

# Hadland Talks

Writer and historian Tony Hadland is a frequent public speaker, based in Oxfordshire. He will be pleased to come and talk to your group, company or conference. He brings his own computer and projector (including spare projector bulb!) and can supply a screen. All the talks are illustrated with pictures and, in some cases, with video or audio clips. Talks can, to some extent, be customised to your requirements, in respect of duration, focus and audience.

## About Tony Hadland

Born 1949 in Reading, Berkshire. Tony has lived in Reading, Oxford, South Oxfordshire and now in the Vale of White Horse. He spent 13 years in the West Midlands, literally having been sent to Coventry by his employer. He studied Architecture at the Oxford School of Architecture and surveying at Reading College of Technology. He has a website [www.hadland.net](http://www.hadland.net) and blog [hadland.wordpress.com](http://hadland.wordpress.com)

**Affiliations and involvement:** Fellow of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors; former member of the Institution of Information Scientists; historian specialising in local, family, recusant and cycle history; author, editor and occasional broadcaster; current editor of *The Oxfordshire Family Historian*; vice-chairman of the Oxfordshire Family History Society; committee member of the Oxfordshire Local History Association; Project Board member for the redevelopment of Abingdon County Hall Museum; Chairman of the Advisory Group to the Alex Moulton Museum, Bradford-on-Avon; former Administrator of the Vale & Downland Museum, Wantage.

**Here is a selection of topics on which Tony can talk:**

## Travel

### Foray to the Falklands

You don't realise how little you know about the Falklands until you go there! Rosemary and Tony Hadland visited the islands in late 2008, where their son Jeremy was based with the RAF. Tony already knew something of the Falklands, as a friend of his mother was married to a Falkland islander – one of the councillors who negotiated unsuccessfully with the Argentines before the 1982 conflict. However, nothing prepares you for the rugged beauty of the place and the fascinating wildlife. On their return, Rosemary produced an exhibition of photos and memorabilia for the Vale & Downland Museum, subsequently shown at the Oxfordshire County Museum. This popular talk was created to augment the exhibition and is available in four lengths, to suit different venues and audiences. Wildlife, landscape and lifestyle are the key features. *Presented with photographer Rosemary Hadland.*

### Islay – Queen of the Hebrides

Islay is the most cosmopolitan of the Hebridean islands and arguably the most varied geographically. Lying between Northern Ireland and the Scottish mainland, it was

once the seat of the Lords of the Isles. A two-hour ferry ride from the mainland, Islay is famous for its wildlife and whisky. This talk introduces you to the place, its people and landscape, and includes a wide range of photographs, demonstrating the striking scenery of the island. *Presented with photographer Rosemary Hadland.*

## **Family History**

### **William Gill - Victorian Explorer and Spy**

William Gill was an officer in the Royal Engineers who unexpectedly inherited a huge fortune and became a self-financed explorer and intelligence officer. For his travels in China and Tibet he was awarded the gold medal of the Royal Geographical Society. After the Crimean War, he was involved in negotiating the border between Turkey and Russia, and worked undercover in North Africa. During the nationalist revolt in Egypt, William Gill went undercover again. He was sent, disguised as an Arab, to cut the telegraph lines from Constantinople to Alexandria. His cover was blown and he and his companions were murdered in the desert. They were buried in St Paul's Cathedral, London. Tony Hadland is William Gill's great-great-nephew and tells the fascinating story of this courageous and very Victorian character.

### **A Tiger in the Bathroom and Bullets up the Chimney**

Tony is vice-chairman of the Oxfordshire Family History Society and has been tracing his family history for nearly 30 years. His father's Hadland ancestors were in Oxfordshire for centuries but his mother's ancestry was quite a different matter. This talk spotlights Tony's ancestors in India and Ireland. They include an English painter and pioneering photographer, a mysterious Indian lady and a handsome Irish soldier with divided loyalties. In getting to the truth, family myths have been deconstructed to reveal a fascinating story that earlier generations would have found shocking.

### **What my DNA Test told me**

After years of wondering whether it was worthwhile, Tony Hadland took a comprehensive DNA test. His aim was to prove (or disprove) a family tradition that his great-grandmother, Mildred Gill, was of Spanish descent. The test confirmed a cover-up going back several generations that but also threw up fascinating information about his Oxfordshire agricultural labourer ancestors, possibly linking them to the spread of agriculture from the Fertile Crescent.

### **The Duke and the Miner's Daughter**

Family tradition said that Tony Hadland's great-grandfather, Thomas Young, was the illegitimate son of the Duke of Raglan. Thomas's mother was the teenage daughter of a miner in the Forest of Dean. Using techniques anybody can employ, Tony discovered that the truth was even more interesting than the legend.

### **From Trevithick to Barnes Wallis – engineering in the family**

Tony Hadland's father-in-law, Herbert Jeffree, was chief physicist at the British Aircraft Corporation and worked with Barnes Wallis. His family has had a continuous involvement with engineering for well over 200 years. This talk traces their achievements, from steam in Cornwall to aviation at Brooklands, via the waterworks of London and the admiralty.

## **Oxfordshire & Berkshire History**

### **An Introduction to The Wantage Engineering Company**

With origins in a small forge established in the early 19th century, the Wantage Engineering Company grew during Victorian times to become a maker of traction engines and stationary steam engines. Revived and expanded by Lord Wantage in the early 20th century, the company was a major employer in the Vale of White Horse. It added mining machinery to its output and even made casings for the famous bouncing bombs. This talk gives an introduction to the company and makes extensive use of archive photographs.

