 2019 x + 269 pp fully illustrated b&w, £65)

This book takes 'Victorian' seriously, though less in terms of the monarch than of the era between the two transport revolutions, the railway and the motor car. It begins with a survey comparing the development of Bristol with other cities in this 'age of great cities': slower and less specialised than most. It ends with a chronological survey, noting that most change had taken place in the second half of the chosen period. Between these, the treatment is thematic: public health, workers housing and suburbs, business, rail and harbour, 'improvement'.

This is an area which Professor Malpass has been researching for some time as the publications list demonstrates (two under our own ALHA imprint). And the primary sources look to have been thoroughly sorted. So a work of scholarship, but accessibly presented, not least in the fine selection of photographs and pictures. And handsomely produced, as perhaps one has the right to expect at this substantial price. The wrapper, with its panorama of Bristol in 1887, is worth careful protection.

The coverage however is rather less comprehensive than the title and the chapter headings might suggest. Only two residential suburbs are discussed, Clifton and Redland (although Cotham and Tyndalls Park are mentioned in the opening paragraph). Industry and Commerce is almost all about industry without reference to the development of offices or shopping (eg chain stores and co-operative societies.) 'Railways' is long on Temple Meads but has nothing on the local network or stations. Correspondingly there is a great want of maps to show city-wide development. There is an outline map in the first chapter which merely establishes the location of the main districts. And that is it. The final chapter, describing the chronology, is mapless. In between, there are detailed plans of particular developments but no maps showing the sort of development concerned across the city or over time.

However, as one might expect from this author, the selected items are well done; and the selection does indeed include much of what was going on in this period, when Bristol grew to nearly its present size. Altogether then a valuable piece of work which might perhaps better have been called *Studies in the Making of Victorian Bristol*.

**More Henleaze Connections** Veronica Bowerman (self-published [www.henleazebook.com](http://www.henleazebook.com) £7.50 exc p&p or £4.25 download. 150 pp, b&w ill.)

This book marks two centenaries: the move of Badminton School to Westbury Road and the formation of the Henleaze Swimming Club. So the material is an account of the school and especially of the people associated with it; and the Swimming Club with other sporting activities including ballooning. In fact, quite a few people get in with Henleaze but not school or swimming connections, including – a bit remotely – Charles Dickens. The breadth of the coverage makes the absence of an index regrettable; but purchasers of the e-version should be able to search.

It is well produced and fully illustrated so good value for money in hard copy too. But for consumers of local history, not for producers. The absence of any references means that other historians cannot cite it and must start from scratch in their own work.

**50 Gems of Somerset** Andrew Powell Thomas (Amberley 2019 96 pp fully illustrated colour £14.99) This is a typical Amberley production, 50 well-produced colour photographs with half a page or so of information about each. The sites chosen are listed in the Contents and keyed on a map, so no need for an index. But the scope is not very clear. Are the sites chosen for historical interest or contemporary charm? There is some overlap not only of sites but of pictures with same author's *Somerset's Military Heritage* (see *Newsletter* 155), including the decision to list the site of the famous battle of Sedgmoor under the unevocative name of Westonzoyland.

**The BAFHS Journal** (175 March 2019) has the usual good things for family historians, plus the story of the sea captain whose signal of Christmas good will was received and circulated as a report of his being washed overboard.

**The Local Historian** 49.1 (January 2019) has no articles about any part of the SW region. And not a single SW publication reviewed or in their Recent Publications list or their Journals and Newsletters received.

### **BOOKS etc NOTICED**

Joseph Rogers, *Britain's Greatest Bridges*, Amberley 2019, £14.99. Includes the inevitable. More at <https://www.cliftonbridge.org.uk/britains-greatest-bridges-beyond-book-author-joseph-rogers>



### **COMMENTARY AND RESPONSES**

#### **GAUDIER-BRZESKA**



As students of the history of UWE will know, Henri Gaudier (1891-1915, self-portrait left) was a carpenter's son from near Orleans in France, who won a bursary from the French Ministry of Public Instruction to study business methods for a year at the **Merchant Venturers' Technical College, Bristol**. He spent the year in the upper fifth form from September 1907 until summer 1908. Back in France he met Sophie Brzeska, a Polish governess over twice his age. He adopted her surname, and in the feminine form. They never married, and the nature of their relationship is obscure. Both appear to have had mental or emotional difficulties. With her, HG(-B) went to study in Germany and became a leading vorticist sculptor. He is said by art historians and critics to have influenced, among others, Henry Moore; some examples of his work are in the Tate Modern and – a wrestler and a ceramic cat (separate pieces: the wrestler is not doing anything to the cat) – in Bristol City Art Gallery. The

