

September 2024

TADS Newsletter

Website - www.tadshistory.com

**Next Meeting - Monday 9th September 2024 at 8 pm, at
Baughurst and Heath End Village Hall, Heath End Road,
Baughurst RG26 5LU.**

‘The Complete History of Thatcham’

By Dr Nick Young

From the earliest finds of the Stone Age to the Romans, Saxons and the present day, Thatcham has a very long history. In fact it is a claimant to the title of oldest continuously inhabited place in Great Britain. Nick is going to have to work hard to fit the history into one evening.

(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*

www.tadshistory.com

Future TADS events:

Monday 14th October 2024 in Baughurst & Heath End Village Hall:

‘The History of Lions Clubs International & the Loddon Valley Lions in particular’

By John Goodchild

TADS Last Meeting 8th July 2024

The Duke of Wellington’s Country Home at Stratfield Saye by Richard Bennett, Guide

There has been a country house of interest on the borders of Berkshire and Hampshire since the 13th Century. The present house, built by Sir William Pitt in 1630, is unusual as it has its stable block at the FRONT of the house. There’s a river at the back....



Arthur Wellesley, the First Duke of Wellington, was the third son of an Irish peer. As a soldier he was rewarded by the State with a house for the defeat of Napoleon in 1815. Although not large Stratfield Saye was conveniently located only 4 hours from London by horse. In 1817 the house was bought for £263,000 with a plan to knock it down then rebuild – but it didn't happen and the Duke was settled by enlarging the one built by Pitt in the 17th Century. His London residence, Apsley House, was bought for £42,000 in 1823 but the Duke very happily gave up the idea of rebuilding it and slept on the camp bed there! The Duchess, Kitty Pakenham, and the Duke had been married in Ireland in 1805 but they were 'ill-suited' and the Duchess became 'lonely and neglected'. The Duchess preferred to live at Stratfield Saye House or in her native Ireland.

The current Duke, the ninth, opens the House and grounds each August to the public. Richard said the House is well-used by the Duke's family.

In the 19th Century the Duke bought some good French furniture which had once belonged to Napoleon. He loathed Napoleon but loved the furniture! As the Duke's estate covers a vast area, he was able to remove some of the mosaics from the Roman Silchester, which he owned then, and use them in the house. In the 1820s the Duke had some form of central heating and lighting installed in his house. He later had double glazing and flushing lavatories – modern for 1841. There is some gold-leaf wallpaper also, which remains.



The Duke's beloved war horse, Copenhagen, was buried in the grounds – apparently with full military honours.

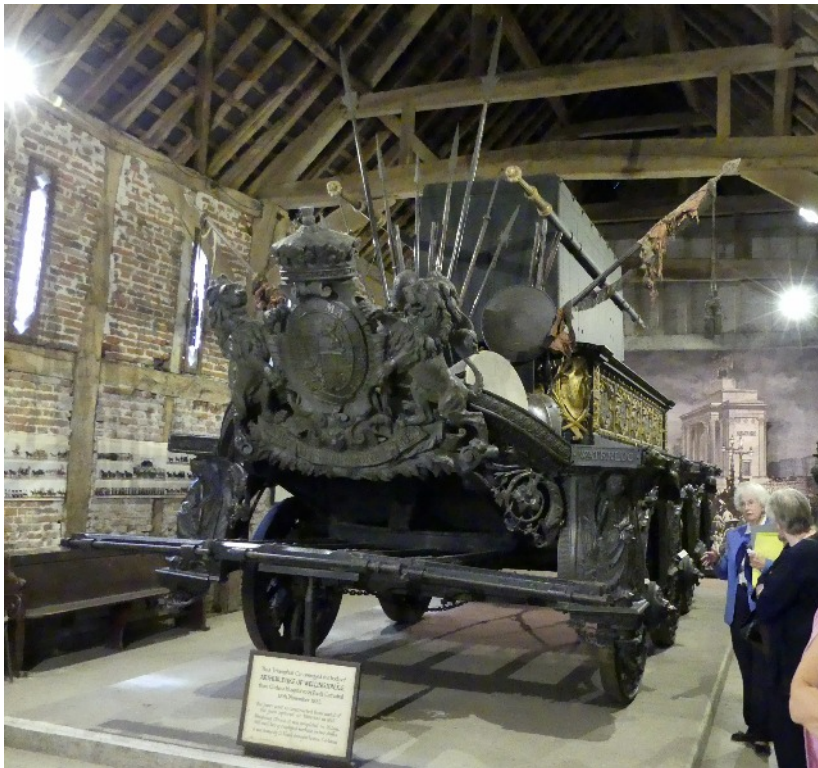
The Duke of Wellington and Admiral Lord Nelson knew of each other. They are both buried at St. Paul's Cathedral in London. *

The 'rent' for Stratfield Saye House, a pennant (triangular flag) must be paid annually to the King.

Thank you, Richard, for your insightful talk. We're so lucky Tadley's quite near to the Stratfield Saye estate so one can quite easily visit in the month of August.

Rosemary Bond

** The first Duke of Wellington as a national hero had a state funeral and was transported to St. Paul's Cathedral on an enormous cast bronze funeral carriage allegedly made from French cannon captured at the battle of Waterloo. It is now in the stables at Stratfield Saye house.- Ed.*



All three photos taken in June 2017 - RB

Special events which may be of interest.

This year the Heritage Open Days run from 6th to 15th September when many places will have special openings, some of them are free. This may be an opportunity to visit buildings which are not normally open to the public.

To find out what is happening a good starting point is the website:
<https://www.heritageopendays.org.uk/>

One local event is the **Thames Valley Police Open Day** on Saturday 7th Sept from 10.00 - 1600. It is at the Thames Valley Police Training Centre, Sulhamstead, Berks.

15th Sept. **Tadley Place Garden**, Church Lane, Baughurst, Tadley, Hampshire, RG26 5LA is open from 14.00 -17.00 under the National Gardens Scheme. Admission is £7, children free.

Natural History Corner



A male Silver-washed Fritillary seen on Silchester Common

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/>

The museum is now taking bookings for its special Christmas events.

The Willis Museum and Sainsbury Gallery

Until 3 November: **Time Studio: Connecting Artists and Community**
Six Hampshire-based artists have been commissioned to lead workshops in diverse mediums from printmaking to clay coiling, responding to the theme of "Time" in honour of founder George Willis, a local clockmaker. The exhibition will evolve from the workshops.

29th Sept, 2 pm – 3.30 pm: Sunday afternoon talk - **Stone Curlews**, by *Keith Betton*. (followed by tea or coffee and cake) £7.00 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)

September's talk is 'members only'.

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

9th Sept. **Hursley Park excavations** by the Winchester Archaeological Research Group (WARG). By Andy and Jane King

Thatcham Historical Society will have a talk by Sue Ellis about **Operation Market Garden** on 30th September. This may be of interest as the operation was the attempted taking of the Rhine Bridges in 1944 which was supported by aircraft flying from Aldermaston Airfield. Details from Carol or Richard.

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