



# UWE Regional History Centre and M Shed Seminar Programme, 2019–20

Princes Wharf, Wapping Rd, Bristol BS1 4RN

Time: 18:00–19:30

Admission: Free

# THURSDAY 19 SEPTEMBER 2019

**Alan Clarke**

**Taking the Pledge: the Temperance  
Movement in Victorian and  
Edwardian Bristol**

From the 1830s until the First World War, the temperance movement was one of the most powerful and visible lobby groups in the country. It never realised its goal of abolishing the trade in alcohol, but it exerted a strong influence on national politics, particularly the Liberal Party, and on local magistrates whose job it was to approve or reject applications for drinks licences. In Bristol, a city with strong links to brewing and the wine trade, there were over a hundred temperance societies of one sort or another by the end of the nineteenth century, and they made their presence felt in a variety of ways, from mass evangelical rallies at the Colston Hall to 'Happy Evenings for the People' in local church halls, featuring tea and temperance homilies. Bring your own non-alcoholic beverage to this exploration of the age of coffee taverns, temperance hotels and pledge-signing missions.

*Alan Clarke is an independent researcher and was recently awarded a Master's degree in History for work on the temperance movement.*

# WEDNESDAY 9 OCTOBER 2019

**Stephen Darrow Stacey**

**Ancestral Roots and Football Boots**

Steve Stacey rose from kicking a ball in the gas-lit streets of post-war Bristol to running out in the top flight of league football. Often the only black face in the team he was the first African-American to grace the professional English game.

Steve attended Fairfield Grammar School and although his first love was Bristol Rovers, it was Bristol City scouts who spotted him playing for the likes of Highridge United and Sneyd Park. After a career in the English and Australian leagues, Steve set about searching for his roots. The journey took him to Kemper County, Mississippi and to the discovery that his descendants came from the Balanta and Fula peoples of Guinea-Bissau in West Africa.

His autobiography 'The Colour of Football', published by Bristol Books, will be available at his talk.

*This is a Black History Month event.  
Books are £12.00 (cash only).*

**Cover illustration:**

Illustration from Humphrey Repton, 'The Red Book of Blaise Castle', Mb2400, copyright Bristol Culture.

# THURSDAY 21 NOVEMBER 2019

**Louise Ryland-Epton**  
**'By Pity and by Terror'? A Contrary  
View of Workhouses**

At the end of the seventeenth century, a Bristol merchant, John Carey, followed a successful experiment in the operation of a workhouse in the city, by publishing a pamphlet extolling its virtues. This proved hugely influential, and as a result began the interest and popularity of workhouses, as a means of providing welfare provision. By the early nineteenth century, however, tales of workhouse deprivation and scandal had begun to circulate influencing the public perception, decades before the publication of *Oliver Twist*. Yet these institutions cannot all be viewed in the same way. The workhouse at Westbury-on-Trym was entirely different. In his description, one historian in the 1960s declared, 'even today it would be unlikely for an old person in a geriatric ward to receive such good treatment.' While this may be an exaggeration, there is no doubt that the treatment of inmates at Westbury was meticulously planned and administered with the 'comforts' of the poor in mind.

*Louise Ryland-Epton is studying for a doctorate at the Open University and is a contributor to the Victoria County History of Wiltshire.*

# WEDNESDAY 11 DECEMBER 2019

**Prof. Ronald Hutton**  
**The Western Magical Tradition**

Is there a distinctive and continuous tradition of ritual magic in Europe, and if so, what are its characteristics, where did it start, and how did it develop? This talk is designed to answer those questions, by going on a journey from ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia, through the worlds of Rome, Judaism, Islam and Latin Christianity. It will follow a trail of manuscripts, amulets and talismans in a bid to construct a coherent history for Western magic.