current RWA exhibition may help put these works in the context of his other sculptures and drawings of animals: not all his work is incomprehensible modernist abstraction. For a biography of Gaudier, see Ezra Pound, *Gaudier-Brzeska, his life and work*; a more modern critical treatment is R Cole, *Burning to speak: the life and art of Henri Gaudier Brzeska* (Phaidon, 1978). The statement in HS Ede, *Savage Messiah* (Heinemann, 1931), 27 that Gaudier attended University College, Bristol, is not correct: the lists of Merchant Venturers' School and technical College pupils are in Bristol Archives, SMV/5/5/4/10-12.

One puzzle is how a French government department in a country that gave us the word chauvinist came to sponsor a student at the MVTC. Was there a trade connection between Orleans and Bristol? Something to do with the Huguenots, who were prominent in the city in the 17th century? Or did the reputation of the MVTC in technical education stretch to central France? Something to dig into next time you visit the French National Archives.

## Horses

ALHA's events team wondered whether their invitation for talks at the 2019 local history day on the theme of getting about might have prompted a speaker to tell us about horses. A hundred years



ago horses were everywhere. Whatever today is moved on land by internal combustion engine was then moved by horses. They pulled wagons, carts, trams, ploughs, canal barges, cabs, coaches and carriages; they were ridden by those who could afford to stable and maintain them or to pay others to do so; the sight, smells, sounds and droppings of the horse were everywhere. Photographs of WW1 troops show officers mounted; other ranks walked. There was a huge horse depot at

**Shirehampton** (Did any return? 8 million died in WW1). In the countryside vast areas of land produced fodder for horses. Some farms grew little else. Just as the modern car industry spawns a proliferation of subcontractors in various trades and skills, similarly the horse gave rise to myriad horse-related manufactures and services.

Yet within a generation the horse virtually disappeared, made redundant by oil- and petrol-driven engines. Some of us remember the rag-and-bone man with his pony and cart, and milk being delivered from horse-drawn floats, but in 1940s towns those were remnants of a bygone age. Not so in the countryside, because horses still worked on UK farms. Nor on the railways: when the rail companies were nationalised in 1948, British Rail acquired some 9,000 horses, used for shunting and short-distance collections and deliveries. Horses now survive only in racing and its once symbiotic betting industry; in crowd control in some police forces including Avon & Somerset; in the illegal hunting of foxes with dogs; in singularities such as **Badminton**; as a middle class signaller of conspicuous consumption or social aspiration; and in peculiarities like trooping the colour, state processions, and what are puzzlingly termed events.

One suspects that although the change to horseless affected both town and country areas, the pace of change in towns was quicker. The demise of the horse will have had two main consequences: redundancy of workers and redundancy of land and crops. In town and countryside alike a range of jobs ceased to exist: horse breeders, trainers, grooms, ostlers, saddlers, stable boys, coach builders and painters, farriers, drivers, crossing sweepers, horse dealers, horse brokers and hirers, knackers and all the unskilled workers who helped look after or did things to or connected with horses. Some of the redundancy problems were resolved by WW1. Those horse workers that did come back must have found other work - at **Abbots Leigh**, for example, the blacksmith turned to selling petrol and repairing cars - or gone on public assistance. In the countryside vast areas of

land that had produced fodder were no longer required: farmers will have put them to other uses or none, and told their workforce to go elsewhere. The post-WW1 agricultural depression had several causes: one was the fall in demand for animal feed and bedding. Those changes took a generation to work through. In 1935 a farmer could buy a Fordson tractor with tyres for just under £200, which was still more than the cost of two strong horses. Hence in 1939 there were still 650,000 horses on Britain's farms, but by 1954 the number had dropped to 147,000. They did not disappear overnight, but the cumulative effect of their decline was severe. Historians have looked at what happened in some other parts of the country, and in America. An examination of what happened in our area would be a useful project. Meanwhile, more about other ways of getting about at ALHA's 2019 local history day.

### Local authority borrowing

In his *Capital in the twentyfirst century* (2013, English translation Belknap 2014) the economic historian Thomas Piketty points out that in western countries at most times the value of assets owned by the government and public authorities has been about the same as the amount they have borrowed. Sometimes, eg before, during and immediately after a war, governments will have borrowed large sums for armaments, military operations and reconstruction, but those are exceptions: over time, public debt is about the same as the value of public assets, as is the case today.

