



May 2018

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

**Next meeting - Wednesday 16th May 2018
at St. Paul's Church Hall, 8.00 to 9.30pm**

‘The Nabobs of Berkshire ’

By Clive Williams

(Everybody welcome - Visitors £3.00)

Visit to Fawley Hill near Henley-on-Thames on 2nd Sept.

23 people and an older child are signed up for the visit and the list is now closed. We need to send the donations to the museum before the visit and would like to collect them at the June & July TADS meetings. A donation of £10 for adults and £5 for children of 10 to 15 years old is requested.

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

TADS Meeting 20th June 2018

‘The AA Man’ (*A theatrical production*)

By Vera Hughes and David Weller

TADS Meeting 18th April 2018

Metal Detecting

by John Forster

Saint of Sinner? That's the metal detector. Not The Brummy (Birmingham) now of Pompey (Portsmouth) detectorist, John.

Until quite recently if you moved in the circles of archaeology this machine was machina-non-grata..... However, the metal detector is now so sophisticated and compartmentalised that it can sort out the wheat from the chaff i.e. decide whether the signalled item is a gold coin or a plentifully annoying humble aluminium sheep ear tag..... That will be with the latest £800 - £3,000 Deus detector.

Our very own TADS' prize metal detectorist, the venerable Cyril Turner, has a Deus and carries all the necessary identification and insurance documents, which only cost about £8 annually.

John said detecting is quite addictive. He's found bronze from the 3,000 BC to 1,000 BC Bronze Age and he proudly showed us his bronze awl. Bronze is an alloy of copper and tin. Obviously a detector won't find STONE Age objects! Unscrupulous metal detectorists give back-handers to greedy landowners. 'Night-hawking' is when unscrupulous detectorists invade the land anyway, in darkness.

You must not detect on known archaeological sites. You must get the landowner's permission. The more romantic term for treasure was 'TreasureTrove'. It's been replaced by the mundane 'Treasure Act'. Anyway, 'treasure' is defined as gold, silver, etc. over 300 years old and an F.L.O. (Finds Liaison Officer) will identify your stuff.

John's had over 40 years happy detecting with over 140 items valued and he knows everyone who's anyone in the Archaeological/Metal Detecting world: a brotherhood/sisterhood of like-minded 'nerds' happy to tramp around muddy/v. cold/v. hot sites summer and sometimes winter. The late-lamented woolly-hatted-Fairisle-be-jumpered Professor Mick Aston, a fellow Brummy

of Time Team TV fame said 'a metal detector is a fine tool used in conjunction with archaeologists'....

Some enthusiasts even collect aluminium ring pulls..... Some collect metal and other, buttons left behind where the 'shoddy man' (rag and bone man) of yesteryear, put his unwanted wares on fields to enrich the soil. You do of course unearth other, maybe unintentional, but worthwhile, finds – a George I pottery shard and fascinating detritus. John found an iron buckle dated 1250, with traces of leather inside it, the size of a 1 penny piece.

So you can marvel and peer into the secrets of a by-gone age. One of John's favourite finds – an 1870 machine pressed box for 'solid ink': pencil leads were very thick and solid then, and named 'penails'.

When a farmer of yesteryear employed labourers on his fields, a horse-drawn wagon would have barrels of beer on board - so no one drank out of turn, the farmer had the Barrel Tap Key and he controlled the flow of ale. The Barrel Tap Key for wine was brightly coloured. You can find these keys in the ground now.

Once coins were cut in halves or quarters on purpose. A King John one penny became a 'ha'penny' (half penny) and the quartered one a 'fourth-thing' (farthing). John found a now-rare groat in Horndean, Hants. It was worth 4d Imperial old pence; also a William IV silver shilling (5p), discovered when harassed by a herd of cows in a field!

Nothing's new, of course, chancers counterfeited coins in the good old days..... Not only can you have fun probing probably no deeper than 6 inches (15cms) and rarely over one foot (30 cms) with a metal detector, but John helps Pompey police find buried jewellery from robberies, or perhaps a murder weapon knife.....

So, go and have fun. But follow the code of conduct and fill in the holes you've exposed and shut those farm gates. You don't want cows harassing you.....

Thank you so much, John, for your humour and enthusiasm.

Rosemary Bond.

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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>

15th June at 7.30 pm *'The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes'* a theatre production. Tickets - Adult - £17.60, Child - £11, Family (2 adults, 2 children) £49.22 (all inc. booking fee).

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

25 Apr to 7 Jul. *'I Do!'* Wedding dresses over 250 years.

19 May to 23 Jun *'INSPIRE'*. Work by some of the region's premier artists.

Friends of the Willis Museum (7.30 pm at the museum - Non-members £2,
booking essential through the museum telephone number 01256 465902)

21st June - *'Christian Pilgrimage to Reading and Caversham'* by Lindsay and John Mullaney

Basingstoke Archaeological & History Society (7.30 at Church Cottage)

14th June *'The Archaeology of the Maltese Islands'* by Kay Ainsworth,
Formerly of HCMS.

TADS Website

The website is currently unavailable. There have been a lot of obstacles to overcome in moving it to another hosting server. It is hoped to have the work completed by the end of May.

***TADS annual membership is £18 per person.
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