



April 2017

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

**Next meeting - Wednesday 19th April 2017
at St. Paul's Church Hall, 8.00 to 9.30pm**

**‘Englishness - a look at
traditions and how they
started’**

By Chris Hutchinson

(Everybody welcome - Visitors £3.00)

Tadley War Memorial

As part of the research about Tadley and World War I, we have been trying to find out when the War memorial was erected and its original position. We have now seen a large scale map showing the position, which is what we had calculated from photographs, right under the roundabout at the bottom of Mulfords Hill. Anyone know when?

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

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TADS Meeting 17th May 2017

**‘ Where is - what is that? Curiosities
in Hampshire’**

by Jill Daniels

TADS Meeting 15th March 2017

**History Minus the Boring Bits.
By Susan Howe**

A somewhat unusual title for a History Group talk!

However, Susan was spirited to us like a vibrant orange version of California's State flower: the *Eschscholtzia* (discovered 1821). What a gal. Someone said she reminded them of a beautiful but benign Colorado Beetle with opaque orange tights and a floaty orange and green dress. (Actually Colorado Beetle *LEPTINOTARSA DECEMLINEATA* is yellow and black striped and notifiable to the police as a pest!) Incidentally Susie has given her permission to be called a Colorado Beetle, and is highly amused.....

She has the vivacity of a naughty but nice St. Trinian's Schoolgirl and yet the presence of your poshest debutante.....

She had us screaming with laughter with all the minutiae of her gleaned History.

During an extraordinarily colourful Life-Before-History, Susie has worked as a P.A. For Sir John Betjeman, cooked for Brigitte Bardot's ex, Gunter Sachs in St. Moritz, owned award-winning country-house hotels; tracked tigers in India; hob-nobbed with a friendly-but-nefarious ghost dog in Levens Hall Stately Home in Cumbria; and been aware that Oscar Wilde took his pet lobster for walks around Oxford....

However, her abiding passion is History and she tells quirky tales from memory without notes.

A Registered Blue Badge Guide for London's Tourist Board, this qualifies her to work throughout the U.K. Susie has toured with an eclectic array of specialist groups ranging from Hymnologists (study of hymn writers); to Mills and Boon authors specialising in the risqué Regency period; to debt-collectors; and escorting a 200-strong Yale Alumni Choir here and abroad. For good

measure there have been riding treks in the Rockies and Painting Jaunts in Zanzibar. And more.....

Susie told us of former politician Sir Roy Hattersley's parentage (only announced in the press in mid-March 2017 and unbeknown to him till then.....) A marriage ceremony was conducted by a priest, Father Hattersley, who soon afterwards eloped the bride, result Roy Hattersley.

Apparently composer and pianist Frederick Chopin rammed wooden wedges between his fingers to widen his handspan and thus improve his playing. Westminster Abbey is a 'Royal Peculiar' i.e. under the monarch's auspices not the Church of England. Consequently the Archbishop of Canterbury may not go into the Abbey without an invitation and the Deans are 'very free-spirited' Susie said.

From now on this gets quite macabre and if you are of a delicate disposition better not read on....

Dean William Buckland was obsessed with helping the starving poor, to the extent of barbecuing moles and bumble bees. He often tasted the top soil anywhere in the U.K., having a 'built-in Sat Nav' and seemed to know exactly where he was: e.g. en route from Oxford to London he tasted the soil and announced he was in Uxbridge. When the British Ambassador to France showed him the Sun King's (Louis 14th) heart, to everyone's dismay, he ATE it! Susie said Ben Johnson was buried standing up in Westminster Abbey and looking towards Poet's Corner. The 'undertaker' had to remove 2 vertebrae to get him below the paving.... Ben had sewn Charles I's head back on after his execution and even some of his vertebrae were removed, ground up and used as 'salt' for important people. It is unknown whether Queen Victoria knew her food was 'seasoned' by her ancestor..... Susie managed to obtain Thomas a Becket's (1170) toenail for an American bishop to see.

Queen Anne didn't sit on the Coronation Chair. She was too fat. Instead she used a square chair and even then her ankles were too fat to fit in the spurs. Anne had 17 children but sadly they had all died. So she hit the gin bottle. Some ghastly things have happened in various part of Westminster Abbey – from the accidental exhumation of many human bones; to paying to kiss the long-deceased queen. Or perhaps you'd like to view the Saxon princess who grew a full beard and moustache to deter a suitor? It's alleged that annually Charles II's and Nell Gwynne's illegitimate children's descendants have a celebratory dinner nearby. His wife, Portugese princess Catherine of Braganza, contented herself with a cuppa, thus she made tea fashionable in England.

