THE WEST END LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

WESTENDER

JULY 2003 – SEPTEMBER 2003 VOLUME 3 NUMBER 12

WEST END LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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SPORTSMAN SIGN PRESENTATION



Left to right: John Avery,Pauline Berry,Nigel Wood,Deborah Waldeck (McCarthy & Stone),Neville Dickinson & Derek Amey

On Wednesday 2nd June, in the afternoon, representatives of WELHS were presented with the pub sign that used to hang outside "The Sportsman" by Deborah Waldeck, Senior Marketing Executive of McCarthy & Stone. The site of the pub is about to be re-developed into apartments by the well-known firm of McCarthy & Stone, who agreed through the good offices of Anne French of RBC Publicity and Deborah Waldeck to present the West End museum with the sign. It will form the basis of a display showing images of "The Sportsman" from the early 1900's through its re-build

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WEST END PARISH COUNCIL

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THOSE MAGNIFICENT MEN IN THEIR DODGY MACHINES

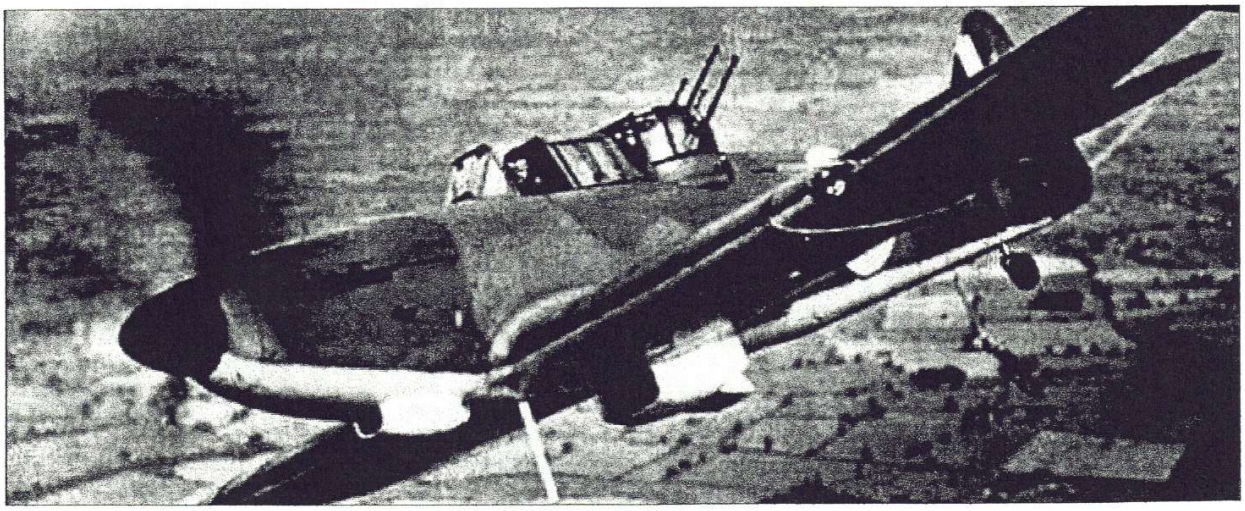
Peter Andrews

I was recently accosted (in the nicest meaning of the word) in the village by my two faithful readers (may their tribes increase!). They wanted me to elaborate more on my recent article on the Whitley bomber and the target towing Defiant. A few years before World War 2 the British Air Force were still using planes virtually little different than those of World War 1, still fabric covered and only marginally faster. In 1936 during the Spanish Civil War the Germans joined in so as to try out their latest planes and tactics. This spurred us on to catch up in designs, resulting in the Spitfire and Hurricane, the latter still fabric covered. A highly secret plane the Boulton Paul Defiant was unveiled. This had a gun turret amidships (see picture) which was blanked out when pictured in the newspapers. However, in 1938 a party of German Air Force (Luftwaffe) officers came here and were given a guided tour of the RAF including being shown the "Defiant"! When war broke out the German fighters using their usual tactics of attacking from the rear had a shock when shot down by a fighter firing backwards, well, they did have advanced warning, or should have!