*Ronald Hutton is Professor of History at the University of Bristol.*

*This talk complements the Bristol Museum and Art Gallery exhibition, 'Do You Believe in Magic'?*



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**Regional History Centre  
UWE Bristol**

# THURSDAY 23 JANUARY 2020

**Prof. David Evans**

**From Bedpans to Budget Cuts:  
a Personal History of the NHS  
in Bristol**

2018 was the 70th anniversary of the NHS in Britain. There have been several initiatives to mark this anniversary by capturing the history of the NHS nationally; this seminar seeks to make a small contribution through reflections on my professional and patient experiences of the NHS locally. My personal history of the NHS in Bristol began in 1982 as a student nurse, often amongst the bedpans as student nurses were commonly regarded as cheap (and fairly unskilled) labour in those days. In later years I found myself as a director of public health and a health authority non-executive board member dealing with financial crises and budget cuts. In this talk I will use some episodes from my personal experiences of the NHS as both a health professional and as a patient to explore some of the major developments and tensions in the NHS from its inception in 1948 to its 70th anniversary in 2018. Themes to explore include patient voice and patient safety, evidence-based health care, health care versus public health, hierarchies of power in the health professions and the regularly re-occurring crises in NHS funding.

*David Evans is Professor in Health Services Research at UWE, Bristol.*

# THURSDAY 20 FEBRUARY 2020

**Jessica Moody**

**Slavery, Public History, and the  
British Country House**

Many country houses in the south west of England have historic links to slavery. Bristol merchants moving out of the city to larger rural homes, in addition to the more 'in-direct' wealth derived by families through slave-based economies or colonial careers, has created a complex connection between elite rural residences in the West Country and the forced labour of enslaved African people in British colonies. Despite such connections, present-day interpretation of such sites in ways which make these links clear is limited and complicated by the ways in which the country house is viewed by many as an iconic emblem of a quintessentially "British" heritage. This talk explores the issues and challenges surrounding the public history of slavery at British country houses through the case of Dyrham Park (National Trust), South Gloucestershire.

*Dr Jessica Moody is Lecturer in Public History at the University of Bristol.*

# THURSDAY 19 MARCH 2020

**John Morgan**

**Dredging up the Past: a Slimy  
History of the Severn Estuary  
and Bristol Channel**

Walk along the Avon at low tide and you cannot fail to miss the glistening layers of silt that line its banks. The Bristol Channel has the second largest tidal range in the world, and with that comes enormous movements of silt. These movements have blocked rivers and contributed to flooding, lain on banks and been used in industry, been dug from ditches and spread over fields, and, recently, provided inspiration for historians and artists. This paper explores how people across the Severn Estuary have lived with silt, slime and sand over the last five hundred years, and provides historical background on plans for their future management.

*Dr John Morgan is Lecturer in Early Modern History at the University of Manchester.*

# THURSDAY 16 APRIL 2020

**Prof Nicholas Rogers**

**Murder on the Middle Passage:  
The trial of Captain Kimber**

In April 1792 Captain John Kimber of the Bristol ship, *Recovery*, was tried for the murder of a slave. The charge was very unusual, though not entirely unprecedented, for enslaved Africans were generally regarded as “cargo”. In the famous insurance case of 1783 involving African captives thrown off the *Zong* slave ship, they were deemed the legal equivalent of horses. This talk traces the career path of the captain, the circumstances of the death, the drama of the trial, and how and why this particular case became a cause célèbre in the battle to establish an enslaved African’s legal personality and to abolish the slave trade. It also tracks the afterlife of the Kimber affair in Bristol and abolition history

*Nicholas Rogers is Distinguished Professor in History at York University, Toronto.*

# THURSDAY 21 MAY 2020

**Corinna Wagner**

**The Gothic Pre-Raphaelites:  
the Uses of the Past and  
Modern Science**

Pre-Raphaelite artists were fascinated by many of the ideas and controversies that shaped the Victorian age, from geology and botany to anatomy, physiology, and psychology. The influence of new scientific theories, including evolutionary biology, can be seen in the techniques, naturalistic forms, and themes of their work. However, although they sometimes combined a fascination with the Middle Ages with an interest in modern science, they also used the medieval past to challenge some of the key aims of evolutionary biology and medicine. This talk investigates some of the ways in which gothic revivalism offered the Pre-Raphaelites new ways of looking at the human body and of representing humans in the natural and built environment.

