



February 2007

**Tadley and District History Society
(TADS) - www.tadshistory.com**

**Next meeting - Wednesday 21st February
at St. Paul's Church Hall, 8.00 to 9.30 pm**

**“Land's End to John o'Groats
by bicycle”**

Bryan & Christine Watson - Fund raisers.

“Its a long way on a bike”

(Everybody welcome - visitors £2.00)

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www.tadshistory.com

TADS Meeting 21st March 2007

'Basingstoke Heritage Society'

Debbie Reavell, BHS Secretary

Last month's meeting (17/1/07)

A Victorian Magic Lantern Show

By a Member of the Basingstoke Magic Lantern Society

'Roll up! Roll up!' ... We could imagine the Victorian or Edwardian public's excitement at the thought of a dimly-lit, smoky, yet colourful semi-ciné show of hand-painted glass slides projected through a magic lantern.

Our projectionist was appropriately and elegantly attired as he showed about 70 TADS' members his magic of yesteryear.

Magic lanterns used bulls-eye lenses and projected light sources 300 years ago, but the inefficiency of candles, animal fat and oil lamps made the lanterns dangerous. In the 19th century a bright, incandescent light known as 'lime light' (calcium oxide) was used for the magic lanterns, as well as in theatres.

Slide production progressed from hand-painted skills to the more ambitious ones with moving images and eventually hand-tinted photographic slides: the forerunner of cinematography.

'Jon' had a magnificent and endless variety of slides from bucolic scenes to advertising, flowers, blacksmiths, jewellery, plumbing, burglars, vicars, gamekeepers, village bobbies, Exeter, Gay 'Paree', temperance society propaganda, burning cathedrals, seaside holidays, moral tales, death, bald men and cures for baldness! No Tadley scenes, though!

He then took us on a whistle-stop tour of England's Victorian South Coast, from the I. O. W. to Lulworth and the Isle of Purbeck.

Included in the Show was a primitive karaoke type sing-along, 'Chick, chick, chick, chick, chicken'and we entered into the spirit of the night by joining in lustily.

Some of the ‘magic’ was when the projectionist could turn a summer slide to a winter one; and chromatropic slides which produce kaleidoscopic patterns on the screen. The most famous and popular image was of a poor Victorian man in bed, probably snoring, with his mouth open and a succession of rats running up the bed clothes into the said mouth. This is achieved by operating a lever and handle on the lantern. This caused gasps of horror from our modern Elizabethan audience at the ‘good old days’ and would have set the 1880 Victorian purchaser back 10 shillings (50p) which would have been about half a week’s wages.

‘Jon’ said he became interested in magic lanterns about 14 years ago, and he certainly has a magnificent collection of Victoriana (and Edwardiana), which gives us a good social history of times past.

Thank you, ‘Jon’ for your dedication and historical accuracy.

Rosemary Bond.

People of the British Isles - a National Genetics Study

Did you know that historical patterns of people’s movements, from Anglo-Saxon invasions to those of the Vikings and Normans, may have an impact on 21st Century medical science? To investigate this, three Oxford professors have been given funding by the Wellcome Trust to launch a study to analyse the geographical variation in Britain’s genetic history. If you have settled in the same rural area as your parents and all four grandparents and would like to volunteer or learn more about the project, get in touch with Susan Tonks or Bruce Winney on 01865 617066 / 617007, or e-mail (susan.tonks@clinpharm.ox.ac.uk, bruce.winney@clinpharm.ox.ac.uk) www.peopleofthebritishisles.org

(I have more information on this Project and will bring it to the February meeting. - Editor)

A TADS Outing to Chartwell & Wisley on Wed 25th April.

The cost will be £9 to £10 for travel by mini-bus. Pay your own entrances. Chartwell is a National Trust property. If the weather is bad an alternative to Wisley will be found. Maximum of 16 people, minimum 8. Book your seat on Wednesday evening or ring David Day on 9700909.

What's On? Local events which may be of interest.

Gypsy Heritage - An exhibition looking at Gypsy and Traveller homes, fairs, work and lifestyles from the 17th century to the present day. See it at the Hampshire Record Office, Winchester, 12 February- 12 March 2007

Hampshire Record Office (*'Last Thursday' Lectures 1.15-1.45pm*)
22 February - 'All the world's a stage [coach]: travel diaries from the Grand Tour' by Adrienne Allen

B'stoke Archaeological & Historical Society (*7.30pm in Church Cottage*)
8 March - What Can We Learn From Human Bones ? Simon Mays of English Heritage

Milestones Museum

The Basingstoke Canal (Until 25 February) - An exhibition by Surrey and Hampshire Canal Society exploring the history and restoration of the Basingstoke Canal. (*Very interesting and informative - the Editor*)

Willis Museum - 10 March (10am - 3pm) - Mission Impossible: Saving the Past. A look at how and why treasured objects, textiles, furniture, archaeology, and modern materials and collections survive. Discover how to look after your treasured heirlooms and collectibles with the team of conservators from Hampshire County Council Museums Service.

Friends of the Willis Museum (*7.30 pm in the Museum*)

15 March - The story of letter boxes by Brian Locock

Archaeology in Berkshire 2006 - Sat. 3rd March from 10am - 4.30pm at Ranelagh School, Bracknell. Featuring archaeological projects that took place in Berkshire during 2006.

Hendon RAF Museum - Countywide Travel are running a day trip to the museum on Sat. 31st March. Cost about £17. They may pick up from Tadley. Tel 01256 780079 for more information.

*TADS annual membership is £10 per person.
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