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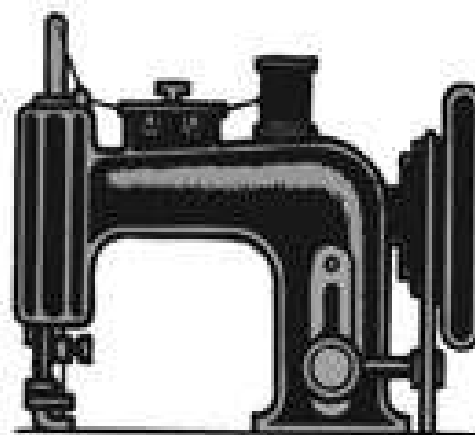


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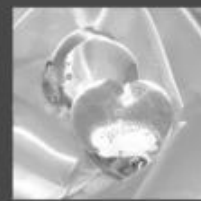


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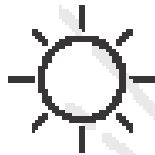
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### USEFUL CONTACTS

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[www.pitchero.com/clubs/bittonafc](http://www.pitchero.com/clubs/bittonafc)

**Bitton AFC Juniors**

**Contact:** Dave Fletcher

**Tel:** 0117 932 2521

**Email:**

[fletchandcarol@btinternet.com](mailto:fletchandcarol@btinternet.com)

**Bitton Archers**

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**Bitton Bellringers**

Practice night Mondays

**Tower captain:** Sue Jay

**Tel:** 0117 932 2424

**Bitton Combined Charities**

**Contact:** Ken Gibson

**Tel:** 0117 932 2122

**Bitton Community Choir**

**Contact:** Nicola Bennetts

**Tel:** 0117 932 4696

**Bitton Cricket Club**

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[bitton.play-cricket.com](http://bitton.play-cricket.com)

**Chairman:** Tim Dyer

**Tel:** 0117 985 9139

**Bitton Flower Arranging Club**

2nd Tuesday afternoon of the month at St Mary's Church Hall

**Contact:** Janet Ballinger

**Tel:** 0117 932 4728

**Bitton Gardening Club**

St Mary's Church Hall, 3rd Monday in the month (plus garden visits)

**Email:** [b.hetzel@btinternet.com](mailto:b.hetzel@btinternet.com)

**Bitton Ladies Football Club**

Bitton Recreation Ground

[bittonlfc.weebly.com/](http://bittonlfc.weebly.com/)

**Bitton Lunch Club**

Last Thursday of each month

**Contact:** Jill Gibson

**Tel:** 0117 932 2122

**Bitton Parish Council**

[www.bittonparishcouncil.co.uk](http://www.bittonparishcouncil.co.uk)

**Clerk:** Sharon Robbins

**Tel:** 01454 868 102

**Email:** [bittonpc@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:bittonpc@blueyonder.co.uk)

**Bitton Parish History Group**

[www.bittonhistory.org.uk](http://www.bittonhistory.org.uk)

**Secretary:** Mike Gates

**Tel:** 0117 932 8777

**Email:** [mg122@btinternet.com](mailto:mg122@btinternet.com)

**Bitton Pre-School**

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(More overleaf)



### USEFUL CONTACTS

**Bitton Village Residents' Association**

[www.bvra.uk](http://www.bvra.uk)

**Contact:** Andrew Ward

**Email:** [andrew@wardandrew.com](mailto:andrew@wardandrew.com)

**Bitton WI**

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**Tel:** 0117 970 8056

**Email:** [gill.boyes@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:gill.boyes@blueyonder.co.uk)

**Kingswood MP:** Chris Skidmore

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**Tel:** 0207 219 7094 (Westminster)

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**Royal British Legion**

(Bitton & Oldland branch)

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**Tel:** 0117 932 2608

**Email:** [jeffjeffdando@gmail.com](mailto:jeffjeffdando@gmail.com)

**Scouts:** 34<sup>th</sup> Kingswood/1<sup>st</sup> St Mary's

Beavers meet Monday evenings at

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The Meadows Primary School

**Contact:** David Harris

**Tel:** 0117 932 7755

**Email:** [djaharris@hotmail.com](mailto:djaharris@hotmail.com)

**South Gloucestershire councillor for Bitton:** Erica Williams

**Tel:** 0786 018 1215

**Email:**

[erica.williams@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:erica.williams@southglos.gov.uk)