*Dr Corinna Wagner is Associate Professor of Literatures, Art History and Visual Culture at the University of Exeter.*

*This talk complements the Pre-Raphaelites exhibition at Bristol Museum and Art Gallery (16 May-27 Sept).*

# THURSDAY 18 JUNE 2020

**Jane Bradney**

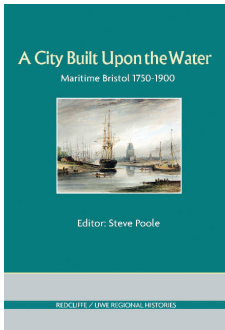
**'Perfectly Secluded from the "Busy Hum of Man": Humphry Repton and the Blaise Castle Landscape**

Humphry Repton (1752-1818) worked up his ideas for the Blaise Castle landscape over the course of two site visits in 1795. The greatest challenge and, at the same time the greatest asset of the place, was the steep terrain surrounding the Hazel Brook. The greatest disappointment, the inadequacy and unreliability of the water in the brook itself. Repton's response was pragmatic. The result delightful; with Nicholas Pevsner describing Blaise Castle as 'the ne plus ultra of picturesque layout and design'. The proposal was recorded in a series of watercolours explained by copperplate text compiled at Repton's home in Romford, Essex during February 1796. The bound volume known as a 'Red Book' is now held at the Bristol City Museum and Art Gallery. This talk will explore what the landscape at Blaise Castle and the Red Book can tell us about Repton's character, the passage of his career as a landscape gardener, his working methods and his views on landscape design and architecture

*Dr Jane Bradney is an independent lecturer and researcher on garden and landscape history.*

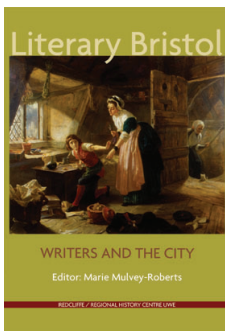
Look out for these fully illustrated Regional History Centre books too, available from good Bristol booksellers or direct from Redcliffe Press

[redcliffepress.co.uk/products-page](http://redcliffepress.co.uk/products-page)



**Steve Poole (ed.), A City Built Upon the Water: Maritime Bristol 1750–1900**

Eight experts write about aspects of life in the city docks from 1750 to the end of the nineteenth century. Topics include leisure and commerce and the development of the Floating Harbour and the Bristol Dock Company, the perilous lives crewing the triangular-trade slaving ships, and the controversial myth of Edward Colston. Also studied in some depth are the rise and fall of the Hotwell Spa, the lives of the Pill Pilots whose job it was to safely negotiate incoming ships up the tortuous Avon Gorge, crime and maritime trade, 1770–1800, foreign sailors and knife crime in nineteenth-century Bristol, and Bristol artists' visual beautification of the waterfront.



**Marie Mulvey-Roberts (ed.), Literary Bristol: Writers and the City**

Literary Bristol tells the story of Bristol through its writers. Bristol has been recognised as a thriving port and commercial and industrial centre, as well as a city of churches, yet insufficient attention has been paid to its literary importance, even though more writers are connected to this 'Venice of the West' than almost any other city in England, apart from London. There are over a hundred significant authors, poets and playwrights linked to Bristol, which allow it to take its place as one of the world's great literary centres. Bristol can lay claim to a significant number of literary firsts in poetry, prose and drama.



**Madge Dresser (ed.), Women and the City: Bristol 1373–2000**

Women and the City is the first sustained study of the history of the women who lived in Bristol. Lavishly illustrated, it charts the changing lot of ordinary women in one of Britain's most important cities over the past 600 years, and seeks to document the expanding channels of female influence on the city's economic, cultural and political life since medieval times.

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**Emma Prescott, Regional History Centre Administrator, RBI, Northavon House, Frenchay Campus, UWE Bristol, Coldharbour Lane, Bristol BS16 1QY.**

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