

February 2023

TADS Newsletter

Website - www.tadshistory.com

**Next Meeting - Monday 13th February at 8 pm, at
Baughurst and Heath End Village Hall, Heath End Road,
Baughurst RG26 5LU. (A new venue, see page 2)**

‘All things British - Eccentrics, Heroes, and Tea’

by Susan Howe

Always highly entertaining, Susan's talks are very unpredictable. The title covers many things and that is what she will talk about. She has been to TADS twice before and both times she was very well received.

Our new venue is really good!

If you wish to stop receiving the Newsletter please email Richard Brown or notify Carol Stevens or a Committee member.

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

www.tadshistory.com

Future TADS events:

At our new venue!

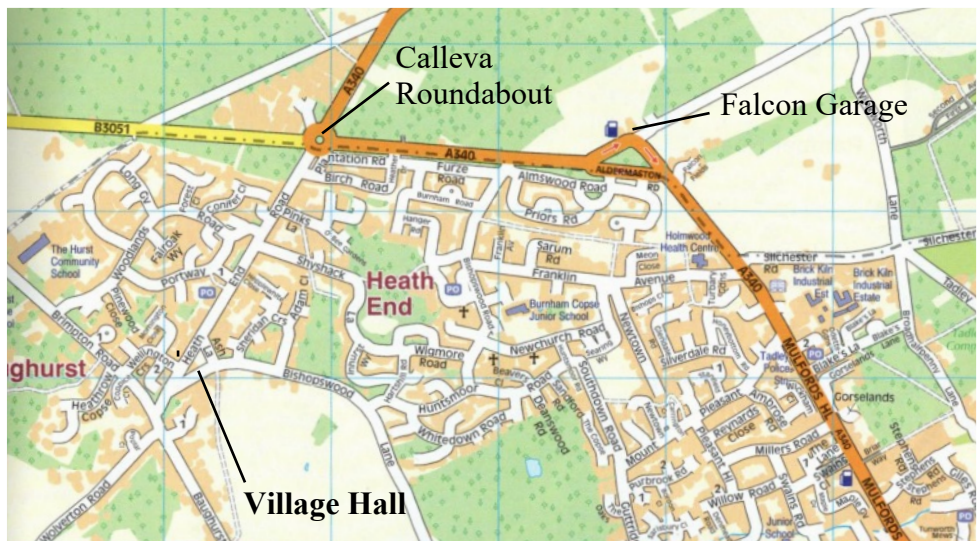
Monday 13th March 2023 in Baughurst & Heath End Village Hall -

‘A Photographic Walk through Tadley’

By TADS Project Group

Our New Venue

Our first meeting in Baughurst and Heath End Hall was a great success last month and very well supported. It is a modern hall with a large car park, a built in projector screen and sound system and padded chairs. The hall is a bit further away from the centre of Tadley than the Church, but it is readily accessible being on the left hand side near the end of Heath End Road coming from the Calleva roundabout, and just before the acute turn off into Bishops Wood Lane. See map below.



Last Man Standing – the Local Defence Volunteers (The real Home Guard) by Dale Johnson.

One shouldn't be ageist but as a local Ukrainian Guest said recently 'You English come to life when you reach 70....' that's definitely true of Dale Johnson, who at 84 years is 'galloping' all over Southern England on a mission to show how it was in yesteryear. TV's 'Dad's Army' he is not! Since 2009 he's driven 60,000 miles with loads of WW2 paraphernalia in his microscopic 90 year-old Austin 7 van.

Established nationwide by a BBC wireless appeal in May 1940, The Local Defence Volunteers (LDV) re-named the Home Guard (HG) in the Summer of 1940, were a very effective defence force of about 2 million men and hundreds of women. They constructed and guarded thousands of road blocks and made vast numbers of Molotov Cocktails (petrol bombs). The HG patrolled our urban and rural areas 24-seven, on foot, horseback, bicycle, home-made armoured vehicles, skis, boats, roller skates, etc., using every size and type of weapon including anti-aircraft guns and rockets. The HG also trained war dogs: Alsations (i.e. German Shepherd dogs) and carrier pigeons.

The HG constructed special weapons, one of which was a drainpipe on legs which fired 200 yard-reaching 29 mm stick-and-mortar-devices, and 3" (5cm) sub-artillery Smith guns. There seemed to be scant protection for the HG who were paid 1/6d (15p) for 3 hours' work, or 3/- (30p) for 6 hours. The South Downs of East Sussex were patrolled by the 'Lewes Cossacks', a fearless and fearsome group of HG on horseback.

The River Thames was guarded by female Home Guards on the river and on its banks. In the Lake District, boats were used.

Dale said that anyone of a certain age, named 'Morrison' or 'Anderson' could have been conceived in one of those shelters..... These shelters still litter the countryside and Franklin Avenue, Tadley has a few.

One of the youngest men of the very last intake of National Servicemen, Dale has appeared on National and Southern Television and counts Dad's Army actor, Ian Lavender, as his friend.

