

AVON LOCAL HISTORY & ARCHAEOLOGY

Registered charity 270930

Newsletter 160 30 September 2019

Website: www.alha.org.uk

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

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Material for Newsletter 161 by 15 December 2019
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
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

ALHA NEWS

FROM THE ALHA COMMITTEE

Roger Angerson, one of the founder members of ALHA from 1973, and for many years its President, wishes to stand down after the 2019 annual general meeting. The committee would like to place on record its gratitude to Roger for his many years of service to the Association, and its appreciation of his achievements, not just for ALHA but in the wider field of local history. The committee gives Roger and Judith every good wish for the future.

The **annual general meeting of ALHA** is fixed for 2pm on **Saturday 5 October 2019** at the **St Michael's Centre, Stoke Gifford**. **AGM at 2pm, refreshments at 2.30, and the lecture at 3.00**. The AGM papers including the agenda, the minutes of the 2018 meeting, the secretary's report for 2018-2019,

and the accounts, have been circulated with the notice of the meeting. To assist with refreshments, could attenders please tell the secretary, by e-mail or on paper.

The Joe Bettey lecture will be delivered by Dr Madge Dresser, Visiting Senior Research Fellow, UWE, after many years as an Associate Professor in Social and Cultural British History, and now honorary professor of history at University of Bristol. Her lecture is titled *Landscapes of slavery - some new reflections on investigating Bristol and the wider Atlantic slave economy*. The lecture will start at 3pm and is free. Dr and Mrs Bettey are moving to Oxfordshire. The committee are sorry that Joe will no longer be in our area, wish them well, and express gratitude to Joe for all that he has done for the cause of local history in our area.

New(ish) member. Welcome back to the revived **Shipham, Rowberrow and Star History Group**, re-joining ALHA after an absence of some years. Good to hear that volunteers are coming forward to help run groups.

Examination of ALHA accounts. Following the appeal in the end of August 2019 e-update for a volunteer to examine ALHA's accounts, Mike Leigh of **Knowle and Totterdown LHS** has kindly offered to do so, and the committee has gratefully accepted his offer.

With Mike's agreement, the committee would like to draw attention to his volunteering and our appreciation. Could it help other people feel able to put themselves forward a little? The committee would like to stress to potential volunteers that they can do as much or as little as we can agree, but that all volunteers make ALHA a slightly better place for the rest of us, so people should not be put off by thoughts that there might be challenges they might not be able to face. Mike comments: 'My loss of hearing is quite severe and it makes it extremely difficult for me to communicate using the telephone, if not almost impossible, so the Committee mentioning that fact and that my communication preference is e-mail or post, would be very helpful for me, and not at all embarrassing. In fact I also find it difficult to hear everything that is said at meetings even though I wear hearing aids, and especially if the room is 'hard', when the sound to me seems to resonate all around. So I would not object to my e-mail address being published. Also I have no objection whatsoever to the Committee mentioning my loss of hearing in the Newsletter, as regards volunteering. Indeed I think it is very worthwhile to do this to let others with disabilities know that they are not stopped from offering to undertake a volunteering role.' Thanks, Mike.

Much activity with **ALHA booklets**, edited by Dr Jonathan Harlow:

- Two new booklets have been published: no.28, *The surgeons and the Bristol school of artists*, by Michael Whitfield; and *Taking the pledge: the temperance movement in Bristol, 1830 – 1914*, by Alan Clarke. Alan talked about his book and the research behind it at a UWE research seminar at M Shed, 19 September 2019. Copies from the treasurer, or at the ALHA local history day.
- If you order two ALHA booklets at once, and they come in separate envelopes, do not fret: the treasurer has not turned extravagant. For reasons known only to Royal Mail, posting separately saves 10p.
- Extra copies have been printed of four **ALHA booklets** that had sold out. They are no.4, *Dr Goodeve and Cook's Folly*, no.9, *Bristol microscopists and the cholera epidemic of 1849*, no.19, *Dr Davies, Bristol's first medical officer of health*, and no.21, *The Herapaths of Bristol, a medical and scientific dynasty*. Copies available from the treasurer, 5 Parrings Grove, Bristol BS9 1TT.
- Brian Vincent and the late Ray Holland's ALHA booklet no.29, *The Butlers and the coal-tar distillery at Crew's Hole*, is selling fast. The early discount is now closed, but copies are still available from the treasurer.
- If anyone would like to help store copies of ALHA booklets, and market some of them to local shops and other outlets, do please contact the treasurer.

