

# WESTENDER

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E-mail address:  
[westendlhs@aol.com](mailto:westendlhs@aol.com)

EDITOR  
Nigel G. Wood  
EDITORIAL AND PRODUCTION  
ADDRESS  
40 Hatch Mead  
West End  
Southampton, Hants  
SO30 3NE  
Telephone: 023 8047 1886  
E-mail: [woodng@aol.com](mailto:woodng@aol.com)

## THEN AND NOW



LOWER NEW ROAD. WEST END from a postcard dated 1906



Our view (above) shows Lower New Road on or before 1906 taken from a postcard dated 1906. The view at the left shows the same scene on 29th October 2008, 102 years later. The roadway is now tarmaced, the area on the left is now built up and the horse drawn carriers cart is replaced with by the ubiquitous motorcar, otherwise it is very similar and quite recognisable.

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## THE JUNE MEETING - THE FRENCH CONNECTION

**A Review by Stan Waight**

Once again, there was a good turnout when Southampton Blue Badge Guide Jake Simpkin returned to talk to us. His subject this time was 'Southampton and its French Connection' and he chose to present his material chronologically, which meant that relatively unimportant connections were mingled with much more important ones. For instance, the escape of the spies Burgess and McLean to France via Southampton in 1951 followed immediately on from the far more weighty Normandy landings in 1944. I have extracted some of the topics in no particular order.

Southampton's international standing as a port is clearly the most important factor, and the shape of the French coast is the reason for its famous double high tides. There is archaeological evidence to show that trade with France existed during the Roman and Saxon periods and even before - stone-age flint tools produced in France have been found in the Southampton area.

With the coming of the Normans, Southampton was restructured. Henry II spent much of his time in France and he married Eleanor of Aquitaine. He chose to make the town his chief port for the import of wine and set up the royal vaults from which casks were distributed throughout his kingdom. This trade was responsible for the affluence acquired by the town and its physical layout; it continued well into the 20th century [I can remember that General Steam Navigation ships were still bringing whole cargoes of wine from Bordeaux in the 1950s]. French merchants became prominent in the town and are still remembered in many ways - French Street, for instance.

Henry's unfortunate remark that resulted in the murder of Thomas a'Becket in 1170 had an important effect on Southampton. In an act of penance, he established a route of pilgrimage with Southampton as the port of entry and the end in Canterbury. This set a precedent for other pilgrims, with great financial benefits for the town.



**The Arcades on the west side of the circuit**

It was the French raid of 1338 that prompted Southampton's enclosure by the magnificent walls that remain today, financed by the wealth possessed by the town at that time. In the reverse direction, the town became the departure port for English armies that fought at Crecy and Agincourt during the Hundred Years War. In more recent years, similar invasion forces left

the port for France during World Wars I and II, and wounded men returned through it. The remains of the Mulberry harbours on the Normandy coast, built in the Southampton area as part of the 1944 operation, are testament to the importance of that connection.

The insertion into the walls of the Pilgrim's Gate is evidence of the continuation of Henry II's precedent, and the nearby French Church of St. Julian became the focal point for Huguenot and other refugees in the mid-1500s.



**The remains of one of the Mulberry harbours at Arromanches**

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Ironically, the Wool House, built in the medieval period to house wool for export to the Continent, was used to accommodate French prisoners during the Napoleonic wars.

Cross-channel ferries sailed to French ports from around 1824. Unfortunately, in the face of competition from quicker routes, they no longer do so. They carried millions of passengers and tons of freight in their day; under both headings, perhaps, were the Johnny Onion Boys, who plied their unusual trade in the Southampton area during the 1950s.

The connection continues with several French companies in the city and people at the University. Thanks, Jake, for a thoroughly enjoyable and informative talk.

