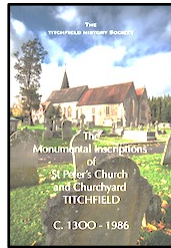




Titchfield History Society Newsletter

Buy a Book

Monumental
Inscriptions of St
Peter's Church and
Churchyard
c. 1300 – 1986



<https://titchfieldhistory.co.uk/shop>

THS Talks

THS Talks Cancelled

Sadly, given the circumstances surrounding the Coronavirus outbreak, the Titchfield History Society has decided to cancel the remaining talks for this year. The situation will be reviewed in early 2021 when it is hoped we can make arrangements to meet.

It Happened in 982

The first reference to Titchfield is in a Charter of King Ethelred the Unready. In which a certain Lufa acquires six small estates including one near Titchfield.



THE LOCKDOWN THAT BROUGHT SHAKESPEARE TO TITCHFIELD

One of the motivating factors behind the fashion for large country houses in the early 16th century was the fear of plague in London.

Outbreaks of plague were annual and those who could afford to moved their families to a safer house in the country, such as Place House at Titchfield.

The authorities in London understood little about the causes of disease but it was plain to them that close contact with other people hastened its spread. The default action, then as now, was to close down events which drew crowds.

In Elizabethan London any outbreak of plague resulted in an immediate closing of the theatres.

Plague was particularly virulent in London in 1593 and successive outbreaks forced the theatres to close early that year and they were not to reopen until May 1594.

This was a long time for actors to go without work and income, and of course there was no social safety net. Some actors resorted to touring, although the returns from this enterprise were often meagre.



Continued over

THE LOCKDOWN THAT BROUGHT SHAKESPEARE TO TITCHFIELD CONTINUED

It seems that William Shakespeare turned his hand to writing narrative poems and after securing the patronage of the young earl of Southampton was able to publish *Venus and Adonis*.

It turned out to be a best seller and the poem made the names of both men.

What does this have to do with Titchfield? William Shakespeare had no work in London and it was not a safe place.

He may have returned to his young family in Stratford on Avon, or, given his new connection to the earl of Southampton, may have been tempted by an offer to work at Titchfield.

Was it in Titchfield that he composed his second narrative poem *The Rape of Lucrece*? A later 17th century writer, John Aubrey, recorded that Shakespeare was 'sometime a schoolmaster in the country.'

That could be anywhere, if indeed it is true, but it is tempting to believe that the out of work actor found some such employment between 1593 and 1594, and that the old schoolhouse at Titchfield was his residence and workplace.

Bryan Dunleavy 2020

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STORMY TIMES

The recent storm just after Christmas, named 'Bella', was a reminder of 'The Great Storm of 1987'.

You may remember the words of BBC weatherman, Michael Fish, "Earlier on today, apparently, a woman rang the BBC and said she heard there was a hurricane on the way. Well, if you're watching, don't worry, there isn't!" The storm turned out to be the worst to hit South East England for three centuries.

Technically Michael Fish was correct, to be hurricane it must have been formed in the tropics and this storm was not. It did rate as 'Storm Force 12' on the Beaufort Scale which is described as *Hurricane Force*.

The storm of '87 occurred on the night of 15/16th of October. Winds of 86 mph battered the south with highest gusts of 134 mph. Pressure dropped to a very low 953mb.

More than 50,000 Hampshire homes were plunged into darkness as power supplies were hit. Many houses in Titchfield had tiles ripped off and damage caused by flying debris

In Nashe Way Fareham eight families were evacuated after the roof blew off their block of flats and a four story block of flats collapsed in Lee on Solent. On the Isle of Wight parts of Shanklin Pier were swept away.

Trees were blocking roads and telephone lines were down. Overall it was estimated that more than 15 million trees were destroyed.

In the South the storm resulted in the deaths of five people, in all across the whole country, 18 people lost their lives.



Phil Burner 2021 2