

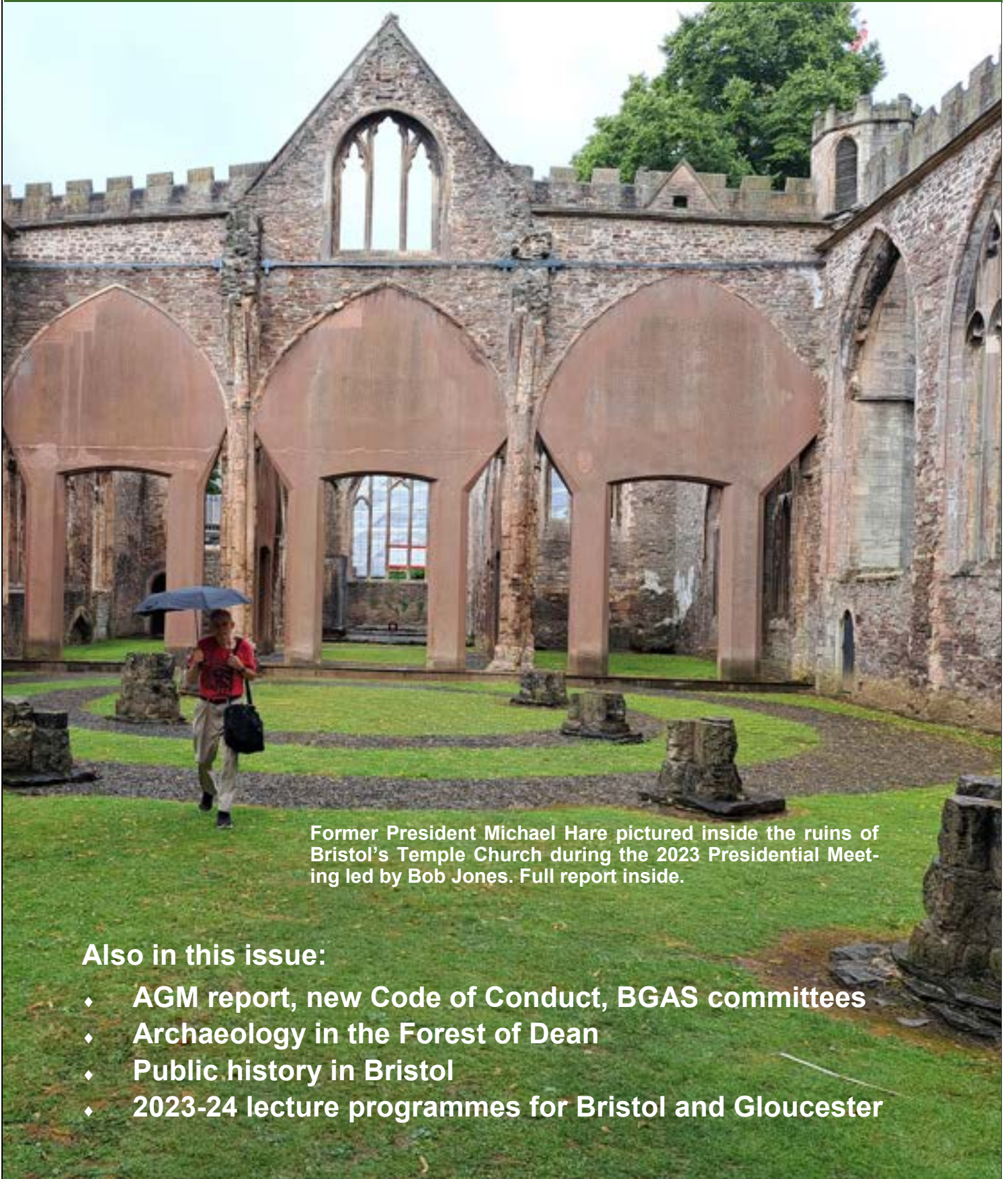
The BGAS Newsletter

Archaeology and history in Bristol and Gloucestershire

Established 21 April 1876

www.bgas.org.uk

Registered Charity No. 202014



Former President Michael Hare pictured inside the ruins of Bristol's Temple Church during the 2023 Presidential Meeting led by Bob Jones. Full report inside.

Also in this issue:

- ◆ AGM report, new Code of Conduct, BGAS committees
- ◆ Archaeology in the Forest of Dean
- ◆ Public history in Bristol
- ◆ 2023-24 lecture programmes for Bristol and Gloucester

Introduction by the editor

Welcome to your autumn newsletter, which contains details of the 2023-24 programme of lectures in Bristol and Gloucester, along with much else.

In July, retiring President Bob Jones led a tour of the medieval churches of Bristol, and his account of the event is included here on pages 18 to 20. There is a report on the Dean Archaeological Group, an introduction to our President for the coming year, Jan Wills, and the usual book reviews. Sadly, we also have to print the obituaries of two long-standing members of the Society, Peter Barlow and Russell Howes. In addition, I have contributed a short article on public history in Bristol, with reference to a new proposal for a museum of slavery and abolition.

A number of forthcoming events outside the regular programme for Bristol and Gloucester are noted. There is the annual Deerhurst lecture on 23rd September (see page 7), while next Spring will see what is hoped will be an extremely worthwhile one-day conference marking the bicentenary of local mine-owner and philanthropist Handel Cossham (also on page 7).

Other news about the Society can be found at various points in the following pages. Of



particular note is the amendment made at the AGM to Rule 6, which means that from next January any members who have not paid their subscriptions for twelve months or more will be removed from the members' register. There is a reminder on page 7.

I hope you enjoy the contents of the newsletter, and would welcome comments or submissions for future issues. Contact details can be found at the foot of this page.

Alan Clarke

Please note - the copy date for the next newsletter is 31st January 2024

Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society

(Established 21 April 1876, Registered Charity No. 202014. Website: www.bgas.org.uk)

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Annual General Meeting Report

The 2023 AGM was held at the Apostle Room, Clifton Cathedral on Saturday 29 April. Thirty-nine members were present; twenty-two members sent apologies for absence. The meeting was opened by the Society's President, Mr Bob Jones, who noted that this was the first physical meeting the Society had held since 2019, due to the recent public health crisis.

The General Secretary presented highlights of the Report of Trustees to members for 2022, copies of which had been previously circulated. Dr Barton briefly reported on the implementation of the Society's new governance arrangements which had come into force on 1 January 2022, drawing attention to the creation of one new standing committee and two new working parties, together with changes to the Board of Trustees since the previous AGM. The deaths of eleven BGAS members had been reported during 2022, and a short silence was held in their memory.

Dr Barton next presented the Trustees' Statutory Report to the Charity Commissioners, together with the Society's Accounts for 2022 and Independent Examiner's report, which were unanimously approved. The 2022 accounts confirmed that the Society's overall financial position remained sound, with the value of our general reserves having increased by almost £20,000 compared to the previous year.