**St Mary's Baby & Toddler Group**

(Wednesday mornings at St Mary's Church Hall)

**Contact:** Ali Smith

**Email:** [alismith241@gmail.com](mailto:alismith241@gmail.com)

**St Mary's Church**

[www.stmarysbitton.org.uk/](http://www.stmarysbitton.org.uk/)

**Vicar:** Rev Jeremy Andrew

**Tel:** 0117 967 2724

**Curate:** Rev Anika Gardiner

**Tel:** 0117 932 5305

**Churchwardens:**

Barbara Merritt

**Tel:** 0117 932 3926

Jacqui Harris

**Tel:** 0117 937 4706

**St Mary's Church Hall**

**Bookings secretary:** Jill Gibson

**Tel:** 0117 932 2122

**Email:**

[kenandjill@gibsonuk.freereserve.co.uk](mailto:kenandjill@gibsonuk.freereserve.co.uk)

**The Meadows Primary School**

**Tel:** 0117 932 2203

**Upton Cheyney URC**

**Minister:** Rev Meryl White

**Tel:** 0775 914 6645

**Email:** [Meryl.white@btinternet.com](mailto:Meryl.white@btinternet.com)

## Churches & services



### UPTON CHEYNEY URC

**Elder:** Muriel Williams  
0117 961 6843

**Minister:** Meryl White  
0775 914 6645

Sunday services are at 3pm

February 4	Bible study led by the Rev Meryl White
February 11	Service led by Veronica Jackson
February 18	Bible study led by the Rev Meryl White
February 25	Bible study led by David Jones

*There will be a coffee afternoon on Tuesday February 27 at 2pm*

### ST MARY'S CHURCH

**Vicar:**  
Rev Jeremy Andrew  
The Vicarage, Warmley  
0117 967 2724

**Ordained minister:**  
Rev Richard Humphrey  
Splinters  
Kenilworth Drive  
Willsbridge  
0117 949 0502

*Continued overleaf*



**Lay ministers:**

Ken Gibson, 8 Church Road,  
Bitton  
0117 932 2122

David Bailey, Westover,  
Bath Road, Bitton  
0117 932 8949

**Churchwardens:**

Barbara Merritt,  
32 Bath Road, Bitton  
0117 932 3926

Jacqui Harris,  
29 St Anne's Drive, Wick  
0117 937 4706

## **Message from the lay minister**

**W**ell, Christmas has come and gone, the old year has gone, and the new one begun. Soon the season of Lent will begin. Then we look forward to Easter. As I look back on these events, particularly Christmas, it is the start of a chain of events that began way before the birth of Jesus.

God wanted to test Abraham to see just how far he would go in serving him. So God asked Abraham to sacrifice his only son Isaac to the Lord. Abraham would have done it too, albeit with a broken heart. God stopped him and promised Abraham that God himself would provide the sacrifice.

Christmas is the beginning of that promise. I am reminded of words we use regularly in church: "God so loved the world that he gave his only son to save us from our sins and to be our advocate in heaven." So Jesus' birth at Christmas is the manifestation of God's love for the world and which would lead ultimately to his sacrifice for us on the Cross.

Love is quite a popular thing that we celebrate in February. I refer of course to Valentine's Day. A registrar friend of mine told me that it is the busiest time of the year for them performing marriage ceremonies. So how does Valentine's Day become synonymous with love? It should be correctly called Saint Valentine's Day, but in these days of pure

## **Focal Point, February 2018**

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Commercialism, the Saint bit has been conveniently dropped.

On February 14th, not one but two St Valentines are celebrated. One, a former priest martyred on the Flaminian Way circa 269AD, and the other a Bishop of Terni, who was martyred in Rome.

So there is no connection between these two saints and love and courtship. More likely is the association with the pagan festival of Lupercalia which takes place in mid-February. This celebrates the Roman god Lupercal, god of fertility and flocks.

Quite amazingly, Valentine's Day this year coincides with Ash Wednesday, the start of Lent. Each Ash Wednesday we have a service in the evening where to mark the start of Lent and to signify our penance, the priest marks our foreheads with the sign of the cross in ash. Jeremy joked that perhaps he should mark our foreheads with a heart instead of a cross!