As the "Defiant" was a lot slower and only had two guns firing forward the Germans now attacked below and from the front – result – owing to losses, it was withdrawn and used as a training plane for pilots and airgunners, also as a target towing plane which was the type shot down at Gosport in 1942. The turret was replaced with a winch with which the operator let out a long steel cable attached to a drogue, this is like the windsock at an aerodrome, only a lot bigger.

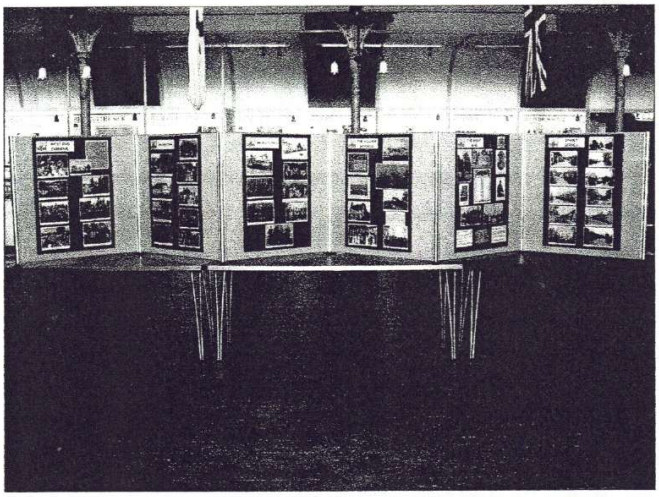
The Whitley, designed before World War 2 was classified as a "heavy" bomber, but was slow and under-armed, when the Lancaster came on the scene the Whitley was withdrawn and relegated for use by Coastal Command against U-Boats. When the Germans overran France their fighters were sent to bases in the west which resulted in many losses, as in the case of Jim Edwards unfortunate "incident". Another plane, the Fairey Swordfish, designed I believe in about 1934, as usual fabric covered, was used to drop torpedoes. Again, slow and only one gun firing from an open cockpit behind the pilot. Though it did some stirling work, notably when they raided Taranto in Italy and virtually wiped out the main Italian fleet, otherwise they were decimated. I believe there is still one flying at Air Shows. On returning from India in late 1947 I was posted to Beaulieu, remember that hard winter? To my relief, early in 1948 I was posted to Gosport, where they had four Swordfish amongst a few other "modern" planes.

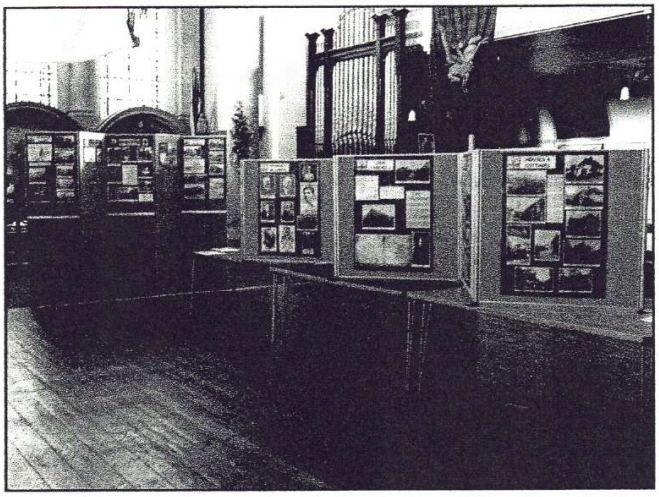
This was an experimental torpedo unit, if any of you were in the Stokes Bay area at the time you may have seen us dropping torpedoes in the Solent, we also had regular trips to Cornwall where we did trials off the Isles of Scilly, using the Royal Naval Air Station at Culdrose. I had many an enjoyable flight in the old "stringbag", though we did lose one which crashed in the sea with loss of the pilot, but luckily there wasn't an observer aboard. Another plane came back in spite of one cylinder head blowing off. These planes were used because they were slow and what's more very stable, ideal for the job. After 3 years and with only a year and a half to go before my discharge, to my horror I was posted to the Canal Zone where they had Vampire jets, it was from the ridiculous to the sublime!!



