

FRIENDS OF THE CENTRE FOR WEST MIDLANDS HISTORY

SHARING THE PAST WITH THE FUTURE

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CREATING 'ORIGINS' – A MEDIEVAL HISTORY GALLERY



Freelance curator Sarah Hayes gave a stimulating presentation on the medieval section of the History Galleries at Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery to a large and appreciative audience at the University on 20th May 2013.

Her talk specifically focussed on narrative development and object selection as well as demonstrating how gallery interactives have been used to showcase new research relating to Birmingham's medieval past. 'Origins' is the first of five new history galleries and thanks to recent archaeological and historical discoveries, it is already proving to be a significant resource for local people, students and academics alike, promoting this pioneering research as well as challenging past misconceptions about Birmingham's status in the Middle Ages.

The gallery has taken advantage of displaying the many thirteenth and fourteenth century finds discovered during

the Bull Ring excavations between 1998 and 2000, alongside the fortuitous discovery in 2007 of two documents also dating from the same period. These documents which list the names and very often the trades of Birmingham's inhabitants perfectly complement the archaeology, working in tandem to build a comprehensive picture of the town's medieval character. Together, this evidence has changed the face of what we knew about Birmingham's medieval origins and has given us a platform to promote this 'new' chapter of West Midland's history.

One of the most imaginative elements of 'Origins' is a detailed model, which recreates the street pattern, buildings and activities of the town. Sarah's film of the model which concluded her talk revealed how features of medieval Birmingham can be made accessible to children and adults.

Malcolm Dick

DR. JOSEPH PRIESTLEY'S HOME AT FAIR HILL by Roy Billingham



Priestley's house at Fair Hill, Sparkbrook, Edgar Fahs Smith Collection, University of Pennsylvania

At the Research Showcase presented by Jonathan Atherton in May 2012 we learnt of the impact of the Birmingham 'Church and King' riots that broke out on July 14th, 1791. One aspect of these riots was the wanton destruction of personal property, mainly that belonging to Dissenters, and this included Dr. Priestley's home at Fair Hill, Sparkbrook. Our knowledge of his house is based almost entirely on the images created by contemporary artists both during and immediately after the burning and ransacking of the house. However an unattributed drawing of the house prior to these events exists in an American university, as illustrated (above)

In anticipation of the Priestley family's removal from Calne in 1780, his brother-in-law, John 'Iron Mad' Wilkinson, suggested Birmingham as an ideal location due to its attitude of religious acceptance towards the Dissenting community as well as its proximity to his wife's relatives and many scientific friends, particularly those in the Lunar Society. Its stagecoach connections to London would offer Priestley the opportunity to maintain his contact with his religious friends as well as his scientific colleagues in the Royal Society.

Priestley readily agreed to his brother-in-law's proposal to purchase for his family a fine Georgian residence on the Fair Hill Estate in Sparkbrook, then a rural location in the Parish of Kings Norton about

1¼ miles south of Birmingham town centre. The house stood on the western side of the Stratford Turnpike. Access to the property was from this road "near the Sparke Brooke turnpike gate" by way of a carriageway that ran alongside a meadow and a boundary garden wall.

The house, probably built c.1750, was a substantial brick-built residence. It was a double-pile structure and comprised a five-bay, three-storey frontage with classical six-over-six double hung sash windows at ground and first floor levels and smaller three-over-six sash windows on the second floor. The central front entrance had a shallow canopy supported by two freestanding plain staved columns with simple Tuscan capitals. A prominent cornice above the upper range of windows extended the full width of the frontage with a parapet above it that extended around the sidewalls to the depth of one pile. There was a two-storey extension at the rear that probably contained the scullery and servants' quarters.

The house, shown in the sketch (above), had a layout that would have conformed to Classical Georgian practice with a drawing room and morning room either side of the central hallway at the front with a dining room and parlour to the rear. Upstairs there would have been a master bedroom with adjoining dressing room with another front bedroom at the front and two further bedrooms at the rear to accommodate the Priestleys' four children, Sally, Jos, Will and Harry. Priestley's extensive library was in a long room on the upper floor.