## **THE MURDER OF CAROLINE SOPHIA COLBORNE**

**By John Avery**

*News report 17<sup>th</sup> Sept 1865*

*“On Monday week, George Broomfield was tried at Winchester for the murder of Caroline Colborne, at Shirley, near Southampton, on the 3rd December last. The murder created a great sensation at the time from the fact that the victim was a young and pretty woman only lately married, whom the prisoner, though a married man, sought to pay his addresses to. After shooting Mrs. Colborne, the prisoner attempted to commit suicide, and nearly succeeded. The defence set up that it was insanity, but the Jury found the prisoner guilty, and he was sentenced to death”.*

George Broomfield was in his mid forties and had worked in various households with his last post as butler to Miss Onslow at Upton House, Old Alresford. Miss Onslow was the daughter of Mr Guildford Onslow MP who had other properties in London and Onslow a village by Guildford from which the family name originated. Caroline Wing, born in Shirley, 2 miles from Southampton was the lady's maid of the household. Caroline or Carry as her family called her was the daughter of Henry James Wing a plasterer and his wife Caroline who resided in Union Road, Shirley which was in later years included in the town of Southampton. She had been walking out with Fred Colborne a plumber/painter but that relationship cooled and she decided to go into service.

Whilst on one of their London seasons visit, they were the guests of Miss Delay whose family owned land in London and Ireland. It was here that they met George Broomfield, butler to Miss Delay. Broomfield had been married for four years to Ann, a lady some senior in years, who lived in lodgings at South Molton Street, Mayfair. Very soon after the marriage he had taken the post as butler to Lord George Beauclerk but his wife continued to reside at her address. In September 1862, Broomfield was accidentally shot in the head and back when a member of the shooting party, Lord Falkland, mistakenly hit him while tracking a bird in flight. He was taken home and the doctor removed some 30 pieces of lead shot.

From that time his diligence and attention to detail changed and he became very remorseful and a classic hypochondriac, often bursting into tears. Broomfield informed his doctor that parts of his inner stomach were disappearing and his brain and heart were leaking fluids. As his condition worsened he feared that his blood was turning to water and had the notion that his wife Ann was terminally ill.

For some unknown reason, probably his health, he then changed employers and then worked in the Delay household.

But it was the arrival of Miss Onslow known for her philanthropic nature and, perhaps he had his sights on the pretty servant maid, Caroline, on their weekend stay at Miss Delay's that persuaded Broomfield to take a post in Miss Onslow's large house at Old Alresford. So in October 1863 the new butler arrived at Upton House. This Carry Wing was to regret. After taking the post of butler, he began to pay her excessive personal attention. Politely she discouraged his attentions and would bring into conversation her intention



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to marry Fred, her beau at Shirley. Broomfield with his developing personality disorder became more and more possessive. Later at the inquest, Carry's mother Caroline related how her daughter detested the man and had been forced to leave her post and to return to Shirley.

Broomfield wrote to Carry 2 or 3 times and she sent him a demand that such correspondence should cease; Carry emphasised that she had no interest in a man 20 years her senior. Then driven by his passion, he arrived at the Wing residence in January 1864 and proposed marriage [although of course he was still married]. This was firmly rejected.

In March, Fred Colborne was invited for tea and their former relationship was rekindled and within days the couple announced their engagement. They married at Shirley Church on 8<sup>th</sup> May 1864. Fred rented a house near to Carry's parents in Union Road. Carry happy in her marriage soon forgot the unwelcome attention of Broomfield.

Broomfield's state of health had worsened and he relinquished his post in March 1864 and returned to his wife. He explained to her his infatuation with his fellow servant; Ann seemed to accept this along with his daily outbursts that he would die that very day. His doctor visited regularly and feared suicide so cautioned that he should be always attended in the house.

On 3<sup>rd</sup> December he called out that he was going to buy a paper but went to an acquaintance Mr Brown and told him that he was travelling to Southampton to join the confederates in the American civil war. He borrowed a £10 note and duly signed an IOU. He then went to Waterloo to board the Southampton train.

