NEWSLETTER of the WEST END LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

WESTENDER

SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 2011 (PUBLISHED SINCE 1999) VOLUME 8 NUMBER 1

CHAIRMAN
Neville Dickinson

VICE-CHAIRMAN
Bill White

SECRETARY
Lin Dowdell

MINUTES SECRETARY
Vera Dickinson

TREASURER
Peter Wallace

MUSEUM CURATOR
Nigel Wood

PUBLICITY
Ray Upson

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY
Delphine Kinley

RESEARCHER
Pauline Berry

WELHS... preserving our past for your future....

VISIT OUR WEBSITE!

Website:
www.westendlhs.hampshire.org.uk

E-mail address:
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

THEN AND NOW



TOP:THE WHITE SWAN AT MANSBRIDGE c.1911 BELOW LEFT: SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT VIEW TODAY



Picture above courtesy of Peter Wallace

From the idyllic Edwardian view of the garden of the White Swan pub at Mansbridge, we see below a similar view of the pub garden area; gone are the dining booths, seating and punts for hire. The area is now taken up by an extension to the pub and the punts as well as the footbridge (not in picture) are now just past memories. For more then and now pictures see our book "Bitterne & West End Through Time", available in our Museum bookshop - it makes an ideal Christmas present!

West End Local History Society & Westender is sponsored by

WEST END PARISH COUNCIL

EASTLEIGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

THE ERA OF BURIAL CLUBS

By John Avery

Burial Clubs were pre-dominant in the north of England but most parts of England ran small clubs to allow weekly or fortnightly collections to pay for a burial. Often the collectors were "in the trade" such as undertakers and even registrars, inn keepers encouraged collectors to use their premises as a collection point, obviously hoping a few extra pence would go on a beer.

Burial Clubs sometimes known as Burial Societies could be a part of a Friendly Society [Hearts of Oak, Manchester Unity of Oddfellows, Ancient Order of Foresters. Liverpool Victoria and the Society of Unanimity [Devonport] etc.] These were regulated by the Friendly Societies Acts and in general provided a sum of money on the death of the member to pay for funeral expenses

Many Burial Clubs were not associated with Friendly Societies and consequently not regulated or subject to strict audit and inevitably some were poorly managed. The Burial Clubs or Societies particularly in Lancashire and Yorkshire purchased large plots where over a number of years and when say 100 or so bodies had been buried, the club erected a series of headstones often listing ten or so names on each side of the stone. In other cases they did not provide a plot but a sum of money.

Whilst it was the fate of many of our poor to reside in workhouses or receive relief throughout their days, the final indignity was to have a pauper's [properly termed a common grave] which by law were not allowed to show the name of the deceased. A name is the only possession appropriately owned by all individuals whether rich or poor and an unmarked grave was viewed as the final indignity.

It is sad to say that many sickly babies were seen as a resource of revenue for destitute families, there were cases where babies were quickly registerèd with various local clubs. There were from time to time cases of murder. The National Archives have an example where one sickly baby was registered with 19 Clubs and when the inevitable happened a few weeks later the father spent days going around collecting payouts.

It was unfortunately an incentive for fraud to be committed as you just walked into the Registrar's office post 1837 and announced that you wished to record a death. Then armed with the certificate you went to the Burial Club to claim the payout. Friendly Societies members on the other hand had to produce a medical certificate to support the registration. It does raise the question when we find a death on the GRO Index whether it was always genuine as surely a false registration would have helped somebody in debt or wanted for investigation to "disappear" such as in the case of John Stonehouse MP.

The establishment of the Registrar- General's Office in 1837 was in fact to bring an archival service of BMD certificates and it was not seen as his role to conduct forensic examination of dates or events and even registrations with obvious spelling mistakes on names etc just went into the archives. The Deputy William Farr however took a hand on approach. He collected data of cholera and diarrhoea deaths and began to build up a case that houses being supplied by a London water company were so high that it was obvious that badly filtered water was the root cause of death. He left his paperwork at the GRO and went off often annoying the directors at the waterworks where he encouraged them to test samples.

Similarly Farr soon realised that areas with a high number of Burial Clubs registered a much higher percentage of infant deaths compared to areas where the Burial Clubs were less prominent. It could be argued that areas of poverty and disease would have a lesser life expectancy but he saw a definite collation of financial gain.

On the retirement of the Registrar- General, Farr assumed his years of devoted service would be recognised and that he would step up the ladder but his political masters wanted a paper keeper not an amateur sleuth and he was passed over. He died a couple years later a broken man. However all was not in vain as a new law was introduced in 1874 that to register any death in England and Wales that a medical certificate would be necessary for all, not just for Friendly Societies.