TP's proposition is striking, because (1) it is contrary to what is popularly believed and what many politicians and the media assert; (2) he backs up his claim with evidence from Germany, France, Japan and the USA as well as the UK; (3) at various times the size of the national debt and the amount of local authority borrowing has been a political issue, especially in **Bath and Bristol**; and (4) government restrictions on local authority borrowing have had such serious impact on the well-being of people in many areas, including our own, and have influenced our local past and present, as anyone with even the slightest knowledge of local services in our area, not just the urban bits, will testify.

Borrowing has been crucial to UK local authorities' finances. (1) Rate revenue in any one year was rarely enough to pay for large capital projects like housing, schools, roads and so on, so that if all expenditure had to be paid for out of the current year's rates, most of what we now regard as essential public infrastructure would never have happened, and we would be all the poorer as a result. (2) To impose on ratepayers now all the cost of buildings and works that will be of benefit to future inhabitants is not fair, but borrowing the cost over the estimated life of the asset ensures that future inhabitants who get the benefit of the asset pay a share towards it.

TP's claim is about national assets and national public debt, but it would be interesting to probe whether his claim can be substantiated or disproved at local level. At first sight it seems an easy exercise: you go through the annual accounts of local authorities in your local record office and compare the sums recorded as having been borrowed with the value of the local authority's total assets stated in the balance sheets. Simple? No, because (1) local authority accounting practice has traditionally recorded the value of an asset as how much it cost, not its present value. That ignores inflation, which was high at times, eg in the 1970s generally, and in the case of housing, of recent years. So a local authority's accounts have always understated the value of its public assets, giving the impression that its borrowings far exceed their value. (2) Another difficulty is how we ought to calculate the value of some public assets. Where there is a comparable asset in the private sector, eg a 3-bedroom semi, it is easy to work out what an asset would fetch if sold, and newspaper adverts allow us to do that for any date since newspapers began. The value of a school or care home or leisure centre can be estimated by calculating the capitalised value of the income





it would generate if it were operated privately. But parks, playing fields, roads, sewer systems and street lighting do not have private sector counterparts. This is a problem particularly with roads, where the local authority may have bought valuable property and knocked it down to build the road, which has no commercial value as a saleable asset, even though it may benefit the community at large or at least the car-dwellers. Is its value the cost of its land and its construction, or nothing, or the value of its contribution to the local economy? Plenty for local history people to get stuck into.

### Leaving the EU

By the time you are reading this, 29 March will have passed. The UK may have left the EU on terms negotiated by the prime minister; or those terms may not have been agreed; or the date of leaving may have been postponed, or may still be under sub-sub-negotiation; or a general election may have been called. The BBC's current affairs commentators may have been sealed up in a sound-proof container, a more appropriate sentence having been commuted so as not to offend the sensitive. Some of the arguments turn on how trade with other countries will change. Whatever the outcome, can we learn anything from the history of our area when it comes to shifts in international trade?

If the UK leaves the EU, or if terms of trade with the EU are altered, the main impact will be on financial services and on the UK's continent-facing ports through which most of the ship-borne trade with the EU flows: Dover, London, Harwich, Lowestoft, Hull, Newcastle and so on. Ports like **Bristol** facing west have not participated in trade with the rest of Europe to anything like the same extent. Bristol never got involved much with the East India Company, except for the Cossins family of **Redland**, and they were migrants from London. Freight through **Lulsgate** has never matched the volume through the airports around London, Manchester or Birmingham.

Most of our area has depended economically on **Bristol**, long an international shipping port. From its inception Bristol traded with a region stretching up the Severn and the Wye as far as they could be navigated, and then inland. Early on, Bristol had trading links with Iceland for fish; and with Ireland, especially Cork and Waterford. In the 14th century wine was imported from the Bordeaux area, and later from Portugal and Spain. The likes of Sturmy ventured into the Mediterranean, but may have been discouraged by what happened to him. Cabot's voyages led to fish and furs from Canada, by which time Britain had a trade in wools and then in cloths. From the 16th century the city cashed in on the protected trade with American colonies, importing tobacco until the late 20th century; cotton only from 1838 until the American civil war ended imports, from which the trade did not recover. International treaties allowed British merchants to engage in the slave trade, on the back of which Bristol imported sugar. Corn has been imported from Canada and America; most recently cars have been imported through **Avonmouth** and, for reasons not clear, coal. In WW1 **Avonmouth** exported horses and gas. Zinc has come and gone, as have wood, wood pulp and paper.