Successful **summer walks** were organised by Mike Hooper, Jan Packer and Keith Nickless. Attendances were good, and enabled ALHA to make small grants to **Glenside Hospital Museum** and **Saltford Brass Mill**. Because of the wealth of information offered, an additional walk at **Thornbury** is planned for 2020.

EVENTS AND SOURCES

BRISTOL DIOCESE PARISH RECORDS NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE

Bob Lawrence writes: Parish records are one of the main building blocks of family and social history. From 1538 onwards, on the orders of Thomas Cromwell, Vicar-General to Henry VIII, parishes have been required to keep a record of every baptism, marriage and burial, and these were the only records available until the advent of civil registration in England & Wales in 1837. Until recently, the original records for the **Bristol** Diocese of the Church of England could only be read on microfiche at Bristol Archives. These were difficult to use, although ALHA member **Bristol & Avon Family History Society** published indexes for the period 1754 to 1837.

That situation has now changed, as the family history website *Ancestry* has digitised images of the pages in the registers and re-indexed them. They are now available online, so they can be viewed anywhere in the world. The quality of the images is very good, and far superior to the old microfiche. They can be easily enlarged to make them more legible.

Ancestry is a subscription website, so you will need to pay to access the data at home. However, *Ancestry* is also available at most public libraries, at Bristol and other archives, and at the Bristol & Avon Family History Research Room, which is housed within Bristol Archives.

The information recorded in the registers varies, sometimes according to the whims of the local clergy or churchwarden, and there is no guarantee that all events were properly recorded, or that individual registers have survived. The periods covered on *Ancestry* are baptisms 1538-1918, marriages 1538-1935 and burials 1538-1994. Only Church of England registers are currently included; Roman Catholic and non-conformist registers will follow over the next few months. The registers included are for parishes in the Bristol Diocese, and church boundaries follow their own rules. For example, **Yate** is in the Bristol Diocese, while **Chipping Sodbury** is in Gloucester Diocese. **Alveston** is included, but not **Thornbury**. Fortunately, parishes in the dioceses of Gloucester and Bath & Wells are already similarly available on *Ancestry*.

This major new historical resource will make it much easier to track local families and their connections in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and help confirm and elaborate the details of many later family events.

BRISTOL ARCHIVES

As noted above, BA has published Bristol's anglican parish registers on the *Ancestry* website: <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/fs1englandbristolparishregisters/>. Access to *Ancestry* content is free at the Bristol Archives searchroom and public libraries.

More in the BA newsletter, for which you can sign up at <https://www.bristolmuseums.org.uk/bristol-archives/>, which also includes information of new acquisitions.

VICTORIA COUNTY HISTORY – SODBURYS

Draft chapters for the intended *Victoria County History of Gloucestershire*, volume 14, on **Little Sodbury** and **Old Sodbury** can now be read and downloaded from www.vchglosacademy.org

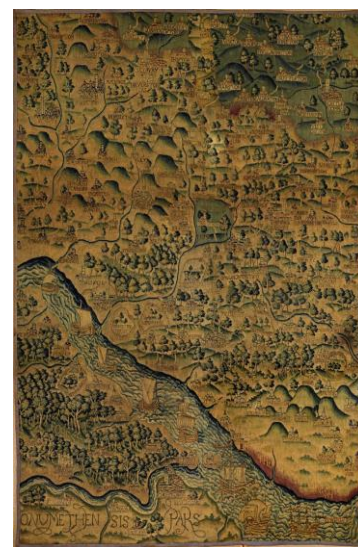
The website <http://www.vchglosacademy.org/vol14.html> also contains some transcripts of documents: **Sodbury area** Tudor wills; **Acton Turville** probate inventories; **Little Sodbury** probate inventories; **Old Sodbury** probate inventories; and **Little Sodbury** window tax assessments 1762.

