



May 2015

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

**Next meeting - Wednesday 20th May 2015
at St. Paul's Church Hall, 8.00 to 9.30pm**

***'The Battle of
Waterloo'***

By Rupert Matthews

(Everybody welcome - visitors £2.50)

Committee News: Peter Gomm, one of the new volunteers on the committee, has been working hard and has nearly completed a very interesting programme of talks for next year, 2016.

*Comments, queries and suggestions to Richard Brown (0118) 9700100,
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www.tadshistory.com

TADS Meeting 17th June 2015

‘Stories in Symbols - the Secret Language of Heraldry’

By David Nash-Ford

TADS Meeting 15th April 2015

The Bare Necessities – the history of Underwear.

by Ruth King.

The men twitched nervously at this titillating title, and some had obviously googled it (or similar). But, we TADS women were made of stronger, more stoical stuff. Well, it's only UNDERWEAR, isn't it. Ruth took the bull by the horns and it was amazing what 'knickers' revealed. Some collect stamps, Ruth collects knickers and other underwear.

People have dabbled-in-knickers since the Crusaders' 12th Century, 'kamis', Arabic for 'CHEMIS' – armour must be horribly chafing without some protection..... Knickers didn't catch on till about 200 years ago, about 1800. (After all, Scotsman allegedly don't wear anything under their kilts).

Knickers have had some frisky names, as noted by the Directoire of Knickers, in Jane Austen's era. Some 18th Century dresses were of such flimsy muslin surreptitiously damped-down to give the wet T-shirt effect, AND necessitating some form of flesh-coloured bloomers.

Knicker names include: stockings, wrist-trappers, passion killers, knicker grabbers, pantaloons, pantalets, pants (American) anti-passions, sugar bags (East Anglian), taxi teasers, wrist breakers (cockney London), harvesters, harvest homes, Annie Oakleys (U.S.A.) fly catchers, apple catchers (Somerset apple scrumping garments) wind socks (Naval term) G-string (1990 term), thong (21st Century) etc. Not-tonight-Empress Josephine apparently had 993 pairs of knickers. Knickers came in pairs because once they were in 2 bits. (No elastic then, and until boilable elastic in the 1920s) the knickers came with tapes which were easily twisted: hence 'Don't get your knickers in a twist!' When it was realised pants shouldn't be seen, but possibly may, lace was added and at 6/- (30p) a yard (metre) in 1820, it wasn't a snip.....

Girls were allegedly embarrassed when their pant-tapes came undone, and one such flummoxed filly stepped out of her errant and slipping silk pants, and then pretended they were her handkerchief.

Old pictures of the early 19th Century remind us young boys wore dresses but not pants.

The 1840s saw Victorian crutchless drawers, and the Queen had a drawers-maker named Florence. Her surname was GUSSET and she also made pants for the rich. A chemise was worn under one's drawers.....

French nuns in Convents taught illegitimate and orphan girls to sew cotton or linen chemises.

Emancipation of some women in the mid-1850s saw sporty women take up rock climbing, gardening and walking, so underwear was essential.

Ladies' crinoline dresses with their farthingale cages and stuffed horse hair, necessitated the wearing of pantaloons underneath all this. Horrors! The shape of the legs and ankles were often revealed. A lady called Mrs.

BLOOMER invented the blousy same for energetic sporting types in Hyde Park, London, but men called them 'witches britches". It was said you could hide 3 kids and a dog under your crinoline as it looked like a bell tent and measured approx. 119 inches (302 cms) in circumference. Sadly crinolines

were difficult to wash and were sponged down. Perish the thought in the 21st Century of clean clothes most days.

Lady Eleanor Standing, Lady -in-Waiting to Victoria, advised gals that crinolines were quite a nuisance in the wind, squeezing through doorways, or climbing fences. One girl climbed a fence, the crinoline went over her head and her red drawers were revealed. Crinolines were a nuisance also near candles (fire hazard), dogs, hot water jugs etc.

Ruth said corsets (Etienne CORSET) 1902, were to squeeze a gal into the required hourglass shape, so her waist was ideally 13 inches (33 cms).

Monsieur Corset had initially made 'stays'/corsets for French Army officers but women adopted them too. Corsets had to bear some blame for still-born or deformed babies in this era.

Now the 21st Century sees some underwear become OUTERWEAR, especially by trendy young things. Paradoxically, knickerbockers were outer garments, but are now underwear.....

The Women's Suffrage Committee in the 1860s wanted a relaxation into the rules of some tight underwear. The bustle (frame or pad for holding a skirt out from the back of the waist, late 19th Century, origin unknown) was less restricting.

