



# □ BATH □ HISTORY

VOLUME X  
2005

# **BATH HISTORY**

**VOLUME X**

**edited by Brenda J. Buchanan**

**Millstream Books  
2005**

The Editor wishes to thank the expert readers who have helped so greatly in the preparation of this volume.

The Editor and authors are always pleased to receive comments and information from readers. In the first instance please contact the Editor through the publisher at Millstream Books.

First published in 2005 by Millstream Books, 18 The Tynning, Bath BA2 6AL

Set in Palatino and Times New Roman

Printed in Great Britain by Short Run Press Ltd, Exeter

© Frank Thorn, John Wroughton, Michael Bishop, Brenda J. Buchanan, Edward Yescombe, Holger Th. Gräf, William Evans, Angus Buchanan 2005

ISBN 0 948975 74 1

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data:  
a catalogue record for this book is available from The British Library

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In the notes at the end of each article in this volume, the place of publication of books, so far as is known, is London unless otherwise stated.



## A Celebration of *Bath History*: A Personal View

It may not seem entirely fitting that the editor of the last five volumes of *Bath History* should write a note of celebration for this journal, with which she has been closely concerned for many years. But I do so precisely because I know something of the history of this series since its inception in the mid-1980s, and have had the responsibility of editing the journal and bringing it to publication since the mid-1990s. Credit for the concept of *Bath History* must go to Simon Hunt, then of the Bath Museums Service. He secured the initial funding, and the support of the major archaeological and conservationist societies in Bath: the Bath Archaeological Trust, the Bath Preservation Trust, and the Bath Society, who all nominated the members of an editorial committee. But it was Sam (as Simon was more familiarly known) Hunt whose initial editing of the fledgling publication set the standard for form, design, and quality.

The early volumes were published by Alan Sutton of Gloucester, and a neat scheme for dividing the distribution between commercial outlets in the form of bookshops, and voluntary outlets in the form of supporting societies was devised. The latter, including for example the very-recently established History of Bath Research Group, were encouraged to make advance orders in bulk, to sell at a discount to members. Also participating in the scheme were the privately-funded museums such as the Holburne, and before Sam Hunt's career took him away from Bath, an arrangement had been made for substantial sales to an organization catering for the education of American students in the city.

By the time volume III was published in 1990, *Bath History* had a new editor, Trevor Fawcett, and a new officer from the Bath Museums Service on the editorial committee, Stephen Bird. Trevor's work on the history of Bath is well-known, and is attested by the many acknowledgements from later writers who have consulted him on matters about which he is almost uniquely able to give advice. He was the editor of volumes III (1990), IV (1992), and V (1994). The steady but unobtrusive support given by Stephen Bird is less well-known, and also deserves recognition. Not only does Stephen have a good eye for design and an instinct for an attractive cover, he is also an excellent negotiator, as we were to find when he persuaded the Bath Archaeological Trust, then in its heyday, to step in to underwrite the somewhat precarious finances of *Bath History*. This move rescued the journal from the threatening situation caused by the loss of support from societies, who no longer felt able to guarantee the purchase of a certain

number of copies at a favourable price. From the mid-1990s these new financial arrangements, backed by a change of publisher to the Bath-based Millstream Books, together with the introduction of a new editor as I took over from Trevor Fawcett after his successful stint, have given a decade of stability to *Bath History*, during which a second set of five volumes has been published.

I must also mention particularly the publisher with whom I have worked on the last five volumes. Tim Graham is already well-known in the literary community for the many volumes of local interest that he has produced. In the publication of *Bath History* his work has been outstanding, not only for the strong commitment that has led him to combine the role of copy editor and illustration-advisor with that of publisher, but also for the sense of design that has contributed so much to the elegance of the finished volumes.

This accomplishment has I hope been matched by the high quality and broad range of the articles published – 40 of them on my watch in volumes VI to X. The cumulative index indicates the breadth of subjects presented, and the *Notes on Contributors* tell something about the authors. Some have been well-known to me already, whilst others have made contact to suggest a possible article. With regard to all the articles submitted, the advice of ‘expert readers’ has been a great help. The range of authors from within and beyond Bath shows that like the city that is its home, *Bath History* has the capacity to combine the unique quality of being both intensely local, yet at the same time of considerable international significance.