### **Steam and Steel in the Vale of White Horse**

This illustrated talk traces the development of Wantage Engineering Ltd and Nalder & Nalder, both of which exported agricultural machinery worldwide. We also explore the history of the Wantage Tramway and look at what remains of these three manifestations of the industrial revolution in rural Berkshire. Available as a two-part talk (with interval for refreshments) or in a shorter one part version.

### **An Introduction to the Museums of Oxfordshire**

Few counties have as many museums, or as varied a selection, as Oxfordshire. They range from lovingly preserved examples of Victorian engineering open only a few days a year, to Britain's senior museum, the mighty Ashmolean. This talk gives an overview of the museums of the county, highlighting interesting examples and explaining how they are managed and financed.

### **Catholic Recusancy in Oxfordshire**

Recusants were people who, after the Reformation, refused to conform to the Church of England. This talk reveals the secretive survival of Catholicism in Oxfordshire (including former North Berkshire). A surprising number of key events in English post-Reformation Catholic history happened in the area. Examples are given of surviving records and sources of further information.

### **Thames Valley Papists**

This presentation tells the story of post-Reformation Catholic survival in Berkshire and Southern Oxfordshire, including Reading and Oxford.

### **Recusancy in the Vale of White Horse**

This popular talk tells the story of post-Reformation Catholic survival in former North Berkshire.

### **Resisting the Virgin Queen**

Sir Francis Englefield, Edmund Plowden and William Woollascott were all Thames Valley gentry who resisted Queen Elizabeth's orders to become Anglicans. They adopted very different strategies, ranging from armed resistance to feigned conformity. But which worked best?

## **The Turbulent Lifetime of Thomas Vachell**

Thomas Vachell was the heir of an old Reading gentry family; his wife was a Reade from Abingdon. Thomas's father suppressed the hugely wealthy Reading Abbey, yet Thomas doggedly stuck to 'the old faith'. His story spans five monarchs and four changes of religion. He became the most fined man in Oxfordshire, his wealth was seized in a government raid and, as a result of 'swimming against the tide', he fell out with his wife. Thomas Vachell's story illustrates some of the huge changes England went through in the Tudor and early Stuart era – and it has a fairly happy ending!

## **Bicycle History**

### **The Moulton Bicycle**

The Moulton was an icon of the Swinging Sixties – a minibike to go with mini cars and miniskirts. In 1962, John Woodburn, riding a Moulton, broke the Cardiff-London record. The Moulton was also used successfully as a long distance and trans-continental tourer. But it was as a stylish unisex utility machine for all the family that it made its greatest impact. In the 1960s, it helped save the British cycle industry, which was in steep decline. Today, Moulton is one of the few British cycle companies still making bikes in the UK. This talk tells the story of this unusual and enduring machine – one of the few successful attempts to redesign the bicycle.

### **100 Years of Sturmey-Archer**

The Sturmey-Archer 3-speed hub gear took the cycling world by storm in the Edwardian era. For a lifetime or more, hub gears became standard fittings for quality bicycles. This talk explains in simple terms how hub gears work and what's good about them. It reveals the cover-up behind invention of the first Sturmey-Archer gear and tells how this great British firm was allowed to decline before being sold to Taiwanese owners. We celebrate the heyday of hub gears and look at the future for hub gears in general and Sturmey-Archer in particular.

### **125 Years of Raleigh Bicycles**

Founded in a Nottingham back-street, and turned into a huge enterprise by a ropemaker's son who became a baronet, Raleigh was once the biggest bicycle company in the world. At various times, the firm also made motorcycles, cars, munitions and gears for bicycles and motorcycles. This talk introduces some of Raleigh's key personalities and products and gives an insight into the massive industrial enterprise that meant so much to the city of Nottingham. We look at Raleigh's triumphs and failures and get a glimpse of what the company is doing today.

### **Portable Bicycles**

'Portable' is the generic term for bikes that fold or take apart for easy storage or carriage on trains, buses, planes or in car boots. Portable bicycles have been around since the so-called 'Penny Farthing', in many ingenious forms. They range from the elegantly functional to the truly awful. Tony Hadland is co-author of a history of portable cycles and has travelled with them on planes, boats, trains, trams and buses. This talk traces the story of portable bikes and will help you decide whether there is one that suits your needs.

## Broadcasting History

### Pop Pirates of the 1960s

In this talk, Tony traces the story of the offshore pirate radio stations of the 1960s, including 'Big L' and Radio Caroline. He explains how restrictions on broadcasting light entertainment existed in the UK from the earliest days of public broadcasting and shows how, between the two world wars, the first generation of offshore stations were land-based, in Normandy, Luxembourg and elsewhere. Offshore ship-based broadcasting developed first in Scandinavia in the 1950s, then in Belgium and the Netherlands, before the first British stations went live in the 1960s. The talk is brought to life with numerous audio clips.

## Computers

### An Introduction to the Apple Mac

The history of the Mac, how it differs from a PC and dispelling myths about Macs. Are there advantages to using a Mac? Is it more expensive? Can you run Windows on a Mac? This talk is a good way to find out whether your next computer should be an Apple.

## Charges

### Speaking fee:

£30 for charities and not-for-profit groups.

£50 for commercial companies/events.

### Travelling expenses:

For charities and not-for-profit groups, approximately 25p per mile travelled.

For commercial companies/events, approximately 40p per mile travelled.

### Examples of travel charges for charities and not-for-profit groups:

Wantage = £5

Witney = £5

Oxford = £8

Swindon = £8

Banbury = £21

Reading = £22

Basingstoke = £24

Southampton = £36

## How to book

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