



October 2020

TADS Newsletter

Website - www.tadshistory.com

The virus situation is getting worse again.

A TADS Talk via Zoom on Wednesday 21st October at 8 pm

“Underground Architecture”

by Mike Grundy

Enjoy this review of successive British architectural styles, based on examples of London's 270 Underground stations.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81793197665?pwd=aTRjaVJPSzVjaDdnVWFQMfJPTCtZz09>

Meeting ID: 817 9319 7665

Passcode: 652270

*Comments, queries and suggestions to Richard Brown (0118) 9700100,
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www.tadshistory.com

Future TADS talks

All talks at St. Paul's Hall have been cancelled for the rest of the year. Meanwhile we will continue using Zoom. I will let you have details of talks as soon as I can.

Zoom talk November 18th at 8pm - **“Twyford (Hants) Waterworks”**.

If you need help using Zoom the TADS Website has information and a contact number.

TADS Zoom Talk on 16th September 2020

‘Never had it so good – London 1957 – 1963’ By Colin Oakes

Colin is a man of many parts, in particular an archaeologist and a London Blue Badge Guide. As promised this was definitely a trip down memory lane. Most of you will recognise the title of the talk as coming from Prime Minister (1957–1963) Harold Macmillan’s famous speech of 20th July 1957 in Bedford. Like so many things the quote is somewhat out of context and Colin quoted the passage in full:



"Go around the country, go to the industrial towns, go to the farms and you will see a state of prosperity such as we have never had in my lifetime - nor indeed in the history of this country. Indeed let us be frank about it - most of our people have never had it so good".

Supremac came over as a bit of an old duffer but he had fought in the First World War and was old enough to remember how poor many people had been before 1914 and in the twenties and thirties. The later 1950s was a time of great change and mostly for the better. Just after the war the country had been on its uppers, not helped by the terrible weather of 1947-8 and greatly in debt. (Colin said that we did not pay off the country's First World War debts until 1968 and last of the second war debts in late 2010).

The film 'Passport to Pimlico' of 1949 is a good reminder of the bombsites in London, some of which were not built on for many years. Colin said the last one remained at Ludgate Hill until 1986. Clothing was among the things to change, bikinis were a shock, particularly as swimming costumes were usually of knitted wool and mine descended to my knees when it was wet. The post war spivs (Fraser of Dad's Army) morphed into the Teddy Boy look of the later 1950s.

So many things were different, central heating and double glazing were in the future. In winter, ice forming beautiful patterns on the inside of bedroom windows was normal. We are nostalgic for steam trains, but they ran on coal and travel on them was filthy. They and the coal fires in the houses made for the great smogs of the 1950s which were killers. The last was 1962 and even as far out of London as Farnborough, Hants they were bad, and I remember the evil yellow colour they had.

Utility furniture and other utility standard goods were the norm for several years. And post war, food rationing actually got worse and did not end until 1954. Then new foods and drinks began to appear – hamburgers, fries (different to chips), Coca Cola and Pepsi, Vimto, Tango, Knickerbocker Glory with the long spoons for a special treat after a meal. In London and other big cities new immigrants like West Indians, Maltese, Indians brought their cultures and foods. The best Indian food was in the East End of London or Southall. Berni Inns came with their standard meal: prawn cocktail, steak, Black Forest gateau, all for 8/-. Pasta was new, so were pimentos, virgin olive oil, peppers, pizzas. It really was a time of great change. Lyons of the Lyons Corner teahouses moved into the manufacture of factory food and they built L.E.O. the first commercial electronic computer to control their stock.

It was not just food, drinks changed as well; lager was introduced for women, or they could have Baby Cham (a pseudo-champagne made from pears, strictly called perry). Cherry brandy was also another popular drink for the ladies. Coffee also changed to the real thing from Camp Coffee in a bottle which was mostly made of chicory. Do you remember the highland officer on the label with a Sikh batman? Believe it or not, it is still on sale today. This is a modern bottle.

Along with proper coffee came coffee bars with their shiny chrome, hissing Gaggia espresso machines.



There were also Milk Bars, but they did not last long. Jazz clubs and folk clubs were other innovations.

For young men there was also the relief that National Service ended.

Very recently journalist Andrew Marr opined that the period was all doom and gloom. Many people responded with “You weren’t there mate.” I heartily agree and think Supermac was absolutely right.