Ash Wednesday and Valentine's Day do not seem to sit nicely together, but they do. Lent starts us on the road towards Easter, and the ultimate example of love. Jesus gave his life for us on the cross, the promise God made to Abraham is completed. Then, to prove that love does in deed conquer all, Jesus rises again from the dead to give us new life. So it really is all about love, the love God has for us through Jesus Christ.

Perhaps on Ash Wednesday we should have a heart marked on our foreheads after all!

**John Sibley**

### **St Mary's flower rota**

<b>3 February</b>	Judith Butson
<b>10 February</b>	Marlene Gallop & Pam Heyes
<b>17 February</b>	Lent (No flowers until Easter)



## Services at St Mary's in February

Sunday, February 4	10.30: Parish Communion
Sunday, February 11	8am: Holy Communion 10.30am: Family Parade Service, followed by lunch at the Old Crown, Kelston
Wednesday, February 14	7.30pm: Ash Wednesday Benefice Communion Service at St Mary's
Sunday, February 18	10.30am: Morning Worship
Friday, February 23	9.30am: Celtic Communion, followed by coffee and cakes
Sunday, February 25	8am: Holy Communion 9.30am: Family Café Church

## Family Café Church

**Sunday 25th February at 9.30am**

A relaxed and informal service on each fourth Sunday.

It is aimed at families with primary school and pre-school aged children although everyone is very welcome. There is a café feel to it with refreshments available throughout.

This month we will hear about 'Moses – The Secret Baby'

## **Christian Aid appeal total**

*Enough for everyone* – that was the aim of the Christian Aid Christmas appeal. We were asked, as we prepared our turkey, plum pudding and mince pies, to remember and give to those who do not have enough to eat.

The Christmas collections from St Mary's raised £382.02 and the carol singers round the village and at the White Hart raised £74.17, a total of £456.19, which will be matched pound for pound by the Government. Very many thanks to donors and singers.

**Nicola Bennetts**

## **St Mary's Matters**

**N**ow we are into February and enjoying the beautiful snowdrops around the churchyard, and the days are beginning to lengthen, but we must say a very big thank you to everyone who worked so hard to make Christmas a very happy time for us all.

Candles, carols, flowers, the tree, mince pies, mulled wine, moving services and sermons brought the meaning of Christmas to us in all its different aspects. We also thank Waitrose for their generous gift of oranges for the Christingle service, and Helen Pugsley and Ann Willis for arranging this. We used the new space at the church to put out tables so the congregation could make up their own Christingle oranges.

Burns Night was celebrated with a sell-out Burns Supper in the new space at the back of the church, and on 24th February we welcome the Jazzbeans with 'Jazz à l'église' (*see page 21*).

Ash Wednesday, the start of Lent, is on 14th February this year and it is St Mary's turn to welcome Warmley and Syston  
(Continued overleaf)

## **Focal Point, February 2018**

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to the service at 7.30pm. Although traditionally we give up something for Lent, some like to take up a new activity, to tone up mentally, spiritually or physically before the great feast of Easter. Our Bible study groups in the morning or evening will stretch you mentally and spiritually, but always in the company of friends and fellow seekers.

St Mary's own green gym is starting again on Saturday 3rd March at 10am when we meet to restart the churchyard working party, sweeping, edging, clearing and generally tidying up.

We will be putting out the sweet jar at the back of the church to collect change for WaterAid throughout Lent. WaterAid is a charity we support every year but it is good to collect that bit extra to remind us of the blessing of fresh water.

**Barbara Merritt  
Churchwarden**

## **Lent course 2018**

### **'ON THE THIRD DAY'**

During the five weeks of Lent, the three churches of the Benefice are combining to follow this discussion course with groups in various locations. Each group will meet on a different day or time so there should be one to suit you. Details will be displayed in each church from the beginning of February.

The course is crammed with questions for discussion and features audio contributions from Tom Wright, a former Bishop of Durham, Ruth Gee, a Methodist Minister who was at one time president of the Methodist Conference, Paul Valley, a writer and lecturer, and Libby Lane, Bishop of Stockport.

Lent is a good opportunity to participate in our mid-week groups even if time makes it difficult for you to do so the whole year round. You will be very welcome.

