

1919: Year of Revolutions

Sat  
12th Oct  
2019

10:30  
to  
16:30

**BRISTOL RADICAL HISTORY FESTIVAL**

Bristol Radical History Group presents the third

Talks \* History Walks \* Films  
Performance \* Exhibitions

brh.org.uk

At  
M Shed  
Bristol

Two Centuries of Green History

Bristol Radical History Festival

It's not just talks! Expect walks, films, a performance space with a puppet show, storytelling and poetry and an exhibition space, as well as stalls with books and merchandise from local and national groups. ALL THE EVENTS ARE FREE.

1919: BRITAIN AND IRELAND IN THE 'YEAR OF REVOLUTIONS'  
GREEN HISTORY: FROM 18TH CENTURY ROOTS TO EXTINCTION REBELLION

Welcome to the third Bristol Radical History Festival! This year's festival is organised by Bristol Radical History Group (BRHG) and the Remembering the Real World War I Group (RRWWI) along with our hosts at M Shed. Once again we will reveal hidden histories, debate and agitate for a future of better pasts. The 2019 festival has two main themes:

- STALLS - Active Distribution**
- Anarchist Communist Group • Black Skin Black Flag • Bloom and Curll Bookshop
  - Bristol Radical History Group • Bristol Transformed • Fiducia/Long John Silver Trust • Haymarket Books • Just Seeds
  - Mayflower Mavericks • Our Charist Heritage • Past Tense • Remembering the Real World War One Group • Tangent Books
  - Unité Community • Wessex Solidarity • West of England and South Wales Women's History Network

We are also thrilled to announce a tie-in event: '3 Acres and a Cow: A History of Land Rights in Folk Song and Story'. This will be hosted at Bristol's Cube Cinema on the evening of Friday 25th October. (£10/£8) book online at: [headfirstbristol.co.uk/#event\\_id=56884](http://headfirstbristol.co.uk/#event_id=56884)



**Bristol Radical History Group**  
Founded in 2006, BRHG has organised more than 250 events including festivals, talks, film screenings, walks, historical recreations, exhibitions, gigs and fireside story telling. We have also published nearly 50 pamphlets and books. BRHG organises public events across Bristol and the South West, hosting local, national and international speakers.

We are a non-profit, volunteer-run organisation and take no funding from business, political parties, local government or universities. We seek to open up history so that it is relevant and real and to make it engaging and accessible for all.

Remembering the Real World War One

Alongside research projects investigating 'war enthusiasm', conscientious objectors, deserters, strikes and army mutinies in Bristol, RRWWI has organised more than 50 events since 2014. These have uncovered hidden histories of resistance to WW1, including opposition to Britain's involvement in the war, conscription and the imperial ambitions of its rulers.

[www.network23.org/realww1](http://www.network23.org/realww1)

M Shed

M Shed is a museum all about Bristol. Explore the city through time: its places, its people and their stories. M Shed is part of Bristol Museums.

[www.bristolmuseums.org.uk/m-shed/](http://www.bristolmuseums.org.uk/m-shed/)



About M Shed

**Accessibility**  
M Shed (BS1 4RN) is an accessible building with bike stands on Museum Street and parking available at Wapping Wharf (BS1 4RH) and The Grove (BS1 4RB). By Train: Temple Meads station is a 15 min walk. By Bus: Bristol Bus Station is a 20 min walk.

**Catering**  
The M Café, located on the ground floor of M Shed is open from 10.00am to 4.30pm. There are also many other cafes, restaurants and street stalls in the immediate vicinity, catering for vegans/vegetarians and those with special dietary needs.

