

WESTENDER

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WEST END CARNIVAL DAY 2009



This was the scene on Hatch Grange during the 2009 West End Carnival Fete held on Saturday 27th June. A beautiful sunny and very hot day! The exciting programme of events headed by two superb performances of the "Spectacular Knights of the Crusades" commenced at 2.00pm and went on until 8.00pm ending with music played by an excellent tribute band with some classic pop music. The Carnival Fete was opened this year by Hampshire County Cricket star Nic Pothas. This was the first year we have not had a Procession before the Fete, due in part to lack of manpower and new legislation constraints, however, judging by the comments of those who attended, the new format appears to be preferred. You can see more pictures of the event on page 9.

West End Local History Society & Westender is sponsored by



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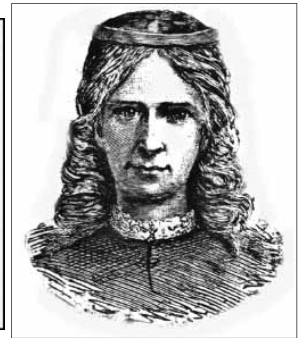
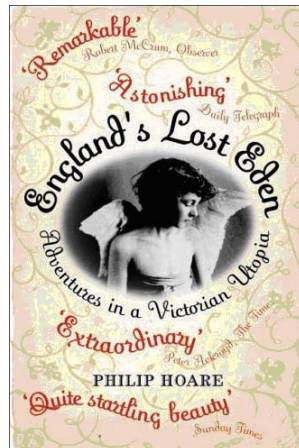


THE MAY MEETING

A Review by Stan Waight



**AUTHOR PHILIP HOARE
AND THE COVER OF
HIS BOOK**



**CONTEMPORARY PICTURES OF MARY ANN GIRLING
(Founder of the New Forest Shakers)**

I don't quite know what I expected from Philip Hoare's talk entitled 'The Shakers of the New Forest'. It certainly was not the first-class, non-stop presentation that, in the event, kept the whole audience enthralled. Mr. Hoare is a prolific writer, and this came through in the thoroughly-researched and interesting story that is the basis for his book *England's Lost Eden*. The slides that accompanied his talk, though few in number, were from original material that is probably unique.

The New Forest featured in that much of the action took place in Hordle and Sway, but the narrative began far away in Suffolk and developed through two loosely connected characters, Mary Ann Girling and Andrew Thomas Turton Peterson.

Mary Ann was born near Aldeburgh in Suffolk in 1827. As a wife and mother of two, she was living in Ipswich and began to have visions in the 1860s. After one such visitation, she declared that she would never die and that those who followed her would become the 'Children of God'. While she preached celibacy and communal living, her white-dressed followers danced themselves into frenzy and attracted rowdy audiences. In an age of religious zeal, her movement met with much local opposition and the sect was forced to move to London, where a railway arch served as a meeting place. Her followers were now known as the 'Convolutionists' or 'Shakers' in consequence of their ecstatic dancing. Once again, crowds gathered to watch and caused local problems because of the frequent violence that ensued. So, after another vision featuring a house in the New Forest, Mary Ann set up a commune. Thanks to the generosity of a benefactress, the community had enough money to buy and convert Hordle Grange on mortgage in 1871. Clothing was made on the spot but the bloomer costumes worn by the women was regarded by some as scandalous. Having rejected worldly possessions the community had to resort to barter, but their financial unwordliness was such that they defaulted on payments, and were evicted in 1875. After living on the road for several weeks, they managed to rent a small farm where they erected tents and huts. They lived there until 1886 when Mary Ann, a self-proclaimed immortal, did in fact die. A simple wooden cross and a plaque bearing the words 'MARY GIRLING LEADER OF THE HORDLE SHAKERS WAS BURIED HERE 1886' marks her grave in Hordle.