In 1876, Stephen Blundell, a Southampton undertaker, with his wife and an assistant, were committed for trial on a charge of larceny. It arose from the circumstance that, in consequence of an offensive smell from the premises and complaints from neighbours, that the premises were examined by Dr. Osborn, medical

Continued on page 3

Continued from page 2

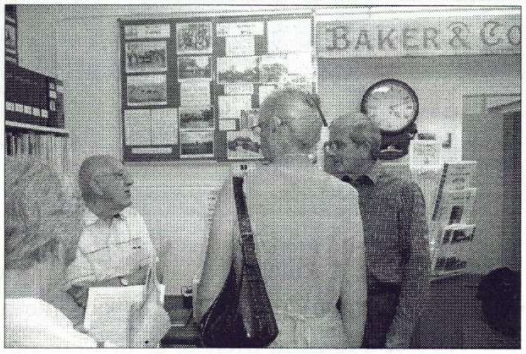
officer of health for Southampton and the Nuisances Inspector, and a number of infants' bodies, fifteen or sixteen in all, were found. All, with the exception of one which was found in the shop, were concealed among a heap of saw-dust and dirt in the cellar underneath the premises. A few of the decomposed babies had been stored in drawers within the workshop, a few were in skeleton condition and the most recent was still in a coffin.

Stephen Blundell arose from his sick bed and produced certificates of still-birth or burial for all cases and no offence under the Registration Act could be sustained. The prisoners were committed on a charge of larceny by the court. The principal offender, Stephen Blundell, died shortly after his committal, and the charges against his wife and assistant were discontinued.

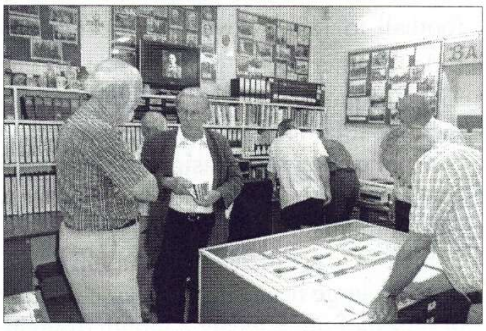
A SOCIAL EVENING AT THE MUSEUM

A review by Stan Waight









But for the fact that there was a slightly smaller turnout for the August meeting at the Museum, this report could well be an echo of last year's.

It had been a very hot and very still day (enough to make you sweat seven shirts as the Italians say) and the cool breeze that blew up the High Street was very welcome. I must say that those who chose to sit outside looked very cool and comfortable under the gazebo. The temperature inside was somewhat different, but the atmosphere was just as pleasant, with an opportunity to chat with other members that is sometimes absent at meetings in the Parish Centre.

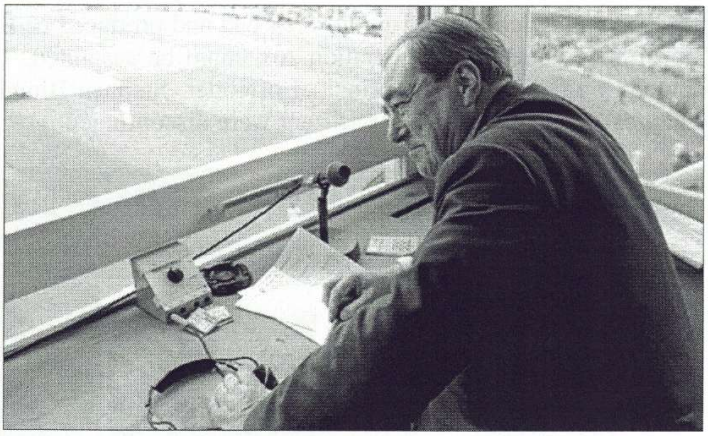
Yet more work has been done in the museum and the layout of the exhibits is a real credit to Nigel and Peter, who were on hand to answer any questions. Once again, the refreshments provided by Lin and Margaret were first class and I made sure of my piece of cake at an early stage. Chairman Neville drew the prize-winning tickets for Delphine's raffle and Bill made up the rest of the Committee - it was a pity that Rose couldn't be with us.

It is clear that everyone was enjoying the evening - perhaps a few more members will see that the museum is not such a fearsome place as all that and volunteer to fill one of the Saturday slots!!