In the yard at the rear of the property were the usual outhouses all under one roof and some thirty yards away stood the two-storey laboratory that Priestley had built soon after taking up residence. This laboratory had a side-entrance with single-bay windows on the southern side and a gable-end chimney on the western side. One can just see the laboratory in the contemporary sketch.

West Midlands Studies: A Forgotten Journal? by Stephen Roberts

Thirty years ago I wrote the first essays – on politics in late Victorian and Edwardian Birmingham – that I intended for publication. They duly appeared in *West Midlands Studies* (vol. 15, 1982; vol. 16, 1983; vol. 18, 1985). Needless to say I was thrilled, at the outset of my career as an historian, when I discovered that my work was cited in Marie Rowlands *The West Midlands from 1000AD* (1987) and Peter Marsh's magisterial *Joseph Chamberlain* (1994). But that was that. Since that time I have not seen any of my youthful efforts referred to by anyone. However, when I came to think about this recently, after reading another essay where the author seemed blissfully unaware of my own relevant research on the subject, I realised that I rarely saw work published in *West Midlands Studies* cited anywhere. I tried searching for the journal on Google – there were traces but nothing substantial. It was as though the journal had never existed.

But it had. *West Midlands Studies* appeared once a year, under the auspices of Wolverhampton Polytechnic, from 1966 until 1985. The historians of Wolverhampton Polytechnic, it should be said, were pioneers in our field. From 1973 an element of regional history appeared in their BA in Humanities. Then, in 1977, they founded their Centre for West Midlands Historical Studies. A taught MA in the history of the region

was introduced in 1982 - and MPhil and PhD theses were soon underway, too. Just like *West Midlands Studies*, this Centre no longer exists; but, without doubt, at both undergraduate and postgraduate level, Wolverhampton's historians did much to stimulate research into the history of the West Midlands.

West Midlands Studies was a cracking little journal. It looked good to begin with – each volume featured the same vivid Black Country industrial scene. So interesting was the content that I usually read most, if not all, of each issue. The contributions ranged across the centuries – from taxation in medieval Shrewsbury to the industrialists who preceded Abraham Darby at Ironbridge, from landownership in Shropshire and Cheshire in the early modern period to elementary education in the nineteenth century West Midlands. Of course, there were typos – contributors weren't sent proofs – but this was invariably high-quality research. I am proud that my own modest contributions were in such good company.

All, however, is not lost. An almost complete run of *West Midlands Studies* can be found in the University Library. I'll even tell you where you can find it ... per q DA670.M65A1. Go and delve into it ... you never know what you might discover!

Friends' visit to the Leasowes, Halesowen, 21st July 2013 by Sue Thomas

The Friends' visit to the Leasowes, William Shenstone's landscape garden in Halesowen, took place on a pleasantly temperate day in July. The group was glad of the break in the heat wave as it meant that we could fully enjoy the walk led by John Hemingway.

Now a public park and golf course, The Leasowes was originally an eighteenth-century farm which was converted into one of the earliest *ferme ornées* or ornamental farms by the poet, William Shenstone. The public area of the grounds is being restored so that visitors can appreciate Shenstone's original plan. The naturalistic landscape, revealed in an originally circular walk, includes natural, classical and Gothic features, together with cascades and waterfalls.

John Hemingway is researching Shenstone and his landscape for a PhD at the University of Birmingham,

having developed his interest whilst working as Archaeological Officer for Dudley Borough Council. John explained that Shenstone's achievement makes him a key figure in the English landscape tradition. His gardens were much visited in the eighteenth century by visitors from home and abroad, including Thomas Jefferson and John Adams.

Our tour was enhanced by John's knowledgeable explanations of the key garden features, by the accompanying detailed and colourful maps and even recitations of Shenstone's poetry at the appropriate points! Thanks are due to him and to Elaine Mitchell for arranging our visit.

Made in the Jewellery Quarter: People, Place and Things

by Sally Hoban

This year's joint Birmingham Assay Office and University of Birmingham Day School took place on Saturday 15th June. It was aimed at anyone who wanted to learn more about the diverse and fascinating history of Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter and its surrounding area.

Made in the Jewellery Quarter: People, Place and Things featured talks from six speakers drawn from the Assay Office, the University of Birmingham, local heritage organisations and local industry. Delegates described the event as hugely successful and the speakers as outstanding.