THE BOULTON PAUL DEFIANT FIGHTER

WEST END GOES TO NETLEY COUNTRY PARK





Thanks to help and support from Patrick Kirkby, Historian at the Royal Victoria Country Park and Peter Leslie the Park Manager, two local history societies have the opportunity to show historical displays in the Royal Chapel at the Park at Netley on the shores of Southampton Water.

Beginning with our society from Saturday 5th July until Sunday 27th July and followed by Hound Local History Society from Saturday 2nd August until Sunday 31st August, the displays gave both societies the opportunity to present the history of their respective parishes in pictorial format to a wider audience than would normally be the case, so a big "thank you" to the Netley Country Park and staff.

The pictures on the left show some of the display organised by West End Local History Society.

WEST END ABOUT 70 YEARS AGO....



This one of our pictures from the archive shows the original Pub that stood on the corner of Telegraph Road and Botley Road. It was a Brickwoods Pub called the "Sportsmans Arms", later demolished to make way for "The Sportsman" which for a short time changed its name to "The Collared Dove" before again changing its name back to "The Sportsman".

RICHARD St.BARBE BAKER

Alec Samuels

Richard St.Barbe Baker OBE, LLD, FIAL, was born in 1889. The family lived in The Firs, Beacon Road, West End, Southampton; the house is still standing. Baker came from a long line of clergymen, his father being an evangelical minister, who built a chapel in their garden, the West End Free Chapel, still standing. Baker attended school in Bitterne. As a boy he helped in the garden nursery grafting fruit trees. He served in the 1914-1918 Great War, principally concerned with transporting horses to France. He was wounded and invalided out in 1918.

After the war he gained a forestry diploma at Cambridge, and took up work as a lumberjack in Canada. He began to reflect upon the consequences of tree felling, the exposure and erosion of the soil, the loss of humus and minerals, damage to wildlife. So in 1922 he founded the Men of the Trees and began a lifelong commitment to trees. He travelled all over the world, meeting many leading people: Nigeria, Kenya, the Sahara, Morocco, Brazil, Canada, the United States, Australia, New Zealand; he was received by the Pope, he worked with the then Prince of Wales in the 1920's and with Franklin D. Roosevelt, when Governor of New York State and subsequently President of the United States of America. Some 61 countries benefited from the influence of Men of the Trees.

Baker sought to protect the Redwoods in California, the oldest trees in the world; and the Firs in British Columbia. He initiated reclaimation and replanting of waste and desert areas. He carried a pocketful of acorns, and peach stones, always looking for opportunities for suitable disposal, and knife for pruning small growing trees. Small trees need careful watching in their early years. He propounded the principle of "2 for 1", i.e. for every tree felled two should be replanted.

The inspirational work of Baker and Men of the Trees is said to have been responsible for the planting of some 27 million trees. Prince Charles became Patron in 1979. The organisation is now called the International Tree Foundation.

Trees planted by Baker, or planted after his death in his memory, are to be found on Southampton Common, in Watts Park, in St James Churchyard at West End (catalpa), and in Hatch Grange, West End.

A legend in his own time, Baker received the OBE in 1962, and the honorary degree LLD from the University of Saskatchewan in Canada. He died 9th June 1982 whilst on a lecture tour in Saskatchewan in Canada, a few weeks before the diamond jubilee of Men of the Trees. Barbe Baker Avenue in West End is named after him.

"The forest is a society of living things, the greatest of which is the tree".

Bibliography

He wrote some thirty books, including ***My Life, My Trees*** 1970 (reprinted Findhorn 1988), ***Dance of the Trees*** (autobiography), ***Africa Drums***.