P.C. JOHN ARLOTT

By Pauline Berry





One of PC Joe Molloy's colleagues based at Portswood Police Station, during the first years of the Second World War, was PC John Arlott. Later to become a famous broadcaster with his distinctive Hampshire burr, he and Joe became good friends. Both were single and had sport in common, although Joe preferred football to John's love of cricket. They also enjoyed swimming and often went to the old Southampton Lido together or in a group, when off duty.

The custom in those days was for police officers on the beat to ring in from a convenient telephone kiosk to their local Police Station, at regular intervals, unless investigating an incident. It was not unknown for these two policemen to occasionally 'cover' for each other, if one of them could not report in. PC Arlott, who was easily distracted, since he was a very 'sociable' person and had several known 'tea-holes' when he had a quiet moment.

Some of the sergeants turned a blind eye to his many distractions, but PC John Arlott was sometimes given an extra large beat, such as Bassett and Swaythling, to keep him very busy. This method of keeping him out of mischief often meant a month of night duty, all on foot!

Joe recalls how his colleague 'could talk himself out of anything' and his eloquent and articulate statements given in Court. Arlott's love of books was also brought to mind, 'he was always popping into a bookshop and was building up quite a library in his digs, said Joe. John was already quite a wordsmith, and he soon got to know several of the authors and poets of his books.

The sociable John Arlott was a popular policeman with a wide circle of friends and contacts. He cared very much about people, 'but his main interest was not really in the Police Force', commented Joe Molloy. It was noted that Arlott's beat sometimes extended to the outside of the Cricket Ground in Northlands Road, looking in at his first love, cricket.

In 1941, John Arlott found himself appointed a detective constable with the Special Branch in Southampton, writing many reports and checking on 'aliens' and 'conscientious objectors'. His command of foreign languages was an asset in this work. When the Blitz on Southampton fell quiet at times, this bookworm would often be found absorbed in books in the Town Library or in his office.

DC Arlott's interest in poetry rapidly developed at this time, and he began writing his own poems, including some about his town, and getting them published. By 1944, the War had abated and police work slowly returned to normal. That year his reputation was such that he was invited to broadcast his views on cricket for the first time.

Continued on page 5



THE LIDO, SOUTHAMPTON

Continued from page 4

The year 1945 saw Arlott as a regular contributor on various subjects on BBC Radio, juggling his work with his Police duties. On VE Day, May 8th 1945, he had the honour of broadcasting to the nation as an 'anonymous' Police Officer, paying tribute to the King – and to the British Police Force's part in the War.
Soon after this, John Arlott resigned from the Police Force and moved to London with his family, having been given the post of Literary Programmes Assistant to the BBC's Overseas Service. Joe Molloy kept in touch with his old friend over the ensuing years, even enjoying a glass of 'fizz' (champagne) with John at his lovely home on the Isle of Alderney, many years later.
Thus this quintessential Hampshire man eventually became a broadcasting legend. After an eventful life, he died in 1991.

NB. To learn more of this intriguing man, read David Rayvern Allen's biography entitled 'ARLOTT' published by Harper-Collins.

NEW DISPLAY CABINETS INSTALLED IN MUSEUM



As you can see from the image above our long awaited new display cabinets have arrived and been installed. Our thanks go to Eastleigh Borough Council (HEWEB) and West End Parish Council both of whom have given us grants which have helped in the purchase of these "state of the art" cabinets.

THE WALLACE FAMILY HISTORY - Part 4

By Peter Wallace

My Great Great Grandmother Jane DRUDGE was born on the 20th December 1839 at Carisbrooke on the Isle of Wight. Her parents were James and Sarah Ann Maria DRUDGE nee SIDDON. On the 17th April 1864 she married William BOOKER (Joiner) in the Parish Church of Northwood Isle of Wight they had two children Eliza and William.

After his early death of Phthisis (TB) on the 12th August 1877 at Park Road West Cowes, Jane married Edward DENYER on the 5th January 1879 at St. Mary's Church, Cowes and then lived at 18 Medina Road West Cowes.



THE DUKE OF YORK PUBLIC HOUSE, COWES, ISLE OF WIGHT

Drowned herself whilst in an unsound state of mind.

The last details I have of Jane DENYER (BOOKER) nee DRUDGE as reported in the Isle of Wight County Press was that she was found drowned in the sea on the 23rd of May 1901.