Sally Hoban provided an update on education and training from the Birmingham Assay Office, Dr Sue Tungate spoke about Matthew Boulton's Soho Mint and Sue Thomas discussed the making of the Jewellery Quarter as a dissenting community in the early 19th Century. The Director of the Birmingham Conservation Trust, Simon Buteux, talked about the importance of heritage in the Quarter, including an update on the Newman Brothers Coffin Fitting Works. Finally, John Berkeley OBE, former Chairman of Brandauer Holdings (a long-established precision engineering firm on the edge of the Jewellery Quarter), discussed the Birmingham Pen Trade.

Sally Hoban explained: 'The Birmingham Assay Office has played an integral role in the history of the Jewellery Quarter and actively supports the University's history teaching and research through joint public engagement activities such as this Day School. The Assay Office also collaborates regularly with local heritage organisations to help tell the ongoing history of Birmingham's industrial heritage.'

Dr Malcolm Dick, Director of the Centre of West Midlands History at The University of Birmingham said: 'I am delighted to be working with the Birmingham Assay Office on high profile history events such as this Day School and I look forward to developing this relationship further in the future.'

Britain's Industrial Revolution: the making of a manufacturing people, 1700-1870

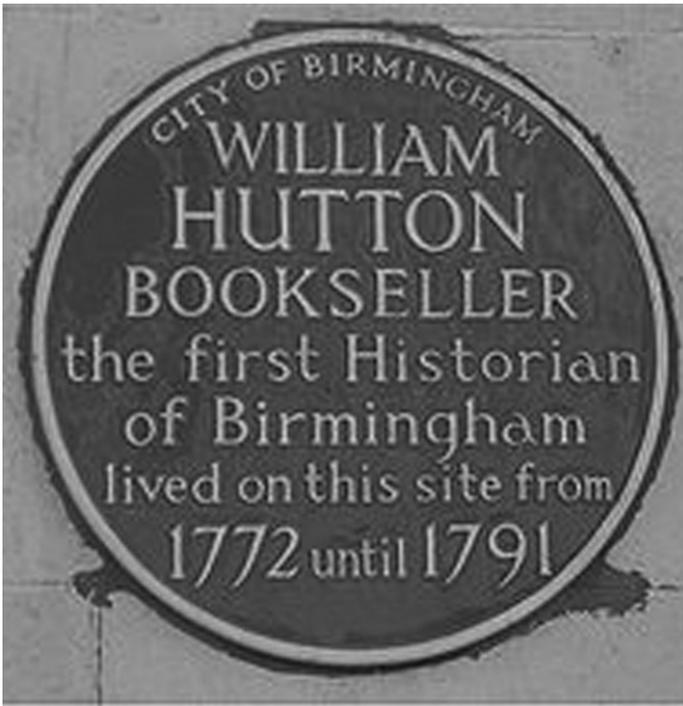
Barrie Trinder is well-known to those interested in the Industrial Revolution and the history of Shropshire but his published canon extends well beyond those boundaries. He has contributed major works in his own name on many aspects of industrial archaeology and heritage; has written on industrialisation in a number of other countries; on probate inventories of inhabitants of the Severn Gorge; and Victorian lodging-houses in market towns. In his current book he has returned to familiar territory and this splendid volume of 676 pages and more than 600 illustrations deals with how the Industrial Revolution left its mark in all corners of Britain.

At this book launch Barrie presented many contemporary images, in addition to his own photographs of heritage sites. He spoke with great authority upon the ironmasters, the development of the transport system and the influence of the mills, such as Richard Arkwright's Cromford Mill and Lombe's silk mill at Derby, following which most of the audience staggered away under the weight of their newly acquired copies of this excellent book.

The launch of Barrie Trinder's new book *Britain's Industrial Revolution: the Making of a Manufacturing People, 1700-1870* (Carnegie Publishing, 2013) was held at the University of Birmingham on Tuesday 21 May 2013.