Andrew Thomas Turton Peterson, a contemporary of Mrs. Girling, was a rich lawyer who chose to live in Sway on his return from India. He was also an eccentric who had a great deal of uncertainty about faith. In an age when photography provided opportunities for faked 'spirit' images and Spiritualism was something of a craze, he was constantly experimenting - he even brought in his own medium. Although he didn't get involved with the commune, he regarded the Shaker community next door as an interesting subject and is said to have known Mrs. Girling. Peterson's legacy to us is the 200-foot-high Sway Tower. Built from unreinforced concrete as a temple to Spiritualism, it has twelve stories, each devoted to an aspect of the religion, and was completed in 1886. Peterson died in 1906, was cremated and his ashes buried in a crypt at the base of the tower.

NOTES FROM A CONSTABLE'S POCKET BOOK

By Roy Andrews

At the tender age of nineteen, I joined the Southampton City Police in 1965. After three month's training at the No. 6 District Police Training School in Sandgate, Kent (now the SAGA group of companies headquarters) I was posted to "A" Division based at the Civic Centre Police Station.

I knew that for the first few weeks on the beat I would work with a Tutor Constable, an experienced constable, who would help me put into practice what I had learnt in the classroom. My first tour of duty would be on the 2pm to 10pm shift but on parading for duty I was informed that the PC who was to be my tutor was attending court all day and so just for this duty I was to be put with PC Bill Ainsle (well known today to members of the Bitterne Local History Society). We were to patrol Beat 10 the London Road/Bedford Place area.

As we walked, Bill gave me the benefit of his years of experience and he even gave me my first chance to perform traffic control, standing in the middle of The Avenue, at the end of the school day seeing the pupils from St. Anne's School safely across. This was the first of many, many hours I would spend doing point duty which I found I enjoyed, particularly at busy cross roads.

By the time we had taken our mid shift, 45 minute meal break, it was dark as we returned to our beat. Later in the evening, Bill suddenly announced he needed to 'spend a penny'; it must have been his age. We were somewhere around the back of London Road, in a maze of narrow lanes and alley ways and it was up one of these unlit alley ways that Bill led me. He found a convenient drain and was answering the call when right behind us a large sash window was slid up and a head appeared, a head attired in a nun's habit! Upon hearing what Bill was up to, she tut tutted and slammed the window shut. As we exited the alley way, Bill pointed out to me that the alley was at the back of St. Anne's School which was run by nuns. He then cheered me up by saying that if the nun made a complaint, he would say it was me 'spending a penny'.

Great, I thought, my first day on the beat and I get a complaint made against me! But whether Bill was joking or not I never found out as no complaint was made. Over the coming years I got to know some of the nuns and they certainly did not meet the stereotype that most people expect as they had quite broad senses of humour.

WHAT'S IN A PICTURE



BITTERNE & WEST END BRANCH OF THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION *Photo courtesy BLHS*

Recently we acquired the image on the left from BLHS. It appears to be a recruiting display for the RBL Bitterne & West End Branch. Advertising the next meeting at West End Parish Hall on Friday 13th July 1934. Do any of our readers or members have similar photo's or pictures of the West End Home Guard unit in WW2, anything would be useful for our archive, either on loan or as a donation. Thank you. Ed.

THE STORY OF THE SCHNEIDER AIR RACES

A Review by Stan Waight

Colin van Geffen's talk to us at the June meeting was a sort of sequel to the one he gave last autumn - 'The Flying Boats of Southampton' - and once again he read from a script because, as he said, he didn't want to forget anything. And there was a lot that he could have forgotten, for he showed an enormous number of slides and spoke about every one. I have to say that there was so much detail that my note-taking just couldn't keep up with it.

The races for the 'Schneider Trophy', the 'Coupe d'Aviation Maritime Jacques Schneider' as it is properly called, were initiated in 1911. Apart from being a French financier, Schneider was a balloonist and aircraft enthusiast. Held over a triangular course, the aim of the races was to encourage technical advances in civil aviation and, if the enormous increase in speed during the 18 years of their existence was the yardstick, they certainly did that.

The first was held in Monaco in 1913 and the last at Cowes in 1931 (I was there, on East Cowes seafront - my Mum told me so!). They were originally intended to be flown annually, but the intervention of the First World War and a change to biannual meetings after 1927 meant that only eleven were held in all. France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy and the United States all took part, although not in every race, and the idea was that the winning country would host the next race. If a country won the three races in five years it was to retain the trophy - Great Britain did that and it is now in the Science Museum in London, with one of the standby aircraft in the Southampton Hall of Aviation.