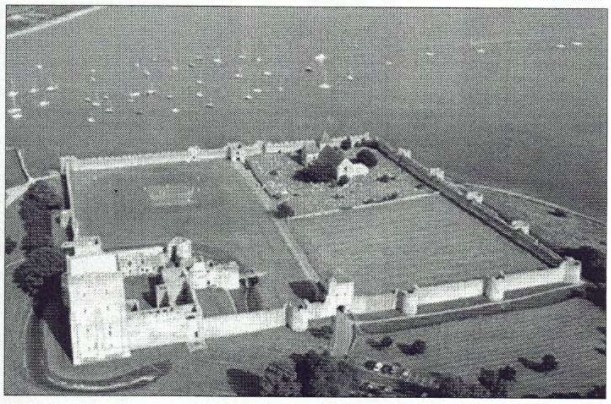
The Coroners Inquest held at the Duke of York Public House in Cowes Isle of Wight on Friday the 24th May 1901 shows that she drowned herself whilst in an unsound state of mind.

MORE VOLUNTEERS URGENTLY WANTED TO MAN THE MUSEUM ON SATURDAYS - PLEASE CONTACT PETER WALLACE NOW ON 01489 786521

THE CASTLES OF HAMPSHIRE

A review by Stan Waight







TOP LEFT:

THE HURST COMPLEX - THE ROUND TOWER BOTTOM LEFT IS HENRY VIII's CREATION.

LEFT:

ALL THAT REMAINS OF MERDON CASTLE IN HURSLEY

ABOVE:

PORTCHESTER CASTLE FROM THE AIR

Around fifty members and visitors turned out on a chilly evening for September's talk, given by Don Bryan. Don is steeped in local history, having been a blue badge guide for Southampton and Winchester for many years among other things.

His talk was illustrated by a PowerPoint presentation and began with a history of this type of defence - from Iron Age hill forts, through Saxon burgh's and Norman motte and bailey fortresses to the sort of 16th century fortification that was built along the coast for protection against the French. He went on to cover individual castles (which did include a couple that lie outside our county!), using a map on which the sites were marked and working round them in a clockwise direction.

Some of the sites were little known - Warblington and Merdon for example - while others such as Rowlands Castle were demolished at an early stage. How many of us knew about Ashley, the 13th century castle at Farley Mount or that Wolvesley Castle, home to the bishops of Winchester, was a palace rather than a castle?

Apart from the well-known castles built by Henry VIII at Southsea, Hamble, Calshot and Hurst, there were mentions of Basing, Odiham, Southampton and Carisbrooke. Perhaps the most striking and interesting of them all is Portchester; where we have a Norman keep and a 12th-century church within one of a chain of Roman shore forts that was also used in the Saxon period.

Don's illustrative images were good, but there were so many of them that he could not linger on any of them for any length of time, which was a pity; better, perhaps, to have left out some of the less relevant ones and spent more time on the others. Also, I would have liked to hear about the sites grouped according to their position in chronology – the 16th century coastal castles deserved a bit more on their common origins for example.

Nevertheless, it was an interesting talk and was enjoyed by all.

B.L.H.S. ON TOUR!

A report and pictures by Lin Dowdell







OUR IMAGES SHOW SOME OF THE VISITORS DURING THE BITTERNE LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY VISIT TO THE MUSEUM

Friday 9th September saw our Museum "full to busting"!!! Bitterne Local History Society's Heritage Weekend started their tour by visiting West End. One Luckett's coach and 44 members and friends of Bitterne Local History Society arrived at our museum. A short stop, but well received by them and lots of encouraging remarks and comments in our visitors book.

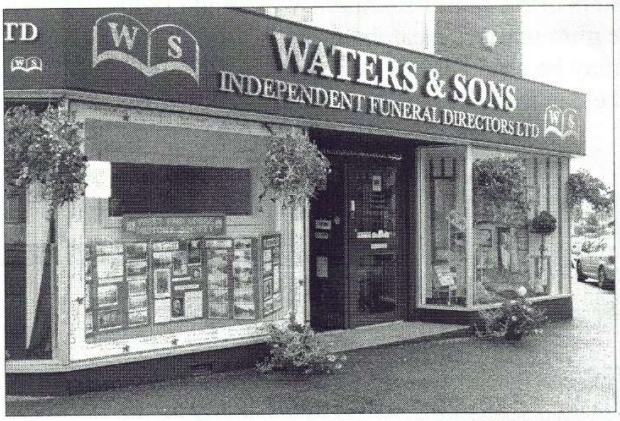
They were leaving us to have a coffee stop in Wickham and then off to Bishops Waltham, Romsey and Winchester. Many of them had not been to our museum before and promised to return on a Saturday for longer.

