

Postcard views were George's sideline

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An exhibition of works by one of the big names in Bath photography from the early years of the 20th century goes on display in the city later this month.

The stunning views of Bath will be on display at Bath Guildhall on the walls outside the chairman's office from Wednesday, October 21 to Tuesday, November 24.

Selected from the extensive archive at Bath in Time, the display features photographs taken by celebrated local photographer George Love Dafnis, taken between 1900 and the 1930s.

Dafnis was a prolific and talented photographer who supplemented his income as a telegraph operator with a thriving postcard business.

Travelling extensively in the area, firstly by bicycle (he was a keen member of Bath Cycling Club) and later by car, he recorded Bath and the surrounding villages in unique detail, much of his work appearing as postcards which have now become collector's items.

Thankfully, most of his original glass plate negatives have survived, enabling extremely high-quality reproductions to be made.

The collection has remained in the family and has now been digitised so that it can be seen again here and online at www.bathintime.co.uk/dafnis.

The exhibition features a small selection from literally hundreds of views of Bath that were taken, capturing a dirty post-Victorian city that was still to be modernised, prone to frequent flooding, with thriving manufacturing industries close to the centre.

There was even a coal-fired power station alongside Bath Spa Station.

The Recreation Ground is undeveloped, with only the Pavilion present, the area being referred to even then as "Bath's Green Girdle".

Trams cross the Old Bridge, past the Full Moon pub (before Churchill House was built) before going up Southgate Street, still 50 years before being demolished for the 1970s development and now much changed once more.

Surrounded by hills, Bath's unique setting is highlighted to full effect by the skill of the photographer, and his careful work has left a legacy that provides an important and detailed record of the city from earlier times.

The exhibition is free to enter and all prints on show are for sale.

Dan Brown, from Bath in Time, said: "Having recently worked through more than 3,200 wonderful images by George Love Dafnis, I have come to appreciate the enormous amount of time and skill that went into creating this wonderful body of work. It is a great pleasure to be invited by the chairman of the council to exhibit them, and have the opportunity of showcasing such a fascinating subject."

Chairman of Bath and North East Somerset, Councillor Cllr Bryan Chalker, said: "As member champion for heritage and historic environment I am passionate about all aspects of local

history and am delighted to host such an interesting exhibition.

"I am particularly pleased that there are several early views of the eastern side of the area, including my ward at Lambridge."