GUANO PHOTOGRAPHS AT TYNTESFIELD

Stow High in Transit is an exhibition of photographs at The National Trust's **Tyntesfield** in **Wraxall**. 'The merchant house of William Gibbs was a major player in the Peruvian guano (seabird dung) trade from 1842 to 1861. Guano profits funded the conversion of Tyntesfield from an ordinary country house into a grand gothic revival mansion—worlds apart from the Chincha Islands where bonded labourers mined guano under the harshest of conditions. As part of *From Madrid to Tyntesfield*, the exhibition explores the estate's links to the Hispanic world. **Until 4 November 2019**, photographer Olli Hellman invites you to consider the relationship between Tyntesfield's fertile wealth and the Peruvian guano trade through his new photography exhibition.'

SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE TAPESTRY MAP

The Sheldon tapestry maps of **Gloucestershire**, Oxfordshire, and Worcestershire date from the late Tudor period. They are displayed in Oxford University's Bodleian's Weston Library. The library is hosting a one-day symposium about these cartographic masterpieces, their historical context in terms of mapmaking and their place in society; the conservation work; and the latest research on the tapestries' content and creation. *From Weston House to the Weston Library: the Sheldon Tapestry Maps at the Bodleian* is at the Lecture Theatre, Weston Library, Broad Street, Oxford, **22 October 2019 9.00am — 3.45pm**. £20 + £1 booking fee: booking essential. More at <https://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/whatson/whats-on/upcoming-events/2019/oct/sheldon-tapestry-map-symposium> 01865 277 094.



GLOUCESTERSHIRE ARCHIVES

The reordered and extended Gloucestershire Heritage Hub (Gloucestershire Archives) is now free of the builders. Congratulations to county archivist Heather Forbes and her team on a fine result. Opening hours at <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/archives/plan-your-visit/where-we-are-contact-us/>. Car parking, limited, £3.

JOHN LOCKE MANUSCRIPT

A recently discovered manuscript, dated 1667-1668, by the **Wrighton**-born philosopher John Locke, is published in the *Historical Journal*, <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/historical-journal/article/john-locke-and-the-toleration-of-catholics-a-new-manuscript/5218E6A9D0F58DA2D8FC075F46042E32>. The manuscript, which sets out arguments in favour of tolerating catholics, is thought to have been prompted by Charles II's need to restore his popularity after the Dutch had destroyed much of the English navy in the Medway in the spring of 1667. Some of the arguments were later to feature in Locke's *Letter concerning toleration* (1689) and his later writings on nonconformity and religious liberty.

BRISTOL & GLOUCESTERSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY LIBRARY REOPENS

ALHA member **B&GAS** runs a library, which is open to the public for research. It is accommodated by the University of Gloucestershire in Cheltenham, but contains books and other material on the whole of B&GAS's area. The University has moved the library from its previous home in Delta Place, and it has now re-opened at the University's Hardwick campus, about 10 minutes walk from Cheltenham town centre (directions at <http://www.glos.ac.uk/visit/pages/how-to-find-us.aspx#CAP>). Car parking on site costs £2.50 per day. There is a café in the main building. Special Collections and Archives is in the Admin Centre, the building on the left as you enter the site. You are welcome to make an appointment to visit the Library Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm. Louise Hughes, Special Collections and University Archivist, Special Collections and Archives, University of Gloucestershire, Hardwick Campus (Admin Centre), St Paul's Road, Cheltenham GL50 4BS, 01242 714851, www.glos.ac.uk/archives / [@UniGlosArchives](https://twitter.com/UniGlosArchives)

A HOUSE THROUGH TIME

The BBC plans to show a third series of *A house through time* programmes, presented by David Olusoga.



