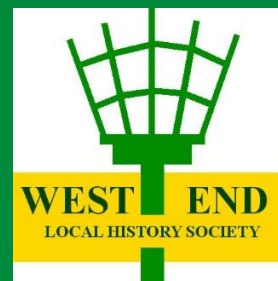


# WESTENDER

Newsletter of the West End Local History Society  
Autumn 2025



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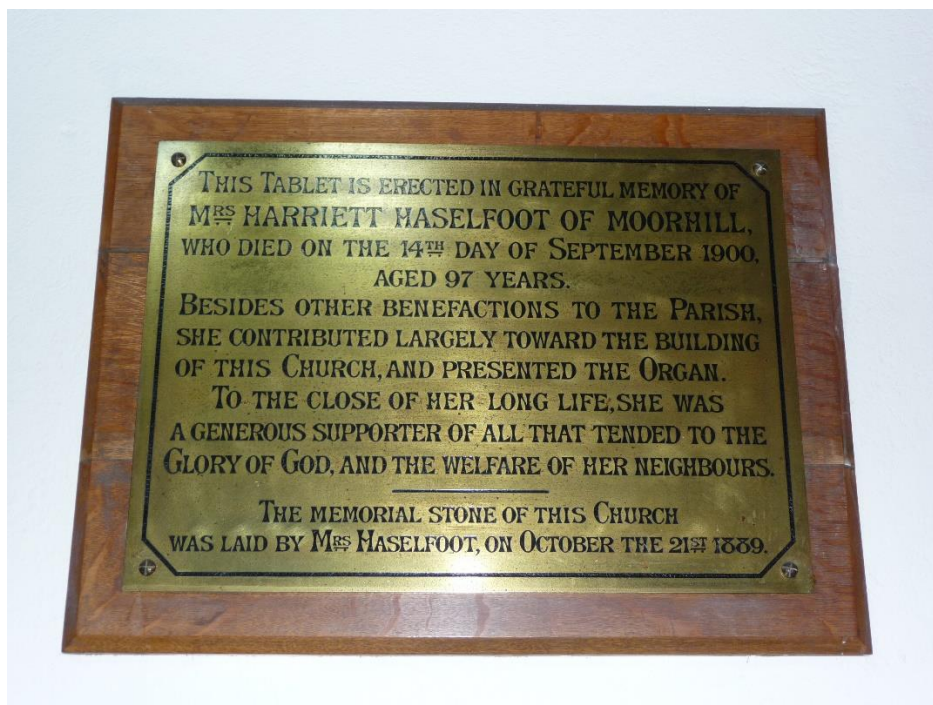
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Membership fees £12 per annum. Payment may be made by bank transfer:

**Account Name:** West End Local History Society

**Sort Code:** 30-13-95

**Account Number:** 00834027



Memorial to West End's great benefactress Harriett Haselfoot in St. James Church.  
Harriett is remembered in the article "The History of Fir Cottage & Moorhill House" inside.

**WELHS ... Preserving our past for your future ...**

West End Local History Society is sponsored by



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## The History of Fir Cottage & Moorhill House By The Museum Team

The original building on the site of the new Moorhill Care Home was Fir Cottage, which was renamed as Moorhill House in honour of it's rather grand and better-known neighbour, Moorhill House, was demolished in the 1960s.

It is believed that the original Moorhill House was built in the mid-19th century.

The 1871 Census shows Moorhill House with Harriett Haselfoot as head of the household and landowner. Aged 68, the widowed Harriet moved from Essex bringing her servants and recruited more staff locally. Harriett was extremely wealthy but used her wealth for many charitable acts including her dame school at West End, contributions to the building of two new churches - St James's (West End) and St John's (Hedge End), a donation of land to extend the burial ground and for a new vicarage and a Reading room and other frequent generous donations.



The original Moorhill House  
Image credit: Bitterne Local History Society



Moorhill House formerly Fir Cottage

Fir Cottage, later renamed Moorhill House, was built c.1870.