The President proposed the election of Ms Jan Wills as President for 2023-24. She was elected by acclamation and took the Chair for the rest of the meeting.

There were a number of additional items for discussion:

- The Trustees proposed an amendment to Rule 6 to reduce the time limit for which members are permitted to be in default of subscription payments before their names are removed from the membership list from three years to one year. This was passed unanimously.
- A change to Rule 8 concerning the nomination of Trustees was also agreed unanimously, but there was a discussion over the question of whether Trustees should be members of the Society. A motion to make this a requirement was, however, narrowly defeated.
- There was also some debate over a proposal from the Trustees to introduce a new code of conduct which would require all members to adhere to a specified standard of behaviour in their future dealings with the Society, its representatives, and fellow members. In response to queries, the General Secretary confirmed that principles of natural justice would be applied should any alleged breaches of the code occur and that a range of outcomes were available, ranging from acquittal to expulsion. It was confirmed that the new code would not be applied retrospectively. Following these exchanges, the code of conduct was approved with no votes against and one abstention, and would come into immediate effect.

The President proposed the election of John Stevens as President-elect for 2024-25, the election of Miss Angie Newcombe as Vice President to 2025 and the nominations of Trustees for 2023-24. These proposals were approved by acclamation. The General Secretary reminded the meeting that several Trustee positions remained vacant and invited the President to call for volunteers to fill these posts. Mark Munday expressed an interest in the Hon. Treasurer role and agreed to follow up his offer with Trustees following the meeting. The appointment of Miss Sue Brown as independent examiner for 2023 was unanimously approved.

Mr Bob Jones concluded the meeting by giving a Presidential Address, entitled 'Neither Dilettantism nor Picnics. The Conduct of Archaeology in Bristol from antiquarians to archaeologists.'

Graham J Barton
Hon. General Secretary

(A full report of the AGM will appear in the next issue of the Transactions.)

Introducing our new President

Jan Wills was elected President for 2023-24 at the last Annual General Meeting. Here she introduces herself to members with a summary of her background and achievements, both professionally and as a longstanding member of the society.

I'm writing to introduce myself as the Society's President for 2023-4. Members may already know my name from previous roles as a Council member, Chair of the Committee for Archaeology in Gloucestershire, and editor of *Archaeological Review* in the *Transactions*.

I've lived in Gloucestershire since the late 1980s but my career in archaeology began with excavations in the north and midlands, in the days of rescue archaeology, volunteers and little money. I worked on many interesting sites – Iron Age cemeteries in Yorkshire, waterlogged Anglo-Saxon buildings in Durham, medieval urban settlement in the centres of Shrewsbury and Worcester, and Iron Age settlement on the River Avon gravels. As a field officer with the then Hereford and Worcester County Council I ran field survey projects and excavations with government funding, either through the Rescue Archaeology budget or with Manpower Services Commission labour and I began to work within the planning system. As I moved to become County Archaeologist in Gloucestershire in the late 1980s, archaeology was changing. Planning policy after the publication of PPG16 in 1992 enabled a much more structured and effective management of archaeological sites affected by development, unlocked developer funding, and accelerated the development of the archaeological profession. After a high-water mark in the 1990s and early 2000s the long-term results of the financial crash of 2007 eventually resulted in significant reductions in local government archaeological staff. Time,



Jan assuming the Presidency from last year's President, Bob Jones, at the AGM.

therefore, to escape. For the last 10 years I've worked part-time as a consultant, and in many Trustee or advisory roles such as CBA, Historic England, and the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists of which I was Chair for five years. I'm currently a Trustee of The Heritage Alliance and of Oxford Archaeology.

In my new role as President I'll be chairing the Advisory Council, and I attend Trustee meetings as an observer. I'm keen to hear from any members who would like to become more involved with BGAS or who have thoughts on the future of the Society. Do get in touch!

Something to celebrate

As readers may be aware, BGAS will reach an important milestone in 2026 when our Society celebrates the 150th anniversary of its foundation. It would clearly be fitting to mark this auspicious occasion in an appropriate manner, and to this end a working party has been established to consider the type of event(s) we might arrange to acknowledge this special moment in the Society's history.

While our plans for 2026 are still at an early stage, we would like to take this opportunity to invite Society members to contribute your own ideas as to how BGAS might mark this special occasion. The Hon. Treasurer has been setting aside resources in each of the last few years to establish a fund which can be used to support these celebratory activities, providing our plans are not too extravagant.

From a practical perspective, it's important to remember that the events we offer in 2026

will need to be organised, and this will call for volunteers to help arrange the activities we plan to deliver, in addition to the financial resources the Treasurer is setting aside to pay for these. Even though these celebrations are still three years away, provisional offers of help to arrange any activities members wish to propose would be particularly welcome.

Members are at the heart of our Society, whose history and achievements are part of a shared heritage. We therefore hope you will wish to join us in planning the forthcoming celebrations and in participating in these events when 2026 arrives. To contribute ideas on how we might mark this important anniversary, please e-mail your suggestions to kate.iles@bristol.gov.uk, or send them in writing to the Hon. General Secretary, 10 Paddock Gardens, Longlevens, Gloucester, GL2 0ED.

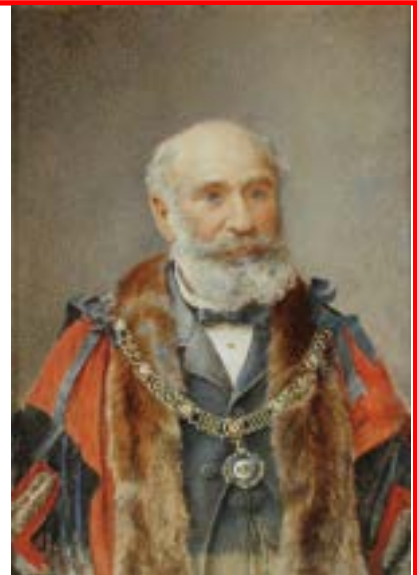
Handel Cossham Bicentenary Conference

2024 sees the bicentenary of the birth of the celebrated local mine owner and philanthropist Handel Cossham (1824-1890).

To mark the event, BGAS are planning, in conjunction with Avon Local History & Archaeology, a day conference. It is hoped there will be talks on all aspects of Cossham's life – his family background, mining enterprises, non-conformist commitments, activities in the fields of temperance and education, and his political life as Mayor of Bath and later a Bristol Liberal MP – as well as the Cossham Hospital, founded with money left in his will. An exhibition of relevant artefacts and photographs is intended to accompany the event.