# JAZZ À L'ÉGLISE

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## **News from Upton Cheyney URC**

### **The Story of a Small Start . . . & a Fruitful Finish**

**Sunday 7 January  
1.30pm**

Chairs were being drawn up around the Chapel Schoolroom table for a members' meeting to discuss church business when suddenly a small brown object flew across the room.

"Goodness me, what was that?" a lady cried. "It's a tiny bird," said another.

"It's a wren," said someone else, hurrying to open the doors in the hope it might fly out.

But all the excitement put Jenny Wren in a panic and she eventually disappeared into a dark corner. The icy blast coming in caused the people to retreat to the kitchen, complete with portable heater and hot water bottles, to leave Jenny in peace to find her way out.

**2.45pm**

Church business completed, other people started to arrive for the monthly Bible Study. "Oh dear," they said. "The doors have been left open and this schoolroom is like an icehouse."

## **Focal Point, February 2018**

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"Come into the kitchen," the others said. "It's nice and cosy in here and a pot of tea has just been made."

So everyone squeezed in for a cup of tea and contemplation on the season of Epiphany, including a quiz and review of some Christmas card designs. The new music system was easily moved in for the singing of hymns.

The result was an inspiring hour of fellowship led by our minister, Meryl White, and which all began with the uninvited appearance of a little wren.

**Muriel Williams**

*Footnote: We are all familiar with the fairly recent 'Cafe Churches'. Remember, you have heard it here first - a 'Kitchen Church'!*

## **Join us for a spring clean!**

Once again Bitton Village Residents' Association are hosting a spring clean of the village to set us up for the year!

We will be delighted to see anybody on Saturday 3rd February who can help and enjoy a stroll round the village with a purpose. All will be very welcome.

We will start at 10.30am outside the White Hart. Equipment will be provided, but you may like to bring your own gloves, which may be better than the ones provided by South Gloucestershire Council.

It would be useful to gauge numbers so if you are able to help to let Jon Booth know - call him on 932 3273 or email [jonbooth@oakfield-property.com](mailto:jonbooth@oakfield-property.com), but this is by no means necessary, please just turn up if you can.

It normally takes about one and a half hours to make an impact and we usually enjoy some refreshment in the pub afterwards!

**Bridget Hetzel**

SATURDAY 10TH MARCH 2018

**BARN**  
**DANCE**

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## **Vodafone appeal successful**

Vodafone have won their appeal to site a radio mast opposite the Swan pub in Swineford to improve coverage in the local area.

South Gloucestershire Council had objected to the phone giant seeking prior approval for a 17.5m monopole, two microwave dishes and two equipment cabinets, saying it would harm the Green Belt. Locals and parish councillors shared the Green Belt concerns, as well as being worried about potential health risks, the effect on wildlife and flooding, and the implications for road safety and aircraft as there is an airstrip at Saltford.

However, the planning inspector felt the harm that would arise to the character and appearance of the area would be "modest", and said the appellant had provided a certificate to confirm that the proposal has been designed to comply with guidelines from the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection.

The inspector did not have evidence that the airstrip near Saltford falls within the definition of an aerodrome for the purposes of prior approval, or that the site is in a safeguarding zone; and said there was no evidence that the plans would worsen the flood risk to any significant extent. The appeal also found that as the site is set well back from the road, the mast wouldn't interfere with visibility. Concerns that bats may be affected were dismissed as there was no credible evidence.

### **FOR ALL FOCAL POINT INQUIRIES CONTACT:**

**Becky Feather**

**Editor**

**Phone:** 0117 932 5037

**Email:** [bittonfocalpoint@live.co.uk](mailto:bittonfocalpoint@live.co.uk)

**Website:** [www.stmarysbitton.org.uk](http://www.stmarysbitton.org.uk)





## **Power plant plan generates opposition**

**A**s some of you may know by now, plans have been submitted to South Gloucestershire Council to build a gas-fuelled power plant in a field off Beach Lane.



People from Beach, as well as in Bitton and Upton Cheyney, have been writing to the council with their concerns, and the deadline for comments is 5th February.

Conrad Energy has submitted the application for a peaking gas generation plant off Beach Lane. The company would develop the land but does not own the right to connect to the National Grid. This is owned by Devon Power Developments, which have engaged Renplan to submit the application on Conrad's behalf.