In addition to his own works, there are articles about him by Harold Dickson in ***Hampshire Magazine*** March 1972 and Francis Nicholson in ***Hampshire Magazine*** January 1985. There is a file on him in the West End Museum.

A REMINDER! SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE NOW DUE!

These run from 1st July 2003 to 30th June 2004 at the new rate of £7 per person for all categories of member. Our Membership Secretary, Delphine Kinley, will be pleased to bring you up-to-date!

If you would prefer to renew membership by post, please make your cheque payable to "WELHS" and send to the Treasurer at 20 Orchards Way, West End, Southampton, SO30 3FB.





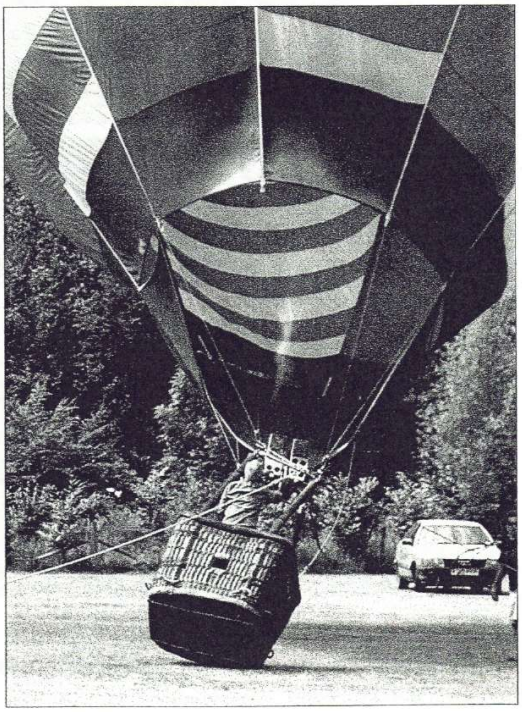




WEST END CARNIVAL 2003

Well, the sun shone, and more people than ever attended the West End Carnival this year. The Hot Air Balloon ALMOST made an ascent, but due to high cross winds it was deemed unsafe. Everyone enjoyed the day as you can see from the photo's and we





Continued from front page.
up to eventual demolition. If anyone has a photograph showing the pub when it became "The Collared Dove" around 1990 for a short time, we would like to borrow it to copy for inclusion in the display. Whilst on the subject of pubs, the other "local" that has closed for business and is awaiting demolition, "The Lamp & Mantle" is also going to be remembered in the museum. Through the kindness of its last landlady we now have the pub sign in the museum and it too will form the centrepiece of a display of photographs and memorabilia tracing the history of the two pubs that stood on the site. So, a big "thank you" to all people concerned in saving these pub signs for posterity. Ed.

LOCAL SUPPORT FOR YOUR LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY!

We are pleased to say that we have received a grant from West End Parish Council towards funding our activities in the coming year. We are most grateful to them for their continuing support. We have already received assistance in the form of a grant from Eastleigh Borough Council, our thanks to them also.

It would be nice if local businesses and shops would consider sponsoring our local history society in its many ventures, perhaps offer to sponsor printing of postcards/publications, display materials or improvements to the Museum building in return for publicity – if anyone is interested please contact the Editor at the address shown on the front cover, thank you. Ed.

BRIC A BRAC SELLS WELL ON WELHS STAND





The WELHS stand at the annual West End Carnival festivities on Hatch Grange proved a very popular place to be on Saturday 21st June – at times you could hardly get near it for crowds, with everyone looking for that bargain amongst our vast range of bric-a-brac! Thanks should go to all our members and friends who contributed items for sale and to the stalwart members who manned the stall, selling bric-a-brac, Treasure Map tickets and "Name That Doll" competition tickets. The Society coffers ended up £156 better off as a result of the days work, so well done everyone and thank you.