Venue and date are to be confirmed but the event is likely to take place at Turnberries Conference Centre in Thornbury on Saturday 13 April. Volunteers to help with stewarding and other organisational matters will be most welcome and should contact John Stevens (johnregstevens@outlook.com, 01179 681326) or William Evans (wm.evans@btopenworld.com, 01179 684979).

Further details and a booking form will follow next spring.



Handel Cossham in his robes as Mayor of Bath. Image: Victoria Art Gallery, Bath & North East Somerset Council.

Ten years later...

As many BGAS members will know, the Society has, over many years, published a succession of General Indexes to its annual volumes of *Transactions*, each of which brings together in a single volume the indexes of between eight and twenty of the most recent individual volumes.

The earliest General Index, covering volumes 1-20, was published in 1900, and since then ten more General Indexes have been published at varying intervals, the most recent, covering volumes 121-130 (2003-2012), being distributed with *Transactions* volume 131 at the Society's 2013 AGM.

So, now that volume 140 has been published, it's that time again, and the Society's Publications Committee and Trustees (having decided that a General Index is still a worthwhile research aid) are considering how and when to produce the next General Index, to cover volumes 131-140.

As far as the 'how' is concerned, there are now, of course, rather more possibilities than there were ten years ago, when hard copy for all members was the only option. It could of course remain so, but we could also consider a digital version as the 'standard offer', accessed through the proposed Members'

Area of our website, with the option (free? or perhaps paid for?) of a hard copy for those who wish to have one, which may well be the preferred option of our many Institutional subscribers.

For convenience, and to save on postage, previous General Indexes have traditionally been issued at the same time as a volume of *Transactions* (invariably at the Society's AGM) but by offering a digital copy the time-scale would be less constrained and the Index could be made available as and when it is ready – which will of course very much depend on the availability and other commitments of those BGAS officers involved, most notably the *Transactions'* editor and indexer.

Before making any firm decisions, the Society's Trustees would be interested to have members' views – so if you have any strong views or preferences, please let me know. We would be particularly interested to know if you would be happy with access to a digital copy only – and if you would be prepared to pay a supplement to your subscription for a hard copy if you wish to have one.

Steve Blake

BGAS Publications Manager
email: fresco2@live.co.uk

Gloucestershire Archives – lockdown photos

Gloucestershire Archives is looking for photographs that depict lockdown in your local area, be it signs in shop windows, oddly deserted highstreets, unusual one-way systems, or anything that defined lockdown for you.

The material will be added to our archival collections here at the Heritage Hub, but also be used to create an image layer on Know Your Place Gloucestershire. For those that don't know, this is a publicly accessible digital mapping resource that layers historic maps of the county on top of one another. Further to that, we can add digital images to their exact location on the map, and these form 'image layers', that suitable photographs deposited with us will be added to. Rest assured, all images will be credited to the photographer accordingly.

If you have any material you would like to contribute, would like to hear more about the project, or would like to take part in the project as a remote volunteer, please contact archivist Max Parkin at max.parkin@gloucestershire.gov.uk

New code of conduct introduced

Members may recall that one of the changes to the Society's Rules considered at this year's AGM was the introduction of a new code of conduct. The meeting resolved that:

It shall be a condition of membership of the Society that BGAS members agree:

- **not to exploit the name or reputation of the Society for personal benefit.**
- **not to use the Society's name to imply the endorsement of personal views.**
- **not to engage in any activity which would be likely to harm the interests of the Society.**
- **to treat others in good faith and with dignity and courtesy.**

- **to comply with any rules adopted by the Society for use of its facilities, such as the library or website.**
- **to abide by statutory provisions affecting the Society.**

Nothing in this code is intended to interfere with members' enjoyment of the benefits of BGAS membership or to restrict anyone's individual liberties or legitimate freedom of expression. The code of conduct has been introduced to enable members to clearly understand the standard of behaviour they can expect from the Society's officers and from other BGAS members, and the responsibilities which each of us in turn owe to the Society and to our fellow members.

Graham J Barton, Hon. General Secretary

Reminder: Deerhurst lecture

The *2023 Annual Deerhurst Lecture* will take place at 7.30 pm on Saturday 23rd September 2023 in St Mary's Church, Deerhurst and will be given by Professor John Hines of Cardiff University on the subject of 'A routeway in a borderzone: Deerhurst against the background of Early Medieval settlement around the Lower Severn'. Tickets at the door, price £5 (students £3). Further details available at <https://deerhurstfriends.co.uk>.

Are your BGAS subscriptions up to date?

Members are reminded that a change to BGAS Rule 6 was agreed at the 2023 AGM which authorises Trustees to remove from the membership list the name of any member whose subscription is one year or more in arrears. This change will come into effect on 1 January 2024, so if you haven't paid your 2023 subs yet, please do so without delay to avoid the risk of your membership lapsing.



In our last newsletter, we reported that BGAS had funded a gazebo for GlosArch. That the gazebo has now been purchased and is fully operational can be seen from this action photograph, sent to us by Neil Cathie.

BGAS working parties

Did you know that, as well as the Trustees and the local groups in Bristol and Gloucester, there is a network of standing committees and working parties helping to ensure the smooth running of the Society? Here is a brief outline – if you would like more information about any of them, please feel free to get in touch with either the Editor or the General Secretary (contact details on page 2).

Standing Committees

Committee for Archaeology in Bristol and Gloucestershire. Chaired by Dr Graham Barton, its terms of reference include promoting the recording and publication of information on archaeological evidence in Bristol and Gloucestershire, including South Gloucestershire, as well as maintaining contact with national and local authorities, museums, and others in the field.

Data and Website Committee. Chaired by Ms Roisin Daly, its terms of reference include overseeing the operation, content, and general administration of the BGAS website, monitoring the Society's data assets and advising on potential opportunities and risks.

Library Committee. Chaired by Dr Graham Barton, this committee's terms of reference include overseeing, within the terms of the joint library agreement, the general administration of the collection and advising Trustees on the library's collection policy.

Publications Committee. Chaired by Dr Steven Blake, this committee's main purpose is to oversee the arrangements for the production and distribution of the Society's publications, including liaison with the producers of external publications with which the Society is associated.

Working Parties

2026 Anniversary Celebrations Working Party (see page 5). This group, chaired by Ms Kate Iles, has been set up to consider how best to mark the 150th anniversary, in terms of events, activities and outcomes, and to make suitable recommendations.

Electronic Publications Working Party.

This group, chaired by Dr Steven Blake, has been set up to explore the practical and administrative implications of providing BGAS members with online access to the Society's most recent *Transactions*, Record Series volumes and Newsletters as part of their annual subscription, and of providing printed versions of these publications if required. It is also overseeing a project to digitise and put online, for public access, previous volumes of the Society's *Transactions* and Record Series five years after their publication.

Lloyd George Database Working Party.

