



March 2013

**Tadley and District History Society  
(TADS) - [www.tadshistory.com](http://www.tadshistory.com)**

**Next meeting - Wednesday 20th March 2013  
at St. Paul's Church Hall, 8.00 to 9.30pm**

## ***'Signposts and Village Signs'***

***By Bob Locock***

*(Everybody welcome - visitors £2.50)*

**Annual Subscriptions** of £12 per person are now overdue. If you have not yet paid, can you please pay at the next meeting. Put your cheque or cash in an envelope bearing your address (a second hand envelope will do).

Subs may also be sent via Carol (See bottom of Page 4.)

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

**[www.tadshistory.com](http://www.tadshistory.com)**

**TADS Meeting 17th April 2013:**  
**‘The Victorian Defences of England’**  
by Michael Forrest

**TADS Meeting 20th February**

**The Basingstoke Riots**

By Bob Clarke

What an enthusiastic and ebullient historian Bob is. History leaps from his lips and mind with relish and realism. We were spellbound at what Basingstoke got up to. And that was in days of yore!

We're not talking the 21<sup>st</sup> century: this was in the name of religion and commerce, between 1880-1883.

3,000 people were fighting, causing fountains of blood to spill from noses and heads with teeth spraying everywhere. There was noise, sweat, tears, stick-wielding, broken plate glass, alcohol, obscene language and loud brass instruments, plus drums and, where there were no official instruments: tin cans with stones inside and crashing saucepans lids were gladly garnered.

The ensuing excitement of mob violence, harassment, bruises and broken bones, disturbances and rioting was caused by the Salvation Army prohibitionists versus the 4 Basingstoke breweries, 50 pubs and their 'Massagainian' mobs. Basingstoke certainly hit the headlines and even then the press (prohibitionists also) relished the fisticuff-fodder cranking up their circulation.

London was aghast at the Basingstoke Disturbances and the Home Office advised making processions and meetings illegal. No one took any notice. Essex Road and Winchester Street etc. etc. were readily wrecked!

Bob said that pubs were an escape from the dull, overcrowded houses from whence people sought excitement and diversion by thirst-quenching. Then, as ever, it was usually the menfolk going for a drink...

So, between 1880-83 the Massagainian mobs were encouraged by the Basingstoke brewers (and publicans), particularly the Adams brothers of the Victoria Brewery, who decided the inhabitants of Basingstoke were NOT in need of salvation.

Basingstoke pubs and breweries provided a livelihood for masses of people. Bob quoted extensively from the diaries of George Woodman and the Sally Army's viewpoint was largely taken from their publication *The Warcry*.

Basingstoke had a reputation for drunkenness and the (50) pubs served the population of the day: only 6,681 in 1880. The Salvation Army established their base at the old silk mill in Basingstoke to 'open fire on sin and Satan.....?' When 10 members of the Massagainsians were jailed in August 1881 in Winchester - as they frequently were! - they were fetched home again to Basingstoke by a carriage flying flags, with folk waving rattles and beating drums and a massive crowd. AND they were each given a silver watch, then dinner at the Corn Exchange where 1,728 pints of beer were downed by not too many people! Afterwards they went off to smash-up the Sally Army HQ at the silk mill and the Gazette offices.

Also in 1881, Mayor Blatch read The Riot Act ( a law made during the reign of George I, 1714-27) to no avail, and it took the soldiers over an hour to clear the streets - but not before the Salvation Army Captain was thrown into the River Loddon. In those days the river ran through the middle of Basingstoke.

Luckily the sporadic incidents petered out by the end of 1883 as by now the Sally Army was big in Britain and the population was fed up with the riots and went peacefully and unharrassed back to the pubs as never before!

One former miscreant, Edward Adams of the Victoria Brewery, became Mayor of Basingstoke. Tee-totallers and drinkers alike had realised that the Salvation Army did good work, so everything in the garden was rosy.

Lately great-grandchildren have come out of the woodwork to talk to Bob about yesteryear and the riots.

Tadley's Sally Army was brought here by our TADS' member Jean Monger's great-granddad in 1889. Now we all co-exist quite happily.

Thanks, Bob for your revelatory talk on the happenings of yesteryear.

Rosemary Bond

---

## **S F Cody Memorial at Farnborough**

The purchase of an inscribed brick is now in hand. To make the best use of the available letters on a double brick, the four line inscription will read:

*Wm. H B Evans, Died with Cody, Buried in Tadley, Tadley History Soc*

## **What's on? Events which may be of interest**

**Hampshire Record Office** *For information ring 01962846154 or see [www3.hants.gov.uk/whatson-hro](http://www3.hants.gov.uk/whatson-hro)*

**Milestones Museum.** For coming events: Tel. 01256 477766 or see: [www3.hants.gov.uk/milestones/whatson](http://www3.hants.gov.uk/milestones/whatson)

LEGO ® Mania 2013 at Milestones Museum. Between 26th February and 14th April Milestones goes LEGO® crazy! There are LEGO® events every weekend.

**Willis Museum** ( Tel: 08456035635) - The museum is running an ever changing series of special exhibitions in the Sainsbury Gallery. Forthcoming exhibits include contemporary and local artists. There are also activities aimed at young people.

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

April 18th: “The Lavender Story”, by Tim Butler. Tim has over twenty-four acres of land dedicated to growing English lavender at Hartley Park Farm, growing four main varieties for harvesting, Hidcote, Miss Katherine, Blue Ryder and Edelweiss. There are over 250 varieties of English Lavender, so it is important to decide which lavenders would suit your garden situation. He will bring examples for sale – and the farm would be well-worth a visit in June!

**Basingstoke Archaeological & History Society** (*7.30 at Church Cottage*)

11th April - ‘Maritime archaeology in the Solent and the prehistoric settlement at Bouldner Cliff’ by Gary Momber, of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Trust for Maritime Archaeology

---

***TADS annual membership is £12 per person.  
Correspondence to Tadley and District History Society,  
c/o 5 Church Road Pamber Heath Tadley. RG26 3DP  
Email: [tadshistory@googlemail.com](mailto:tadshistory@googlemail.com)***