



November 2017

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

**Next meeting - Wednesday 15th November 2017
at St. Paul's Church Hall, 8.00 to 9.30pm**

‘Woman of Wax: the remarkable life of Madame Tussaud’

By Tony Weston

NB This is a change from the advertised programme

Committee News.

The AGM is not far away and although the current Committee members are willing to continue for another year, some fresh blood would be very welcome.

*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 20th December 2017

‘Annual General Meeting and Social’

TADS Meeting 18th October 2017

Silchester Environs Project

By Professor Mike Fulford

University of Reading Archaeology Department.

As the Silchester ruined Roman town – Calleva Atrebatum – is so famous, many of us hadn't considered its 'environs' to be of interest. Of course they are! Professor Mike is surely part of the fixtures of our environs, after so many, many years excavating.

He seemed pretty excited about what these environs, 2-3 miles around Silchester, contain.

When Calleva's Insular IX had been excavated by 2014, what next? Mike began to look deeper into the ground – there was a large pre-Roman Iron Age settlement covering about 80 acres of the Calleva 'town' of 100 acres. It's thought these Iron Age people emigrated here from Northern France in the late 1st Century B.C.

Archaeological exploration moves with the times – and fast: aerial photography; the use of drones with cameras; radio carbon dating; geophysics; metal detecting; LIDAR (Laser Light Detection And Ranging) which shows the ground's contours particularly in woodland – tell us loads about what's down under.

There's Bullsdown Camp at Bramley, and Grim's Bank runs straight through AWE Aldermaston. When Iron/Bronze Age people constructed Grim's Bank they used the soil from the Wood Farm area ditches. This is clearly seen in aerial photographs. Latchmere Green yielded an Iron Age green-jewelled mirror, discovered by the now-not-so-controversial-if-used-sensitively metal detector. The Hill Fort at Pond Farm, an area of 2 acres at 1 kilometre N.W of Calleva, disappointingly yielded few goodies. Obviously any wooden building with wooden post holes, had rotted away in the melee of gravels, clays and burnt charcoal. Radio carbon dating showed activity there from the Iron Age,

Saxon and Medieval times – but Mike was still saddened by the lack of goodies.....

Windabout Settlement, south of Mortimer, was examined in 2016. There was evidence of small farms, ditches and enclosures and shards of late Iron Age pottery. Also of cremation and burial sites with grave goods: bowls, human bones, sheep and goat bones, spelt (a type of wheat), buckwheat and bronze rings. The rings had been in a wooden box which had gone to dust.

Predictably and sadly Mike said there was evidence of grave pilfering. Anything of interest has now been sent to Winchester.

Pamber Forest Enclosure, an area of old woodland, was excavated in Feb./March, 2017. New ditches were discovered 2 metres (6 feet) down. The charcoal here isn't yet radiocarbon dated.

In the 1920s, one Colonel Philip Carslake, a local worthy, discovered numerous bits of tile and brick with splodges on them. This was in Little London, an area now known to be a tilery. Excitingly in July 2015, 16 or 17 pieces were found to have the stamp of Roman Emperor, Nero (AD 54-68) on them. They are the only known Nero tiles in the Roman world!

Little London's bricks and tiles were used as far away as S.W. Hampshire and Cirencester (Gloucestershire) etc. (NB The Tadley area has evidence of 19th Century brick kilns).

The Romans left 4-5 tonnes of waste building materials in the Little London area. They'd used 4 or 5 kilns with very big post holes, for firing bricks and tiles.

Mike reminded us not all Archaeology students are nerdy: they have to put aside their mobile 'phones to wash the 2017 finds!

So, thanks, Mike for your chat and slides, showing us ALL areas are important to Silchester, not just Calleva, but its environs, too.

Rosemary Bond.

If you were not able to attend the talk or want background information on the talk the following links are very informative:

<https://www.reading.ac.uk/silchester/Excavations/Sil-Environs-Aerial.aspx>

<https://historicensland.org.uk/research/research-results/recent-research-results/london-and-south-east/silchester-environs/>

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>

9 and 10 December - *A Christmas Market at Milestones.* Explore a variety of gift, food and drink stalls, treat your children to a visit to the traditional Father Christmas Grotto.

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>

21 Oct to 16 Dec - *Turner and the Sun* exhibition. A local chance to see works and personal items of the great painter J M W Turner.

2-22 Dec. *The Basingstoke Project:* An Artikinesis exhibition - Five artists take a close look at Basingstoke

Friends of the Willis Museum (7.30pm at the museum - Non-members £2, booking essential through the museum telephone number above)

16 Nov. '*Frost, Freezes and Fairs*' by Ian Currie

Basingstoke Archaeological & History Society (7.30 at Church Cottage)

14th December *PAS Discoveries in north Hampshire* by Katie Hinds –
Finds Liason Officer for Hampshire
(PAS - Portable antiquities Scheme)

***TADS annual membership is £17 per person.
Correspondence to Tadley and District History Society,
c/o 5 Church Road Pamber Heath Tadley. RG26 3DP
Email: tadshistory@googlemail.com***