



September 2011

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

**Next meeting - Wednesday 21st September 2011
at St. Paul's Church Hall, 8.00 to 9.30pm**

'Frost, Freezes & Fairs'

By Ian Currie

(Everybody welcome - visitors £2.50)

TADS AGM & Social will now be on **14th December** not the 21st!

Hampshire Field Club, Local History Section will be visiting Tadley and Pamber Priory on Saturday 1st October, hosted by TADS. Help with the event would be welcome. Please contact Carol if you can help.

*Comments, queries and suggestions to Richard Brown (0118) 9700100,
e-mail: richard@ilexind.plus.com or Carol Stevens (0118) 9701578*

www.tadshistory.com

TADS Meeting 19th October 2011:

‘Basingstoke and its contribution to World Culture’

By Rupert Willoughby

Last Meeting 20th July:

**William, Lord Sandys, Knight of the Garter, Lord
Chamberlain to Henry VIII, Builder of the Vyne and
Much, Much, More.**

by John Jenkins, author and Vyne guide.

You always picture aristocrats and politicians of yesteryear by their, often portly, portraits (Sandys didn't have one) and their being righteous, upstanding, God-fearing, ambitious, true, honest and of good report, reliable jolly good fellows...

Not always true! They were often devious, sleazily nepotistic, sycophantic, full of paradoxes, self-promoting, dog-eat-dog (other courtiers circled around an ageing Sandys for his job when he was ill), toadying, vain, greedy, lying and cheating. Sandys suffered convenient amnesia at times regarding his soldiers' pay, and 'some money stuck to him', John said. William could be two-faced: he kissed Ann Boleyn one year and signed her death warrant 2 years later.

Would these people be involved in 21st century mobile phone hacking? Who knows!

Just a few misdemeanors ... And as for tax-avoidance - Sandys declared his annual salary as £200-£300 circa 1523, although he had property in 8 counties, including: The Vyne House, Mottisfont Abbey, which he had swapped for Chelsea Manor, apartments in: Windsor; The Tower of London; Hampton Court, gilt cups and bowls and 4,700 ounces of gold plate when he died in 1540. So, his fortunes had been given a seismic boost and poor he was NOT!

William was a local lad (Andover, 1470) and was well-connected and wealthy: his Mum's cousin was Henry VII. The family married into more and more BIG money, and his wife, Lady Marjorie Bray, also had a royal link and massive wealth... He was clever and ambitious, being knighted by Henry VII when he was 17, having been an apprentice (squire) since he was 7, as was customary then. He was *au fait* with light and heavy suits of armour and could even do a

cartwheel in the latter... He did wrestling, pole-axing, javelin, acrobatics, quarter-staffing, etc. So, he was necessarily very fit because it was boiling hot in the armour and you had to breathe through your abdomen to survive.

William was a very good soldier for Henry VII and later Henry VIII. Even the French admired him. He was also a 'courtier, administrator and discerning patron.'

Sandys was heavily involved in wars with France (1523 and other dates), often fought in hard winters, where body lice bothered the soldiers and bodily functions didn't always function! Calais then belonged to us. France wanted it back. Other campaigns included Brittany (1489), Flanders, Blackheath, and he was Treasurer for War controlling a military budget of £80,000 (£80 million today). As in the 21st century there were chronic shortages of military supplies because of mismanagement.

After these testosterone-fuelled forays, which included rape and pillage, Sandys helped broker peace with France. So came the 'Cloth of Gold' (1518) where ostentatiously lavish jollities occurred with 'Olympic style' jousting (he judged it) and other sports; rivers of wine, women and song All this took place at a specially-built castle with tents and pavilions and cost the taxpayer mega bucks: using 300 masons, 500 carpenters, 100 joiners, glaziers, tilers and smiths.

The 'Cloth of Gold' didn't work and soon the English and French were back at each other's throats.

Along the way, Sandys became a Knight of the Garter on 16th May 1518, and Lord Chamberlain of Henry VIII's Household on 15th April, 1526.

Hey ho! As with other historical characters who have led less than blameless lives (take now-hero Guy Fawkes), history has lent enchantment to Sandys' reputation...

John talked to over 90 TADS and visitors members of Sandys the Man. We know that his house was a magnificent Tudor mansion with grand grounds by a widened tributary of the River Loddon that has been adapted over the centuries by various owners, including John Chute, and owned by the National Trust since the 1950s.

Sandys spent shedloads of cash on exquisite glass, woodwork, Flemish tiles, massive 20'x20' (6mx6m) tapestries and on the Holy Ghost Chapel, Basingstoke where the Sandys family are buried. Sadly William Sandys' demise on 4th December 1540 caused the 'vultures' to steal some of the treasures, with Henry VIII acquiring some tapestries....

Thank you, John for your very intensely researched project and lecture - and we now realise that there's nothing new in history!

Rosemary Bond

What's on? Events which may be of interest

Hampshire Record Office *For information see*
www3.hants.gov.uk/whatson-hro or ring 01962846154

Milestones Museum. For coming events:

Tel. 01256 477766 or see: www3.hants.gov.uk/milestones/whatson

Willis Museum

The museum is running an ever changing series special exhibitions in the Sainsbury Gallery.

In particular there is: **Sickert to Shaw** until Saturday 08 October - 100 Years of Prints, Drawings and Watercolours from Southampton City Art Gallery.

Friends of the Willis Museum (7.30pm at the museum)

15th September : **English Cartography** from 16th to the 20th century, by Douglas Bancroft.

Basingstoke Archaeological & History Society

13th October: Recent work at **Marden Henge** and the Neolithic Building, by Dr Jim Leary of English Heritage

TADS Visit to the Royal Berkshire Medical Museum

7pm on Friday 23rd September. Those who put their names on the list are being contacted with directions on how to find the Museum, which is on the left-hand side of the old Main Front of the Royal Berkshire Hospital, on London Road, Reading. RG1 5AN.

If you are not on the list and would like to go please see Carol or Richard at the TADS Meeting on 21st Sept.

***TADS annual membership is £12 per person.
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