Bristol is next in line. Houses being considered by the production team are listed at <https://www.bristol247.com/news-and-features/features/23-places-where-a-house-through-time-could-film-in-bristol/>. Favourite at the moment is 10 Guinea Street, **Redcliffe**, near what was the General Hospital. The programme is understood to air in January 2020 on BBC4. The possibility of some mention of the slave trade, and the appearance of local talent, cannot be ruled out.

REVIEWS by Dr Jonathan Harlow unless otherwise said

Bath and Admiral Nelson The Nelson Society <http://www.nelson-society.com> , 112 pp fully illustrated colour £10)

This is a revised version of the original published in 1991. It is primarily for Nelson aficionados but for the general reader it makes a good claim for **Bath** as the main land base for the adult Nelson – he hardly visited the Suffolk estate he bought. And it was obviously a good place for a naval man eager for his next posting, full of admirals. It is also quite good on the Bath of his time with many photos of the surviving buildings with Nelson connections. On Nelson himself there is a good deal of detail, but the man himself hardly comes out well, not only separating himself from an affectionate wife to adulter with Lady Hamilton, but refusing to visit his supportive father on his death bed, lest he meet the wronged woman.

The book is handsomely produced and very fully illustrated. There is a list of sources but no references, so it must be for the consumers, but not the producers, of history.



Frankie went to Hollywood and **East with Eadon**, **Frenchay Village Museum** Chronicles 17 & 18 (63 pp £3.50; & 120 pp £5; frenchaymuseum@hotmail.com). These booklets have two very good stories to tell. The Frankie who went to Hollywood was Francis George Packer who emigrated to the US in 1897 age 19 and changed his name to Nigel de Brul[I]er. He became a professional singer (the booklet does not specify, but from the roles he took, baritone or bass-baritone). And this way he made his way into early Hollywood where his presence rather than his voice (films still silent at first) got him good parts, continuing right through into the early 1940s.

The other distinguished local man is Lt-Col Alan Eadon who served as a fighter pilot in WW1. In the 1920s he worked on pilot training for de Havillands ending in charge of their training school; and then in the 1930s as Deputy Director of Civil Aviation for India and Burma. Here he initiated the local building of planes. In WW2 he and his wife organised the air rescue services which saved thousands from the Japanese forces. Returning to England after the war, Eadon became Deputy Regional Controller south west for the Ministry of Supply till 1959. He spent his last years in Bristol and was buried at **Frenchay** in 1973.

Both books are well produced and fully illustrated. Both list sources but do not give references, which seems a shame for such good research on two interesting people.

BAFHS Journal 177 (September 2019) has an interesting article by Jane Bambury on a Victorian girl who began as a servant and ended up quite well-to-do as proprietor of **GWR** Refreshment Rooms, but the article is without references. The same point applies to the continued life of a Short Sailor by David Joy: surely if the full reference can be given for an image, it is not too much to expect the same for other material? Many will want to make use of the full transcription of **Bristol** Apprentices now completed with index – CDs available for the September fair at £9 for each of the two volumes. Bob Lawrence notes that for the coming year a copy of any will proved from 1858 to date is



just £1.50 (down from £10) – try bit.ly/BAFHS199. There are favourable reviews of ALHA booklet no.29 *Butlers & Coal Tar*; and of a useful booklet by the Bristol Radical History Group, *Refusing to Kill – Bristol's World War I Conscientious Objectors* – 580 of them plus bibliography for £9 www.brh.org.uk

Bristol Industrial Archaeological Society Bulletin 158 (Summer 2019) has a striking photograph of the Gardiner Haskins building in **Bristol's Broad Plain**, soon to be redeveloped, with four storeys of modern flats crouched under its dominating bulk. The *Bulletin* majors on current threats to the industrial heritage, whether by development or neglect.