Roger Bruton

WILLIAM HUTTON: BIRMINGHAM'S HISTORIAN



American academic Dr Susan Whyman, gave a talk to 'Friends' on a local historian, William Hutton (1723 – 1815). She discussed his rise from rags to riches, and why he was treated so badly during the Priestley Riots of 1791. During his long life, Hutton first devoted himself to making money, then to public service, and later to writing and travel. Hutton had a deep love of Birmingham and an urge to serve, improving not only himself but also the town. He ended his life as a wealthy leader of local society, revelling in his ascent from worker to master, but still believing that all men were equal.

Hutton was born into abject poverty, working as stocking knitter for his uncle in Nottingham. A female ex-teacher taught him to read and write and another mentor helped out with a gift of £1 worth of second hand books. Hutton taught himself to bind books and after his uncle's death in 1746, he walked to and from London, buying cheap books to sell on. By 1750 he had set himself up as a bookseller in Birmingham.

At this time Birmingham was an expanding commercial centre where self-made men could make a fortune. Due to hard work, and an excellent location on the corner of High St and New Street, Hutton made a success of selling cheap books, almanacs, bibles and primers, and set up a circulating library.

Once Hutton started to make money, he was able to devote himself to public service in Birmingham, including becoming Overseer and Guardian of the Poor. This happy state of affairs was halted by calamity in 1791. The Priestley Riots destroyed his paper business; his town-house, shop and warehouse were stripped of their contents, and his house at Saltley was destroyed.

Prior to the riots, he had collected material for the first history of Birmingham which he completed in 1781. This was considered by Dr William Withering as 'the best topographical history he had ever seen'. He also made extensive journeys to various parts of the country, writing further histories, poems, and travelogues. In his seventies he undertook a walk along the length of Hadrian's Wall, having travelled there on foot from Birmingham, and wrote about his expedition. He was made a Fellow of the Antiquarian Society of Scotland. Hutton was an author who revelled in being unusual, and wrote with wit and candour and made opinionated digressions on what he enjoyed. He aimed to inform but also to entertain, being interested in people, social status, and the nation. Hutton had two surviving children, Catherine and Thomas. His daughter published his autobiography posthumously.

Sue Tungate

Committee Member Profile: Sarah Hayes



After graduating from The University of Birmingham in 2006 with a degree in Medieval English and History, together with nearly two years' experience working in local museums, I decided that I wanted to combine my passion for history with a long-term career in the heritage sector. My ultimate goal was to become a curator but I knew there were a few steps in between before I could achieve that. I returned to full-time education, this time at the University of Leicester studying for a Master's degree in Museum Studies, which equipped me with the necessary theoretical and practical skills to advance in the museum sector. Before graduating at the end of 2008, I was fortunate enough to secure employment on a Heritage Lottery Fund research project at the Black Country Living Museum which involved the reconstruction of a period high street.

Subsequent projects kept me in the West Midlands, but it wasn't until 2010 that I achieved my goal of becoming a curator and earned a place working on a dream project: The Birmingham History Galleries at BMAG. Even better still, I was given the opportunity to apply my passion for medieval history to this project by leading on the medieval section, 'Origins'. The real delight for me, however, was working with local specialists such as Mike Hodder and George Demidowicz to incorporate their latest research on medieval Birmingham in to this display.

'Origins' is innovative because of that and the Medieval Model Interactive, which sits at the heart of the gallery, is testament to the many efforts of the people involved and their commitment to ensuring that the various aspects of this project were as accurate as possible.

Based on my work on the Birmingham History Galleries I was given the opportunity to work as Project Curator managing the final stages of the We Made It, Nuts, Bolts, Gadgets and Gizmos gallery at Thinktank, Birmingham Science Museum. This exhibition is inspired by the manufacturing past of the West Midlands and perfectly complements the History Galleries, even displaying identical objects. To have worked on two major capital projects in the space of two years, both centred upon Birmingham, has in many ways allowed me to achieve many career goals at an early stage in mine. Just when I feared my time working on local history projects was slowing down, I was overjoyed to be asked to join the committee of the Friends of the Centre of West Midlands History. Having already been given the opportunity to speak at both the Birmingham History Day and for the People, Places and Things series of seminars, I am very much looking forward to continuing my contribution to celebrating the history of this region with many more projects to come.