During the 1880s, Fir Cottage was used as a convalescent Home. The 1891 census shows Jane Reeves as matron and in 1901 Miss Matilda Shoosmith was another of a series of matrons.

Insurance premiums were paid in 1888 by the Hon. Isabella Fiennes of Christchurch, who is likely to have been the owner at this time.

On 14th September 1900, 97 year old Harriett Haselfoot died. She is buried in the Old Burial Ground at West End. Moorhill House was then occupied by a succession of different occupants.

The 1911 Census indicates that Fir Cottage had become a private residence. It was referred to in Richard St Barbe Baker's book 'I planted Trees' as the home of his friend Mr George Frederick Grose, a retired merchant.

The 1921 Census shows that after Mr Grose's death a John Leonard Kimber, engineer and Royal Navy Commander, lived at Fir Cottage.

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In 1937, during the Spanish Civil War, the original Moorhill House (which contained 12 bedrooms and many large rooms on the ground floor) was placed at the disposal of the National Joint/Relief Committee by Mr H. C. Cole to be used by 50 - 70 Basque refugee children. To start with, the children were put in a makeshift camp at North Stoneham and, as Moorhill House was only a few miles from this camp, it was used initially as an infirmary for staff and those children who were too weak to stay in tents.



Basque Children at Moorhill House

The 1939 Register shows Moorhill House as empty, as many of the children had returned to Spain and the Basque home at Moorhill House was closed up. Fir Cottage is shown on the 1939 Register as being 2 flats, one occupied by Thomas H Brown (b.02.06.1874) and the other by Thomas B S Brown (b.26.05.1910). In the late 1940s the original Moorhill House was known as Moorhill Farm. Mr and Mrs Reynolds were tenant farmers there, with help from Mr and Mrs Bennet and other farm hands.

The Original Moorhill House was demolished in the 1960s and a covered reservoir built on the site. After the demolition of the original Moorhill House, 'Fir Cottage' was renamed Moorhill House.

On 20th December 2009, the second Moorhill House, now empty but possibly being refurbished, was devastated by fire which broke out at about 5.45pm. A second fire broke out at 1.00am in the roof. The building does not appear to have been occupied again after the fire. The property was well known by locals and was a bit of a landmark and was very often described as 'the house with the treehouse' because of the treehouse in the tree at the front of the property, which was still there for many years after the fire.



The renamed Moorhill House showing fire damage to the roof. The tree house can be seen on the left.



The new Moorhill Care Home

In August 2023, the plans for the construction of Moorhill Care home were approved by Eastleigh Borough Council.

The site was cleared in December 2023 and construction of the care home began.

Moorhill Care Home opened on 31st July 2025.

## Struan William Gordon Tamplin, Gent, 1<sup>st</sup> Volunteer Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment By Paula Downer

There is a grave in the Old Burial Ground in West End, Hampshire in Loving Memory of a dear Brother Struan William Gordon Tamplin, the second son of Colonel William Cloves Tamplin and Henrietta Christiana Schneider, who sadly died in 1905 at the age of 34.

Struan William Gordon Tamplin was born in Brighton in April 1871 and duly christened in the Church of England's Chapel Royal in Brighton. The family lived at 1 Lennox Place.



On Whose Soul Sweet Jesus Have Mercy

Struan was born into a family of Brewers, his great grandfather Richard Tamplin founded Tamplin and Sons in 1820. They owned several tied public houses in Brighton and the surrounding area, as far afield as Bognor Regis, Eastbourne, Lewes, Petworth and East Grinstead. After Richard Tamplin died, his eldest son Henry Pagden Tamplin succeeded as Head of the Brewery which in turn passed on to his eldest son William Cloves Tamplin (Struan's father). The Tamplin & Sons Brewery lorries were a familiar sight; its ales were widely advertised. The business became very successful so rather than leave the business to his eldest son Richard William to inherit, which would have been unfair on his other children, William Cloves set up a limited liability company, Tamplin and Sons Ltd, in 1889. The business further expanded by acquiring several smaller concerns.