That naughty playwright and author Charles Dickens didn't like his wife either. He had a wall built between his bed and hers. On taking said wife and a mistress on holiday to France, in an ensuing train crash he nearly lost the manuscript for 'The Tale of Two Cities'!

Dandy Beau Brummel daily took 5 hours to dress. He then sat in his Club's bow window to display himself. The club was White's and many rich men lived at their London Club to save the bother of going to one's Estate. One rich and eccentric WW2 pilot Hoppy Hodgkinson, a friend of legless pilot, Douglas Bader, crashed his plane too. (He owned Wooky Hole Caves in Somerset). Being equipped with prosthetic tin legs he stuffed them full of ping-pong balls in case he ditched in the sea. He did. The balls exploded. Famous burns expert Dr. Sir Archie McIndoe made Hoppy new tin legs. Hoppy stuffed them with smuggled French gold, nylons, etc. etc. Happily Hoppy settled down, married a beautiful model and in 1983 collected his crashed plane's propeller from France....

London's Trafalgar Square once housed masses of horse stables. It was decided after the Battle of Trafalgar, 1805, to honour Horatio Nelson by building him a big Column with 4 supporting lions. The artist was slow because he didn't really know what a close-up lion looked like. A dead lion was brought from London Zoo but the stench was so bad the stonemasons had to be bribed to stay. Because Nelson suffered sea sickness one of the lions by his tomb is lion-sick!

Susie has a friend near Gloucester who wanted a house extension. A jolly, laugh-a-minute joking builder was employed. Suddenly he was unavailable for work and off the scene; he turned out to be notorious 1990s multi-murderer, Fred West, who with his wife, Rosemary, dispatched and buried many of his relations and friends. However, Susie says she's quite happy to sleep in the 'West' Wing. Brave!

All this sounds so macabre droll and bloodthirsty, so how come we all roared with laughter. It must be the way she tells 'em! Susie's not only an Historian, but canters through life as a fine entertainer and enthusiast for living too.

Thank you so much, Susie.

Rosemary Bond.

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Family history enquiry - Trusler Family

Andrew Weller has contacted us about where the Trusler family lived in 1939. The records give the house as Hazeldene in what is now New Road. Does anyone know what it is today?

Planning Applications

1. Sainsbury's

Their application to build a small petrol station near the Silchester Road traffic lights was being considered on 5th April. The result is not yet announced.

2. Tadley Place

The owners of Tadley Place have applied to build a modern single storey house on the old tennis court. TADS along with many others have made formal objection on the grounds that 'that the character and heritage of this unspoilt area would be significantly compromised should this application be accepted'. There is a fear that should this application be passed there will be many others for the same area.

Bishopswood Grange

This historic house is for sale. It is the one at the far end of New Road, Tadley where the road swings right along the bottom of the golf course. Asking price about £1 million.

What's on? Events which may be of interest.

Milestones Museum. For coming events: Tel. 01256 477766 or see:
<http://hampshireculturaltrust.org.uk/milestones-museum>

7 Feb – 23 April '**Around the World Brick Adventure**' - Stop the plot to steal the Crown Jewels in our live action LEGO® challenge

Willis Museum - The museum is running an ever changing series of special exhibitions in the Sainsbury Gallery. The Museum also hold workshops on assorted topics. *For information tel 01256 465902 or see*
<http://hampshireculturaltrust.org.uk/venue-events/52>

1st to 22nd April - '**Home and Away**', an exhibition of the paintings of Vivienne Taylor Ballson

Until 26th April - '**The Romantic Thread in British Art**' paintings and prints from the late eighteenth century to the present day.

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

20th April - **The Archaeology of Warfare** by Dave Allen the Hampshire Cultural Trust's Curator of Hampshire Archaeology.

Basingstoke Archaeological & History Society (7.30 at Church Cottage)

11th May - '**The Ebbsfleet elephant butchery site and the Acheulian invasion of Britain**' by Dr Francis Wenban-Smith – University of Southampton

***TADS annual membership is £17 per person.
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