Each country had its share of glory and tragedy, and Colin's slides did full justice to the events. He described each race in great detail, inserting many humorous comments and inviting the audience to cheer whenever a GB win was mentioned. The technical improvement was only too evident, with the string and canvas machines of 1913 giving way to the sleek Supermarine jobs of 1931; 1925 was the last time that the slower flying boats, took part.



above
THE SCHNEIDER TROPHY

below
1929 SCHNEIDER TROPHY CONTEST
SOUVENIR PROGRAMME



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It just wasn't possible to cover every race in detail, so the following table gives the essential detail (I must admit that I compiled it from the Wikipedia entry on the internet).

Date	Location	Winning Aircraft	Nation	Pilot	Speed
1913	Monaco	Deperdussin	France	Maurice Prevost	45 mph
1914	Monaco	Sopwith Tabloid	UK	Howard Pixton	86 mph
1920	Venice	Savoia S.12	Italy	Luigi Bologna	43 mph
1921	Venice	Macchi M.7 bis	Italy	Giovanni de Briganti	117 mph
1922	Naples	Supermarine Sea Lion	UK	Henri Biard	145 mph
1923	Cowes	Curtiss CR-3	US	David Rittenhouse	177 mph
1925	Baltimore	Curtiss R3C-2	US	James Doolittle	232 mph
1926	Hampton Roads	Macchi M.39	Italy	Mario di Bernardi	146 mph
1927	Venice	Supermarine S.5	UK	Sidney Webster	281 mph
1929	Calshot	Supermarine S.6	UK	Henry Waghorn	328 mph
1931	Calshot	Supermarine S.6B	UK	John Boothman	340 mph

The 1931 race was a fly-over, no other country taking part. On the same day an absolute air-speed record of 379 mph was set by another Supermarine aircraft.

WEST END CARNIVAL 2009 PUB QUIZ & WALKS



The Annual Carnival Pub Quiz was held at the Master Builder pub as usual (photo's above) as usual it was very well attended and a good evening was enjoyed by all, our thanks to Debbie and Mick. The lower pictures show scenes from our two Carnival walks around West End and Moorgreen, conducted by Eric Reed on Thursday 18th June 2009 and Wednesday 24th June 2009. Both the walks were well attended and enjoyed by all who took part. Our thanks to Eric for his continued support.



JULY MEETING REPORT

A Review by Stan Waight



MARY ANN ROGERS



S.S. "STELLA"



PICKING UP SURVIVORS

Local historian Jake Simpkin has a very relaxed, almost conversational, style of public speaking. This is not surprising considering that he is a Blue Badge guide for the City of Southampton, but his talk at the July meeting did contain a surprising twist.

The background to his story, entitled 'The Loss of the S.S. Stella - An insight into Victorian Society', was the competition between Southampton (London and South Western Railway) and Weymouth (Great Western Railway) for the Channel Islands steam packet trade. Although Southampton had better rail links with London, the crossing to St Peter Port took longer than that from Weymouth. Speed was of the essence and surely contributed to the disaster.

Jake began with a slide of the 'Stella' memorial. This stands opposite the Royal Pier in Southampton and, he said, should properly be called the 'Mary Ann Rogers' memorial. It may be worth reproducing the typically Victorian inscription, which reads:

'In memory of the heroic death of Mary Ann Rogers, stewardess of the 'Stella', who on the night of 30th March, 1899, amid the terror of shipwreck aided all the women under her charge to quit the vessel in safety, giving up her own life-belt to one who was unprotected. Urged by the sailors to make sure her escape, she refused lest she might endanger the heavily-laden boat. Cheering the departing crew with the friendly cry of 'Good-bye, Good-bye', she was seen a few moments later as the 'Stella' went down lifting her arms upwards with the prayer 'Lord have me', then sank in the waters with the sinking ship'

The lifetime of the 'Stella' spanned the decade from her launch in 1890 to her loss in 1899, and Jake cleverly used this to introduce the twist into his talk, giving three reasons why this period was so important. It was an age of scientific invention - the population had become detached from the countryside because of migration into towns and cities - and it was a time of 'isms'. He supported these reasons by a chronological list of examples, particularly mentioning the technological innovations, the poverty of the masses and the moves from liberalism into imperialism and from conservatism towards socialism. He also dwelt on the sombre literature of the day. Jake spent quite a lot of time on this part of his talk, and in many ways it was more interesting than the subject we were all expecting.

