

H I S T O R Y O F B A T H
R E S E A R C H G R O U P

NEWSLETTER 1

September 1986

It is hoped to send out at least three informal newsletters a year, though this will depend to some extent on what members are able to contribute. The compilers (Philippa Bishop and Trevor Fawcett) would welcome any news items relevant to Bath history, including notices of lectures, courses, conferences, exhibitions and other events, as well as details of new and forthcoming publications.

In addition it is proposed to experiment with a "Queries Section," where members can ask for information and suggestions on their research - provided such queries are kept to fairly specific topics capable of succinct replies. Brief questions-and-answers sessions might also be tried at the regular monthly meetings. In this case questions should (for preference) be sent to the Secretary at least several days before a meeting. If this is impracticable please hand them in (i.e. in writing) immediately before the start of each meeting.

GROUP NEWS

1. The Committee for 1986-87 is as follows:-

Philip Hemmings (Chairman) now <i>Brenda Buchanan</i>	
Trevor Fawcett (Secretary)	(For addresses
Mary Wills (Treasurer) - <i>Library</i>	please see
Philippa Bishop - <i>Art</i>	accompanying
Brenda Buchanan	List of Members)
Paul Cresswell - <i>Literature</i>	
Judith Samuel	
<i>Chris Pound - Culture</i>	

2. The social meeting held at the Herschel House and Museum on 2 July attracted about thirty members. Several of these had recently joined following publicity in the local press early in June. The total membership now stands at over sixty.
3. The programme of meetings for 1986 - 87 is enclosed. Please note that venues vary. Otherwise meetings are always held on the first Wednesday in the month and start at 7.30 p.m.

PUBLICATIONS

1. Bath History, vol. 1 (1986)

The first issue of this intended annual publication contains eight essays on a range of topics from the early settlement of the Bath region to an account of Major Davis, Surveyor of Works in the city, 1862 - 1902. Other authors discuss William Smith's map of 1588, the pioneering water closet design of Sir John Harington of Kelston, English spas, gambling and prostitution in Georgian Bath, the Hoare family of artists and the local Jewish community in the 18th and 19th centuries. Inevitably in a publication aimed at the 'serious-popular' market (and with a number of contributions originating as lunchtime lectures at the Guildhall), the topographical, biographical and social-historical approaches predominate but most of the articles present some fresh research and are buttressed by notes and references. The issue is attractively designed, decently illustrated (except for a few over-reduced maps) and most reasonably priced at £5.95.

2. Southern History

This scholarly journal covers the history of the region bordering the English Channel plus the counties of Somerset, Avon, Wiltshire, Gloucester, Oxford, Buckingham, Berkshire and Surrey. Volumes 1 - 6 (1979 - 84) were published commercially but from volume 7 onwards appear under the auspices of the Southern History Society (founded 1984) which also holds occasional conferences in different parts of the region (a recent one being in Bath). Volume 8 (1986) will contain two articles of local interest: "Aspects of Capital Formation: some insights from North Somerset, 1750 - 1830" by Brenda Buchanan and "Class and Politics in Bath, 1832 - 48" by D. McNulty. Members of SHS (subscription for individuals £10.00) receive the journal free; to non-members it costs £14.00 per volume.

3. AIHCAM

The latest issue of the magazine of the Avon Industrial Buildings Trust (Summer 1986) includes articles on the Clifton Rocks railway, Avonmouth Dock and the Regeneration of Weston-super-Mare. Price £1.95.

4. Millstream Books

A new Bath publisher (at Whiteman's Bookshop in Orange Grove) has launched its series of local titles with Country Walks around Bath by the architectural historian, Tim Mowl. Forthcoming are Chris Pound's The Genius of Bath and two transport histories: The Somerset and Dorset Railway at Midford and The Buses and Trams of Bath. A book on Prior Park and its grounds is also planned.

5. Two other recent publications worth noting are Barry Cunliffe The City of Bath (Alan Sutton £6.95) and J.H. Bettey Wessex from AD 1000 (Longmans hardback £19.95, paperback £10.95). See also items listed under individual names in the List of Members.

LECTURES, COURSES, EVENTS, etc.

1. The University of Bristol, Department of Extra-Mural Studies, has organized two relevant courses: "The Wessex Region: history, landscape and buildings" (tutor - J.H. Bettey, eight meetings from 2 October, 1986, at Holy Trinity Church, near Queen Square) and "Industrial Archaeology of Bath and District" (tutor - Joan Day and others, six meetings from 6 October at the Technical College, Avon Street). The same body holds a one-day course on "The Archaeology of Bath: recent work at the University of Bath on Saturday, 22 November, 1986. Professor Barry Cunliffe and a panel of speakers, chaired by Mick Aston, will continue the biennial review of the archaeological exploration of the city.
2. The Townswomen's Guild intends holding a display of material related to the parish of Walcot, the result of eighteen months' research by a group of its members. HBRG members are invited to view the exhibition in Walcot Methodist Church Schoolroom on Wednesday, 29 October, 1986, between 3 - 9 p.m.

Q U E R I E S

(and Mike Chapman)

Mr. Neil Macmillen of the Avon Industrial Buildings Trust is working on the industrial history of Camerton in co-operation with Camerton Parish Council. Anyone knowing of relevant material that he might examine should contact him directly at Bristol Old Station, Temple Gate, Bristol (Telephone BRISTOL 291349).

POTENTIAL NEW MEMBERS

If you know of anyone who would be interested in joining the Group or would like further information about it please ask them to get in touch with:-

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