If we can draw any lessons from Bristol's history of international trade, they might include:

- International trading links do not just happen: they require vision, initiative, opportunism, energy, planning, capital investment and hard work.
- No trading link lasts for ever.
- Any trading link is vulnerable to competition from other ports (witness the trade in bananas), substitutions for the products traded, and changes in demand, which may be affected by fickle



fashion, breakdown in international relations, wars, economic sanctions, or by changes in taxation, medical advice or moral opinion.

- Dependence on one trade is never a good idea: you can reduce risk if you diversify.
- If you are going to import products, it helps if they are not ones that doctors say are medically bad for us.
- If your prosperity depends on overseas trade, you will lose it if you do not keep your port facilities up to date, competitive and accessible.

Over the centuries, Bristol's import choices (slaves, sugar, alcohol, tobacco,) proved financially profitable, but at a cost in other senses.

## **EVENTS DIARY**

*Events notified to ALHA's website manager are attached. 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.*

*Venues: Please let us know if any of these is no longer correct*

**Avon Gardens Trust:** 01275 371398; **Visits** Non Members welcome Booking Essential: 01275 371398  
**Avonmouth Genealogy Group** 7 pm Community Centre, Avonmouth Road, Bristol Mrs F J Andrews 0117 982 3435  
**Banwell Archaeological Society** 7.30 Village Hall, Banwell 01934 632307  
**Bishopston, Horfield & Ashley Down LHS** 7.30 Friends Meeting Ho, 300 Gloucester Rd, Horfield 0117 924 5226  
Visitors £2  
**Bristol & Avon Archaeological Society** 7.30 Clifton Cathedral, 50p, non-members £1 0117 951 9613  
**Bristol & Avon Family HS, Bath** 7.30 BRLSI 16 Queen Square, Bath  
**Bristol & Avon Family HS, Bristol** 7.30pm BAWA Leisure Centre, Southmead Rd, Bristol  
**Bristol & Avon Family HS, Sodbury Vale** 7.30 Community Centre, Shire Way, Yate 01454 882 192  
**Bristol & Gloucestershire AS, Bristol** 7.45, Apostle Room, Clifton Cathedral £1  
**Bristol Industrial Archaeological S Visits** Details Will Harris 01453 843411 Bookings Maggie Shapland 0117 736653  
**Clutton History Group** 8.00 Clutton Village Hall 01761 471533 £3  
**Downend Local History Society** 7.30 Lincombe Barn, Overndale Road, Downend, BS16 2RW  
**Frenchay Tuckett Society** 7.30 Friends Meeting House, Beckspool Rd, Frenchay £2 0117 957 0942  
**Harptrees History Society** 7.30 West Harptree Village Hall 01761 221758 £2.50 **Visits** £3: 01761 221941  
**History of Bath Research Group** 7.30 St Mary's Bathwick Church Hall 01225 859 427 (£2)  
**Kingswood History Society** 7.30 Park Centre Room 4, High St, Kingswood 0117 983 4692 £2.50  
**Knowle & Totterdown LHS** 7.30 The Redcatch Community Centre, Redcatch Road 0117 977 5512  
**Marshfield & District LHS** 7.30 Church Hall Marshfield £2 01225-891977  
**Nailsea & District LHS** 7.30 Nailsea School non members £2 01275 463479  
**Olveston Parish HS** 7.30 Methodist Church, The Street, Olveston 01454 202011 £2  
**Paulton History Group** 7.30 Wesley Hall, Park Rd, Paulton 01761 412051 £2  
**Regional History Centre (UWE) Seminar** 18:00 -19:30 M Shed, Princes Wharf, Wapping Road, Bristol, Free  
**Stoke Bishop History Group** 7.30 Stoke Bishop Village Hall BS9 1EX 0117 968 6010 Visitors £3  
**Weston-super-Mare Archaeological & NHS** 7.00 for 7.30 Victoria Methodist Church Hall, Station Road, Weston-super-Mare. 01934 620785 £2.00  
**Whitchurch LHS** 7.30 Whitchurch United Reformed Church Visitors £3 01275 830869  
**Winscombe & Sandford LH & AS** 7.30 Community Centre, Sandford Road, Winscombe  
**Winterbourne Medieval Barn Trust** The barn is by the church, in Church Lane, Winterbourne 01454 775008  
**Yatton LHS** 8.00 Yatton Methodist Hall 01934 838801