Bristol & Avon Archaeological Society Bulletin 84 (Autumn 2019) has updates on work on Roman era work in **South Gloucestershire** and on the *North Somerset Roman Road* project. Both *Bulletins* naturally pay tribute to the late Joan Day. And both have their full programme of meetings for 2019/20.

The Local Historian 49.3 (July 2019) is once again an Avon-free zone, but has a very positive review of *A Maritime History of Somerset* vol 3 by Adrian Webb (Russell Press 2017, 210 pp £14.95). But *Local History News* 132 (Summer 2019) reprints in full William Evans's favourable commentary on the report in our end of May 2019 e-update of the evaluation of the *South Gloucestershire WW1* project. The consultant's report is at <http://www.southglos.gov.uk/leisure-and-culture/museums-and-galleries/ww1-museums-and-galleries/south-gloucestershire-and-the-first-world-war-2/>.

BOOKS etc NOTICED

Peter Barlow & Martin Boothman, ed., '*Conspicuously marked': Vehicle Registration in Gloucestershire, 1903–13*, (**Bristol & Gloucestershire Archaeological Society's** Record Series 33, 2019, hb, illustrated), £30, so it is cheaper to join B&GAS and subscribe to the record series. Registration and plates became compulsory in 1904. The book lists details of the AD (Gloucestershire) and FH (Gloucester City) registrations, including descriptions of the vehicle, make and model, colour and paintwork, and who owned it. Lists in alphabetical and numerical plate order, but the book includes indexes of people, places and manufacturers, and an introductory explanation and analysis. Lots of **Bristol and south Gloucestershire** entries (an owner could register a vehicle with any local authority), and useful information about dealers and manufacturers eg Douglas at **Kingswood**, because registration was required for motor cycles as well as cars. <https://www.bgas.org.uk/publications/books.html>

Dr C. S. Knighton, *Bristol University: conception to foundation* (**Bristol Record Society** volume 71), to be launched, with an introduction by the editor, at BRS's annual general meeting on **16 October 2019**.

COMMENTARY AND RESPONSES

OH LOOK, THERE'S A NEW MUSEUM OPENED

A red telephone box in **Sea Mills** under Addison's Oak [*image from Bristol Post*] has been recycled as a little museum to celebrate the estate's centenary: <http://seamills100.co.uk/category/phone-box/>; and <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p06x90bj>. This is the latest museum to have opened in our area within living – or just about living – memory. Some new museums came out of old ones: M Shed, for example, which emerged largely out of the Bristol Industrial Museum, which was an offshoot of the Bristol City Museum, which derived from the Bristol Institution. Many others have been new foundations: **Kingswood Heritage Museum; the Museum of Bath Architecture; the Herschel Museum of Astronomy; Beckford's Tower and Museum;**



Thornbury and District Museum; Aerospace Bristol; Frenchay Village Museum; Glenside Hospital Museum; Radstock and District Museum; the SS Great Britain and the Brunel Institute; Yate Heritage Centre; No. 1 Royal Crescent, Bath; the Museum of Bath Stone. Depending on how you define a museum, you could add **Avon Valley Steam Railway, Winterbourne medieval barn, Tyntesfield, Dyrham House and Saltford Brass Mill.** Some older museums have been reordered and extended: the **Holburne Museum, Weston Museum and M Shed.**

What could have caused this flowering? One positive and welcome explanation might be that of recent years more people have been or have become interested than previously in the pasts of their localities and communities; and that, as well as exploring family and local history, more people's interests lead them to collect artefacts from those pasts and want to display them than was the case fifty or more years ago.