Calling at the Shirley Hotel, he asked the landlord where Mr and Mrs Colborne resided. A short time afterwards Frederick called in at his local and from the landlord's description, he realised the caller had been Broomfield. He hastened home and Broomfield and his wife were chatting politely. Broomfield stressed that any misunderstanding was in the past and they all shared a cup of tea. He informed them of his plan to fight in the war in America and that he wanted to say goodbye to his former colleague. Broomfield enquired as to whether they could put him up but the couple were not able to do so and Broomfield went back to the Shirley Hotel to book a room.

The atmosphere was quite relaxed, both men enjoyed a pipe of tobacco and Broomfield asked for some brandy. About 9 pm Carry was preparing supper and Fred popped out to get a jug of beer. As he returned he saw neighbours showing some alarm outside his house. There inside Carry's mother was cradling the body of her dead daughter and other neighbours were attending Broomfield who was still holding the pistol. Broomfield had shot himself twice in the chest and they assumed him to be dead but then he opened his eyes. Two doctors and Sergeant Cheney from the nearby police station attended. Dr Weston urged Broomfield to make amends with his maker as he had not long to live. Broomfield was taken to the Royal South Hants Infirmary. He survived and faced his trial at Winchester Assizes.

Broomfield held a handkerchief to his head and seemed unaware of what was happening. His wife and a doctor from the infirmary attended him as he sat in the dock, most of the time his eyes were closed tightly. When asked if he wished to question any witness he chose only Frederick Colborne. Strangely he asked if Carry had bewitched him and that he had laid for 3 weeks or 3 months [claiming that Carry had told him so]. Colborne replied that he had not.

The defence tried to convince the court that his personality disorder since the accidental shooting in 1862 had disturbed his reasoning and the killing of Caroline Colborne was committed when he was of a disturbed mind. The jury however found him guilty of murder and he was sentenced to be hanged. Oddly the free BMD index on the internet does not record his death [September 1865].

There was some public discussion as to when a jury should view a crime when committed whilst of unsound mind. The Spectator ran a challenging article on the case 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1865 [page 3] The British Medical Journal Vol. 2, No. 239 (Jul. 29, 1865), pp. 94-97 ran an in depth review of his condition at the time of the crime.

Broomfield composed a long poem of regret which was published by Henry Disley, printer London in 1865.

*Yes I must face the gallows tree  
To die a death of scorn  
How happy it would have been for me  
If I had not been born  
etc*



## NEW PICTURES FOR THE ARCHIVE



The picture above shows the Swaythling Road in West End just past the Crown & Thistle (or Master Builder as it is now) as it was around 1900. The postcard was purchased via eBay and is one of a series taken in the village. Our second picture is one of four kindly donated to the society recently by Christine Atterbury. They show her father Eric James Fisher as well as the vehicles of his local firm G.R. Payne. Eric's Oil Business ran for many years from Princess Coach premises in Botley Road, West End.

## BARGAIN BASEMENT?

Our member and regular contributor John Avery sent in this little bit of information he gleaned recently from an old newspaper:

**April 1928**

*"While an auction was taking place at an old country residence at West-End, near Southampton, the floor of the sale room collapsed and some 30 people and a quantity of furniture fell into the cellar 6 ft. below. No one was seriously injured, but a few persons suffered from shock and bruises. The sale was continued in the garden."*



## THE WORLD'S SMALLEST VISITOR CENTRE

By Nigel Wood



And you thought our museum in West End was small.....

On a recent holiday to the North of England and Scotland with our 'better halves', Peter Wallace and I happened across the above in the village of Branxton in Northumberland. The old village phone box having been made redundant by BT was purchased 'in situ' by the local residents for the princely sum of £1 and promptly converted into a 'Visitors Centre' to commemorate the 500th Anniversary of the Battle of Flodden Field which took place nearby on 9th September 1513.

The phone box is fitted out with excellent displays depicting a blow by blow account of the battle along with illustrations and a push button recording detailing the battle. The battle in which the Scottish King James IV was defeated and killed during his invasion of England in support of the French King changed the face of history. The battlefield is virtually untouched and from the memorial on the hill (which formed the English line) one has a good view towards the high ground in front over which the larger Scottish Army advanced to do battle.

