



May 2024

TADS Newsletter

Website - www.tadshistory.com

**Next Meeting - Monday 13th May 2024 at 8 pm, at
Baughurst and Heath End Village Hall, Heath End Road,
Baughurst RG26 5LU.**

‘General Brock and the Maiwand Lion’

by Mike Cooper

Many of you will be very familiar with the great lion statue ‘The Maiwand Lion’ in the Forbury Gardens, in central Reading, yet not know its significance to the area. It commemorates a battle fought in Afghanistan in 1880. The lion is posed in snarling defiance to the north – towards Russia.

This talk looks at the Battle of Maiwand against the backdrop of Anglo-Russian rivalry in Asia – The Great Game, and the history of the Lion itself.

(Everybody welcome - visitors £3.00)

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:

Monday 10th June 2024 in Baughurst & Heath End Village Hall:

‘The Great Train Robbery’

By Tony Keep

TADS Last Meeting 8th April 2024

The Vyne

**A pictorial & photographic journey through 500 years of history.
by Claire Tilson.**

The Vyne is a mansion of many rooms and Claire, who has been a volunteer and photographer for many years, loves and is knowledgeable and enthusiastic about them all. The Vyne is her ‘happy place’ and her object was to take us for a walk through 500 years of The Vyne.

The house has medieval origins and Tudor roots, transitioning from one family to another. Claire emphasised that only two families had owned it in the 500 years before it was gifted to the National Trust.

Roughly, the Manor of Sherborne with the Cowdrey Fyffhide family, the Sandys family – but not for long, the Brocas family in 1420, and in the 1488 back to the Sandys family.

In 1523 William Sandys was Henry VIII’s Lord Chamberlain and Henry visited The Vyne with both his first wife, Katherine of Aragon and later with Anne Boleyn. As Jane Seymour was lady in waiting to Anne Boleyn it is thought that she may also have visited The Vyne. Later Queen Elizabeth I visited twice. In 1551 the property was enlarged into a moated courtyard manor – its lost buildings would have extended into the curent lake.

In 1653 the Chute family bought the estate for £17,000 – over £4m in today's money, they knocked down parts and built other parts, retaining it until 1956 when the house, land and tenant farms were handed over to the National Trust.

As we were walked through the rooms in the house, the photographs showed them in the present and how they used to be from drawings, paintings and old photos.

The Entrance Hall is Tudor but with no staircase. After John Chute returned from his Grand Tour (of 7 years) in 1770 he designed it inspired by what he had seen. The colours and the bannisters designed to give the idea of space. There was a design in the 1760s but this was not used. In 1860 Martin Chute replaced the figures on the pillars at the bottom of the stairs with torches. Under the staircase is part of the medieval cellars but there is nothing down there to see. The external Palladian portico was the first built outside of London.

The Large Drawing Room where originally the same material, Brocatelle, was used for the walls, furniture and curtains. In the modern photo the mirror, clock and portrait of John Chute remain in the same place.

The Further Drawing Room is where Jane Austen would have attended dances and which during WW1 became a classroom for Miss James's School for Girls. From it you can see from one end of the house to the other.

The Stone Gallery – always a cold place it has been used variously for keeping Henry VIII's horses, as a dormitory for the servants of posh visitors, as a play area for the 11 children of Wigget Chute and for schoolboys who were evacuated to The Vyne during WW2. The boys were allowed only 1 handkerchief which they dried on the Victorian heating pipes.

The Print Room. The height of Regency good taste, the walls were covered with prints collected by Horace Walpole and John Chute on the Grand Tour. In recent times, due to the light from the windows opposite, the prints were replaced by prints from the Prince of Liechtenstein and the British Museum. This room is one of only 12 properties which have print rooms.

In WW2 it became the Headmaster's room where punishments were carried out.

The South Bedroom. This was part of the main bedroom in Tudor times, it

contains a clothes press in which clothes such as embroidered waistcoats were laid.

The Gallery Bedroom. This was the second part of the main bedroom which had an en-suite bathroom to which water was brought by servants. Later Wiggett Chute enabled piped water upstairs.

The Oak Gallery. At 82 ft. long, this remarkable, linenfold panelled gallery was the Tudor jewel and rare survivor. The two 16th C portraits survive with embellishments by the Victorians over time. The gallery as it was in 1840 is completely recognisable today.

The Tapestry Room. This was once Katherine of Aragon's bedroom, later redecorated for Anne Boleyn. The Soho tapestries of Oriental scenes dating from approximately 1720 were probably collected by Edward Chute but Wiggett Chute cut them ruthlessly to fit the walls. The tapestries have been damaged by water leaking from the old roof and a 3-year programme of conservation and restoration is under way.

