

December 2012



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

**Next meeting - Wednesday 12th December 2012
at St. Paul's Church Hall, 8.00 to 9.30pm**

'TADS Annual General Meeting & Social'

Minutes of the last AGM

Annual reports

Treasurer's report and annual accounts

2012 Programme

Election of Committee

Any other business

The existing Committee members are willing to re-stand for election, but would welcome additional members to share the work.

Subscriptions are being recommended to remain at £12.00. They can be paid on the evening by cash or cheque in an addressed envelope, please.

Members are invited to display items of local or personal interest.

Drinks will be served but the Committee would welcome donations of food and help with the domestic work..

Family history books and CDs will be on sale.

*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 16th January 2013

Submarine History and the Submarine Museum

by David Ottley

Tads Meeting 22nd November.

Farnborough. Early Flying in the UK with Specific Reference to Samuel Franklin Cody

by David Wilson C.Eng. F.R.Ae.S

TWO American Bill Codys? Both were Wild West circus performers. Buffalo Bill made a good living dressed as a cowboy, pony-tailed, sharp-shooting and horse-handling. Samuel Franklin Cowdery wanted some of this. Thus he emulated Buffalo Bill and changed his name to Cody with great success. However, Sam was also into kites - big ones and BIG balloons, then aircraft...

(By the way, the real Buffalo Bill's caravan ended up in Franklin Avenue, Tadley. It had belonged originally to the father of the late Misses Polly and Betty Williams, who had 5 caravans, all lived-in and used for different purposes. I had many a cuppa in Buffalo Bill's caravan! Sadly, the caravans were all destroyed when the land was cleared in the mid-nineties, when Elisha Gardens was built - and unfortunately I was away on holiday...)

Hydrogen balloons were used by armies for reconnaissance, especially during the American Civil war 1865-1870. The British Army commissioned the Royal Engineers to develop hydrogen balloons so they could see a long way into enemy territory... Balloons were built at Woolwich Arsenal, 1878, then bigger and better ones at Chatham 1882, and finally at Farnborough 1905/6, which was good - because the Army was based at Aldershot. The R.A.E. (Royal Aircraft Establishment) was established in June 1918. In WW2 it became a Centre of Excellence and functioned as such until 1992. In 2012 is now part of Qinetiq, which in these cash-strapped times must pay its way.... It is the world's oldest continuous flying establishment!

Sam Cody was born in 1867 in Iowa USA, was a bit of a lad - he seems to have included his American wife in his balloon experiments: she fell out of one of them and disappeared back home to an American mental hospital! Sam then took up with a Brit: Lela King (Cody). He was and IS very revered in the Aldershot area

and has many 'possible' descendants. TV newsman John 'Cody' Simpson is one of them...

Cody tried to make a man-carrying kite, which could be used in windy weather when balloons could not. The British Army didn't trust this pony-tailed, kite-flying character at first (1902), but by 1904 Cody was teaching the Army to fly kites and eventually airships.

The American Wright Brothers flew a 'plane in 1903, while Cody was flying massive kites at up to 14,000 feet. (A UK record which was only broken in 2011). Being a flamboyant fellow, Cody loved publicity and a photographer recorded his every move - even his being made a Fellow of the Royal Meteorological Society. Cody tried to get Army support to build an aeroplane but they supported Lt. Dunne instead, who got nowhere. Cody was a much better builder and on 16th October in 1908 he flew a distance of 1,390 feet in 28 seconds which is recognised as 'the first powered heavier-than-air sustained and controlled flight in the UK'. (The first true Brit to fly was Lord Brabazon of Tara, although Sam became a British citizen in 1909).

Cody built British Army Aeroplanes 1-6, often at his own expense but increasingly his showmanship and flamboyance may have caused risk-taking: Lela King Cody was his first 'plane passenger in the world'. (*Only true for the UK - Ed*). Then there was the wing-walking to show the strength and stability of the 'plane.

Plane No. 4 crashed into a cow at Laffins' Plain, which cost £18 for cow-killing! Cody No. 5 was built in only 3 weeks and flown to military trials at Larkhill - as opposed to being taken there by horse and cart. He won, but the aeroplane was not what the military wanted. Cody No. 6 carried Tadley's William Evans as a passenger. It had a structural failure at Farnborough on 7th August 1913 and, horror of horrors, Cody and Evans were killed because they weren't strapped-in and fell 300 feet (100 metres). Two memorial stones marked the crash site. King George V was devastated at 'Colonel' Cody's death, as were the people of Farnborough and even the whole world. 100,000 people lined the route to 45-year-old Cody's grave. The Times newspaper reported 'the tragic death of S F Cody' as 'one of the greatest blows which aviation has sustained in recent years'.

David, our speaker, masterminded the building of a replica of Cody's British Army Aeroplane Number One. Typically British, his team began with NOTHING in 2006 and completed the labour of love in 2008. The 'plane has a 52' (141/2 metres) cambric-covered wingspan and was built with odds and ends garnered from old motorbike shops, etc. The plane is beautifully housed in the Cody Pavilion (2008). Now a Cody statue may happen by the Centenary of his death in August 2013. David certainly celebrated the wonders of this un-educated but brilliant engineer and pilot.

Thank you, David for your enthusiastic and lively lecture.

Rosemary Bond

What's on? Events which may be of interest

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

Milestones Museum. For full information on coming events:
Tel. 01256 477766 or see: www3.hants.gov.uk/milestones/whatson

If you want to learn the magic of card tricks there are masterclasses at the museum every weekend and Christmas/New Year until early January.

Willis Museum - Telephone: 01256 465902 for information.

Every day until 22nd Dec. - 'Festive Fun'

There is also a series of ongoing exhibitions at the museum.

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

20th Dec. - Christmas party and talk on "Seasonal Customs from Hampshire archives" given by Sarah Lewin.

Basingstoke Archaeological & Historical Soc. (Church Cottage 7.30pm)

10th Jan. The effects of the railways on Winchester, 1830 – 1900 by
Dr Mark Allen, University of Winchester.

***The Committee wish everyone a happy
Christmas and prosperous New Year.***

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