



April 2024

TADS Newsletter

Website - www.tadshistory.com

**Next Meeting - Monday 8th April 2024 at 8 pm, at
Baughurst and Heath End Village Hall, Heath End Road,
Baughurst RG26 5LU.**

‘500 years of the Vyne, Basingstoke’ by Claire Tilson

The Vyne is our local National Trust property. It has been home to lords and ladies for over five centuries. Through the years it's hosted Tudor kings and queens, been the home of a Speaker of the House of Commons and sheltered evacuees during the Second World War. With only two families owning the estate through history, there are many stories to be uncovered.

(Everybody welcome - visitors £3.00)

If you wish to stop receiving the Newsletter please email Richard Brown or notify Carol Stevens or a Committee member.

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

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Future TADS events:

Monday 13th May 2024 in Baughurst & Heath End Village Hall:

‘General Brock and the Maiwand Lion’

By Mike Cooper

TADS Last Meeting 11th March 2024

‘The Versailles Treaty: failure or folly’

by Colin Oakes.

This ear-opening lecture by Colin happened to be given on Commonwealth Day. The Treaty of Versailles, like many other treaties, tends to gloss over the horrors and memories of the war. A.J.P. Taylor went as far as saying the Peace of Versailles was one of the catalysts for starting World War II!

Treaties are sometimes nebulous meetings and it is said someone tends to be left out or forgotten. In this case U.S.A.’s President Woodrow Wilson forgot to inform some of the countries involved.... Careless. A few historians thought that this Treaty was ‘stupid’ and didn’t keep world peace. It didn’t! Just over 20 years later WWII happened. Even Hitler had thought the Treaty was a failure but he had his own agenda anyway.... He led the Germans ‘down the path’ and they had been seeking a ‘strong leader’.

Apparently we Brits were good at ‘staring out’ our enemies, Colin said – we did it to the French during the Napoleonic Wars. We were preparing to do it to the Germans in 1916 when we ‘frightened’ the German Navy at Jutland.

It’s quite widely known that Kaiser Wilhelm II had a mildly deformed hand and a massive complex about it – he always wanted to appear ‘strong’, therefore winning a war was his idea of strength.

WWI was actually 1914 – 1919 because we wouldn't declare peace till the Germans actually SIGNED the Peace Treaty. Colin said Germany bombed us more times in WWI than during 1939 – 1945 and that there were German U-boats in Scapa Flow off Scotland's north coast, and near Harwich, until they 'scuttled' them.

1918 saw the French wanting the German tanks and aircraft destroyed also.

Our Prime Minister, Lloyd George, had a different approach from the French. He cannily gave women over 30 years the vote, thereby increasing our voting power. (Only in 1920 did women under the age of 30 get the vote.) The Americans also thought that at this time (1918) the Germans weren't a threat to the peace of Europe.

The Treaty of Versailles also ensured that the African countries weren't to be divided up – they became colonies, in an effort to give people freedom of choice. Russia was also left alone – it was an autocracy. Belgium was divided somewhat: the French-speaking Walloonians favoured the west area; the Flemish speakers nearer to Holland.

Suddenly in 1933, Hitler emerged as a leader in Germany, blaming gypsies and Jews for World War I and saying Germany would NOT pay reparation for WWI damage because the war 'hadn't ended properly...' We let Germany keep their industrial Ruhr area and there was supposed to be a 10,000 ton limit on their shipping BUT they craftily had their aircraft built in Russia, disguising the planes as 'civilian' when in reality they were WAR PLANES.

In a gentleman's agreement Germany should have paid 8% (138 billion marks) war reparation. The full amount was to be paid off by 1957. (We also had a war debt to be repaid by 1968 to USA.) Colin remarked that Germany 'printed money' therefore there was rampant inflation. John Maynard Keynes said that the 'Carthaginian Peace' was a disaster and the Treaty of Versailles helped to start WWII – a theory with which Colin disagreed! All in all the Treaty seems to have been the cause of lots of trouble.

Thank you, Colin, for your very detailed talk, and let's hope MORE notice can be taken of its ideas to stave off wars for the rest of the 21st Century (and beyond!)

Rosemary Bond.

Context notes to the talk:

The fighting in World War 1 was ended at 11am on the 11th November 1918 by the Armistice signed at Compiègne, France. The Armistice was only an agreement to stop fighting and the war did not officially end until the signing of the Treaty of Versailles. The Armistice was established for only 36 days and had to be extended three times while the terms of the peace treaty were worked out

To finalize the 1918 Armistice, the Treaty of Versailles was signed on 28 June 1919. Meant to last 20 years, this treaty established the reparations due from Germany to the Allies, as well as new borders within Europe. Among the 231 articles of this treaty:

- Germany was considered entirely responsible for the war.
- It lost one-seventh of its total territory.
- It relinquished its African colonies.
- It lost the right to maintain armed forces.
- It had to make colossal reimbursements to the Allies.

I think it fair to say that many of those in the new European countries that the treaty established, like Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, were not very happy about it, as it forced together peoples who had no natural affinity or common religion. Some of these problems exploded in the Balkan wars of the 1980s.

N.B. A ‘Carthaginian Peace’ quoted in Rosemary’s article is ‘the imposition of a very brutal peace intended to permanently cripple the losing side.’



The Palace of Versailles near Paris where the treaty was signed.

TADS Membership Subscriptions.

TADS membership is by annual subscription. We now have 44 paid up members at the last count. Some of you have paid but have not yet returned the membership form. Will you please bring the completed forms to the next meeting or post it to Christine Poile at 34 Otterbourne Crescent, Tadley.

A Talks Organiser.

After a number of years of organising the monthly TADS talks Stephen has given up and we urgently need someone to take on the job. The job is mainly contacting prospective speakers and putting together a programme of talks for the next year. The committee have already put together an outline list, but if the organiser has any good ideas or interests they can be included. If you think you can help please contact Carol or Richard as on page 1.

Atom Town Memories.

The Project group are considering preparing a publication about Tadley after the start of the Atomic Weapons Research Establishment in 1952. If you were around at that time or in the following years (or know someone who was) we would like to record your memories. It was a time of great change and the first arrivals must be approaching their 90s.

A raffle.

Treasurer Christine, always mindful of income, has decided to run a raffle at the monthly meetings. Look out for the details and prizes on her table when you come into the hall.

Natural History Corner



Seen locally at the end of March: above a male Adder, our only venomous snake and below a Slow worm, a legless lizard.



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

Milestones Museum The website to buy admission tickets can be found at: <https://www.milestonesmuseum.org.uk/>

Until 14 April - **Bun & Ted's Spring Challenge** Easter Holidays fun for children.

The Willis Museum and Sainsbury Gallery

Until 28 April - The exhibition - Becoming Roman: **Silchester**: a town of change.

28th April - **A history of women policing in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight**, by Dr Cliff Williams. *From World War 1 to the appointment of Hampshire's first female Chief Constable in 2016 and beyond*
£7 and must be booked.

To book go on-line at www.hampshireculture.org.uk/willis-museum, or call in or phone 01256 465902.

Friends of the Willis Museum (7.30pm at the Museum - Non-members £3, and book through the Museum on 01256 465902)

18th April - **Gilbert White: his life and times**, by Kimberley James. *The celebrated eighteenth century Hampshire naturalist was at school in Basingstoke.*

Basingstoke Archaeological and Historical Society (7.30 at Church Cottage, Basingstoke)

8th April - No information, website not active.

***TADS annual membership is £20 per person.
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