A building in the field, *pictured above*, would house two 2MW generators, and there would be a liquefied natural gas (LNG) store, along with associated equipment. The site would be surrounded by a three-metre high security fence and a new access would be required to install the power plant and for the delivery of LNG refills three or four times a week.

The gas generators would operate for about 1,200 hours a year and power would feed into the electricity substation at Warmley. The plant would be for a temporary period of 25 years and the applicants say any "minor impacts" to the landscape would be "entirely reversible". They have also produced reports which show air quality impacts would be "minor", that noise generated would be below local background noise, and say there would be no adverse impact on local listed buildings.

They contend that the development meets the needs of local, regional and national priorities, therefore very special circumstances exist to justify development in the Green Belt. The site is also in the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty but they claim that dozens of similar schemes will be needed in due course across this designated area.

Rob Deverell, of Uplands Farm, is acting as a spokesperson for people in Beach, and says the submission makes no mention of the fact that the hamlet is a conservation area, nor of the need to install high voltage connectors back to the substation.

Rob says the plans fail to adequately justify why Green Belt agricultural land within a conservation area and AONB should be used to house a gas-powered electricity generating plant in an area with no natural gas, and takes issue with the findings about noise, pollution and the impact on listed buildings.

He says the narrow lanes of the Golden Valley, which are well-used by horse riders and walkers, are unsuitable for the three to four journeys that would be required every week to deliver LNG by tanker, and that access to the field would be close to a blind bend.

Others share his concerns in comments posted on the council's planning portal, and, it is pointed out that work is starting this month (19th February) on the long-awaited introduction of a 30mph limit on the largely derestricted network of narrow lanes around the Golden Valley.

They say a recent incident in which a lorry went into a ditch in Upton Cheyney, *right*, highlights the roads are unsuitable for heavy vehicles.



There are fears voiced about horses being spooked by heavy vehicles, as well as from the noise of the plant's engines starting up. The effect on wildlife and the proximity of the  
*(Continued overleaf)*

Briarlands Guide camp are highlighted, and that the proposed the proposed entrance would involve removing trees and bushes, and diverting the stream underground.

Another resident comments that the only reason the plant has been proposed for this area is that it is close to a substation with capacity to receive electricity: "This is three miles away. A three-mile radius from this substation equates to 28.26 square miles. It is extremely likely that a more suitable industrial site could be found within this area. Despite the unsuitability of the land in question, I believe the substantial returns made on investment in such a development... has led the absentee landowner to take a chance on the successful outcome of this application with no regard to the land, its surroundings or neighbourhood."

The planning reference number is PK17/5762/F.

## **Bitton WI report**

**P**resident Ann Coales opened the evening by wishing every one a Happy New Year, *writes Jean Hook*. We were told of forthcoming events, then Doreen Lindup told us of the walk in the rain around Bristol Harbour. They went to the Underfall Yard, which is a working boat yard and visitor centre, and enjoyed a ride on the Human Accumulator where visitors are lifted several metres upward using the power of pumps and, at the turn of a valve, their downward force pushes hydraulic fluid through an overhead pipe to lift a sluice paddle

The speaker was Sue Weaver, a volunteer worker for Paul's Place, which is a day centre in Coalpit Heath for adults with physical difficulties.

The next meeting of the WI is Monday 12 February and the flower club will meet on the third Tuesday in the month, Tuesday 20 February. All are welcome.

# **BITTON GARDENING CLUB**

Invites you to  
Our next meeting is  
**MONDAY 19th February**  
in the  
**Church Hall, Church Lane, Bitton**

**Doors open 7.15pm. Meeting starts 7.30pm**

Our speaker at this meeting is

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For more information contact Bridget Hetzel  
*b.hetzel@btinternet.com*  
or just come along to the meeting

**New members and guests always welcome**

### *Looking Back..to February 1968*

In this month in 1968, the Youth Club had taken part in a lively discussion about the future of the village of Bitton. They had also enjoyed a talk from Mr Norman from Upton Cheyney entitled 'Hope', and one on Christianity today by Miss McKendie, and were looking forward to trips to the ice rink and a panto.