This group, chaired by Mrs Gail Boyle, has been set up to determine the Lloyd George project's current methods of operation and division of responsibilities and to explore the administrative and resourcing implications of maintaining the Lloyd George database once the Trustees have taken over control. (More information about the Lloyd George 1909 survey can be found on the Society's website under the heading 'Resources'.)

Website Members' Area Working Party.

This group, chaired by Mrs Gail Boyle, is working on proposals for the structure and content of the BGAS website's members' area.

In addition to the above, there are **General Awards, Research Awards and Bursaries Panels**. Applications for such awards are received by the Hon. General Secretary and referred for consideration to a team usually comprising three panel members. Grant criteria are published on the BGAS website.

Graham Barton

Public history in Bristol

It is a little over three years since, in the middle of the coronavirus pandemic, the statue of Edward Colston was pulled down by a crowd during a Black Lives Matter demonstration, bringing Bristol and Colston to the attention of the world.

One of the consequences of the removal of Colston from his plinth was the establishment by Bristol's mayor of a group, rather grandly entitled the We Are Bristol History Commission. The aims and scope of this group were very broad, but in fact its work so far has been almost entirely focused on Bristol's relationship with the slave trade. To some extent this was natural, as the first task entrusted to the Commission was to consider the future of the Colston statue, but there is as yet little sense of any broader historical purpose emerging from the group, which, although nominally independent, is also closely connected with the City Council, where history is perhaps inevitably viewed through the lens of current politics.

With so much official focus on this aspect of the city's history, it is perhaps not surprising that calls for a museum dedicated to slavery and abolition should resurface, and a new project was reported recently in the Bristol Civic Society magazine *Better Bristol*, targeting the old Seamen's Mission next to Queen Square as a likely site, following the rejection of a previous proposal relating to a pair of Council-owned sheds on Welsh Back. The Seamen's Institute and Chapel, built in 1880, was partly destroyed in 1940 and, as Andrew Foyle says in his 2004 edition of *Pevsner's Architectural Guides: Bristol*, was 'appallingly refronted with the most utilitarian concrete structure, now derelict'. Foyle concludes that the building 'demands imaginative reuse' and it is difficult to disagree.

Whether or not the new museum ever sees the light of day is unknown, as the project depends on securing funding and obtaining planning permission, but it would no doubt be



The former Seamen's Institute and chapel viewed from Prince Street.

a valuable addition to the city's commemorative landscape. To be particularly welcomed is the suggestion that the museum should concern itself with both slavery and abolition, as the city played its part in the abolition movement, as well as being the base of many slave traders.

As for the broader question of history in the public sphere, it is no doubt difficult to disentangle it from contemporary concerns; historical study necessarily reflects the shifting preoccupations of historians, which are often influenced by schools and fashions. What is essential, though, is that whatever orthodoxy is predominant from time to time should be subject to challenge – and this should apply to public as well as academic history.

Alan Clarke

NB. The Seamen's Mission in Bristol was the subject of an essay by the late Martin Crossley Evans, which appeared in the BGAS volume *Historic Churches & Church Life in Bristol: Essays in Memory of Elizabeth Ralph*, edited by Joseph Bettey (2001).

Introducing the Dean

The Dean Archaeological Group (DAG) has been active in the Forest of Dean for the last thirty-five years. A registered charity, we are a voluntary group of enthusiastic amateur archaeologists who encourage and promote the understanding of archaeology in the Forest and neighbouring areas 'between the Severn and the Wye'.

We practise field archaeology and take every opportunity to research, survey, excavate and record sites. Excavation reports are posted on our website and listed on the Gloucestershire Heritage Environment Record; the finds are deposited in the Dean Heritage Centre, Soudley.

DAG is happy to give talks to local groups and over the years we have established a good working relationship with a number of organisations. These include the Dean Heritage Centre in Soudley, Gloucestershire Archaeology, BGAS, Gloucestershire County Council Archaeology Service and the Forest of Dean Local History Society.

Our Group has undertaken a number of excavations over the last few years either

independently or with Worcestershire Archaeology as part of the Foresters' Forest project (a National Lottery Heritage Fund Landscape Partnership programme). Information on all of these can be found on our website.

We are currently working on two projects. The first is at Eccleswall Farm near Bromsash, just over the county border in Herefordshire. In 2022 the owners of the farm kindly offered DAG the opportunity to investigate the 'humps and bump' in one of their paddocks and on an adjacent field. This was an invitation that we could not refuse because the farm is situated very close to the Roman settlement at Weston-under-Penyard known as Ariconium, a major ironworking centre during the Roman period and a scheduled site.

Fortunately, the farm is outside of the scheduled area and last year we initiated a geophysical resistivity survey. So far, results do not indicate that there are any remains of structures. However, there is a significant low resistance linear feature, approximately 8



DAG 'diggers' at Breckness Court and (facing page) the results of the resistance survey at part of the site.

Archaeological Group

metres wide that runs in a general east-west orientation across the area that we have surveyed. It coincides with the line and location of a footpath/trackway that appears on old Ordnance Survey maps. There are also a number of small circular low resistance features across the site that could be pits and may warrant further investigation.

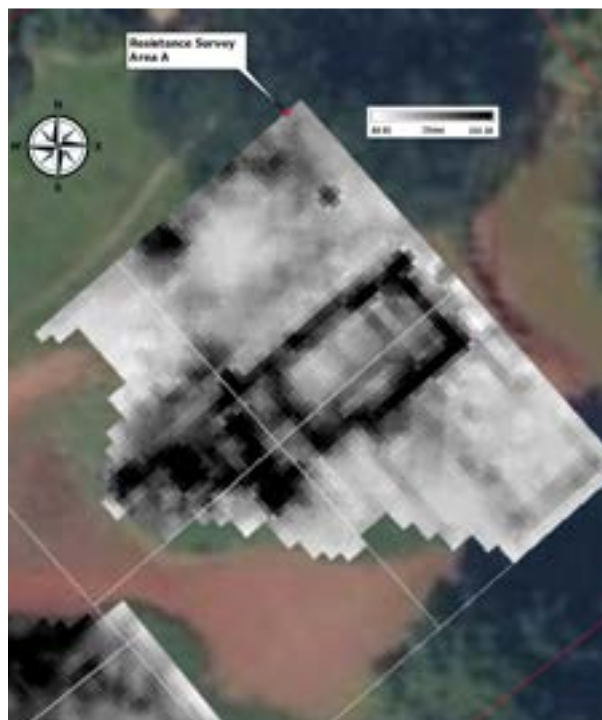
Given the large area that we need to cover, the survey is going to take a while to complete but we are optimistic that the results will justify our endeavour.

Our second project is an excavation at Breckness Court, just north of Clearwell.