On a more sombre note, it had been announced that next years West End Carnival events may be held at The Rose Bowl Cricket Ground in Moorgreen not on Hatch Grange, West End which has hosted the event since time in memorial. Vast numbers of West Enders have complained to the Editor and other members of the Society at this change including a very well known and respected Parish Councillor. The good news I can report is that the Carnival Committee have reconsidered their decision and the Carnival will once again be held on Hatch Grange next year.

BISHOPSTOKE WALKABOUT

Stan Waight





Our July meeting was a follow-up from the previous month, when Joan Simmonds had talked to the Society about The Mount in Bishopstoke. We were now to see on the ground what she had showed on slides.

There was a good turnout, and twenty six members assembled up at the Parish Centre for the short but very wet drive to Bishopstoke. Once there, we sat in our cars for what seemed an hour before the rain stopped and Joan could make a start. Fortunately the rain held off for the rest of the evening.

There was a single timber-framed building on the corner of Spring Lane that may well have been built in the early 17th century, but the majority of the buildings Joan spoke about were of the late 18th or early 19th centuries. Nothing remains of the medieval church but a mound, the present building being some distance away and built as recently as 1890/1; even the so-called Manor House contains no fabric earlier than the Stuart period. A number of buildings had tile-hung gables and chimneys that may have been local features, but the majority were reknowned more for their inhabitants than for their architectural qualities.

Having said all that, Joan knows her subject and gave us detailed accounts of the places of interest. For me the most interesting was The Mount itself, which stands in beautiful and extensive grounds. Most recently in use as a hospital, this attractive building is subject to local controversy over building plans that threaten to destroy its character.

It was a pleasant outing, even if the weather could have been kinder.





Above: A selection of pictures taken on the walk around Bishopstoke on Wednesday 2nd July 2003 – note the wet weather gear being worn and the umbrellas in the top photograph

On this day (September 3rd) in.....

1189 The coronation of King Richard I, the Lion Heart, took place at Westminster Abbey.

1658 Oliver Cromwell, statesman, Puritan leader and Lord Protector of England from 1653, died in Whitehall, London of pneumonia – was succeeded by his son Richard, as Protector.

1877 Adolphe Thiers, French statesman, Prime Minister and President, died of apoplexy at St. Germain-en-Laye, near Paris.

1897 Cecil Parker, English film actor, born at Hastings, in Kent as Cecil Schwabe.

1913 Alan Ladd, American film actor, born at Hot Springs in Arkansas.

1939 Great Britain and France declared war on Germany.

1966 Captain Ridgway and Sergeant Blyth became the first Britons to row across the Atlantic; the journey in "English Rose III" took 91 days.

1967 Sweden switched to driving on the right hand side of the road.

1969 Ho Chi Minh, Vietnamese leader and one of the most influential Communist leaders, died aged 79.

THE NEXT MEETINGS ARE ....

NO MEETING IN AUGUST

September 3
FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE & MILITARY NURSING IN HAMPSHIRE
Patrick Kirkby

October 1
THE ELEPHANT BOATYARD, BURSLEDON
Tim Holt

November 5
EXPLOSIONS FROM THE NEW FOREST!
Tony Yoward

December 3
CHRISTMAS BUFFET, QUIZ, SLIDE SHOW AND RAFFLE

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

Paper # 5
The Swaythling Road Methodist Church
Written by Marjorie Bodman **£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 (reduced price)* **£5.99**

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

"Half a Loaf - The Care of the Sick and Poor of South Stoneham 1664-1948" *by Eric Raffo* **£6.50**
(new special low price)

"Sister Kate Oram 1879-1918
A Personal Portrait. *By Pauline Berry* **£4.99**

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

"The Mackay-Bennett...the Funeral Ship at the Titanic Disaster". ** *By John G.Avery* **£2.50**
***** This is a new enlarged edition***

"The Cholera Years...an Account of the Cholera Outbreaks in our ports, towns and villages".
By John G.Avery **£6.00**

A varied selection of postcards is also available – check for details and prices