Another possibility is that a new museum came about because some local people were dissatisfied with what existing museums displayed. If that is so, it may nudge curators and managers of existing museums into some critical self-examination. Museums differ in how or whether they respond to external changes or make an effort to understand their publics. MShed, for example, emerged partly from a recognition that the social history of **Bristol**, and the pasts of local communities within the city, both of intense interest to local history people and many of the wider public, were not so well represented or presented in the City Museum. The very concept of a museum has changed over time: those who founded the Bristol Institution had aims that were not the same as those that led to the establishment of the City Museum, and if a new museum were to be designed for Bristol from scratch now, it would be different from both. Within the professional museum world, as elsewhere, traditionalists, having demarcated and fortified their comfort zone, resist proposals for change. One manifestation of that is the argument about whether a museum should display its collections like an encyclopaedia in date order and with minimal comment or explanation, or should try to show artefacts in displays that help visitors, particularly children and newcomers to the subject, understand what the objects are, why they were made, in what contexts, and how they relate to their original environments. There is also disagreement about whether museums should cater mainly for experts, specialists and people already into the past, or should open up to encourage access by people who have not previously been interested. Museums, like other cultural organisations, have sometimes been slow to respond to changes in the social and demographic temper of the publics they are expected to serve. It took years for the National Trust to recognise downstairs as well as upstairs, activities as well as artefacts, and (in spite of its full title) landscapes and gardens as well as buildings.

A related explanation why so many new museums have been established might be inferred from several of the new ones focussing on a particular theme (eg **Glenside Hospital Museum, Museum of Bath Architecture**) or a locality (eg **Frenchay Village Museum, Kingswood Heritage Museum**). Did founders of those museums consider that existing museums did not adequately handle their special interest or local patch? Or that the distinctive pasts of small localities were lost within the wider sweep of older museums? There was a touch of that in the conception of MShed.

Some museums seem to have been founded as a way of preserving the memory of a bygone activity, especially if it dominated the lives of local people or if their survival depended on it. Given the number of people in our area who have worked locally in the aircraft industries, and not just in **Filton** and **Patchway**, the number of families who have been directly or indirectly dependent on those industries, and the importance of their work both nationally and locally, it would have been surprising, as well as unfortunate, if no one had tried to set up a museum commemorating their achievements and expressing a sense of pride in some of their less destructive products. What about other industries and activities that we have lost? Do we see signs of an incipient mining museum in south Gloucestershire? A museum can also be a way of preserving a building from demolition or neglect. It makes sense to show in an old building artefacts that were made or used in it. **Saltford**

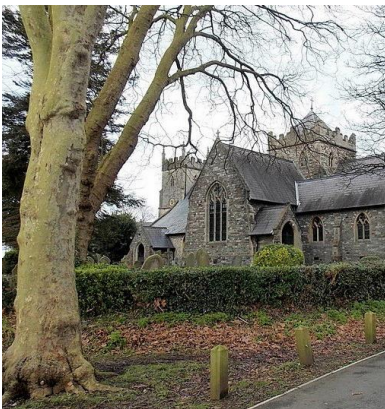
Brass Mill is an example, and perhaps **Clifton Rocks Railway** and the **Underfall Yard**, and certainly the **Museum of Bath Architecture**, without which the countess of Huntingdon's chapel would now flog junk food or worse, or have been demolished. Grants have helped.

A new museum may be required because an existing one is full to overflowing. For reasons suggested in ALHA's end of August 2018 e-update, museum collections have an inbuilt tendency to grow. Museums sometimes hive off departments or themes into specialist museums, as happened with Bristol's Industrial Museum and MShed. But several of the recently-established museums in our area have been completely or mostly new. They have also been promoted and implemented by volunteers, which may also suggest that the older museums and their professional establishments may not have responded sufficiently to local aspirations. That criticism is not confined to museum people: some commentators consider that the unexpected success of populist politicians in the UK, the USA, Italy, Greece and elsewhere, taking advantage of votes from the less educated and less affluent, is at least in part attributable to those in government and positions of power, national and local, not paying enough attention to the interests of the less fortunate.