As well as being Head of the Brewery, William Cloves Tamplin was a commanding officer of the 1<sup>st</sup> Volunteer Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment which had originally formed as a Rifle Volunteer Corp in 1859 when there was fear of coastal invasion by the French. William Cloves had the means to provide a permanent base for the Regiment by building a new drill hall in Church Street, Brighton which was completed in 1890. Struan William Gordon Tamplin did not join the family business; instead he enrolled in his father's Regiment. The London Gazette dated July 1890 details Struan William Gordon Tamplin, Gentleman, to be 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant of 1<sup>st</sup> Volunteer Battalion, the Royal Sussex Regiment. In the event, the French did not invade our shores. However, trouble was still brewing in South Africa (South Africa was rich in diamonds and gold). There had been much resentment from the Dutch Boers, who had been there since the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century, over the increasing number of foreigners, mainly British, (known as Uitlanders) coming into the area to prospect for gold. A large gold field (Witwatersrand) had been discovered in 1886; the Boer Republicans of the Transvaal and Orange Free State disagreed with the British over the who had the rights to the gold fields, which led to a declaration of war. In December 1899, the Volunteers were given the opportunity to assist the Regulars in this war, Captain Struan William Gordon Tamplin was assigned to the 1<sup>st</sup> Volunteer Active Service Company. The South African War 1899-1902, also known as the Second Boer War, lasted two and half years. In the end, peace was negotiated with the Treaty of Vereeniging being signed on May 31<sup>st</sup> 1902; from then until 1910, the Orange Free State and the Transvaal were administered by the British. Several thousand had been killed or wounded in this war. For their part, the Volunteers had gained their first battle honour. The Queen's South Africa Medal was instituted by Queen Victoria in 1900 to award those who had

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served in South Africa during the Boer War from 11 October 1899 to 31 May 1902. (The first Boer War had been fought Dec 1880 – Mar 1881). After the end of the war in South Africa, the 1<sup>st</sup> Volunteer Battalion, the Royal Sussex Regiment was transferred to the Cantonment at Sitapur in the Bengal Presidency of India. I have not been able to find any records to confirm that Struan William Gordon Tamplin was in India. The Peerage.com website shows his rank as Major.

Nor have I been able to establish why Struan William Gordon Tamplin came to West End. He sadly died on 12<sup>th</sup> August 1905 after a bout of meningitis followed by pneumonia at Oaklands, Allington Lane. His Probate record shows his official address as Sports Club, No.8 St. James' Square, London but that he died at Oaklands, West End on August 12th 1905. His younger brother Henry Robertson Tamplin was present at his death; Struan William Gordon Tamplin's death certificate shows his occupation as Electrical Engineer.



Extract of OS 1888-1915 map series showing 'Oaklands' in Allington Lane  
(from the National Library of Scotland's Historic Map Collection)

## VJ Day 80

This year marks the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VJ Day. Thank you to David Martin for recalling the celebrations for the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VJ Day at West End, published in the Volume 5, No.1 (September/October 2005) issue of Westender.

### WEST END CELEBRATES VJ-DAY 60 YEARS ON



PARISH COUNCIL STAFF IN WOMENS' LAND ARMY UNIFORMS POSE IN FRONT OF AMERICAN WW2 LORRY OUTSIDE THE PARISH CENTRE DURING THE CELEBRATIONS



The full version of the report from 20 years ago can be viewed in the museum – or in colour online at <https://www.westendlhs.co.uk/newsletter-events/>



## Sweet Memories by Paula Downer



Jenny (née Turner), who was born in West End, remembers the above residence in Swaythling Road in the late 1950s/early 1960s being a grocery/sweet shop run by Mrs. Smyth.

Jenny particularly remembers the chewy marzipan teacakes. However, these teacakes did not actually contain marzipan, but coconut and toffee!



*Editor's Note:* "Smyth, Jn.H. shopkrpr. Swaythling rd." appears in the West End section of Kelly's Directory for 1960.

No recipe for these little treats can be found on-line, but they are still available to buy from several sellers on Ebay as GRAYS TEA CAKES: "Retro sweets with coconut and toffee, dusted in sugar. Made by a family run company with long tradition: Edward Grays of Dudley."