‘Middle Class philanthropy in nineteenth-century Birmingham: John Avins and his charities’ by Janet Berry

John Avins was typical of many successful middle-class nineteenth-century Birmingham businessmen and manufacturers. He was born in 1816, grew up and worked in the Worcester Wharf area of Birmingham around where the Hyatt stands today and his family were largely japanners, sawers and woodturners. In 1858 he and his brother sold up the family firms and John Avins ‘retired’ to Moseley to a substantial home with extensive grounds, Highfield House, Church Road, Moseley and established himself as a ‘gentleman’. Moseley was then a delightful, small village close to Birmingham, endowed with good water supplies, a healthy hill-top location, some fine gentlemen’s seats, easy access to Birmingham and later, a railway station.

John Avins contributed generously through subscriptions and donations to Birmingham hospitals and institutions, particularly The General Hospital, The Orthopaedic Hospital and Blue Coat Charity School, and many other charitable causes, both local and national. He took on various local civic roles, such as Guardian for Kings Norton Union Parish and committee member for ‘Public Lighting in Moseley’, and became very involved in the local church, St Mary’s. He bought up land around his house for middle-class housing with large gardens and on long leases, thereby protecting his environment and helping to develop Moseley as a middle-class enclave. He was involved in a huge range of businesses, holding various important positions, and dealt enthusiastically in shares across numerous areas.

John Avins died at Highfield in 1891. In his will he left money to causes that simultaneously advertised his name, such as money to the RNLI for two named

boats, for prizes and stained glass windows in his name and for the John Avins Science Scholarship to Birmingham University, which still runs today. More particularly he left substantial amounts to The General Hospital and the Orthopaedic Hospital. However, he left the bulk of his money to The John Avins Trust to be invested and distributed to charitable institutions designated by him and to any other medical or quasi-medical charities deemed appropriate by the Trust. Before the NHS, the focus was on hospitals and subsequently the Trust gave grants to various homes such as homes for the elderly and the mentally and physically handicapped, and to charities related to specific diseases. Over the period 1927-47, The John Avins Trust distributed £18,975 and between 1948 and 1978 some £150,000. This Trust still operates today along the same lines.

John Avins, then, was a philanthropist during his lifetime and a benefactor after his death. Like others, he was inspired by a myriad of motives and determinants, but clearly status, reputation and prestige were crucial to him both in life and in death. The creation of the John Avins Trust elevated John Avins into a league on a par with celebrated Birmingham citizens, but he remains a ‘hidden philanthropist’, deserving of recognition and is perhaps more representative of many other city inhabitants who played a role in the development of civic society locally but remain unfamiliar to modern audiences.

Janet Berry’s presentation was given to the People, Places and Things seminar at the University of Birmingham on 22 April 2013. Her talk was based on her dissertation for the MA in West Midlands History in 2012 and is now the subject of her PhD.

VISIT TO STOKESAY COURT, SATURDAY 20 APRIL 2013

Stokesay Court 'hardly looks like the setting for a smouldering love scene, so highly-charged and raunchy that it has been tipped for an Oscar'. So wrote Robert Hardman in the *Daily Mail* (8 September 2007). Whether or not this was a cause of disappointment to the eighteen Friends who visited Stokesay Court in April was not recorded. However, what is on record are remarks made after the visit; remarks such as 'wonderful', 'fascinating', and 'a lovely day out'. Another was 'what a remarkable woman'. But more about that shortly.

Unlike its thirteenth-century neighbour, Stokesay Castle, which stands a mile or two to the north, Stokesay Court is a much more recent addition to the South Shropshire landscape. Built by wealthy Victorian merchant John Derby-Allcroft between 1889 and 1892, and with panoramic views towards the Clee Hills and Ludlow, the Court was technologically very advanced for the time. Not only was it equipped with under-floor heating but it was one of the earliest English houses to be fitted with integral electric lighting, and evidence of this was visible as we toured the house. When Derby-Allcroft died, the house was inherited by his daughter Jewell. Jewell was married to Sir Philip Magnus Bt., the author of biographies on Gladstone, Kitchener, and Edward VII. And, as our guide later noted: 'Stephen Roberts's amazed delight at discovering that this was where Philip Magnus had written *Gladstone* was especially cheering!'