King James IV's body was temporarily placed in Branxton's mediaeval church before being taken to London - the church is still there but only the chancel is original and not 'victorianised'. The 'Visitor Centre' is looked after by local residents and refreshingly there was not a sign of vandalism.

For more information on the battle check out the internet at:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle\\_of\\_Flodden](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Flodden)

## **MORE EXTRACTS FROM St. JAMES' CHURCH MAGAZINES**

**1901-1905**

**By Pauline Berry**

Early 1901 saw the death of Queen Victoria following her 63 year reign, and it was marked by national mourning and a memorial service held at St. James' Church. The former, temporary, vicarage called Winton House (Merlyn House), continued to be used for the Girls' Club and Mothers' Union meetings. The new vicarage opposite it (Elizabeth Court) was occupied by the vicar, the Revd. C.R. Patey, at last, although £230 was still outstanding against its building cost.

At the annual Cottagers' (Villagers) Show at 'Shales' (owned by Colonel E.K. Perkins) in West End Road, Mr John St. Barbe Baker of 'The Firs', gave a prize for the best cottage loaf. He was a skilled baker, like the rest of his family, as many unemployed residents of West End knew to their benefit.

The Band of Mercy, resembling that of the R.S.P.C.A., was started at the Elementary School and 65 pupils joined in order to learn more about animals and their care. The school managers, including many well known names, met regularly to discuss the need for a new school for the rapidly growing population in the village. Public subscriptions, concerts etc.. were instigated to raise the expected cost (£2,764) and by the end of 1901, over £1,000 had been collected.

The Reading Room, the corrugated iron hut on Shotters Hill, which was also used for many society events, began a lending library for all villagers willing to pay one shilling (5p.) per annum to borrow books which were donated by all and sundry.

A lecture was recorded in a 1902 Church Magazine, entitled 'Village Life 500 years ago' which was well attended by 140 residents. The village Flower Show held in the spring, had so few entries (due to the weather?) that only one prize was given. A Village Committee was created to organise talks, meetings and outings etc.. for those interested.

Following the recovery of the future King Edward VII from his illness and the subsequent delay of his Coronation, a Service of Thanksgiving was held at St. James' Church in June.

July 1902, brought a Flower Show at 'The Wilderness' and an Open Day was held at the Vicarage. It may have been a good summer, for many local societies held their outings: The Mothers' Union to Lee-on-the-Solent and the Field Club went to the Coronation Temperance Fete in a 'brake' (a form of large horse-drawn wagonette) costing 2 shillings (10p.) per person. Prince Henry of Battenburg presented the prizes. In September the Sunday Class (School) went to London and the Village Committee visited Winchester.

A 'Glee Club' (a close harmony singing group) was formed by Mrs Winter and met at Winton House in preparation for a local concert to be held in the schoolroom. The Band of Mercy received prizes for their essays on 'Kindness to Animals' from Miss Heigham of Heather Mount. The 100 members of the West End Nursing Association, who had already paid their annual subscription for medical assistance, donated 'useful items' for the sickroom!

Various talks on 'The Cat', 'The Dog' and 'Animals as Builders and Engineers' kept the Band of Mercy interested during 1903. The vicar gave a talk on 'The Navy' to the Village Committee. This committee stated 'a growing need for a doctor' since the village nurse, Miss Chapman paid 2,069 home visits during the year, dealing with 123 medical cases.

The building fund for the new school, being erected by Haines Bros., borrowed £1,350 from Grant

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and Maddison's Bank, to continue the work. One of the said builders, George Haines, died suddenly in June.

Midlands Estate was the venue for this year's Flower Show, with kind permission of the owner, Mrs Hollingworth. Poultry classes were introduced for the first time. The vicarage held a Pet Show in August but with only a few entries from the 124 visitors. Thirty one 'maidens' were invited for tea and games at the vicarage!