Moving on to the disaster, we were first given one important set of statistics. Although there were enough life-jackets for everyone aboard, there was only enough lifeboat capacity for 100 passengers

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and crew out of a potential complement of 700.

Commanded by the experienced Captain Reeks, 'Stella' left Southampton in good weather on Maundy Thursday, 30 March 1899, but soon encountered fog which forced her to slow down. When conditions improved full speed was resumed, but the ship entered another bank of fog just as she neared the notorious Casquets reef. What happened next became the sensational subject of many newspaper articles in the weeks to come. 'Stella's' bottom was ripped out as she struck the reef and sank within ten minutes. There was apparently no panic and many acts of heroism. Four lifeboats got away (including one filled with men!) and survivors were, ironically, picked up by the G.W.R. steamer 'Lynx', en route from Weymouth to St. Peter Port. For women, chances of survival were reduced by the heavy skirts they wore.

There was only one real eye-witness account of Mary Ann Rogers' bravery but an appeal was raised which not only funded her memorial, but also provided for her orphaned children in Southampton, whose father had died some years earlier.

This contrasted with the fate of four children of crew member Thomas Glover, who also died in the disaster. They were sent to Guernsey to live with Glover's second wife who already had a child of her own and proved unable to cope with them. Consequently, the four were returned to England where they were split up and placed in institutions - never to be together again.

Jake is of the opinion that the effects of the 'Titanic' disaster thirteen years later would have been reduced had a full enquiry been made into the sinking of the 'Stella'

All thanks to him for a most entertaining and instructive talk.

St. JAMES' CHURCH FETE - 20th June 2009



This years St. James' Church Fete on Saturday 20th June was a great success, a variety of stalls and events was enjoyed by a good crowd of people. West End Local History Society were invited to put up a display in the church (see pictures above) and also to judge a photographic competition 'West End's Past in Pictures'. A good number of entries were received and much interest shown in our exhibit 'West End in the Fifties'. Our book "Bitterne & West End Through Time" was available to purchase at the event with quite a few sales to the public being registered.

MEMORIES OF MILLVINA DEAN

By Pauline Berry



Pictures by Bruce D. Williams - Photographer

PICTURES LEFT AND RIGHT: Millvina Dean during the unveiling at the museum in 1999

MIDDLE PICTURE

LEFT TO RIGHT: Gillian Holloway, Pauline Berry, Margaret Howman, Steve Broomfield and Millvina Dean, Saturday 17th April 1999

On learning of the death of Millvina Dean, the last survivor of the Titanic disaster, on May 31st, I cast my mind back to April 1999 when I met her when she came to West End. She had been invited, along with the chief guest, the late Mrs Margaret Howman (daughter of Capt. Sir Arthur Henry Rostron of 'Carpathia' fame) and others, to unveil the brass plaque in our museum. It had been placed there by our committee to commemorate the fact that both Capt. Rostron and James Jukes, a greaser on the Titanic, had lived in West End. Two quite different people and unfortunately, James Jukes drowned in the incident and had no known grave.

The arrival of our well-known guests caused quite a bit of excitement and the museum was understandably full. After speeches and presentation of bouquets, Mrs Howman (nee Rostron) stepped forward and unveiled the plaque on the wall, but only after Millvina had been held back by Brian Ticehurst (local representative of the British Titanic Society) who reminded her quietly that it was 'Margaret's day' not hers.