Apparently the Home Guard were especially good with anti-aircraft guns, which spewed out 120 rounds a minute. Dale said you had to aim ahead and a primitive computer-like construction: a 'predictor' helped. 'Tracers' were also fired, to deter foreign aircraft. Because of the possibility of poison gas, all HG personnel had gas masks. We had 3,000 tons of chlorine gas stashed away in Savernake Forest on the Berkshire/Wiltshire border – protected of course by the Home Guard. They really were into everything, Dale said: street fighting (often hurting themselves); field kitchens (with Girl Guides doing the washing up), Dale was dressed as a bear, sniping, in Eastney, Portsea Island; the HG persuaded London taxi drivers to give lifts, also used were ponies and traps, motor cycles; they checked bus passengers' tickets and documents and were involved in unarmed combat, doing 'as much damage as possible'.

Sadly, over 1,200 Home Guardsmen and women were killed in accidents. George Medals were awarded for their bravery where applicable and Defence Medals for 3 years' service. Over 2 million Brits were involved in WW2's Home Guarding. Their weapons were kept at home and even, it is said, our late Queen Elizabeth had a live anti-personnel butterfly bomb 'which was polished daily.....'

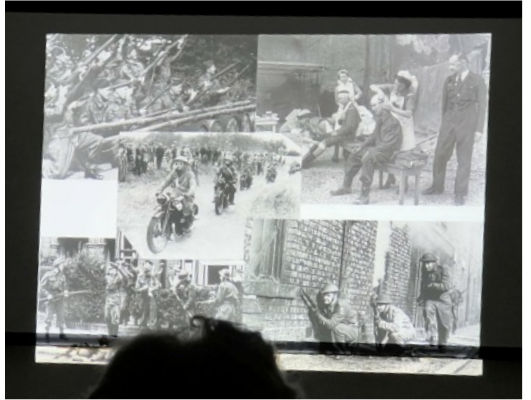
Dale had some fine pictures of German bombs: black Satan 1,800 kg; red Hermann 100 kg; green 500 kg; grey 50 kg and lots of British weaponry.

The Home Guard was stood down in December 1944 (and has not been revived). We have been honoured to have Dale with us driving his Autogophasta (Ought-to-go-faster) van, so named after British Mark IV Male Tank A41 number 2028 which eventually saw action in WW1.

Thank you Dale for showing us the REAL Dad's Army.

Rosemary Bond.

Page 5 has a selection of photographs taken on the night by Ian Burn. Clockwise from top left: Dale's Austin 7 van; Dale Johnson; One of his photo slides; Richard and Stephen hanging his bomb poster; The German Luger pistol; A typical wartime warning sign.



Lorna Cooke (nee Brock)

Lorna died on 30th January after a 2 year battle with cancer. She was Treasurer for TADS for many years and a member of the Project group who produced TADS first publication 'Around Tadley Fact & Fable'. Her husband Alan was TADS Archivist.

She and Alan made France their permanent home upon Lorna's retirement. I am sure that all who remember them will wish to send Alan our deepest sympathies.

Carol Stevens

Membership Subscriptions.

Subscriptions are now due and thank you to the many members have already rejoined.

A copy of the Membership form was included with the AGM papers. Copies are also be available at TADS meetings or can be download from the TADS website.

We ask members to complete the form and return it, signed and dated, to TADS Treasurer, Christine Poile. The form includes a number of payment options, please follow the instructions for your chosen option. Alternatively, you can renew your membership subscription when attending one of our forthcoming meetings.

Christine Poile, TADS Treasurer.

Photographs

We are always interested to see old photographs taken in the Tadley district. Even ones taken just a few years ago can be very interesting as things change quickly, such as the area opposite the new Lidl's store.

The bus on the next page is a very good example. The photo was taken by Wally Stamper who passed it to member Mark Beauchamp via the Basingstoke and District Railway Society. It was taken in 1963 when Wally was living at Boundary Hall.



1963. Wilts & Dorset 388 (KAM 594) Bristol 'K' on route 137 to Basingstoke. Boundary Hall is to the left and The Falcon pub is middle right. Although it is just 60 years ago, of everything in the photo, only the road itself remains.

Copyright - Wally Stamper

A Mystery

The grave stone in the picture was erected by Major George Roller in memory of his horse Gabardine. It was probably in what is today the Tadley Court area. Does it still exist? If so where is it?



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

Milestones Museum The website to buy admission tickets can be found at: <https://www.milestonesmuseum.org.uk/>

11 - 19 February. **Half-Term Fun** at Milestones: Play days; teddy Trail; and more.

The Willis Museum and Sainsbury Gallery

<https://www.hampshireculture.org.uk/willis-museum-and-sainsbury-gallery>:

2 Feb - 1 May. **Shoes: Inside out** - a free exhibition featuring footwear from 11 AD to the present, with X-rays of many of the exhibits.

Friends of the Willis Museum (7.30pm at the Museum - Non-members £3, and book through the Museum on 01256 465902)

16 Feb - The history of **Shaw House**, the Newbury Tudor house
by Sarah Somerville

26 Feb 2.00pm Sunday afternoon talk - **The good old cause**, by Tim Craven. The twists and turns of the English Republic (1648-60) and why it failed: Part One, **The road to Regicide**.

£5 inc. Refreshments. Book at www.hampshireculture.org.uk/willis-museum-and-sainsbury-gallery

Basingstoke Archaeological and Historical Society (7.30 at Church Cottage, Basingstoke)

9 Feb - The **Andover Workhouse Scandal** Reviewed - Professor Michael Wheeler, Visting Professor, University of Southampton

9 Mar - Recent **Archaeological Discoveries at Manydown**
by Susan Porter

***TADS annual membership is £20 per person.
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