Now, after two decades, ten volumes, and some 80 contributors, we have reached the point where the financial underpinning by the Bath Archaeological Trust, which has been so much appreciated, has been lost. In an increasingly competitive archaeological world the Trust has been forced to step back from all its activities, including its exceptionally public-spirited support of *Bath History*. With no supporting organization and subscription list, but with plans for *Bath History* X well-advanced, it has seemed that the only way to keep faith with our contributors who had already worked hard on their articles, and with our readers keen for a tenth volume in the series, was for us to dig deep in our pockets and provide the funding ourselves, helped in large part by the sympathetic role played by our publisher. I can now only thank all who have played any part in the happy collaborations that have produced the ten attractive volumes at the high and interesting standard that has been the hallmark of *Bath History*.

Brenda Buchanan, 29 September 2005



## Notes on Contributors

Dr. Frank Thorn was born and educated in Weston-super-Mare. He taught Latin at King Edward's School in Bath for 34 years, during which time he also lectured on Medieval Latin at the University of Bristol and helped to train teachers there. Between 1975 and 1986 he and his wife Caroline edited ten counties for the Phillimore edition of Domesday Book, and he is currently working on a possible revision of this edition for a fully searchable CD-Rom. He was maps and place-names editor for the Alecto facsimile edition of Great Domesday Book.

Dr John Wroughton was formerly Headmaster of King Edward's School, Bath. A Fellow of the Royal Historical Society, he now lectures extensively throughout the west country on seventeenth-century topics. A contributor to the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2005), he has written many books including *A Community at War: the Civil War in Bath and North Somerset* (1992); *The Stuart Age* (1997); *An Unhappy Civil War: the Experiences of Ordinary People in the Western Counties* (1999); and *Stuart Bath: Life in the Forgotten City* (2004).

Michael Bishop taught at Kingswood School, Bath, from 1950 to 1987, as Senior Classics Master and subsequently as Director of Studies. After retirement he remained at Kingswood until 2001 as Director of its Wesley Centre and School Archivist. Making models of (usually) vanished buildings has long been a major interest. He is married to Philippa Bishop, formerly Curator of the Holburne Museum and a contributor to *Bath History*.

Dr Brenda Buchanan, Visiting Fellow at the University of Bath, became in 1986 the first chair of the History of Bath Research Group. She has edited *Bath History* since 1994, and was invited to contribute biographies of figures of local interest to the *Oxford DNB* (2005). Currently chair of the UK Gunpowder and Explosives History Group, her recent publications include 'The Art and Mystery of Making Gunpowder' in Steele and Dorland (eds.), *The Heirs of Archimedes* (MIT Press, USA, 2005), and 'Making Fireworks' in Buchanan et al., *Gunpowder Plots* (Penguin, 2005).

Edward Yescombe, a former banker, is now a consultant in project finance and public-private partnerships.

Dr Holger Th. Gräf is an Akademischer Rat (academic councillor) at the Hessisches Landesamt für geschichtliche Landeskunde, a research institute within the Hessian Ministry of Science and Culture. He has studied in Germany, the UK, and the US, and has published widely on the urban, diplomatic and cultural history of central and western Europe in the early modern period.

William Evans was secretary and solicitor to the University of the West of England, Bristol. He is honorary treasurer and membership secretary of the Avon Local History Association.

R. Angus Buchanan is now Emeritus Professor of the History of Technology at the University of Bath, which he joined in 1960. He is a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries and of the Royal Historical Society. He is Honorary President of the Bristol Industrial Archaeological Society and of the National Association for Industrial Archaeology. His latest book is *Brunel: The Life and Times of I.K. Brunel* (Hambledon and London, 2002).

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Bath History is a periodical featuring articles on aspects of the history of Bath. It includes recent research on the city as well as articles of a wider historical interest relating to Bath, and aims to present these studies in a way which will be attractive to everyone with an interest in the past.

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**COVER:** Lithograph of Brunel's timber skew bridge approaching Bath Spa Station from the west, from J.C. Bourne, *History and Description of the Great Western Railway*, 1846.

ISBN 0 948975 74-1



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