Historic England Monument No: 109460 states that 'A Medieval moated site, comprising a moated platform with clear traces of the foundations of a substantial building, a fishpond and its retaining dam and spillway to the south west, and a possible second fishpond to the east of the moat, has been recorded through field survey and aerial photographic evidence'. According to historical records the building dates from the 1220s. It remained in use until the 18th century when another building, also called Breckness Court, was built on higher ground some 450 metres to the north of the moated site thereby making the earlier structure redundant.

Our overall objective is to understand and date any activity at this location through the identification of features and the recovery of datable artefacts. In the summer and autumn of 2021 we carried out a geophysical resistivity survey on the main platform. The results were used to target our first excavation carried out in the summer/autumn of 2022.

Analysis of the information and artefacts that we recovered (mainly pottery and animal bone) is ongoing. Preliminary results indicate that we have identified the walls of a substantial medieval stone building that



continued to be used into the post-medieval period. Our excavations continue in 2023 and at the time of writing (July) we have already uncovered more walls to puzzle over.

DAG aspires to meet professional standards across all of its activities but that does not mean that you need an archaeological background to join us. All you require is enthusiasm and a desire to learn about archaeology. Please visit our website at <https://www.deanarchaeology.org.uk/> where you will find a lot more information. Alternatively, come along to one of our meetings at the White Horse Inn, Soudley, Forest of Dean. We meet at 8pm on the last Thursday of each month (except December) and you are guaranteed a warm welcome.

John Izzard, DAG

Book reviews

Winchcombe Museum publications

Avid readers of the annual list of Recent Publications in our *Transactions* might have noticed the prolific publication record of Winchcombe Museum, which, since 2015, has published no fewer than twelve paperback local history and archaeology books, ten of which have been either written or compiled by the Museum's Honorary Curator (and BGAS member), Anne Crow.

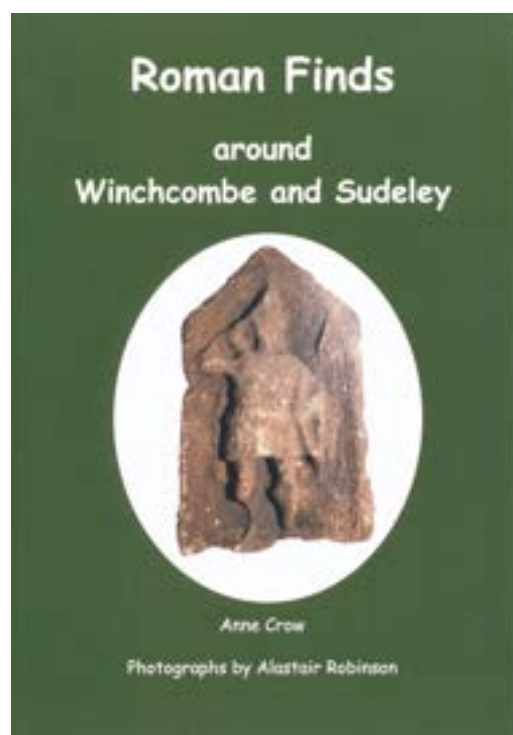
Between them (albeit with some degree of overlap) the books provide a comprehensive overview of significant people, places and objects relating to the town's past – from the undoubtedly quirky *Weird and Wicked Winchcombe* (100pp, 2015) to *The Story of the Winchcombe Meteorite* (14pp, 2021), which focuses on what is undoubtedly the most unusual (and certainly the oldest!) item on display in the recently redisplayed Museum. Other items from the Museum's collection are featured in *A History of Winchcombe in 50 Objects* (56pp, 2017, reprinted 2022), while *Winchcombe Personalities 1* (96pp, 2019) and 2 (99pp, 2020) cover people, and *Discovering Winchcombe* (90pp, 2017) and *A Brief History of Winchcombe* (77pp, 2021) cover places. All the books are well produced and profusely illustrated, and comprise a large number of short (often single sided) entries which makes the books ideal for 'delving'.

Three rather more specialist publications cover the career of Don Jones. *Winchcombe Potter* (40pp, 2019); *Winchcombe Flower Show, Horse Show and Hunter Trials. A history from 1950 to the present day* (108pp, 2020); and *Winchcombe Red Cross Hospital* (52pp, 2022), the last two written by Alan Herod and Carol Harris respectively.

Beyond the town itself (although inevitably mentioned in several of the above publica-

tions) are three significant archaeological sites: Belas Knap long barrow and the Roman villas at Spoonley Wood and Wadfield. Two further volumes are devoted to these sites, each of which is reviewed below, by Tim Copeland.

Steven Blake



Anne Crow, *Roman Finds around Winchcombe and Sudeley* (Winchcombe, Winchcombe Museum, 2021; second edition, with additional illus., 2023). 80pp, many b/w and colour illus., maps, A5, paperback. £8 [ISBN 978-0-9562328-9-2]

This book deals mainly with the excavations at Spoonley Wood and Wadfield villas in the Beesmore Brook valley above Winchcombe. There is a short scene-setting about the Ro-

(Continued p. 15)

More book reviews, destined for publication in the annual *Transactions*, can be found on the BGAS website. See: <https://www.bgas.org.uk/publications/transactions-latest-reviews>

***Clifton Cathedral Story: The Building and its People.* Peter J Harrison. Bristol, 2023. 130 pp, numerous colour and b/w ill. Card covers. £12.99. Available from the Cathedral or by post from cliftondiocese.com. [ISBN 978-1-3999-5029-9]**

Clifton Cathedral will be known to many members of the Society, which has hired a basement room there for meetings of its former Council, for annual general meetings in 2017 and 2023, and for meetings of the Society's Bristol section, whose members in 2022 were given a guided tour of the Cathedral by this book's author.

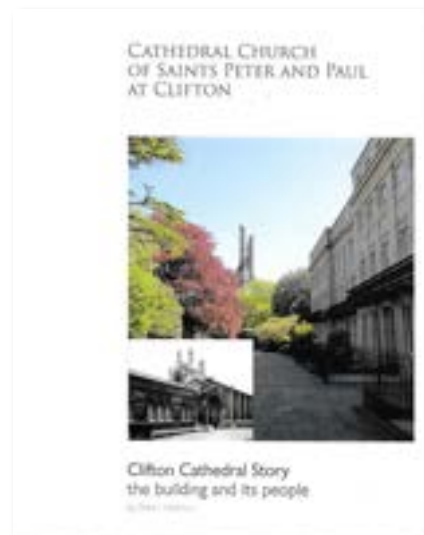
The book is a personal memoir. The author, ordained in 1964, was assistant priest in the pro-Cathedral that the present Cathedral replaced. As Cathedral information officer he observed and was involved in the planning, design, construction and opening of the new Cathedral.

That makes for immediacy, enhanced by the author's style: informal and readable. The price for that is repetitions, textual and typographical, a plethora of exclamation marks, verbless sentences, misplaced commas, and dangling participles. The text would have benefited from a rigorous edit.