CHARACTER AND PERSONALITY

Local history people know that reliable histories can be written only so far as traces of the past allow. Those traces – mostly documents, artefacts, buildings, landscapes – tell us about what happened in the past and what people did, but they rarely tell us much about the characters or personalities of the people involved. Sometimes there are contemporary descriptions of people and of how they behaved, from which we may be able to draw inferences about their aims, ambitions, beliefs or emotions. We have information of that sort about national leaders such as Henry VIII and Napoleon, and politically important people like Cicero and William Ewart Gladstone, and there are contemporary accounts of literary figures like Samuel Johnson, but at local level the traces are sparse. We know that one Hugh Smyth of **Ashton Court** was unneighbourly, irascible and violent, and that another had problems with what a later age might call anger management ('God increase my patience to endure it stille,' wrote his wife Elizabeth), but what do we know of Edward Colston's personality other than that he was a high tory intolerant of nonconformists and had some affection for his native town?

Where sources of information about people's personalities do exist, many are suspect. We can draw inferences from what people write in their memoirs, but how much do we believe? When nineteenth century obituaries and memorial tablets extolled the virtues of the deceased, they respected convention, not necessarily the truth. Readers who knew the subject may have wondered whether they had the right bloke. Comments in our area about political or religious antagonists cannot be trusted. Nor can biographical profiles printed in newspapers and magazines, especially where the publication is known to be corrupted by political bias or personal animosity on the part of author, editor or proprietor. The truth about an individual's personality is often suppressed by the convention (superstition?) that one ought not to speak ill of the dead, which some people still observe.



Now and again we get a glimpse of an individual's personality by inference from unwitting testimony. Take John Shadwell, born 1763, lessee of the manor of **Horfield** from 1777 until he died in 1849. Shadwell Road in **Bishopston** is named after him or his family. JS was a doctor who lived and practised in Southampton. If, as is most likely, it was he who commissioned and dictated the design and text of the inscription in **Horfield** parish church on the memorial tablet to his father, JS was responsible for the prominent depiction of the family's armorial bearings and the statement that his father was 'descended from an ancient family in Staffordshire.' In the same tablet including the memorial to his mother, JS recorded that she was a 'daughter of Thomas Mitchell late of ... Cork, whose ancestor was

companion with the earl of Strigul in the conquest of Ireland in the reign of Henry II and among the first settlers of distinction in that country.' There are colour reproductions of the tablets in Andy Buchan's *The history of Horfield parish church (Bishopston, Horfield & Ashley Down LHS 2008)*. As lord of the manor of Horfield, JS continued strict manorial practices long after they had ceased to be observed elsewhere. He and his father were among the last to hold manorial courts, and controlled the transfer of copyhold interests in the manor, even into the mid nineteenth century when copyhold was obsolescent elsewhere. When his father died in Brussels, his son had the body brought to Horfield and interred in the family vault at 11 o'clock at night by the light of torches, an obsolete practice but one said to be observed among families who claimed ancient and superior descent. Overall, the impression one gets is of a man conscious of, and keen to assert, his ancient lineage, a stickler for tradition and the continuation of past practices. Nowadays he might be into family history.

DESTROYING PUBLIC RECORDS

ALHA member **Bristol & Gloucestershire Archaeological Society** has published an edited transcription of records of early Gloucestershire and Gloucester City vehicle registration numbers, mentioned under **BOOKS etc NOTICED** above. A similar volume was published for Wiltshire by Wiltshire Record Society in 2006. Can we expect similar books for other areas? No, because when parliament transferred responsibility for vehicle registration from local authorities (county and county borough councils) to central government (now the DVLA), old registration records in most areas were destroyed. The Gloucestershire and Wiltshire publications were possible only because officials there presumably recognised that the information the records contained could be of interest, especially to those concerned with social, business, economic and local history, industrial archaeology and family history. So they arranged for their deposit. Is it too much to ask that any public authority no longer having an operational use for old records should at least give some thought to their potential archival value?

QUOTE

For the growing good of the world is partly dependent on unhistoric acts; and that things are not so ill with you and me as they might have been, is half owing to the number who lived faithfully a hidden life, and rest in unvisited tombs.

George Eliot, *Middlemarch*

EVENTS DIARY

Events notified to ALHA's website manager are listed on the ALHA website. 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 St Nicholas Family Centre, Chargrove, Yate BS37 4LG.
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