## Do You Recognise Anyone In this Photo?

This photo was given to the museum by a descendant of Arthur Knowlton, whose bakery sign hangs in the museum. It was taken by a Winchester photographer and the band name is The Bohemians (not to be confused with the modern Queen tribute band of that name!) Do you recognise the venue or anyone in the picture?





## WEST END LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY NEWS

**West End Summer Fete** was postponed from 7<sup>th</sup> June due to bad weather and a rather smaller fete was held on 19<sup>th</sup> July. Unfortunately, due to an uncertain weather forecast, attendance was not as great as in previous summers.

Nonetheless, West End Local History Society ran the Coconut Shy once again and raised £110 for Society funds. Another successful year. Well done and thanks to everyone who helped.



**Moorhill Care Home** was officially opened by the Mayor of Winchester on 31<sup>st</sup> July, when it opened its grounds to the local community. West End Local History Society attended with an information stand, including a display of the history of the site on which the care home has been built. The display can be viewed at the museum for a limited period.



Images courtesy Lin Dowdell

## FORTHCOMING LOCAL EVENTS

All event details are correct at time of publication. Please contact event organisers to confirm.

### JANE AUSTEN 250 EVENTS

**Dr Cheryl Butler has published a new book “First Impressions: Jane Austen's Southampton Circle 1780-1820).” It is available from Sea City Museum or October Books in Portwood Road, Southampton ([octoberbooks.org](http://octoberbooks.org)).**

Continuing a huge range of local events celebrating 250 years since the birth of Jane Austen.

**25th September 2025, 2 p.m. – 5 p.m. 'Tea & Money' – Author event with tea, alongside the Jane Austen Society of Hampshire at God's House Tower. £8, including hot drink and cake**

"The Georgians invented the Coffee House as a place to go and discuss the important issues of the day, so join us for tea (or coffee!) and cake and learn about the ceremony of taking tea with the Hampshire Jane Austen Society. Once you are topped up with tea it is all about the conversation, this one will be about the banking crisis that rocked the Austen family. We'll also explore the stories of the poor debtors who found themselves in God's House Prison when Jane Austen lived in Southampton." [www.godshousetower.org.uk](http://www.godshousetower.org.uk)

**5th October 2025, 11 am Black History Month, Hidden History Walks 'Black Georgians' – with the God's House Tower Guides. Starting at God's House Tower**

Jane Austen's Southampton was a multicultural society, not only the plantation families and their black servants, there were also black soldiers who served with Wellington, black sailors who served with Nelson, as well as abolitionists, actors, writers. Find out more about Southampton's Hidden History. [www.godshousetower.org.uk](http://www.godshousetower.org.uk)

**Self-Guided Tours – Jane Austen Trail Leaflet**, an updating of the popular guide produced for the 2017 celebrations and sponsored by Go Southampton available at various sites around the old town.

**WEST END LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY FORTHCOMING EVENTS**

**All events take place at West End Parish Centre, Chapel Road SO30 3FE and begin at 7.30 p.m. Members free. Visitors welcome (£2 per person per meeting). Membership £12 per year.**

**Programme of Talks 2025**

- |                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| Oct. 1 <sup>st</sup> | "Southampton, Water, Slaughter & Trade" – Andrew Negus   |
| Nov. 5 <sup>th</sup> | "Vietnam Veterans Remembrance Wall" – Jeremy Prescott  |
| Dec. 3 <sup>rd</sup> | SOCIAL EVENING – raffle, drinks provided, bring your own plate of food<br>– plus "Shopping in the High Street in the 1940s and 50s – John Pitman |

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**Articles for Westender**

You don't have to be a historian to write for Westender. We would love to hear your memories of growing up in the village.

email: [suballard@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:suballard@yahoo.co.uk)

or leave hard copies at the museum addressed to Sue Ballard, please.

Closing Date for contributions to Winter issue: 10<sup>th</sup> November 2025.