Early chapters explain the author's background; the Acts of 1791 and 1829 that released Roman Catholics from most legal disabilities; the construction of the pro-Cathedral (1834-1848); and the constraints of capacity and structural stability that led to a decision to build a new Cathedral on a new site.

The next dozen chapters recount the appointment of architects and of a liturgical briefing committee to direct them; how constitutions on the liturgy that emerged from the second Vatican Council from 1963 informed the design; how the Clifton Park site became available; the planning application; the contracting; the consultation with the congregation; the progress of the building works; and the people involved.

Further chapters on various architectural features constitute a guide to the building. They explain the general layout, doors, narthex, baptistery, font, stained glass, tabernacles, altar and sanctuary, bishop's chair, relics (of



pope Pius X and Oliver Plunkett); pyx, organ, ambulatory with its reliefs of the stations of the cross, and the lady chapel.

Final chapters deal with the heating and ventilation system (as annoying to the congregation above as to the Society's Bristol section trying to hear the speaker in the Apostle Room below), the Cathedral's media relations, the 1973 consecration ceremony and celebratory festival, reactions to the architecture (with verbatim quotations), the role of the building, and its later use and alterations. The book ends with a glossary of terms, and some lists, but no index.

The main merits of the book include:

1. its explaining, in terms of Roman Catholic theology and symbolism, the main aspects of the Cathedral, and the influence of the post-Vatican Council II directions;
2. its recognition of the tensions the new building occasioned;
3. its acknowledgement of the roles and contributions of individuals. Singled out are the architect Ronald Weeks (who later had a hand in the second Severn crossing), and the then parish priest Canon Thomas Hughes and Bishop Joseph Rudderham;
4. the quality of the photographs, most in colour, many taken by the author.

A worthwhile book, this deserves to be treated as a source as well as a history. If one of history's tasks is to explain and to foster understanding, this book succeeds.

William Evans

Obituaries

The Society was saddened to learn of the deaths, earlier this year, of two long-standing members, both of whom had contributed to the Society's publications, and to whose families, friends and colleagues the Society sends its condolences.



Peter Barlow MBE (1945-2023) read French and German at Oxford and remained a keen linguist throughout his life, eventually becoming fluent in Portuguese, Russian and (during extensive periods of military service there) several Balkan languages, including Albanian, on which he published two books. While at Oxford, Peter joined the Officer Training Corps, and the Army remained central to his life thereafter, initially in the Territorial Army and later as a full-time Army Officer, a post that took him on a series of Balkan postings between 1996 and 2012. He later worked as a freelance translator for the International Court of Justice, and was a great supporter of the Royal British Legion, serving for two years as Chairman of its Cheltenham branch.

Between University and the Army, Peter worked briefly at GCHQ and then for many years as a solicitor in Gloucester, including eight years as Under Sheriff of Gloucestershire. Peter's wife, Jill (whom he

had met at GCHQ) had joined BGAS in 1996, and in 2011 Peter joined as an Associate Member. Before long he was able to combine his interests in local history (he and Jill were founder members of the Cheltenham Local History Society in 1982) and classic cars in editing, with Martin Boothman, a volume entitled *'Conspicuously Marked': Vehicle Registration in Gloucestershire, 1903-13*, which was published as volume 33 of our Society's Record Series in 2019. At the time of his death, Peter and Martin were planning a further volume, covering vehicle registrations from 1914 onwards.

Russell Howes (1930-2023) was a highly regarded part-time WEA tutor for 35 years, between 1977 and 2012, giving classes across the county on a wide range of local historical topics, from Roman Gloucestershire to the Civil War. He was also a long-standing Committee member of Stroud WEA and an



Russell Howes on his last day as WEA tutor in Stroud, 2020, and, above left, Peter Barlow

active member of several of the County's local history societies.

Before joining the WEA, Russell had undertaken his National Service as a clerk in the Royal Corps of Signals, gained a degree in Ancient History from the University of London and had been ordained as a Nonconformist Minister before deciding on a career in teaching – initially (having obtained a teaching diploma at the University of Bristol) in schools and then in Adult Education with the WEA. In order to supplement his income, Russell also became a part-time postman in Stroud, opting for early shifts to free up the rest of the day for preparing or giving talks or undertaking research, which he did on an almost daily

basis at both the County Record Office and Gloucester City Library.

Russell joined BGAS in 1978 and was a regular attendee at the Society's meetings, as well as publishing an account of 'John Smith the Younger of North Nibley and His Papers;' in volume 121 (2003) of our *Transactions*. He also contributed many articles to other local history publications, notably *Glevensis* and *Gloucestershire History*. Russell's obvious regard for BGAS is reflected in the fact that the collection at his funeral was for the benefit of our Society.

Steven Blake

Reviews (continued from p. 12)

man period in the Cotswolds. The excavations were commissioned by the avid antiquarian Emma Dent of Sudeley Castle. She reported the outcomes in her local magazine, *The Winchcombe and Sudeley Record*, published in the last seven years of her life. Mrs Dent also put sheds over the mosaics at both of the villas, similar to those at Chedworth. After her death in 1900, our Society was requested to undertake the maintenance of the site, but the cost was to be beyond the available funds. Another female archaeologist and member of BGAS, Helen O'Neill, published in our *Transactions* about the state of the villa in the 20th century. She also reported on the condition of the smaller villa at Wadfield. The rest of the volume is taken up with photographs of copper alloy small finds, pottery and coinage alongside stone carved effigies. This is a valuable resource for the evidence of Roman occupation around Winchcombe, including descriptions of more recent work, and how the area adopted Roman 'lifeways'. It is to be recommended to anyone interested in the archaeology or history of both sites.

Anne Crow, *Exploring Belas Knap* (Winchcombe, Winchcombe Museum, 2022) 33pp, b/w and colour illus.. maps, A5, paperback. £5 [No ISBN].

This short book combines the description of the monument from excavations in 1864, and its restoration in 1893 at the expense of the indefatigable Emma Dent, to a further restoration in 1928-31 by H.M. Office of Works, the English Heritage of the day. Throughout, contemporary accounts are used from Mrs Dent's diary and excavation reports as well as *Cheltenham Chronicle and Gloucestershire Graphic* photographs of 1913. The author has clearly done some background reading and presents some of the modern approaches to the Neolithic period. This volume is recommended to anyone interested in the history of archaeology in the area, especially the response of local people to the tomb, as well as the fabric and interpretation of the long barrow itself.