History Walks

**History Walk 1: Mark Steeds (Bristol Radical History Group)**—From Wulstan to Colston, severing the sinews of slavery  
Join Mark Steeds on a walk paying tribute to Bristol's abolitionists and sharing the history of the City's links with the slave trade.  
*Start 11.00am: M Shed (meet at the front of the building)*  
*End 1.00pm: M Shed*

**History Walk 2: Molly Conisbee (bread, print and roses)**—Romantic, Radical and...Reactionary: Bristol Green Capital or Green Capitol?  
Molly Conisbee's harbour walk will explore the way that the city of Bristol, a magnet for environmental activists and contemporary good-lifers, has a longer history of struggles relating to the built and natural environment.  
*Start 3.00pm: M Shed (meet at the front of the building)*  
*End 4.00pm: M Shed*

**Not to be missed: see the Regional Radical Press exhibition on Level 2, featuring highlights from UWE Bristol's current project.**

# Talks

## Studio 1 (Level 1): 1919

**10.30am — 11.20am**

**Mike Pearson**—‘Wild Scenes at Cardiff’—Mike Pearson will analyse the riots of June 1919, when Cardiff was the scene of four days and nights of violent unrest that targeted black sailors.

**11.30am — 12.20pm**

**Philip Kuhn**—‘With all the resources at the disposal of the State’: Industrial legality and the 1919 Railway Strike—Philip Kuhn will explore Government responses to the 1919 Railway Strike to understand how the British State successfully negotiated the large-scale industrial upheavals that threatened a syndicalist takeover.

**12.30pm — 2.20pm**

Ireland in 1919

**Joe Mooney**—‘England’s difficulty is Ireland’s opportunity’: How Irish nationalism responded to the Great War—This talk will outline the difficulties of the ‘Irish question’, the movement towards Home Rule and the rise of armed bodies in the pre WW1 period. 1919 would witness the establishment of a separatist parliament in Dublin, an escalation of guerrilla warfare and the establishment of a ‘soviet’ in opposition to British rule.

**Dee Daley**—Whose King, Whose Shilling?: Irish Great War soldiers who returned to fight for freedom—Dee Daley will examine the anomaly of Irishmen who fought for the British during the Great War. What were the motivations of these men who owed nothing to the British Crown, some of whom would go on to join the IRA?

**Nick Heath**—‘We Make Butter, Not Profits’: The Irish Soviets, 1919-1921—Between 1919 and 1921 there was a rash of workplace occupations and the setting up of workers’ councils or ‘soviets’ throughout Ireland. Nick Heath outlines this movement and the forces arraigned against the workers.

**2.30pm — 3.20pm**

**Karen Hunt**—Bridport 1919: Conflict and tensions in a small industrial town in West Dorset—Karen Hunt’s talk explores social and political tensions in 1919 through a case study of Bridport in the war years, including soldiers’ protests, industrial strikes and new political organisations.

**3.30pm — 4.30pm**

Strikes and riots: British servicemen in 1919

**Roger Ball**—‘We want out’: Bristol and the British armed forces strikes of January 1919. Roger Ball outlines the massive wave of discontent which swept through the British armed forces in 1919, with a particular focus on Bristol and its regiments.

**Neil Gordon-Orr**—‘Keep the home fires burning’: the 1919 Peace Day riot in Luton—In Luton in 1919 riotous crowds of angry ex-servicemen fought with police and burned the Town Hall down. Neil Gordon-Orr will examine the causes of the local and wider social discontent that erupted in the aftermath of WWI.

## Performance Space, Level 1

11.00am-12.00pm **Otherstory**—‘*The Draining of the Mere*’—A storytelling that demonstrates, however benign the technology, it is who owns and controls it that matters. This tale of Whittlesea Mere in the Fenland starts in 1605 and ends in a few years into the future...when the environment strikes back. (Suitable for Age 10+)

12.00pm-12.45pm **Graham Bottrill**—*How do you articulate a working class political consciousness in the context of 1919?*—Graham will read from his novel *The Sword & The Sick* which was partly inspired by his own family history and explain the research that led him to write it.