There was a plea to ladies for old nylon stockings (15-20 denier): "A basket is to be placed in the church porch so will you drop them in. We hope to show you the result, some new kneelers, at a later date."

*Also in this month in 1968:* GB & Northern Ireland competed at the Winter Olympics in Grenoble but did not win medals

*Next month: Bitton in March 1973*

## **The January quiz answers**

Last month's quiz gave you the first letters of well-known international (not European) landmarks. Here are the answers:

1. Table Mountain, 2. Central Park, 3. Space Needle Seattle, 4. Red Square, 5. Golden Gate Bridge, 6. Great Pyramid of Giza, 7. Uluru, 8. The White House, 9. Mount Rushmore, 10. Iguassu Falls, 11. The Terracotta Army, 12. Angkor Wat, 13. Empire State Building, 14. Monument Valley, 15. Christ The Redeemer Statue, 16. Burj Al Arab Hotel, 17. Saint Basil's Cathedral, Moscow, 18. Grand Canyon, 19. Sydney Harbour Bridge, 20. Easter Island Statues.

Well done to Sue & Alan Murtagh, Frank & co, Bryan & Margaret Garlick, Jon & Pam Booth, the Perrett/Godwin team, Jon & Pam Heyes, Sue & Rod Nethercote, Jan & Diane, Mary Younie, Keith Carrington, and David & Peter Harris.

Jon & Pam Heyes are the winners this time!



## The February quiz

This month's quiz concerns cryptic clues to musical instruments. Entries please by 13th February to the Editor, 18 Church Road, Bitton, BS30 6HH or email me at *bittonfocalpoint@live.co.uk*

1. In agreement with molecule?
2. Water heater found in ear?
3. Grab smoking utensil
4. Central mesh
5. Branston, perhaps, with a sigh!
6. Veto one of the March girls?
7. Ill-gotten gains
8. He's out of work so at home
9. Not shorts but ...
10. Quiet italian floor
11. Mother on edge with the sound of sheep
12. What fishermen do
13. Fabricator of facts
14. Emblems
15. Addressing the ribbon?
16. Salty form of communication
17. What you do in a game of whist
18. Hold forth at length
19. Warning sound from a Renault, for example
20. Injure Ross's sister?

**Name:**

**Contact:**



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**Doors open 7.30pm. Film starts 8pm.  
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Drinks will be available from the licensed bar,  
choc ices will be served in the interval and  
there will be time to chat with friends.**

**Admission FREE**

## **Bitton Parish History Group**

**S**hirley Hodgson's talk last month about the vagrant children of Bristol was enthralling, but at the same time disconcerting, *writes Mike Gates*.

How could we have accepted that so many children could be abandoned and left to feed and clothe themselves? Shirley explained how those who ran the 'ragged schools' and industrial schools had, as evidenced from her research, tried valiantly to do their best for these children.

I can certainly recommend her latest book 'Bristol's Pauper Children', in which she provides a lot more detail about the efforts to educate and accommodate the vagrant children.

She also covers how she identified about 1,500 children who were sent to Canada and inevitably ended up with lives of drudgery, being used as farm workers or domestic servants and with no means to contact their families.

Thank you, Shirley, for such a well-presented, and absorbing talk, and Oldland Common United Reformed Church for hosting us so well.

Our next meeting will be in early March and we will be digging out old photos and memories for a 'show and tell'. The theme will be buildings. Please contact me if you have any old photos showing local homes, pubs, churches, shops, or other buildings.

Photos from as recent as the 1980s often reflect streets and landscapes that have now changed. Similarly, up-to-date photos of buildings that have an interesting history or will help to bring back memories will be appreciated.

*Mike Gates is secretary of Bitton Parish History Group. Contact him on 932 8777.*

*The group's website is <http://www.bittonhistory.org.uk>*

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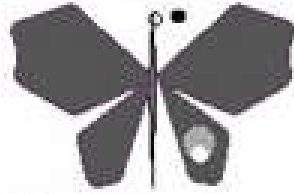
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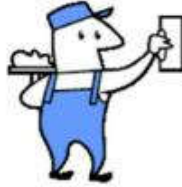
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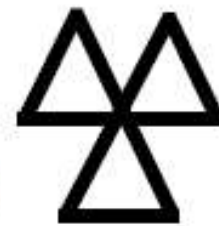
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