Tim Copeland

2023-24 Lectures - Bristol

<p>Monday 25 September 2023</p> <p>Peter Insole (Principal Historic Environment Officer, Bristol City Council), 'Hillfields Homes for Heroes: the story of Bristol's first council estate.'</p>	<p><i>Following the First World War, the British government sought to tackle the country's housing shortage through the introduction of the Housing Act in 1919. This talk tells the story of Bristol's first council estate, built after World War I, which says much about the national and local government priorities of the time and the contemporary and subsequent urban landscape of the city.</i></p>
<p>Monday 23 October</p> <p>Howard Parker, 'The Vale of Berkeley Railway.'</p>	<p><i>The Sharpness extension was completed in 1875 and linked via a railway bridge to a line carrying coal from the Forest of Dean to Lydney. It closed in the 1960s, but there is a campaign to reopen the stations at Berkeley and Sharpness.</i></p>
<p>Monday 27 November</p> <p>Professor Keith Wilkinson (University of Winchester), 'Bristol before Bristol: evidence for pre-historic and early historic landscapes beneath the city centre.'</p>	<p><i>While the archaeology of medieval and later Bristol is relatively well known, knowledge of pre-historic and later historic landscapes that preceded the city is more limited. However, redevelopment of central Bristol since the 1990s and in particular the geoarchaeological and geotechnical work that has preceded it, have enabled the nature and age of Bristol's pre-urban environment to be reconstructed.</i></p>
<p>Monday 22 January 2024</p> <p>Elaine Cook (Bristol History and Archaeology Society), 'Keynsham Abbey: key events and characters.'</p>	<p><i>The story of Keynsham Abbey, once one of the greatest and richest abbeys of medieval England, and some of the people associated with it, among them King John's first wife Isabella, the Duke of Buckingham (possibly responsible for the deaths of the Princes in the Tower) and Henry VII's uncle Sir Jasper Tudor.</i></p>
<p>Monday 26 February</p> <p>Alan Clarke, 'Leisure Towns: Bath and the Bristol Hotwell in the eighteenth century.'</p>	<p><i>In this talk, we look at the rise, the brief heyday and the slow decline of the Hotwells Spa, comparing it with its more durable neighbour, Bath, and placing both in the context of the eighteenth century culture of urban and social improvement.</i></p>
<p>Monday 18 March (Note date)</p> <p>Richard Stride, 'Sieges of Bristol in the English Civil War, 1642-46.'</p>	<p><i>Bristol changed hands twice in these years, being stormed by Prince Rupert for the King in 1643 and retaken for Parliament in 1645. We learn of the tactics of besiegers and defenders and of the fortifications involved in these actions.</i></p>

All talks take place in the Apostle Room, Clifton Cathedral, Pembroke Road BS8 3BX and commence at 7.45 pm. Tea and coffee are available from 7.15 pm. Off-street parking is available and no. 8 buses run close by.

2023-24 Lectures - Gloucester

<p>Wednesday 27 September 2023</p> <p>Alex Thomson (Cotswold Archaeology), 'A Roman Settlement and Medieval Manorial Complex at Lydney B' (held over from March 2020)</p>	<p><i>Between 2016 and 2020, Cotswold Archaeology undertook excavations in advance of residential development in Lydney. The identified features included those dating to the Bronze Age, Roman, Anglo-Saxon, medieval and post-medieval periods, suggesting a rich landscape of agricultural settlement.</i></p>
<p>Wednesday 25 October</p> <p>Richard Bryant, 'The 11th century eastern chapel and early Lady Chapel at the abbey of Gloucester St Peter'.</p> <p>(Afternoon event at 2 pm in the Parliament Room)</p>	<p><i>Radiating chapels open off the eastern apse of the 11th-century abbey church (now Gloucester cathedral). The axial chapel survives in the crypt, but has largely been replaced at ground floor and tribune level by later changes. However, there are still elements of earlier phases. This lecture will explore the development of this often-overlooked part of the abbey church.</i></p> <p><i>(Joint event with the Friends of Gloucester Cathedral)</i></p>
<p>Wednesday 22 November</p> <p>Jim Pimpernell, 'The Development of the Berkeley Estate during the 18th Century'</p>	<p><i>This talk describes the changes to the estate during the 18th century instigated by the Earls of Berkeley together with the important contribution of the Countess of Berkeley. The changes led to a dramatic increase in income, a changing set of tenants, and implications for the organisation of farms.</i></p>
<p>Wednesday 24 January 2024</p> <p>Henry Elwes, 'Colesbourne: A Village History Through the Ages' (held over from January 2023)</p>	<p><i>Sir Henry Elwes is a former Lord Lieutenant and Custos Rotulorum of Gloucestershire. His family has owned the Colesbourne estate since 1789, which he took over in 1956. In this talk he will outline the 'story of Colesbourne', the subject of his recent book.</i></p>
<p>Wednesday 28 February</p> <p>Edward Biddulph (Oxford Archaeology), 'Settlement on the edge of Roman Gloucester: discoveries at Twigworth and Innsworth'</p>	<p><i>Excavations by Oxford Archaeology at Twigworth and Innsworth to the north-east of Gloucester have uncovered dense areas of prehistoric and Roman rural settlement. Ed Biddulph of Oxford Archaeology will highlight the discoveries – and reveal some surprises – of the ongoing field and post-excavation work.</i></p>
<p>Wednesday 27 March</p> <p>Jon Hart (Cotswold Archaeology) 'Making a Living on the Severn Vale: The Invisible Potters of Domesday'</p>	<p><i>When surveyors for the 1086 Domesday Book arrived at Haresfield (Gloucs.), they did something unusual: they recorded potteries, a presence noted at only two other locations in England. Work at Quedgeley East by Cotswold Archaeology has now identified one of these potteries and has also uncovered a rare example of an excavated pre-Conquest farmstead that survived until its replacement in the 13th century by an elite landscape.</i></p>

Lectures (**except for the October meeting**) will be held at the Dunrossil Centre, Gloucestershire Heritage Hub, Clarence Row, Alvin Street, Gloucester, GL1 3DW, beginning at 7.30 pm. Free parking at the Heritage Hub is available. The October lecture will be held jointly with the Friends of Gloucester Cathedral and will take place in the Parliament Room in the cathedral precincts at 2 pm on 25 October 2023. Entry to all lectures is free both to members and non-members of the Society. There is no charge, but donations are welcome. Refreshments are provided.

Presidential meeting 2023

Bob Jones reports on a tour of Bristol churches in July

On a day when rain was forecast and a Gay Pride march was to be held through the city, our past president, Bob Jones, led a tour of the old city for some thirty members and guests. We began at the enigmatic concrete 'obelisk', the entrance to some fine vaulted cellars, beneath a tavern, formerly the George in 1532. After introducing the history of Bristol, emphasising its position on high ground defined by the rivers Avon and Frome, Bob pointed out some of the major monuments, including Bristol Bridge, constructed c1240, probably replacing an earlier bridge and later rebuilt in 1768 with a 19th century superstructure added in 1873.

