

Mary Harris.

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I have a History degree from York University and then a post graduate diploma in Anglo-Saxon Archaeology from Durham University. I spent most of my working life teaching History, Classics, and Classical Archaeology in Sixth Form Colleges. I joined LTVAS in 1975 and have been an active member most of the time since. I have always been interested in local history and have been working on the history of Timsbury and Michelmersh, where I live, and the Romsey area generally.

Talks (all illustrated) I can give:

1. Saxon charters of the lower Test Valley.

Romsey Local History Society undertook a study of the lower Test valley in Saxon times. As part of this we have studied in detail the 4-5 Saxon charters for our area. The talk records how we went about this and the information that the study has revealed about the landscape and its use in Saxon times.

2. Wessex Saints in Europe.

This tells the story of St Boniface and other members of his family who travelled from Wessex in the 8th century AD to visit Rome, the Holy Land and settled in Germany to bring Christianity to the pagans and peoples on the edge of the Frankish Empire. Amazingly there are 8th century Lives of these saints and copies of their letters which enable us to see them as real individuals. In Europe many of these saints are still remembered and revered whereas in their homeland of Wessex they are largely forgotten.

3. Life in a Medieval Village - The Farming Year. This is based on studies of the Medieval documents - rentals, custumals, and court records held by Winchester Cathedral for the estate of Michelmersh. Many details of farming and everyday life can be gleaned from these records. The type of activities etc are illustrated with pictures from a variety of Medieval manuscripts.

4. Little Woodham 17th century reenactment Village.

The 'Living History' village at Little Woodham, Gosport, was created over 30 years ago. It is run and peopled by volunteers who demonstrate a variety of crafts and living conditions. The village is set in 1642, just as the English Civil War was starting ( but not quite started). Villagers have researched and developed their own activities and skills and include: blacksmith, potter, spinner, weaver, dyer, alehouse keeper, seamstress, herbalist, button maker, woodman and bodger. The talk records the development and activities of the village.

5. Romans in the Rhineland.

This talk and slide show combines an account of Roman activity in the area of the River Rhine with a commentary on German methods of preserving and displaying their ancient monuments.

6. The 1588 map of Hursley.

In 1588 Ralph Treswell, one of the earliest map makers drew a map of the estate at Hursley for its new owners together with a schedule of the lands held by all the tenants. The map has been carefully copied and illustrates not only methods of map making but detail of the estate and how it was farmed in 16th century.

7. Hall Place.

Hall Place (now a private house) was a small estate in Braishfield, near Romsey. From the 16th century it was owned by New College, Oxford, who created and preserved many records and surveys of its lands. The talk illustrates the methods of tracing house/estate histories and attempts

to trace the Hall Place back to Saxon and Norman times. There is much speculation but the results are interesting.

#### 8. The Swing Riots in Michelmersh and Timsbury.

In 1830 the south and east of England experienced serious agricultural riots when the labourers demanded a living wage. Local newspapers and court records give details of these events and it is possible to trace these in specific villages and discover the details of the riots and the consequences for the workers and their families.

#### 9. Myths and Mysteries. (Facts and Fantasies)

Stories from Romsey area local history investigated. How true are they? These include: Was Stanbridge Earls a royal Saxon manor? Did the Vikings sack Romsey Abbey? Was there a battle between Saxons and Danes at Bloody Bridge? What was the Romsey Rose?

#### 10. Mayflower pilgrims.

The story of the Mayflower Pilgrims, who they were, why they went to America and the clothing and stores they took with them. This is based on the written records of the Mayflower pilgrims and research done on clothing and textile history through involvement in 17th century re-enactments. 10. The Mayflower Pilgrims 1620.

#### 11. History of Timsbury

A brief history of a Hampshire village from Stone Age to 20th century using archaeology and local records. Although a small village which has largely been agricultural throughout its history, Timsbury has participated in most of the significant developments in English history: dominance by the church, reformation, enclosure movement, canal building etc.

#### 12. Domesday People.

An investigation into the people, Saxons and Normans, mentioned in Domesday Book in association with local places, varying from national figures like Odo of Bayeux, and Hugh de Port, sheriff of Hampshire to local men like Chipping of North Baddesley and Hungar of Romsey.

#### 13. The history of RAODS

Dramatic productions in the early 20th century which led to the founding of RAODS in 1934. The development and expansion of the group from the Crosfield Hall days to purchasing the Plaza Theatre and opening in 1984 to the plans to raise the roof in 2024.