

March 2009



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

**Next meeting - Wednesday 18th March
at St. Paul's Church Hall, 8.00 to 9.30 pm**

Jack of Newbury

By Dr David Peacock

(Everybody welcome - visitors £2.00)

Vacancy - TADS require a new visit/outings organiser. Offers to Chairman Bob please.

TADS Meeting 15th April 2009:

'Aviation in Berkshire' *By Jean & Ken Fostekew.*

*Comments, queries and suggestions to Bob Brown, Tadley (0118) 981 6109,
or Richard Brown (0118) 9700100, e-mail: richard@ilexind.plus.com*

www.tadshistory.com

February meeting (18/2/09)

The Story of Southwark

By Sally Botwright, London Blue Badge Guide

All human life was in Southwark and still is! It is one of the 33 boroughs of Greater London.

The 11th Century ‘Southern Defensive Fort’ may be Southwark’s origin of name, but as Sally said, ‘Don’t let the truth get in the way of a good story ...’ Southwark is 7,000 plus acres of old, historical, interesting, lively ‘dark’ but desirable Borough, which the Romans thought of as ‘The Suburbs’ and excavations for the Jubilee Line turned up mosaics, hypocaust systems and much, much more.

Southwark now has a multicultural, multi ethnic population, which was 274,000 in 1965. Bigger now, and rejuvenated, it’s an area south of the River Thames formerly consisting of many islands possibly braided by a wider, more sluggish Thames of yesteryear and therefore bridged.

The most famous bridges are Southwark Bridge and of course London Bridge.

The Domesday book, 1086, stated Southwark had 40 Households. In 1295 there were 2 MPs. Now several very prominent and controversial MPs and Cabinet Ministers live there, Sally said.

The gated London Bridge was the ‘key’ to getting over the River Thames into the City of London. In around 1014 King Ethelred and the Norwegian King Olaf, had some fierce fights on the bridge with a wayward Dane, thus trashing the bridge. Hence the internationally-known song, ‘London Bridge is broken down....’ This rhyme was very popular in the 18th Century.

It is also said that in Britain we drive on the LEFT side of the road so swordsmen riding over London Bridge could draw their swords with their right hand!

In 1176 the first stone London Bridge was built, with 13 piers bearing the weight of shops, and the boiled, tarred heads of many so-called traitors speared on it! Scotland’s William Wallace and our Thomas More met their grisly ends here, (but Thomas’s daughter bribed someone to give her her Dad’s head and it was buried in Canterbury Cathedral).

John Rennie’s 1830s stone London Bridge was famously removed to the Arizonan desert and the present one was completed in 1972. However, people sentimentally adored Rennie’s bridge and left money in

their wills for it. By 1995 £140,000 had been donated for its upkeep, and some cash had gone to local British charities.

Southwark is a marvellous m el e of markets (the Borough market was founded in 1276), wharves, docks; of pubs (the famous George Inn is a galleried pub). The Tate Modern Art Gallery (the former Bankside Power Station); Southwark Bridge built in 1912 to replace the 1819 structure; the notorious Clink Prison, 1151 – 1780 (now a museum) which intermittently incarcerated Charles Dickens' family, because of his Dad , in the 19th C. Southwark has the Hop Exchange, lots of breweries, glass works and tanneries; Shakespeare's rebuilt Globe Theatre with the ONLY thatched roof allowed in the London area, (fire risk); The Rose theatre was here too, 1587 till 1606 when it was abandoned.

Not only did London have its infamous Great Fire: Southwark had one in 1676 when the close proximity of wood, brick and thatch caused cruel devastation and damage. John Harvard was baptised in Southwark and he later founded the Boston, USA University. The Borough has 2 Cathedrals; Southwark Church was built originally in 1220 and became a Cathedral in 1905. There is also the RomanCatholic Cathedral of St George.

In the 18th Century theatres, bear baiting, and cock fighting etc. were encouraged as theatres were NOT allowed within the bounds of the City of London.

The Bedlam Hospital was here, maybe as chaotic as the name implies nowadays. Also St. Thomas' Hospital, one of Britain's oldest stood in Southwark till 1862, when it was demolished and rebuilt further west. Curiously they accidentally forgot the old Operating Theatre for Women re-discovered in the 1950s in the ROOF of the hospital chapel. It is now a museum.

Thank you, Sally, for your fast and furious fact-packed talk enthralling the 50 or so TADS members and showing just the tip of Southwark's exciting rejuvenation.

Go visit!

Rosemary Bond

Sally's web site: WWW.sallybotwright.co.uk or Tel: 01753 551814

Bowler Hats - Roger Wheble of Basingclog Morris who came last November is looking for Bowler hats for the group. and has asked if any members have one no longer in use. His telephone no. is 01256 325207.

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

Hampshire Record Office

There is a Family History for Beginners event every Wednesday. The Record Office holds lunchtime lectures every Thursday from 1.15-1.45pm

For Information see www3.hants.gov.uk/whatson-hro or ring 01962846154.

Current exhibitions are about the changing face of record-keeping and the history of Royal Clarence Yard, the Royal Navy's victualling yard in Gosport

Milestones Museum does not have any special events at present

Willis Museum - *The Museum is still closed*

Friends of the Willis Museum (7.30pm at Milestones)

19th March . 'The wild side of life on the Basingtoke Canal' by Paul Hope.

B'stoke Arch' & History Soc. (19:30 at Church Cottage, Church Square.)

9th April. Jane Austen, her Life and Family in Hampshire by Elizabeth Proudman of the Jane Austen Society

Silchester Roman Town Excavations - Professor Michael Fulford will give his talk about the 2008 dig and plans for 2009 on Monday 27th April (postponed from February) at 7.30p.m. in Silchester Village Hall. Doors open at 7pm. Entrance fee £3.

Good Citizen Award for Pat Galvin. - Pat was recently presented with the award by Tadley Town Council for her many years of work with the British Polio Fellowship and fundraising with the British Legion Poppy appeal. Pat had polio as a young lady so it is a subject close to her heart. Just to fill any remaining spare time she has been an enthusiastic member of TADS and the Project Team for many years.

*TADS annual membership is £10 per person.
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