THE WEST END LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

# WESTENDER

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## THE ANNUAL OPEN DAY AT "THE FIRS" - 4th March



It was a glorious, sunny day with blue sky, perfect for the Annual Open Day at "The Firs" in Beacon Road, Geoff Poulton made everyone very welcome to the International Tree Foundation (Hampshire Branch) Open House, as did the owners of "The Firs" - Rob and Liz Keenan. Whilst Geoff gave a very interesting guided tour of the gardens and supplied refreshments and a gift shop at "Tardis"we all enjoyed his informative talk. This was followed by a guided tour of "The Firs", one time home to the St.Barbe Baker family and the original headquarters for "The Men Of The Trees" organisation founded by Dr. Richard St. Barbe Baker, OBE, in 1922 – now known as *The International Tree Foundation.* Born in 1889 at "The Firs", Richard St.Barbe Baker went on to become internationally famous for his work on tree conservation, a friend of Presidents and Kings the world over, he travelled extensively spreading his ideas and enlightenment about conserving the quality of our environment, a man ahead of his time! He ran "Bakers West End Nursery" from here, and became nationally well known for supplying tree's of all kinds. "The Firs", built in 1880, is undergoing a sensitive renovation to its Victorian origins by the Keenan's, we wish them well in this worthwhile enterprise and look forward to next years Open Day, a very interesting and enjoyable time and thoroughly recommended!



Right:Visitors enjoy an explanatory open-air talk by Geoff Poulton in the grounds.

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## NEW PUBLICATION OUT

As this newsletter is being printed I am preparing the first copies of "THE SWAYTHLING METHODIST CHURCH" by Marjorie Bodman for sale – they should be available at the meeting on Wednesday 5th. This is being re-printed by us with the kind permission of the author, it is the story of this little church, built in 1900 and demolished in 1989 which was featured on the famous FGO Stuart card of the Swaythling Road.
Long out of print it has many illustrations and is a fascinating insight to one of the many "lost" buildings of this village. The price is a modest £2.50. Also there will be laminated enlargements of the FGO Stuart postcard featuring the Church on sale at the special price of £3.00 while stocks last!

### RESEARCHING & WRITING LOCAL HISTORY

Doreen Pearce, who has just published a very successful book on the history of Twyford, will be giving a talk about getting started, researching and writing up local history, to the Southampton Writer Circle on Wednesday,April 12th.
Southampton Writer Circle meet at 32 Archers Road, Southampton (the Ex-Servicemans Club) at 7.30pm.
The visitors fee for the evening is £1.00. Our Chairman is Mr Mike Parker, 141 Porchester Road, Southampton, SO19 7JA. Telephone 023 8044 4406, to whom enquiries about this event may be addressed. Any indication of the possible number who may attend would be appreciated, in case arrangements have to be made to secure a larger meeting place.

**A.J.Collins – Southampton Writer Circle**

## PHOTOGRAPH WANTED

If anyone has a good photograph or postcard view of the "Blacksmiths Arms" in the High Street when it was a public house – can we borrow it to copy for the archive please. Please let either Pauline Berry or Nigel Wood know, we would be grateful. Ed

## THE WEST END ARCHIVE COLLECTION

The archive is going from strength to strength, with much more new material, both photographic and printed word arriving all the time. Bill White is hopefully on the trail of a long sought after photograph of "Wilderness House", one of the few big houses in West End that we are short of pictorial evidence of. Pauline has managed to obtain pictures of "Midlands House" and has enrolled the help of Paula, one of our small band of Museum helpers to assist with cataloging and indexing our collection. Anyone who can assist in the cataloging should contact Pauline Berry. Mr David Hutchinson has very kindly donated an early "COUNTY" fire-mark along with the relevant write-up to the Museum, and Mr Othen has kindly lent us some photographs of the old "Moorgreen Inn" to copy. There have been lots more acquisitions too numerous to mention – you should visit the Museum and see for yourself.

# MUSEUM SHOP

**The Society publications now available for sale in the Museum – these are an ongoing series of Occasional Papers on things of local interest written by members and friends of the Society. We also have photo enlargements of local scenes.**

**Paper # 1**
My Memories Of The Harefield Estate
(Oral History Project)
*By Chris Boulton* **£1.50**

**Paper # 2**
A New Church For The Parish
*Written by Peter Baker* **£1.00**
*****NEW ITEM*****

**Paper # 3**
West End National School 1863-1904
*Written by John Collins* **£2.50**

Plus the following books:

**Tales of Old West End**
*C Sillence* **£3.50**

**I Remember,I Remember**
*Bob Moody* **£4.00**

**Hatch Grange..a stroll back in time** *Pauline Berry* **£6.95**

**Townhill Park House**
*Ralph Coney & Jim Brown* **£3.00**

Various photo enlargements suitable for framing of village scenes taken from postcards.
**£2.50 per print**

**AVAILABLE AT THE MUSEUM SHOP**

## THE HISTORY OF RECORDED SOUND



Wednesday, March 1st., saw our third AGM – well attended this year, especially as we were all waiting to get the business over and sit back and enjoy one of Bill Whites interesting and amusing talks. We were not disappointed, I for one found it fascinating and also learnt quite a lot about early sound recording.
One of the highlights was when Bill played an original cylinder on his 1912 vintage Edison phonograph (and it worked!) - we heard famous peoples voices, amongst them Thomas Edison, Florence Nightingale, Glenn Miller … and the only **live** recording made in the field during the Great War – this was of a Gas bombardment during the Allied advance at Lille in 1918. As usual Bill had his entertaining stories and of course he managed to play some excerpts from Glenn Miller, Frank Sinatra and the great Caruso as well as many more. A very entertaining evening – can't wait to see what Bill makes of his talk on Brickmaking prior to our guided tour of Bursledon Brickworks on June 6th.! ***Ed.***