The year 1904 saw all the societies thriving and Bible classes were held at various private houses (Midlands, Glen Lea etc.). The new nurse, Miss Cooper, settled into 'The Cottage' (at Winton House?). The Cottagers Show at Harefield was nearly washed out by the rain, so was moved into the Riding School there, with the band playing to raise everyone's spirits.

The new Elementary School, next to the Burial Ground, was officially opened in October and over 200 pupils moved in, with Mr GH. Elliott in charge of an age range of 5-14 year.

September was the date of the 'Old Relics Exhibition' with exhibits including a stone cannonball, fossils from Burnetts Lane and flint spearheads. All from the West End area – where are they now?

The last monies owed on the school's construction were paid off by several residents including Colonel Frank Willan, J.P., of Thornhill Park. His wife often entertained the G.F.S. (Girls' Friendly Society) at their impressive home.

The vicar of St. James' Church, Revd. C.R. Patey, resigned in 1905, due to ill health, after 17 years in West End. He had been instrumental in the construction of the new Church, the Vicarage and the School. He wrote many affectionate letters to his parishioners following his departure. The new incumbent, Revd. L.R. Whigham arrived to take over in November of that year.

## **THE JULY MEETING - a talk by Dr. Cheryl Butler**

### **A Review by Stan Waight**

Nigel thinks that the turnout of members and visitors for this meeting - around 70 - was a record. It is apparent that the West End Local History Society is becoming very popular (but Chairman Neville still has to make a monthly appeal for volunteers to man the museum!!)

Dr. Cheryl's talk was entitled 'The History of the Itchen Ferry Village and its Families', but, in truth, only one family - the Diapers - really got a mention. Cheryl's gt. gt. grandfather was Tom Diaper who, although not a captain, wrote a log from which much of her material was drawn and which became the basis for a genealogical project. Roughly speaking, the Village occupied part of modern day Woolston and Peartree Green.

The Diaper ancestors included members of a French family who came over after the Norman Conquest. Given permission by the lords of the manors, they settled on the east side of the River Itchen and took up ferrying foot passengers across it in their small fishing boats; the landing on the Southampton side was at Cross House. Several notable people, including Jane Austen, used the service and Queen Elizabeth I is said to have planted the Pear Tree on her way to Netley. The ferries had a distinctive design which developed into yachts at a later stage.

The inhabitants were a self-contained community which tended to govern itself, but it was the part

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of the parish of St. Marys which subsequently became St. Marys Extra. A chapel built on Peartree Green in 1622 was the first Protestant chapel to be built in England.

The Village lost a large part of its livelihood when the Floating Bridge was introduced in 1836. But the inhabitants always remained fishermen and seafarers, and in the 1930s they crewed for a number of prominent yachting enthusiasts; these included Tommy Lipton aboard his famous J-Class contenders for the Americas Cup. Three members of the Diaper family went down with the Titanic and several others went to Germany to train the Kaiser's men in the skills of yachting. Families were large - the boys all went to sea and the girls into service. In the absence of the men away at sea, the women ran the Village

Part of the talk was devoted to the cannibalism that sometimes took place when seafarers were shipwrecked. The remains of Richard Parker, who was killed and eaten in 1884, are buried in the chapel on Peartree Green and his memorial is still to be seen there. A William Diaper, a bit of a rogue who went to Australia and Polynesia, is said to have indulged in cannibalism.

The character of the Village was changed dramatically in the early 1900s and the process was completed in the autumn of 1940, when the Luftwaffe flattened it in the attack on the Spitfire factory, but some early buildings still survive.

Cheryl's interesting talk was illustrated by a number of slides, including this engraving of the Village.



## **LOCAL GROUP VISITS OUR MUSEUM**

**By Nigel Wood**

Arranged last year we hosted an evening visit by Nursling and Rownhams History Group on Thursday 11th July this year. Some 15 to 20 people attended on what was a lovely summer evening. Tea, coffee and cakes were provided through the good offices of Margaret Wallace and Lin Dowdell and Peter Wallace and myself mingled and pointed out points of interest in the museum displays.