With rain threatening, we then visited Christ Church where the churchwarden, Roger Metcalfe, and our member John Stevens gave brief introductions to the church, emphasising its links, through members past and present, to this Society. During refreshments kindly provided by members of the church, Bob then summarised the history of the church, founded before 1147, originally set back from Broad Street, with a row of shops along the street. The medieval church was demolished in 1787 and the current church was erected, to a design by William Paty, refurbished in 1883. On the west front



Roger Metcalfe addressing the group in Christ Church

of the church were two quarterjacks, currently undergoing conservation, dating to 1728, and taken from the earlier church. One of the quarterjacks was on temporary display in the church. Bob pointed out a number of features within the church, some of which had been taken from the church of St Ewen, on the opposite side of Broad Street, including the bell, of 1698, and the organ, by Renatus Harris, of 1708. St Ewen dates to before 1160. Its tower lay on the north side of the church. In 1787, the parish was merged with Christ Church and the church itself was demolished in 1823 to make way for a new Council House (now the city's Register Office).

Leaving Christ Church, we visited St Nicholas's Church, where John Bryant, an expert in the history of the church, gave a brief outline of St Nicholas and of its crypt, or 'crowde'. The church incorporated the south gate into the town on its east side and the original line of the town wall formed its south side. The church was first mentioned in 1154, rebuilt in the 14th century. The upper church was demolished in 1762 and rebuilt in 1769, leaving the 14th century crypt intact. John explained the various features of the crypt, notably the intricately-carved vault bosses. He explained that during conservation works a further bay had been found to the west, while persistent damp problems had necessitated the excavation of the earth behind the 17th century monument to John Whitson. He also revealed the innovative use of Polyfilla in the conservation of the crypt vaults!

We then went along St Nicholas Street, on the line of the original intra-mural lane, to reach Corn Street. Here we paused briefly while Bob explained that at the junction of Corn Street and St Nicholas Street stood the church of St Leonard, another gate church lying over the west gate into the town. The church dates to at least the mid-12th century,



In the crypt of St Nicholas

if not before, and was of two bays with a 65ft tower above the arch leading into Corn Street. The gate and church were demolished in 1766 and the parish amalgamated with St Nicholas, enabling street improvements, including the construction of Clare Street in 1771.

From Corn Street we entered a dark alley, Leonard Lane, still following the intra-mural lane until we reached Small Street. We paused at the site of St Giles Church and gate. The church was in existence by c1285, but by 1350 had been subdivided into properties rented by the Corporation and became known as the 'old Jewry'. The gate was presumably contemporary with the church. The gate was demolished c1777.

Going down another narrow lane, Bell Lane, we reached St John's Church, pausing briefly to consider another lost church, St Lawrence Church, which lay on the town wall and was probably contemporary with St John's. At the Dissolution it was sold to the merchant Henry Brayne and in 1580 the parish was merged with St John's. It was deconsecrated in 1585. It was then used as a warehouse and by the 19th century it was being used as a barilla mill. The building survived until 1963 when it was demolished almost without record.

Entering St John's Church, incorporating the only surviving medieval gate with the statues of Bellinus and Brennus on its south face, Bob outlined the history of the church, which

was founded probably before 1174, although most of the existing church dates to the mid to late 14th century. The 14th century rebuilding was paid for by Walter Frampton, a wealthy cloth merchant and three times mayor of Bristol, who died in 1388. His elaborate tomb lies in the chancel. Other notable features include the 17th century west gallery and the pews, of c1621, but altered in the 19th century, and a communion table of 1635. We then entered the crypt, accessed from neighbouring Nelson Street. The crypt is also of the 14th century, with the east end slightly earlier. The crypt was used by the guild of merchants known as the Brotherhood of the Holy Cross from 1465.

After an excellent lunch in John Wesley's New Room (founded 1739), we briefly visited Castle Park, passing St Peter's Church, now a ruin after being largely destroyed in 1940. It has long been considered Bristol's mother church and is documented as early as 1107, although most of the standing fabric is 15th century. Its position at the centre of the peninsula that defines Saxon and medieval Bristol is likely to be significant. To the west lie the ruins of St Mary-le-Port church, with its surviving 15th century tower. Excavations in 1962 suggested that the church may have had a pre-Conquest origin.

We crossed the Avon via the new Castle Bridge, to enter the modern development

(Contd. over)



Bob Jones addresses the group in St John's Church

known as Finzels Reach. The name commemorates the large sugar refinery founded by Konrad Finzel in 1839 and rebuilt in 1846 after a fire. Many of the buildings retained in the new development are of the brewery founded by Philip George in 1788. The development lies within an area known as Arthurs Fee in the medieval period, identified from documents by our past president Dr Roger Leech, and possibly predating the Norman Conquest. Excavations in 2007-8 located what may have been one of the boundaries of Arthurs Fee as well as extensive evidence of medieval industrial activity and well-preserved wooden artefacts.

We proceeded to the church of St Thomas, via Thomas Lane, where excavation in 2007, on the site of the present law court, produced important evidence for dyeing, complementing evidence from across Redcliff Street in 1983. Unfortunately we were unable to gain access to the church so we had to satisfy ourselves with the exterior view. The church must be post-1170 but was extensively rebuilt in the 15th century. The fact that so many rich merchants lived in the area meant that the church was well endowed, but by the 18th century there seemed to have been structural problems, so in 1789 it was replaced by the present building, leaving only the 15th century tower.

From St Thomas Church we made our way across busy Victoria Street to reach Temple Church, now reopened to the public, after

major conservation work by English Heritage. The church was yet another victim of the 1940 bombing raids. It originated as the church of the Knights Templars, founded c1150 and consisting of a rotunda with surrounding ambulatory and apsidal chancel at the eastern end. The apsidal chancel was replaced c1300 by a longer rectangular one with a chapel on the north side, probably dedicated to St Katherine, and granted to the company of weavers by Edward I in 1299. The circular church was demolished in the 1390s and a new and greatly enlarged aisled nave was built. From 1441, a tower was built in the south-west corner. Before completion, the lower two stages began to lean westwards and c1460 an upper stage was added, at a markedly different angle to the lower.

By now the rain had set in so, sheltering in the covered porch, we ended our tour, with a few of us deciding to round it all off with a pint in the nearby 18th century Cornubia pub.

Thanks are due to several people for making the day a success, but particularly Roger Metcalfe, churchwarden of Christ Church, John Stevens, a regular worshipper at Christ Church, John Bryant who shared his detailed knowledge of St Nicholas Church, Amy Walker of St Nicholas Church for allowing us access, our former treasurer Bill Evans who ensured that the finances for the tour were in order and finally to Rob Harding who undertook most of the organisation for the meeting and arranged the excellent lunch stop.