Our guide was, in fact, the niece of Sir Philip, Caroline Magnus - the 'remarkable woman' referred to by one of the Friends. On Jewell's death in 1992, the entire contents of the house were sold by Sotheby's, raising more than three million pounds. Thus, when Caroline Magnus inherited and moved into the house, she took on a completely empty building; one with a badly leaking roof, unsafe wiring, and a suspect central-heating system into the bargain. The Sotheby's sale went some way towards funding the essential repairs. But it was the selection of Stokesay Court and its surrounding estate as the location for the film of Ian McEwan's novel *Atonement*, filmed in 2007, that really provided the crucial funding that Caroline Magnus needed for the further restoration of the house. Not that the house was put back to its former state once the film crews had left; some of the rooms have been left to show how they were subtly transformed for the making of the film.

With the tour of the house at an end, the visiting Friends sat down to tea and home-made cakes - a lovely day out, indeed.

Guy Sjögren

'Divine Providence': Birmingham and the Cholera Pandemic of 1832

In April a large audience of 'Friends' of the Centre for West Midlands History had an interesting talk from Dr Ian Cawood, Head of History, and Dr Chris Upton, Reader in Public History, at Newman University. They discussed the outbreak of cholera in 1832 in Britain, and how Birmingham responded, in times before the establishment of any effective overall control of public health.

In October 1831 cholera arrived in Britain in Sunderland, but there was no effective quarantine, and the disease crept down the country. It was rampant in London in February 1832 with at least 6000 victims, and by July 1832 had reached the Black Country, where, in Bilston alone, 693 victims died. But in Birmingham there were few cases, and only 3 died. Upton and Cawood asked why?

Birmingham was efficient in dealing with the cholera pandemic, and had taken effective measures to prevent the disease, not just to contain it. A Board of Health was established in October 1831. Led by Samuel Galton III (1783-1844), it met three times a week during the crisis, maintaining cooperation between doctors, Street Commissioners, Guardians of the Poor, magistrates and inhabitants.

Birmingham was unique in stressing that an unhealthy environment was a possible cause of cholera. The Board insisted on improvement in sanitation. In advance of the disease, various sites were chosen to house sufferers, including the General Hospital, the Infirmary in Lichfield Street, a fever hospital in Bishopgate Street, a cholera hospital in Bradford Street, a dispensary for bowel complaints, in Upper Priory. General health was considered important and soup stations were set up during the winter months to provide two pints of soup for 1d and a mass burial site was chosen, but not needed.

Cholera prevention had cost £74 by March 1832, without any cases occurring in Birmingham. Disease did arrive in July 1832, with a death in Weaman Row. But there were few further victims, and by 1833 the Board of Health was disbanded.

Upton and Cawood concluded that the reasons for good health in Birmingham were manifold. It had an excellent water supply from deep artesian wells, with good drainage; in general housing conditions were reasonable, and Birmingham had high wage levels due to a skilled workforce. There were also knowledgeable medical men around including William Sands Cox (1802-1875) who rejected the idea of the disease as 'God's punishment' of the feckless sinful poor. Actions were taken early to remove sufferers to a place of containment, which prevented the spread of the disease. Overall, cooperation between those involved, in improving both medical and social conditions, was an innovative initiative to solve a potential medical crisis.

Sue Tungate

Birmingham History Fair 2013

Once again, the Birmingham Lives History Fair on 9th June provided an excellent opportunity to meet old friends and make new contacts. Genealogy and air raids, local history societies, postcard and book sellers, artefacts and displays - there was something for everyone, with excellent refreshments on site too.

Thanks to Keith Clenton for organising this again and let's try and encourage more people to attend next time for what is always an enjoyable, interesting and rewarding event.

Christine Mann

CWMH FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Friends of the Centre for West Midlands History will be informed of further details when they are available. Everyone is welcome to attend these events and there is **no need to book and all events are held at the University of Birmingham unless stated otherwise**. The best way of keeping in touch with events is via the Centre's website: <http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/activity/cwmh/index.aspx>

➤ Thursday 26 September
CWMH Research Seminar, 6.30-8.30pm
Professor James Measell, 'The Stourbridge School of Art 1850-1905'. Lecture Room 3 (Floor 1), Arts Building, University of Birmingham.

