



July 2015

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

**Next meeting - Wednesday 15th July 2015
at St. Paul's Church Hall, 8.00 to 9.30pm**

‘Eccentric London - Part 2’

By Alan Copeland

(Everybody welcome - visitors £2.50)

NB: 1. We are having Part 2 of Eccentric London because Alan gave Part 1 to Tadley U3A last year and more than a few members heard that talk. He was rated a very good speaker.

2. As normal there is no meeting in August.

*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 September 2015

‘The Abbey and Castle - Reading in the Middle Ages’

By Mike Cooper

TADS Meeting 17th June 2015

Stories in Symbols – The Secret Language of Heraldry by David Nash-Ford

Secret it certainly is. The language of heraldry is hardly translatable. It smacks of masonic intrigue and the Upper Classes. When we see coats-of-arms, flags, studs-on-shields, crests, badges, banners, pub signs even, we tend to absorb a mass of colour, squiggles, and dreams of yesteryear and think, 'Oh, posh!' Not so. Each symbol has specific meaning.

David showed us some impressive and very large banners which his Mum had made for his wedding day.

Heraldry (Middle English) is the system by which coats-of-arms and other armorial bearings are devised, described and regulated. A herald was a person (usually male) who carried official messages, made proclamations and oversaw tournaments. It still happens. A herald is an official of The College of Arms. Much of the terminology is obscure: e.g. 'gules' (Middle English) is the method by which red tincture is used to dye the red fur neck ornament found on heraldic items.

You can buy a coat-of-arms for around £5,000, or pay X-thousand pounds for a business one..... (Jewish company, Tesco, has a coat-of-arms of 3 impaled badges on its commercial vehicles). Or, you can inherit a coat-of-arms. David's wife's maiden name, 'Johnstone' can be traced as a Scotswoman descended from Robert the Bruce (1274-1329). One of her ancestors helped him, and thus he was granted the coat-of-arms David's family uses through inheritance.

Heraldry can be unpredictable and difficult, David said. Sir Francis Drake (1540??-1596) allegedly stole a coat-of-arms from another Devonian named Drake, cheekily boxed his ears AND incorporated the new one Queen Elizabeth gave him, as her favourite, with the stolen one.....

Usually coats-of-arms are 'incorporated or quartered' when marrying, especially to an heir or heiress. The Welsh have BIG many-quartered coats-of-arms which possibly tell stories of derring-do, or similar.

When two shields are joined, 'impaled', the man's is on the left, the lady's on the right hand side.

Locally in Berkshire, Kendrick and Wellington schools have impaled crests. Heraldry is all around us and still increasing. Barclay's Bank has an eagle; Lloyds Bank a black horse. Pubs, etc. have colourful heraldic signs and badges with meanings: Wadsworth's Brewery; the Hind's Head (Aldermaston); The Bull (Sonning-on-Thames); Greene King; Tadley's recently demolished Falcon pub belonged to the Congreve family whose badge was a falcon. The heraldic signs and symbols tell us these things.

Brimpton's (Berks) Pineapple pub belonged to the Perkins family and is surprisingly nothing to do with pineapples or pine cones, which the locals swear to be true!

Coats-of-arms were created long ago; in battle you recognised friend or foe by his 'uniform' – brothers, cousins, friends. Even the strengthening studs on shields from the Norman Conquest told your lineage.

There are 'rules' in the heraldry of then and now! White represents 'silver'; yellow: gold. Always a gold or silver centre on the coats-of-arms with a coloured surround. But rarely purple. There were jokey signs: 'harris' is the old name for hedgehog, so the Harrises incorporated three hedgehogs! A sea horse is depicted as a horse with a mermaid's tail. A dragon with two legs is a Wyvern. A griffin is a lion and an eagle. This means many of these creatures are mythical. West Berkshire's Earl of Craven was very important, so bits were added to his coat-of-arms: crests, a motto, and a coronet showing his status.

Civic crests, heraldic badges, etc. - all these things show your status and whether you're a baronet, duke, earl, viscount etc.

The Order of the Garter was, and is, given at the monarch's discretion, from Edward III 1348, when Princess Joan of Kent's garter slipped. The king retrieved and replaced it for her – allaying waspish remarks from onlookers by saying 'evil does who evil thinks' (but in Latin). King George III gave the Order of the Garter to the first Duke of Wellington but NOT to his wife.

Heraldry is best explored through coloured pictures, and lots of them.

Presumably heraldry was originally an Old World Thing and the New World is now keen to muscle-in on all this living history, and as the Court of Heralds lacks the teeth of its dragons it is relatively easy to do!

David, your very slick and comprehensive lecture was astounding, and thank you so much.

Rosemary Bond.

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>*

Like Milestones the Willis has several dinosaur themed events during the summer, all to do with DinoFest 2015. Details from the museum.

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

September 17th - The Battle of Britain over Basingstoke by Dr John Smith, Archaeologist and Historian

Archaeological & History Society (7.30 at Church Cottage)

10th September - Excavations at Selborne Priory by David Baker

Congratulations to TADS stalwart Peggy Anscombe and husband Jim who have just celebrated their 60th Wedding Anniversary.

I am sorry to report that **Kate Pyne the AWE Historian** died on 26th June at the age of 72. (She was still working as the AWE Historian).

Kate was a very good friend to TADS over the years, giving us at least three talks on the history of AWE, and helping with the content of some of our publications.

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