It was a good enjoyable evening, with very good feedback and appreciation from our visitors, who made a very generous donation to our society funds.

As in the past we can make our museum available out of hours for group visits by prior arrangement.

**GROUP & SCHOOL VISITS TO THE MUSEUM CAN ALWAYS  
BE ARRANGED TO SUIT. PHONE 02380 471886  
TO ARRANGE**



## St. JAMES' CHURCH FETE

### Saturday 6th July 2013



As we have come to expect, the St. James Church Fete, here in West End was a resounding success. The weather was really hot and sunny and crowds of people turned up. Lots of stalls selling all manner of items, the usual excellent crockery smash (always very popular), a street organ which played music continuously, Maypole Dancing, a display of 1950's local history images from the WELHS archive, the travelling layout of the Boorley Green Light Railway with live steam engines in operation, raffles, excellent barbequed hot dogs and burgers and a whole host more.

Thanks to such a successful day and all the volunteers hard work, the church funds were boosted by £2,274 a very good result, well done everyone! We all look forward to next years event.

Ed.



## WEST END CARNIVAL

### Saturday 15th June 2013



West End Carnival this year was held on Saturday 15th June 2013, the weather although a little changeable at first improved, although the weather was very windy. As you can see from the photographs the event was very well attended, everyone making that extra effort to make the day a success again.

The theme this year was "Movies and Musicals", the Carnival Procession started off at 1pm and progressed through a different route; Barbe Baker Avenue, Quob Lane, across Chapel Road, Hope Road, St. James' Road, High Street and finishing at Hatch Grange Jubilee Gates by Hatch Lodge.

Among the events in the arena were The King John's Morris Men and Street Beatz Dance Academy who performed with audience participation. There was a full take-up of pitches which included the WELHS stand, selling local history publications and running the now obligatory and much enjoyed Coconut Shy.

Due to a holiday commitment Peter and Margaret Wallace and Lin Dowdell and Nigel Wood were not this year in attendance, but our thanks go to Delphine and Leslie, Richard Pryer and Doreen Cogdell, Roy and Pauline and everyone who helped make the day a success! Well done also to the Carnival Committee and Parish Staff for all their hard work organising the event.



## OBITUARY

### PETER ANDREWS

1923 - 2013

It is with much sadness that we have to announce that Peter Andrews, a well known local resident and staunch member of West End Local History Society for many years passed away on the 20th May 2013 at the age of 90.

He had served in the Royal Air Force, and used to recall many stories of his service life around the world, later he worked for the Ford Motor Company. Our sympathies and condolences go out to his nephews, niece, step-son and their families.

His funeral was held at Wessex Vale Crematorium, Hedge End on Thursday 6th June 2013.

## THE NEXT MEETINGS ARE....

September 4

### CIVIL WAR IN HAMPSHIRE

*Don Bryan*

October 2

### CHANGE OF TALK TO BE ANNOUNCED

November 6

### HASLAR HOSPITAL .... what next?

*Eric Birbeck*

## On this day (7th August) in .....

**1657** Robert Blake, one of the greatest of Britain's naval commanders, died as his ship entered Plymouth harbour.

**1711** The first Royal Ascot horse race meeting took place - attended by Queen Anne.

**1834** Joseph Jacquard, French silk weaver and inventor of the first loom to weave patterns, died.

**1876** Mata Hari, Dutch dancer, courtesan and spy, born at Leeuwarden as Margarete Gertrude Zelle.

**1925** Summer time or daylight saving, introduced in Britain on 21st May 1916 by William Willett, was made permanent.

**1926** The first British Motor Racing Grand Prix was held, at the Brooklands track, over a distance of 110 laps and 287 miles.

**1957** Oliver Hardy, of Laurel and Hardy fame, died.