

May 2025

TADS Newsletter

Website - www.tadshistory.com

**Next Meeting - Monday 12th May 2025 at 8 pm, at
Baughurst and Heath End Village Hall, Heath End Road,
Baughurst RG26 5LU.**

‘The Battle of Hastings: regime change 11th Century style.’

by Mike Cooper

Three men – one kingdom – two great battles and an amazing embroidery.
Was Harold the rightful king of England ? What changed ?

In this talk Mike Cooper looks at England in 1066, at the rival claimants to the throne and the available evidence for what happened and its impact on Britain.

(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 9th June 2025 in Baughurst & Heath End Village Hall:

‘The invisible corps’

By Roy Larkin

(NB. This is a change from the published programme)

TADS Last Meeting 14th April 2025

Donnington Castle, NW of Newbury.

By David Peacock.

This once-white, ruined castle isn't easily seen from the road. It was once owned by the Chaucer family and home to a Queen of France*. Sadly only the gatehouse remains. The building is not far from the Watermill Theatre.

The East-to-West Newbury A4 Bath Road gives easy access and from the castle one can see south to Beacon Hill and the Oxford Road also. The castle plan is irregular with towers and a gate house (main entrance). Richard II gave Sir Richard Adderbury (or Abberbury) a licence to build it in 1386 – of flint, stone and chalk. Adderbury also held a manor in Old Shoreham, West Sussex. He went with the Black Prince, heir to the throne, to fight in France.

In 1368 an army had gathered first in Northampton and then in France to fight for the king – who became the sovereign at a very early age. Adderbury also built a castle at Bodiam in E. Sussex which is better maintained than the one at Donnington. Adderbury was a very powerful man. We're told he liked Alsation wine, he built a friary, almshouses, a hospital in 1393 and was very religious.....He and the king were very close....for a while.

Donnington Castle had a ditch, not a moat, plus a special oak tree named after Chaucer. In 1399 Adderbury sold Donnington Castle – for an unknown reason..... to Thomas Chaucer, son of Geoffrey of the Canterbury Tales.

Chaucer was based at Ewelme, north of Newbury. His daughter Alice, owned other manors and she sold Ewelme where there's a memorial to her, plus a spectacular carved stone work of art. Alice eventually took a third husband: Brandon, Earl of Suffolk, 1396-1450. He met his end by being murdered in 1450.

In 1512 Henry VIII had given Brandon's family the manor, castle and park at Donnington. It was a house to show one's status. The coat of arms was put onto the building but sadly is no longer there. Henry VIII visited the castle in 1516 and 1541 and his daughter, Elizabeth I, briefly owned it.

The castle seems to have been frequently fought over.... In 1644 during the English Civil War it came under siege. After the Second Battle of Newbury when the Royalists vacated the building at dusk they apparently left the King's jewels behind! The castle was then almost demolished.



A reconstruction showing how the castle may have looked during the Civil War siege.

© Historic England Archive/English Heritage Trust (illustration by Peter Urmston).

In the 1960s the Ministry of Works produced a Guide Book to be re-printed every 2 years, but 1978 saw the last book of the castle and indeed, the 20th C hasn't seen a repeat of any fighting!

Thank you, David, for your comprehensive talk about an area not many miles from Tadley, but of which some of us knew little.

Rosemary Bond.

** page 2 - Mary Tudor, the sister of Henry VIII was briefly married to Louis XI, King of France, and after his death married Charles Brandon of Donnington.*

The Castle is in the care of English Heritage. Their website has a lot more about the history of the castle and its owners.



Donnington Castle today. Photo English Heritage

VE Day (Victory in Europe 8th May 1945) commemorative events

Thursday 8th May The beacon in Pamber Park, Pamber Heath will be lit at 9.30pm along with others throughout the country. The evening's events will start at 7.30pm.

The u3a Craft Group have been very busy since Christmas Knitting for this week's Commemoration for VE Day. When you are out and about in Tadley you should spot small displays of remembrance. There are also displays in St Mary's Church and outside of St Paul's Church.

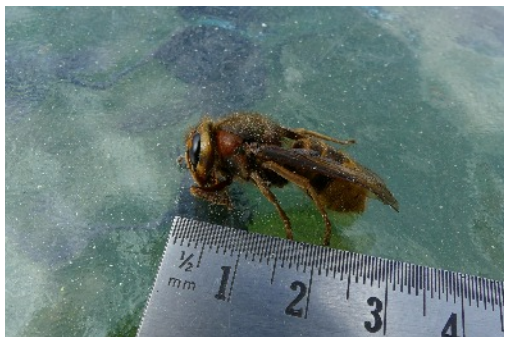
There will be a commemoration service at St Mary's Church, Newchurch Road, Tadley at 10.30 on Sunday 11th May. TADS will be contributing a display about VE Day and the WWII celebrations.

Signing in at TADS meetings.

Will everybody please sign in with Christine on arrival at meetings. The fact you are present could be essential information in the event of an emergency.

Natural History Corner

We found a dead European Hornet in the garden. The ruler shows just how big they are. This one was over 25 mm (1 inch) long.



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

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

10/11 May - **VE Day celebration weekend.**

24 May - 1 June: **Sherlock Holmes: Adventure of the Emperor's gold.**
A fun, interactive mystery trail around the museum

The Willis Museum and Sainsbury Gallery

March: 26 – June 29: The Comedy **Wildlife Photography Awards 2024** exhibition

25 May 2 – 3.15 pm, Sunday afternoon talk – **Charles Butler, Father of English Beekeepers** by Chris Park. *Butler was the parson of Wootton St Laurence from 1600 - 1647.* (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 £3.00 and please book by telephone on 01256 465902)

15 May - **Milk on the Rails** by Matt Pinto. *The complete story of how milk was transported on British Railways*

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

12 May - The **Civil War in Hampshire** by Alan Turton – Historian.

2 June - AGM followed by: **East Anglia and the Arrival of the Anglo Saxons** by David Whiter – BAHS member.

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