The Library was added by Speaker Chute after 1653 and contains over 3,500 books. The oldest book is a 1485 Book of Hours.

The Saloon. This used to be 3 rooms and contains a Broadwood piano from 1846.

Martha Chute taught her 11 children to play the piano.

The Dining Parlour. Henry VIII would have entered the house through the 'front door' in this room.

The Ante Chapel is of Tudor origin but there is nothing left in it from this time. If you look carefully it is possible to see the 68 'corn law' truncheons along one wall.

The Chapel. Claire said it is the finest non-Royal chapel in Tudor England. It contains the best stained glass owned by the National Trust and which has recently been conserved. The top three sections show the Passion of Christ. The three lower panels depict Queen Margaret of Scotland, Henry VIII as a young man and Queen Katherine of Aragon. The pomegranate was Katherine's symbol and there are many depicted here which must have been very disconcerting for Anne Boleyn in her later visits as queen.

The floor tiles a Majolica and one design shows a Tudor 'fool'.

Nobody has ever been buried in the chapel.

The Servants' Area included a servant's hall, Victorian pantry bells, leather buckets, the Housekeeper's office and kitchen. But its refurbishment is a project for another day.

The Roof. At a cost of £5.5 million it was off with the old in 2016 and on with the new in 2017. Tiles which look as though they are slightly lifted are to accommodate the 7 species of bats.

The last owner of The Vyne was Charles Leonard Chute, a barrister, who saw action in the Battle of the Somme with the Middlesex Regiment and was awarded the Military Cross. His batman became Headmaster of Tormore School in Kent which is how the school came to be evacuated to The Vyne during WW2. Charles was knighted in 1952 and upon his death in 1956 the property was given to the National Trust.

Thank you Claire for your very informative talk about a place with a long history which is on our doorstep.

Ann Broad.
(Assisted by Richard)



The Vyne (*Image from National Trust*)

TADS Membership Forms.

Some of you have paid but have not yet returned the membership form. Will you please bring the completed form/s to the next meeting or post it to Christine Poile at 34 Otterbourne Crescent, Tadley.

A Talks Organiser.

Our plea for help has had a positive result with Mrs Bernie Williams volunteering to take on the role.

Atom Town Memories.

The Project Group are considering preparing a publication about Tadley after the start of the Atomic Weapons Research Establishment in 1952. If you were around at that time or in the following years (or know someone who was) we would like to record your memories. It was a time of great change and the first arrivals must be approaching their 90s.

The Raffle.

Treasurer Christine's first raffle was very successful. Look out for the details and prizes on her table when you come into the hall.

Census Files

We have hand written files by the late Iris Stanley which are transcriptions of the 1841 - 1901 censuses for Tadley, Baughurst and Pamber. We would like to get them on the Website as pdfs. Help in doing the scanning would be welcome.

D-Day. 80th Commemorations of 6th June 1944

Carol/TADS have been asked to provide historic pictorial displays for the following local events:

The Tadley Treacle Fair on Sunday 2nd June.

The Officers' Mess in the Hinds Head, Aldermaston on Wednesday 6th June.

A St Paul's event on the Green, Tadley on Saturday 8th June

A big church service at St Mary's Church, Tadley on Sunday 9th June.

These were all unplanned from the TADS perspective, but we have been able to put something together mainly using past items from the stock under Carol's bed.

Natural History Corner



A Hairy Shieldbug *Dolycoris baccarum* in our garden. (11.5mm long)

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/>

25 May to 2 June - **1940s Week, Hampshire in WWII.**

The Willis Museum and Sainsbury Gallery

May 9 until 28 July - **Karl Blossfeldt: art forms in nature:** a Hayward Gallery touring exhibition featuring 40 photogravures by one of the 20th century's most influential photographers. Published in 1932, the year of his death, they enlarge forms in nature up to 30 times thereby capturing their aesthetic and revealing their underlying structures.

26 May, 2 pm – 3.30 pm, Sunday afternoon talk (followed by tea or coffee and cake). **Capture the castle**, by Tim Craven, former Curator of Southampton City Art Gallery. Tim makes a welcome return to talk about how castles are represented in art.

£7 and must be booked.

To book go on-line at www.hampshireculture.org.uk/willis-museum, or call in or phone 01256 465902.

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

16 May - **“Lord” George Sanger: Britain’s Greatest Showman**, by David Wickens.

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

13th May - **Shaw House, Newbury** - 400 years of history by Sarah Somerville, Visitor Manager

***TADS annual membership is £20 per person.
Correspondence to Tadley and District History Society,
c/o 5 Church Road Pamber Heath Tadley. RG26 3DP
Email: tadshistory@googlemail.com***