Thank you Colin for your fascinating reminder of life 60 years ago. It was so alive that at one point Jane and I were coming out with long gone product names in chorus with him.

Richard Brown

A USAAF Plaque

On 6 June 1997 a plaque, dedicated to the people of Tadley, hosts to the USAAF during WW II, was erected at Blake's Lane, on the south wall of the Toucan Travel building. This plaque was designed and unveiled by American G. Paul Gerbracht in association with Gordon Timmins.

Royal Air Force (RAF) Aldermaston came into existence in 1941 and was transferred to the United States Army Air Force in August 1942. Originally under the command of the 8th USAAF it transferred to the 9th USAAF in 1943. In October 1943, the 318th Air Base Group, including the 458th Service Squadron, arrived at Aldermaston from Barksdale Field, Louisiana to support the 434th Troop Carrier Group. They stayed at Aldermaston until February 1945.

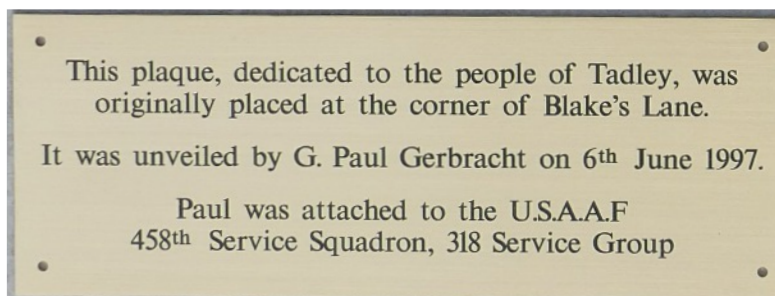
Paul Gerbracht was attached to the newly formed 458th Service squadron, 318th Service Group and arrived in Tadley prior to D-Day. Throughout the afternoon and evening of the 3rd of June 1944 the 458th Squadron were responsible for painting the 'invasion stripes' on all the aircraft awaiting D-Day at Aldermaston.

On the 60th anniversary of D-Day in June 2004 a second plaque was erected. This one on the site of the Aldermaston Airfield, Station 467, now AWE, was dedicated to the memory of those members of the Airborne Forces who died during WW II. This plaque was initiated and designed by Gordon Timmins, MOD police dog handler and local historian.

By the beginning of this year the weather had taken its toll on the brass plaque and it was nearly a uniform black. With its position high up the wall and nearly falling off it was time for something to be done. With permission, TADS removed the plaque and I restored it.



After further negotiations, it was agreed that it should be sited on the Tadley Town Council building in Franklin avenue where it would be more visible. In order to explain its new position TADS had smaller brass label made to mount alongside the original.



On Saturday 3 October at 11.00, a Ceremony to unveil and re-dedicate the Plaque was held outside the TTC building. Unfortunately it was a very wet

morning so the event had to be held under a pop-up awning and observe the Covid 19 restrictions.

After an introduction by Carol Stevens and an Act of Remembrance led by Padre Charles Lewis, RAFAC, the Plaque was unveiled by Councillor Jo Page, Chair of Tadley Town Council together with Gordon Timmins. Padre Lewis then re-dedicated the Plaque to the memory of the people of Tadley and the 9th US Army Air Force who gave their service in defence of this land. This was followed by a short address from Councillor Page.

Since publicising this event on our website and Facebook we have heard from some of Paul Gerbracht's family and are very pleased to say they fully support the move and are pleased he will not be forgotten.

Richard Brown



Councillor Jo Page and Gordon Timmins
with the newly unveiled plaque.



Not the best of mornings for the re-dedication



What a contrast in the weather - The south section of the Roman walls at Silchester photographed a few days later.

What's on? Events which may be of interest.

Milestones Museum. For coming events tel. 01256 477766 or see <http://hampshireculturaltrust.org.uk/milestones-museum>
Milestones is open and from 24th October to 1st November they have their Halloween Half Term event.

Willis Museum - The museum has also re-opened *For information tel. 01256 465902 or see*
<http://hampshireculturaltrust.org.uk/venue-events/52>

28 Oct 20 - 16 Jan 21 Sunday Times Watercolour Competition 2020 - See the winners and short list entries of this national competition.

Like TADS many Societies are doing their talks online, but they are at too short a notice to list them here.

With the ever changing Coronavirus regulations please check with any venue before making a special journey to visit it.

STAY SAFE, STAY WELL.

***TADS annual membership is £18 per person.
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