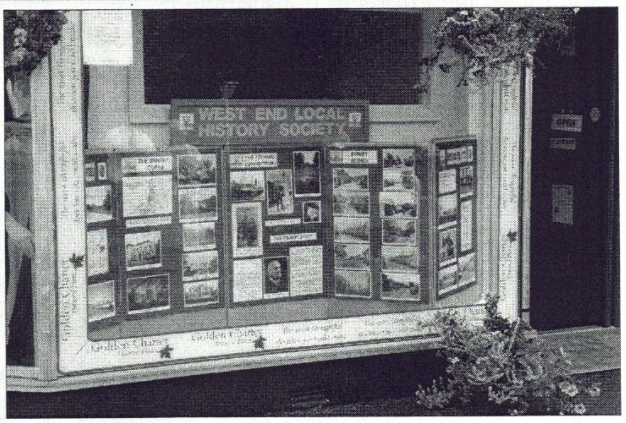
!!! ANOTHER WEST END TITANIC CONNECTION !!!

Thanks to the good offices of Cheryl Butler at Eastleigh Borough Council, we now know of another Titanic connection for West End, making a total of four. John Lovell Diaper was born in the South Stoneham Union Workhouse at Moorgreen on 22nd March 1875. He was living at 21 Highland Road, Itchen Ferry when he signed on for RMS Titanic as a Grill Cook. He registered as John Lovell, for reasons best known to himself. He went down with the ship and like fellow crewman James Jukes also from Moorgreen his body was never recovered or identified. He was aged 37 and single when he died, leaving his widowed sister and her son as dependents. They were provided for by the Titanic Relief Fund, whose Secretary, Alderman Fred Woolley also lived at West End. The fourth Titanic connection is of course Captain Sir A.H. Rostron who came to retire to West End in 1927 and lived at the top of Chalk Hill. Ed.

NEW DISPLAY VENUE IN SHOLING

By Nigel Wood





As a result of seeing our window display in Eastleigh, Simon Waters, owner and proprietor of Waters & Sons, Funeral Directors at 106 Spring Road, Sholing kindly invited our society to place a display in their window. The result can be seen above. We also left a supply of Westender's and the society gatefold leaflets for people to take.

Waters & Sons are one of the very few truly independent funeral directors left around Southampton, and the corner site of their premises in Sholing gives us a prominent site to advertise West End's history. Our thanks go to Simon and his son Craig for all their help and support.

KINGS COPSE SCHOOL COMMUNITY CAKE & COFFEE DAY

By Lin Dowdell & Margaret Wallace





The society were invited to attend the above event on Saturday 17th September. Our display showed "West End in the Fifties" plus a table of books and publications for sale.

We were entertained by Kings Copse School Choir, Wildern Community Choir and an amazing group of young people from The Point Youth Theatre. Among the other displays were Fair Trade, the British Heart Foundation, Hearing Dogs for the Deaf, greetings cards etc..

Free coffee and cakes flowed the whole 3 hours and it was well attended and our display generated much interest.

GRATEFUL THANKS

On behalf of the West End Local History Society I would like to express our grateful thanks to Sue Robinson for all her efforts in transcribing the Burial Registers of St. James's Church West End (1840–1972) on to CD's in PDF format, which will be deposited in the museum for research purposes.
I am transferring them into Microsoft Excel so they may be searchable. I will also endeavour to transcribe from 1972 to the present day from the burial register held at the Vicarage.

Peter Wallace

THE NEXT MEETINGS ARE....

November 2
MONKS, MARQUIS AND MYSTERY ... the story of Netley Abbey
Geoff Watts

December 7
CHRISTMAS SOCIAL INCLUDING A SKITTLE'S EVENING, BUFFET AND RAFFLE

January 4 - 2012
HASLAR HOSPITAL
Eric Birbeck

ON THIS DAY.....

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

1830 Chester Arthur, American Republican statesman and 21st President, born at Fairfield in Vermont, the son of a Baptist minister.

1880 Jacques Offenbach, German born French composer of operetta's and the opera 'Tales of Hoffman', died in Paris.

1919 Donald Pleasence, English actor, born at Worksop.

1923 Glynis Johns, British film actress, born at Durban in South Africa..

1930 The 777 ft British airship R101, captained by Flight Lieutenant Irwin, crashed at the edge of a wood near Beauvais in France on its way from Cardington to India - killing 48 of the 54 passengers and crew.

1933 Diane Cilento, film actress, born in Queensland, Australia.

1936 The Jarrow March of unemployed shipyard workers to London started on its southward journey, led by Labour MP Ellen Wilkinson.