Some of the underwear discussed weighed up to 19 lbs (9 kg). Viscountess Harburton, 1880, suggested a maximum weight of 7 lbs (3.5 kg) but some of the young brides in the 21st Century Brit. TV documentary 'My Big Fat Gipsy Wedding' have gowns so heavy with 'x' metres of fabric, that they suffer permanently from back problems. T.V. Producers research all these things very carefully and the clothing for 21st Century 'Larkrise to Candleford' saw tiny waists – achieved with steel, whalebone, wood etc. In real life, women ate an apple and a few biscuits a day to maintain this anorexic look..... However, on marriage, the lady's 13 inch – 17 inch waist soon disappeared if she became pregnant. That is why so many tiny-waisted trousseau dresses, worn only a few times, survive. N.B. The National Trust Collection at Killerton, Devon. Men wore their clothes into the ground, so not many outfits survive....

Poorer ladies had hand-me-downs of under and outer wear, so were not fashionable. 'Underwear' was an unmentionable word (still can be) and became known as 'smalls'.

Liberty bodices with cotton covered rubber buttons endured into the 1940s, as some of us can testify.....

So Ruth's brief history of voluminous and smalls was very entertaining and everyone relaxed when the 'underwear ice' thawed!

Thanks, Ruth, you were marvellous.

Rosemary Bond

Corrections

There were a couple of errors in last month's Newsletter which require correction:

1. At the head of the meeting report the speaker's name was incorrectly written as David Pocock instead of Peacock.
2. In Carol's article about Tadley Place, the third phase of the building, the "farm" extension, was built in the 19th Century not the 20th.

Wakeford Farm Planning Application

Many of you will by now be aware of this application which seeks to demolish the current farmhouse beside the A340 at Pamber End and ‘replace’ it with a new complex of buildings off Church Lane, Tadley (South of old St. Peter’s Church), more than 1 kilometre away.

TADS Committee have made formal objection to the application on the grounds that it would spoil an undeveloped area of countryside and that the area may well be an archaeological site.

The application was roundly rejected by the Tadley Town Council after a lively discussion. It is now under consideration by the Basingstoke & Deane Planning Department and may go before the Council Planning Committee.

Horace Walpole and Strawberry Hill

Saturday June 20th 2015 from 10:00 – 15:00

Come and join the WEA Basingstoke branch for this fascinating lecture on the history and personalities of this famous house.

Tutor: Glenis Kerr Elliott Venue: United Reformed Church, London Street, Basingstoke. Fee: £20 (*may be free if you are in receipt of an income-related benefit*)

Pre-enrolment is essential! Please enrol by 13th June. To book please visit www.southern.wea.org.uk/basingstoke, call 07437 543473 or mail us at Basingstoke@wea.org.uk

Odiham Castle - Spring Bank Holiday weekend of 23/24/25 May.

There will be open days and some excavation is planned. Alan Turton will be conducting free tours on 23 May at 11am and 2pm, 24 May at 2pm, and 25 May at 11am and 2pm.

There is also an opportunity to be involved in the excavation work, which will be in the form of a test pitting exercise, and volunteers are welcome. If you would like to be involved in this part of the celebrations please contact Ian Waite, waite52@live.co.uk. Please give details of your availability.

What's on? Events which may be of interest

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

13 June - 27 Sept Dino Hunter at Milestones - Discover some of the earliest dinosaur hunters, and marvel at some of the creatures living in our seas 190 million years ago before encountering 5 life-size animatronic dinosaurs.

Willis Museum - The museum is running an ever changing series of special exhibitions in the Sainsbury Gallery. *For information tel 0845 603 5635 or see <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/willis-museum.htm>*

The Trench Coat until Sunday 31 May 2015. This exhibition includes the display of an original Burberry WWI cavalry trench coat and other garments to tell the ever evolving story of a coat which has become an iconic fashion garment.

Friends of the Willis Museum (7.30pm at the museum - booking essential for non-members. Book through the museum telephone number above)

June 18th - Researching the Fallen of Basingstoke. 233 men who died in the Great War are named on the Basingstoke War Memorial. David Stewart.

Basingstoke Archaeological & History Society (7.30 at Church Cottage)

11th June - AGM followed by: A lecture (TBA)

Basingstoke Discovery Centre (01256) 470666

Tuesday 16th June at 2pm - **Waterloo** with Sir Christopher Wallace
In this, the 200th anniversary year of the Battle of Waterloo, Sir Christopher Wallace, Chairman of The Royal Green Jackets (Rifles) Museum, will describe what happened at Waterloo on 18 June 1815 and why the outcome was so important that it still resonates today.

Tickets £3. To book a place, you can order online from <https://www.hants.gov.uk/shop/home.php>, or visit Basingstoke Discovery Centre in Festival Place, or call 01256 478670. Advance booking is strongly recommended.

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