1.00pm-1.30pm **Peter Bearder aka Pete the Temp**—*A People’s History of Poetry: Highlights from Stage Invasion*—Hot-foot from Edinburgh Fringe Festival, Bristol’s Pete will be sharing highlights from his new work on radical performance poetry, Stage Invasion: Poetry and the Spoken Word Renaissance, which ‘explores the unwritten history, science and skill of spoken word’. (Suitable for all ages)

3.30pm-4.30pm **Otherstory**—‘*Roots of Resistance*’—A live animation show celebrating twenty years of the environmental direct-action network Earth First! Using innovative puppetry and video, Otherstory, take us from the treetops of Newbury to the towers of power stations. (Suitable for adults and older children)

## Studio 2 (Level 1): Green History

**10.30am — 11.20am**

**Steve Hunt**—Green Romanticism: The roots of the ecology movement 1750-1900—Steve Hunt will discuss the pre-history of green awareness during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries, looking at themes of well-being and protest in several Romantic writings.

**11.30am — 12.20pm**

**Mya-Rose Craig aka ‘Birdgirl’**—The Conservation sector: its foundations and its racism—British Bangladeshi naturalist and supporter of Youth Strike and XR, Mya-Rose Craig will discuss the foundations of the conservation sector and how racism was pervasive from the beginning and continues to this day.

**12.30pm — 1.20pm**

**Leonard Baker**—Ecology from Below: Resisting Enclosure in Rural Somerset and Dorset, 1780-1850—In the eighteenth and nineteenth Centuries rural elites sought to physically reshape and culturally redefine the countryside. Leonard Baker will share his research into West Country labourers’ resistance to enclosure and their struggle to defend customary rights.

**1.30pm — 2.50pm**

**Discussion panel**—Environmental activism in the 1980s and 1990s: Former activists based in the West Country remember and reflect—First-hand accounts of the ecological direct-action movements with former participants in anti-nuclear activism, road protest, Earth First! and Reclaim The Streets. At a time when there is a resurgence in environmental activism through Extinction Rebellion, Earth Strike and Youth 4 Climate, this will be an opportunity for activists to discuss the lessons learned and to look to the future.

**3.00pm — 4.30pm**

Looking back on the 1970’s environmental movement

**Kath Holden**—Back to the Land in the 1970s—Kath Holden, co-chair of the West of England and South Wales Women’s History Network shares personal reflections on green and community politics in the 1970s.

**Peter Harper**—Reflections on Radical Technology in the 1970s—Peter Harper coined the term ‘alternative technology’ during the early 1970s and will reflect on his work with the Centre for Alternative Technology, the influential environmental magazine Undercurrents and Comtek, the inspirational community technology festivals held in Bath during the mid-1970s.

## Exhibition and Film Space, Level 2

**Exhibition: Regional Radical Press in Britain 1968-88**

From popular community paper *Bristol Voice* in the 1970s to the scandalous award-winning *Bristolian* broadsheet of the 2000s this exhibition based on a UWE project takes us through the radical press of Bristol and beyond.

**Film screenings and Exhibition talks**

10.30am-12.00pm Screening films on 1919—*Tiger Bay Is My Home* (early 1980s, Colin Prescod, 39 minutes), *Versailles 1919: Return of the Dangerous Women* (2019, Charlotte Bill, 20 minutes), *The Last Clarion House* (2018, Charlotte Bill, 22 minutes)

12.00pm-12.30pm Talk—*Regional Radical Press in Britain 1968-1988 exhibition*—Steve Poole (UWE)

12.30pm-2.00pm Film screening—*Who Bombed Judi Bari?* (2012, Mary Liz Thomson, 95 minutes)

2.00pm-2.30pm Talk—Steve Poole—See 12.00pm-12.30pm

2.30pm-3.30pm Film screening—*Reclaim the Streets: The Film* (various, c1998, 50 minutes)

3.30pm-4.30pm Film screening—*Tiger Bay Is My Home, Versailles 1919: Return of the Dangerous Women*—See 10.30am-12.00pm

Also, expect a performance by Bristol’s wonderful Red Notes Choir on the Ground Floor at around 3.00pm.