



October 2024

TADS Newsletter

Website - www.tadshistory.com

**Next Meeting - Monday 14th October 2024 at 8 pm, at
Baughurst and Heath End Village Hall, Heath End Road,
Baughurst RG26 5LU.**

‘The History of Lions Clubs International & the Loddon Valley Lions in particular ’

By John Goodchild

John Goodchild has been a member of Loddon Valley Lions for 37 years, during which time he was National Chair of the Lions in the UK and the whole of Ireland. He will talk about:

the formation of Lions Clubs International in 1917; the development of the organisation to the present day and the events that led up to the formation of Loddon Valley Lions Club in 1976; the work of Loddon Valley Lions and some of its major achievements.

(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 11th November 2024 in Baughurst & Heath End Village Hall:

‘Roller and Burberry’

By Ian Burn (TADS Project Group)

TADS Last Meeting 9th September 2024

The Complete History of Thatcham by Dr Nick Young.

Nick said that around 10,000 years BC, ie in the pre-Palaeolithic era, the Berkshire town of Thatcham included Cold Ash and Midgham. Even the 1761 boundary included Cold Ash and Midgham. But Thatcham has become smaller of late.

Baby mammoth tusks, 4 feet long (1m12cm) have been retrieved. There was evidence of woolly rhinos in the Shaw area, with Palaeolithic hand axes also spotted in Wash Common which means human beings were there too.

Flints have been found south of the A4 road and in the Sewage Works vicinity: Palaeolithic sites. 5 Inch (20 cm) hand axes which were multi-bladed for multi-tasking were used in the abundant reed beds. Lower Way, Thatcham, has several rivers running under it, not necessarily where you think they'd be, Nick said. The much-used Discovery Centre is apparently one of England's best Mesolithic sites, where 10,000 bone shards have been found and there are many worked flints. In the 1920s till 1950s archaeologists discovered lots about Thatcham, particularly including when old fish bones had been used as shovels. People were very resourceful, Nick told us.

4000 BC to 2400 BC is deemed to be the Neolithic era, where New Stone Age axe heads found in 1.5 metres of soil had SHAFTS. The River Kennet did not flow in

the area at this time. Neolithic flint tools with a selection of arrowheads were deemed to come from Europe – or even the U.S.A.....

2400 BC to 800 BC was the Bronze Age leading to the Iron Age – 800 BC to 43 AD. Pottery was found in the Ring Ditches, suggesting burial rituals were common. If one were to discover spear heads and other antiquities now, they must be registered with the Portable Antiquities Scheme – and your SECRETS would be safe as the site of finding will not be disclosed.

In the Roman period, roughly 43AD – 410 AD, post holes in the soil indicated where huts had been built. Blue dots were used to mark roads and red dots, wells on the map Nick showed.

The Romans were active in the Turnpike area and also where Newbury Hospital is now. Nick said Roman roads are sometimes marked on old maps but to find them you must ‘go with your gut.....’ It was relatively easy to build things or move about because Thatcham is in the River Kennet valley.

From 410AD onwards ‘modern’ Saxon Thatcham began to appear and evidence of this has been found in the Co-op car park and in 2002 south of the Saxon stone-built church. The old Saxon name for Thatcham was PAECHAM (Circa 951).

Mediaeval Thatcham boasted 2 mills, a church and 250 people (Newbury only had 100) – it of course included Midgham, Greenham and Crookham, with Colthrop coming later. The area was affiliated to Reading Abbey, was self-governing but had no M.P. Nick said a new manor just north of Thatcham called HENWICK was created about 1445-ish, but ‘it was a muddle.....’

A Thatcham lady, one Alice Bye, in 1413 granted a churchwarden a piece of land for the construction of a STONE church. In the 16th Century the church tower was clad in flint. Inside is the tomb of Sir Walter Danvers 1513.

In 1707, Francis Winchcomb bought a ‘decayed chapel’ and converted it into a ‘school for poor boys....’ It functioned until 1914 when the schoolmaster had to go off to war (WWI). Today it is known as ‘The Bluecoats School’.

Dunston House and park were built for royalty – but no royalty visited! The house was pulled down in 1800. Thatcham obviously tried to be a very traditional village. It had a maypole in the 1700s which was danced round to celebrate Queen Victoria’s coronation.

It seems that Thatcham has striven to be a traditional English village with some success.

Thank you ‘Thatcham Nick’ for your fact-packed Thatcham talk – you are a lucky man to have and love ‘your own village.’

Rosemary Bond.

Nick’s website is www.nickbits.co.uk where you can find lots of information on historic Thatcham.



Chapel Street, Thatcham (by Dr Nick)

Cemetery extension

The Tadley Town Council have bought a piece of land south of the existing cemetery opposite St Peter’s Church, so that the cemetery can be extended.

It is thought that the extension will cross the route of the Portway Roman Road so the council is initiating some explorations by archaeologists to see if they can find exact position of the road. If they are successful the Portway will be marked as a feature of the cemetery extension.

(This has nothing to do with the Skates Lane building proposal).

Dale Johnson

We were saddened to hear of the death of Dale in late September at about 85 years of age . He came in costume to TADS in January 2023 to talk about the Local Defence Volunteers (The real Home Guard). Those who were present will remember a very entertaining evening. He was last seen heading home to Ferndown, nr. Poole at a very sedate speed in his 1933 Austin Seven Home Guard van.

One of life's real characters.



TADS November meeting will be near to TADS 40th Anniversary.

To mark the occasion **cake and coffee** will be served at 7.30 before Ian Burn gives his talk about George Roller and Thomas Burberry.

A Volunteering Opportunity - Jane Austen's House

Julia McLeod the Volunteering and Visitor Operations Officer at Jane Austen's House in Chawton is seeking volunteer Stewards. Part-time, across any 4 days per week. The snag for those of you who are in the Tadley area is that Chawton is just the far side of Alton.

Julia can be contacted by telephone on 01420 83262 or through their website:

www.janeaustens.house



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/>

26 Oct - 4 Nov sees **Halloween** events with a special trail round the museum. The museum is now taking bookings for its special Christmas events.

The Willis Museum and Sainsbury Gallery

Until 3 November: **Time Studio:** Six Hampshire-based artists have been commissioned to lead workshops in diverse mediums from printmaking to clay coiling, responding to the theme of "Time" in honour of founder George Willis, a local clockmaker. The exhibition has evolved from the workshops and is now different from when it opened.

26 Oct - 3 Nov. There are many child centred events during half term.

29th Sept, 2 pm – 3.30 pm: Sunday afternoon talk **Windrush, My Personal Journey by Grace Powell** - (followed by tea or coffee and cake) £7.00 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*)

October 17th - **AGM** for all members Followed by '**Jane Austen in her own words**'. Readings of Jane Austen by members.

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

14th Oct - Hampshire and the Spitfire by Paul Beaver, Aviation Historian.

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