

The Frenchay Tuckett Society
Autumn 2021 Newsletter

Registered Charity No. 1066961
www.frenchaymuseumarchives.co.uk

Frenchay Tuckett Society Talks

These will be held in Frenchay Village Hall
BS161NU 7.30pm Entry £2

January 13th 2022

Ray Bulmer will be talking about the various crossings of the River Severn

February 10th 2022

Roger Angerson will be talking about the research he has done on one of our latest acquisitions---the book recording donations and finances of the subscription bridge across the Frome.

March 10th 2022

AGM

Followed by a talk by **Karin Walton**
"What exactly does a Curator Do?"

Karin was our museum's mentor
Until her retirement as
Curator of Fine Arts for Bristol City Museum

Museum Custodians

We always welcome more custodians, so if you are interested in coming along and finding out more, call **Margaret Bulmer on 07814303960** for an informal, chat. Whether you help once a month, or once a year, you will be welcome. There are many other tasks that need doing, besides manning the museum when it's open. From straightforward cleaning to mounting new displays, there are many jobs waiting. If you feel that you would like to get involved in any way, call **Carol Thorne on 0117 9569963** for a no-obligation chat.

House and Grounds report from Hugh Whatley

The reopening of the Museum in early July after 'covid lockdown' appears to have gone smoothly, thanks to the efforts of volunteers both inside and out. Regular work on the grass and flower beds has also been appreciated, with no danger of the old West Lodge looking neglected.

At the end of August, the 'Picnic afternoon' on Sunday 29th brought in a steady stream of visitors, including our new South Glos Councillor (for Frenchay & Downend Ward) Liz Brennan and her family.

Following recent discussions with the planners, we have reached a new understanding about the possibility of a two-storey extension and John Page, our architect is working-up a new design proposal.

In essence, our requirements for some additional space have not changed -ie; a proper inside store to replace the old prefabricated garage, inside toilets and more display area, plus some new cabinets, etc. If possible, the current thinking is to make the most of public access to the ground floor, with the first floor becoming more of a 'research & office area' to compliment the specialist interest in our hospital room & extensive records. A new activity space on the ground floor, leading out into a secure (lower) patio area has also been shown on the new plans and appears to be acceptable to the planners.

We have also been seeking updates on the line of the new public highway coming in off the mini-roundabout and how the adjacent car park will be used when taken-over by the Parish Council. This work is on-going but it is now becoming clear that the setting of West Lodge is going change quite significantly and we are also looking at old photographs for any clues about the former garden.

Hopefully we are getting closer to a revised planning application which will be approved...

Frenchay Subscription Bridge.

The bridge at the bottom of Pearce's Hill was built in 1788. Before that there was a ford. In winter the river was too deep to ford which was very inconvenient. We heard that a book recording the details of the bridge building was being auctioned and we were successful in bidding for it. The book has thrown up some interesting facts. Come and listen to Roger's talk on February 10th to hear what he has discovered.

Kabul Air Evacuation.

We have all seen the recent television pictures of the evacuation of civilians from Afghanistan by air. But this was not the first time such an evacuation had been attempted - the first was almost 80 years ago, and it was organised by a man born in Frenchay..

In December 1941, what the newspapers of the day called, "*History's First Big Air Evacuation Of A Civil Population*", began when the Japanese invaded Burma. The whole air evacuation operation was conceived and directed by the Director of Civil Aviation, Burma, Alan Eden-Eadon, and around 10,000 civilians were evacuated to India.

Eadon was born in 1898 in "*Elleray*" Beckspool Road, and when he died in 1973 he was buried in the Eadon family grave in Frenchay Churchyard. He led a very eventful life, a fighter pilot in WWI, then in 1923 he was the founding principal of the De Havilland Aeronautical Technical College, before moving to India as Deputy Director of Civil Aviation.

In 2019 we published a book about his life and achievements, "*East with Eadon*". However, we were recently contacted by his nephew, and great grandson, who have both supplied lots of new information, and significantly, many family photographs.

This has lead to a second edition of "*East With Eadon*" being produced, and it will be available from the museum in October.

The Bells of Frenchay Church

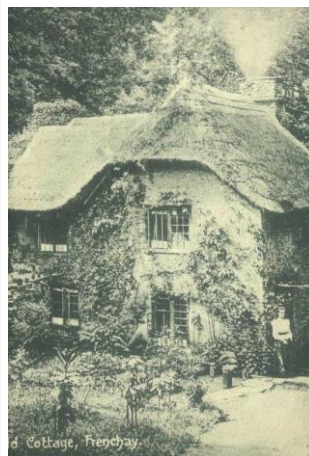
It was 30 years ago that the Bishop of Bristol consecrated the ring of six bells, the culmination of a massive DIY project, which besides the bells themselves, involved a huge amount of work in the church to create a belfry in the tower, and a ringing room from which the bellringers could ring the bells. All this work was done entirely by volunteers in their spare time.

There was amazing support from the ringing community in the wider area, as well as local people who just simply wanted to support the project. Local businesses helped with donations, and also by loaning such unusual items as cranes and cherry pickers, as well as donating significant items - like steel beams! There was also help from further away. A Japanese handbell team visiting the UK offered to give a money raising concert in Frenchay. This helped pay for the work that had to be done by Taylor's bell foundry. And the hurricane that BBC weatherman Michael Fish failed to forecast in 1987 played an unexpected role.

A book, *The Bells of Frenchay Church*, has just been published to mark the 30th anniversary. The fully illustrated book tells the intriguing story of the ambitious DIY project, and can be obtained by emailing frenchaybellringers@gmail.com. Copies are also available in Frenchay Village Museum, for £5 p&p is £1.50

NEW ACQUISITIONS

We now have a cabinet with a changing display of items which may not normally be on show. One of these is a postcard of a thatched cottage with a cliff face behind it. It is titled "Old Cottage Frenchay".



There is no cottage like this in Frenchay today so where was it? We have thought about this and have one idea of where it might be. Could it be the house next to the water wheel at the far end of Snuff Mills? Before the present house, built many years ago to house the Park Ranger, there was a previous building which served as a pub where they brewed their own beer. The water for this came from a stream emanating from the field above.

Unfortunately, the field housed an isolation hospital where Scarlet Fever sufferers were kept in quarantine. It was felt that there was a danger of the water being contaminated and the brewing stopped.

A group of volunteers have restored the engine that was used to trim the stones quarried from the rock face behind the cottage. The stone is pennant stone which was used to make kerb and paving stones. The last big quarrying was for the wall around Horfield prison. And did you know that the roughly trimmed stones are called shoddies – hence the word 'shoddy'?

Contacts

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