➤ Monday 14 October
People, Places and Things Seminar, 4.30-6.30pm
Dan Wale (University of Birmingham), 'How far did the nineteenth century prison provision for juveniles in Birmingham evolve from the prison system in that city?'. Lecture Room 3 (Floor 1), Arts Building, University of Birmingham.

➤ Tuesday 15 October
Historical Association, 6.30-8.30pm
Dr Ian Cawood, "Joe or Judas' the reputation of Joseph Chamberlain". The Library Building, Newman University, Genners Lane, Bartley Green, Birmingham B32 3NT.

➤ Saturday 19 October
Black Country History Day, 10.00am-4.30pm Large Lecture Theatre (Floor 1), Arts Building, University of Birmingham. There is a fee of £19 per person for this event. For further details see brochure or contact Malcolm Dick (see below).

➤ Saturday 26 October, 1.30-5.15pm
Birmingham's Global Communities: a historical and contemporary perspective: Malcolm Dick, Jahan Mahmood and Izzy Mohammed. AV Room, Gas Hall, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery. Tickets £25. Places are limited and advance booking is required – to book your ticket call the box office on 0121 303 1966, or visit the Gas Hall reception desk, or book on-line at www.bmag.org.uk

➤ Monday 28 October
People, Places and Things Seminar, 4.30-6.30pm
Dr Zoe Crisp: (University of Cambridge) "It is generally thought that a city garden is an impossibility": exploring urban garden provision in five nineteenth-century English towns'.
Lecture Room 3 (Floor 1), Arts Building, University of Birmingham.

➤ Monday 11 November
People, Places and Things Seminar, 4.30-6.30pm
Dr David Symons (Birmingham Museums), 'The Staffordshire Hoard: An Insider's View'.
Lecture Room 3 (Floor 1), Arts Building, University of Birmingham.

➤ Tuesday 12 November
Historical Association, 6.30-8.30pm
Professor Roger Ward, "The Napoleon of the Caucus' the career of Francis Schnadhorst, Britain's first professional political organiser'.
Lecture Room 3 (Floor 1), Arts Building, Lecture Room 3 (Floor 1), Arts Building, University of Birmingham.

➤ Saturday 22 November
Birmingham History Day, 10.00am-4.30pm
Large Lecture Theatre (Floor 1), Arts Building, University of Birmingham. There is a fee of £19 per person for this event. For further details see brochure or contact Malcolm Dick (see below).

➤ Monday 25 November
People, Places and Things Seminar, 4.30-6.30pm
David Eveleigh David Eveleigh (Black Country Living Museum), "It's all a Gas": the development and provision of household technology in the Black Country 1800-1939'. Lecture Room 3 (Floor 1), Arts Building, University of Birmingham.

➤ Tuesday 10 December
Historical Association, 6.30-8.30pm
Dr Caroline Archer and Dr Malcolm Dick, 'John Baskerville and the power of print'. Lecture Room 3 (Floor 1), Arts Building, University of Birmingham.

➤ Tuesday 14 January
Historical Association, 6.30-8.30pm
Dr Miriam Muller, 'Fishing, ploughing and pesky pirates: people, power and personalities in a coastal manor, ca. 1270 to 1350'. Lecture Room 3 (Floor 1), Arts Building, University of Birmingham.

➤ Thursday 20 February
Lunar History Lecture (Lunar Society and Centre for West Midlands History), 6.30-8.30pm
Lucy Bamford, Keeper of Art, Derby Museum and Art Gallery, 'Joseph Wright of Derby: the Philosopher's Painter'. Large Lecture Theatre (Floor 1), Arts Building, University of Birmingham. There will be a small fee for this event. Further details will be provided later.

➤ Tuesday 11 March
Historical Association, 6.30-8.30pm
Louise Brown, 'Disgracing the Raj: White and Mixed Race Prostitution in Colonial India'. Lecture Room 3 (Floor 1), Arts Building, University of Birmingham.

For further information about the events which require advanced booking contact Malcolm Dick: m.m.dick@bham.ac.uk or 0121 415 8253

If you would like to contribute to our next newsletter, please send editorial and news items to Kate Iles at kate_iles@hotmail.com. Please note we do reserve the right to edit material.