Millvina was so used to being the centre of attention in recent years especially since the fame and furore over the last 'Titanic' film in the cinema. She had been celebrated, as well as her brother, as two of the last survivors and had travelled the world in her latter years, attending many conventions, unveilings and ceremonies. Of course, being a baby at the time of the disaster, she did not remember the tragic events but she never tired of telling the story from her parents' point of view. Her father bundled his wife and family into lifeboat 13 and baby Millvina was lowered in a sack. The family's plans to settle in America were scuttled, but they were saved by Capt. Rostron's prompt rescue in the 'Carpathia' but Bert Dean, the young father, died with so many other poor souls who were left without lifeboats.

Our committee took Millvina and our other guests out for a modest meal and unlike Margaret Howman who was a quiet, reserved lady, Millvina talked much of the time in her usual outgoing way. I recall we talked mainly about television, films, Hollywood musicals and famous singing stars. We discovered we were both fans of Mario Lanza! We later visited Captain Rostron's freshly cleaned grave in West End's Old Burial Ground. The marble was so white that Margaret said it looked as if it had been painted!

Millvina, born Elizabeth Gladys Dean, also known as Gaynor, died at her nursing-home in the New Forest, aged 97 years. She thoroughly enjoyed her celebrity status and would have been so disappointed to know that she would not live to see the centenary of the Titanic disaster in 2012. To quote a recent newspaper report about the prospect of seeing the 1998 film 'Titanic', she replied, "I'll see half of the picture - the first half".

WEST END CARNIVAL FETE ON HATCH GRANGE

27th June 2009

Photographs by Nigel Wood - West End Carnival Association



Superb weather and a good crowd made this years Carnival Fete on Hatch Grange a great success on Saturday 27th June. Although there was no Parade this year, the Spectacular Knights of the Crusade put on two excellent shows in the main arena both of which were very well received. The theme this year was Medieval and the Grand Opening was performed by Hampshire CC wicket keeper Nic Pothas. Many trade and charity stalls and the French singing group Gaudete Accapella and the Tribute Band all helped make the day a success. Our thanks go to all the Parish Staff and helpers.



On this day (5th August) in.....

- 1729 Thomas Newcomen, English inventor of the first atmospheric steam engine in 1705, died in London.
- 1754 James Gibbs, Scottish architect, especially responsible for St. Martin's-the-the-Fields, died.
- 1792 Lord North, British Tory statesman and Prime Minister from 1770 to 1782, died.
- 1799 Richard Howe, British admiral and distinguished naval commander, died.
- 1858 The first transatlantic cable was completed by Cyrus Field, laid by USS Niagara and HMS Agamemnon, was opened by Queen Victoria and President Buchanan exchanging greetings.
- 1895 Friedrich Engels, German Socialist, political writer and co-founder with Karl Marx of modern Communism, died in London.
- 1906 John Huston, American film director, born at Nevada in Missouri.
- 1911 Robert Taylor, American film actor, born at Filley in Nebraska as Spangler Arlington Brugh.
- 1914 The first electric traffic lights were erected, in Cleveland, Ohio.
- 1930 Neil Armstrong, American astronaut and first man on the moon, born at Wapakoneta on Ohio.
- 1962 Marilyn Monroe, American film actress and sex symbol, tragically died in Los Angeles aged 36.

MUSEUM ROSTER

Don't forget to volunteer to help man the museum on Saturdays. There are three shifts each of 2 hours duration; 10 am-12 midday, 12 midday-2pm and 2pm-4pm. Its not an arduous task and time goes by very quickly. It's also a good opportunity to view some of the excellent archive material the museum boasts as well as a chance to improve your knowledge of West End's past. The museum's future depends on you giving up a little spare time for a good cause, so why not see Peter Wallace at the next meeting and put your name forward for the roster or telephone him on 01489 786521.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

THE NEXT MEETINGS

September 2

RIVER MEON FROM SOURCE TO SEA

Carol Watson

October 7

UNTO SOUTHAMPTON DO WE SHIFT OUR SCENE.....

Geoff Watts

November 4

WICKHAM PAST & PRESENT

Madeleine Selby

December 2

CHRISTMAS BUFFET, QUIZ, SLIDE SHOW & RAFFLE

Members only