

October 2012



**Tadley and District History Society
(TADS) - www.tadshistory.com**

**Next meeting - Wednesday 17th October 2012
at St. Paul's Church Hall, 8.00 to 9.30pm**

'The Basingstoke Canal'

***by Roger Cansdale
of the Basinstoke Canal Society***

(Everybody welcome - visitors £2.50)

Committee news: A shortlist of projects in the running for the Hurst TADS prize will be on display at the meeting for interest and comment.

Suggestions for speakers and subject are needed for the next programme.

Don't forget you will have another chance to buy the Tadley Tracks, Tadley Facts book at a discounted price at the November meeting.

*Comments, queries and suggestions to Richard Brown (0118) 9700100,
e-mail: richard@ilexind.plus.com or Carol Stevens (0118) 9701578*

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TADS Meeting 21st November.

‘The reconstruction of Cody’s plane’

By David Wilson

Tads Meeting 19th September.

The Life & Times of Sir William Paulet - the Willow of Basing by Alan Turton, former Curator of Basing House

Near Basing, the River Loddon's mushy marshes upper reaches lend themselves to growing willow trees, but the 'willow' referred to in the title is William Paulet, 1st Marquis of Winchester (died 1572 circa 97 years old).

His story is astonishingly similar to his very near neighbour, one William Sandys of the Vyne House. Sandys was also an acolyte of Henry VIII and a 'willow', but kept a lower profile and there is only one known portrait of him. Paulet is often pictured, but in the background like an L S Lowry pin-man! Good job the 20th Century publicity agent, Max Clifford didn't know of these two!

William Paulet's life unfurled like a black and gold, monied, and titled ribbon because of his BRILLIANT administrative skills, bending like a willow to his best advantage. He was a kind of high-class yes-man, a ubiquitous and enigmatic fence-sitter....

Paulet's Dad was a successful 16th Century Cornish gentleman, Alan said. He was gentry, not nobility, and therefore could learn a trade. Nobility couldn't.

William had an enormous network of friends and contacts, he cast his net stealthily, quietly, and cleverly keeping his head - literally - when those around him were losing theirs to Henry VIII. Unlike the king, William was probably faithful to his wife, daughter of Capel, Lord Mayor of London. When he died he had 103 immediate descendants....

William built up, and lived in, Basing House and restored it to look like Hampton Court Palace. Basing was the last legally crenallated CASTLE in England. It had probably been the Hampshire stronghold of Roman Emperor, Vespasian. The name 'Basing' derives from the Basingas tribe. Paulet (and his wife) had a family crest and also collected country and town houses and money (though he died strangely bankrupt).

As a statesman serving each Tudor crown he made his fortune and enlarged Basing House to be grander than most of the royal palaces. He changed his religion to suit the needs of the day, a fact for which he was criticised by guide-book author, William Cobbett.

Alan said Paulet was in the Drapers' Guild in the City of London; he calmed the Boulogne mutiny for Henry VIII in 1513, also being the army quartermaster. By the way, Henry's suit of armour at this time weighed 70lbs, but luckily he didn't have to move in it!

Paulet witnessed the sinking of the famous flagship Mary Rose off Southsea, Portsmouth in 1545 when he was Governor of Southsea Castle. He also tried to raise the Mary Rose.. A 'drunken French fleet of 225 ships' had tried to invade the Isle of Wight unsuccessfully.

Previously (1520) Paulet was knighted and in 1524 was a Member of Parliament for Hampshire. Still rolling out his Midas touch he became a Knight of the Garter (1540) and eventually Marquis of Winchester (1569) when he entertained Elizabeth I at Basing House. Later he became Earl of Wiltshire.

In 1535 Henry VIII had gone on a Royal Progress tour of the West Country. On his return he and an enormous retinue stopped off at the Vyne House and Basing, where the entertainment for 3 days cost Paulet £3,000. That's £600,000 in today's money.

Mind you, William had the blood of the Earl of Somerset on his hands; he'd also wanted to kill King Phillip of Spain, but eventually let him honeymoon at Basing House! A man of paradoxes indeed.

Sadly, after William Paulet's death in 1572, the later English Civil War saw the demise and destruction of Basing House (1645). So brick by brick and stone by stone the locals carried away the remains for their own dwellings. Shed-loads of money had gone missing and in this age of metal detectors, William's descendants have searched the ruins in vain.

To this very day, no metal detectors are allowed at the Ruins of Basing House, Alan said, and it may become more devastated as there is not enough Lottery money for upkeep.... So, the man who wrote of himself -

“Late supping I forbear,
Wine and women I forswear;
My neck and feet I keep from cold,
No marvel then, though I be old,
I am a willow, not an oak;
I chide, but never hurt with stroke.”

- would be crushed at this loss.

Thank you, Alan for the amazing story of 'The Willow of Basing'.

Rosemary Bond

What's on? Events which may be of interest

Hampshire Record Office *For information ring 01962846154 or see www3.hants.gov.uk/whatson-hro*

Milestones Museum. For coming events: Tel. 01256 477766 or see: www3.hants.gov.uk/milestones/whatson

11:00am Saturday 13 & Sunday 14 Oct 2012 - **OctoberFest** at Milestones - a celebration of Hampshire's finest Beer and Food producers.

Willis Museum - Telephone: 01256 465902 for information.

Saturday 27 Oct 2012 - "Halloween Half-term Make & Takes". Bats, cats, and all things spooky!

Friends of the Willis Museum (7.30pm at the museum)

18th Oct. - AGM followed by Owen Blissett's "Memories of Kempshott".

Basingstoke Archaeological & Historical Society (7.30 at Church Cottage)

8th Nov. - "Putting flesh on the bones; the human skeleton in archaeology and forensic science" by Dr Martin Smith, University of Bournemouth

The **Kingsclere Heritage Association** is having an exhibition called 'Kingsclere Through the Ages' on Sat 13 and Sun 14 October. It will be in the Village Club, George Street, Kingsclere, RG20 5NH from 10 am to 4 pm on each day. This exhibition will explore the social and economic history of our community with photographs, maps and other information; much of it drawn from our own archives. We extend a warm invitation to all local history clubs to visit. More information from peter@pwoodman.co.uk or on 01635 297144.

We have details of two study days at the University of London - Forensic Aspects of Ancient Egypt, 11am - 5pm Sat. 10th Nov. and Festivities in Ancient Egypt, 11am - 5pm Sat. 1st December. - More from Richard or Carol.

***TADS annual membership is £12 per person.
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