NEWSLETTER of the WEST END LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

WESTENDER

SEPTEMBER—OCTOBER 2005 VOLUME 5 NUMBER 1

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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

Saturday 13th August 2005, the day designated for the West End celebrations to mark the 60th Anniversary of VJ-Day and the end of the Second World War was far from ideal weatherwise, it poured with rain! However, to everyone's surprise adults and children turned up in droves at the Parish Centre in spite of

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West End Local History Society is sponsored by

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WEST END CELEBRATES VJ-DAY 60 YEARS ON!













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the weather. The Parish Council staff and helpers had done an excellent job of transforming the main hall for the childrens party as can be seen from the pictures above. There were also a couple of American Army vehicles strategically stationed in the carpark with their crews dressed in period uniforms, and as can be seen from our picture on the front page two members of the council staff dressed in Women's Land Army outfits posed by one of the vehicles for the photographers! Due to the inclement weather the children's

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outdoor games had to take place indoors in the Sports hall, but this did not detract from an excellent party, enjoyed by everyone. After the games everyone filed into the main hall whilst an entertainer kept everyone amused amid copious quantities of SPAM sandwiches, jam sandwiches, sausage rolls, cakes and soft drinks which were served by staff and parents. After the childrens party, a 60th Anniversary Dance took place for the adults from 7.30pm. People arrived in World War Two costume (see pictures below) to listen and dance to 1940's music performed by a 'Glen Miller' type band. A special commemorative cake (see picture) had been made, washed down with bubbly for the Loyal Toast. A bar was available, with Spot Prizes and on a more sombre note a one minute silence was observed in remembrance for those who fell in the war. Another excellent event laid on by the Parish for West End parishioners, we eagerly look forward to the 200th Anniversary of the Battle of Trafalgar celebrations on October 21st. which promises to have amongst other attractions a spectacular firework display, the Beacon on Hatch Grange being lit as part of a national network, a Bar, Stalls, hot food, Competitions and various entertainment!





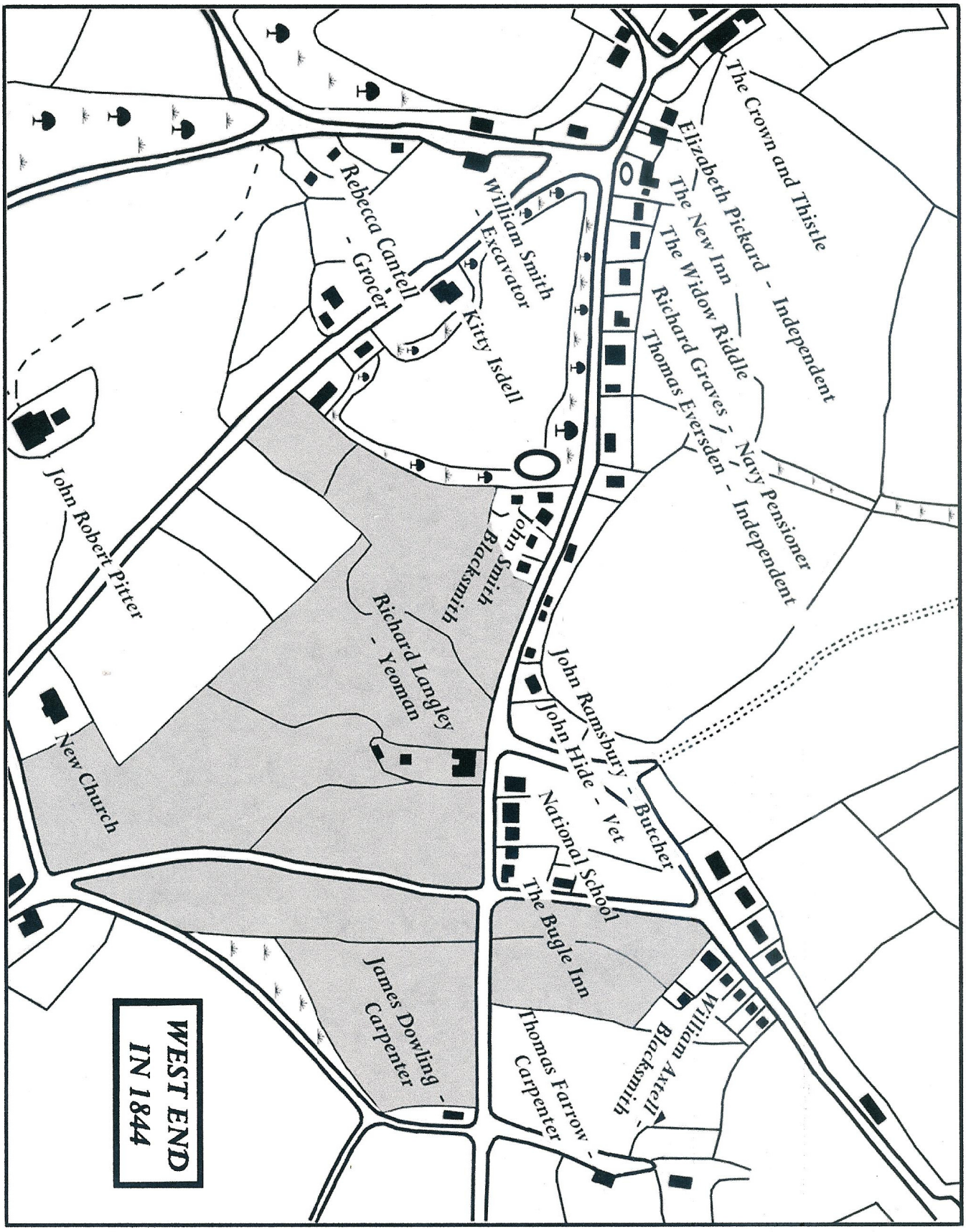
VJ-DAY
60th
ANNIVERSARY
DANCE





WEST END IN 1844

Written by Stan Waight in 2001



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WEST END IN 1844

This map of West End was taken directly from the South Stoneham Tithe Map, and the names of the occupiers are from the Award of 1844 that accompanied it; the occupations of the inhabitants were obtained from the Census of 1841. There was considerable movement into and out of the village during the three-year interval, and some occupiers, particularly agricultural labourers, appear in the Award but not in the Census and vice versa. Kitty Isdell's husband for instance, in his 60's and described as a clerk, had evidently died during this period.

In order to preserve detail, the area of the map has been limited to West End's present centre. The major roads are easily recognisable, however - High Street, Chapel Road, West End Road, Upper and Lower New Roads, Church Hill and Chalk Hill. The junction in front of the New Inn was considerably different from the busy crossroads of today, and there was a pond there. The roads were unmade, and there was another pond beside John Smith's smithy.

The present St. James' church was built in 1890; its predecessor, the 'New Church' in the map, had been struck by lightning. The 'National School' became the Village Hall, and was long since replaced by the small shopping parade.

Much of the village shown in the map was under arable, pasture or woodland, and the Hatch Farm estate occupied most of the area to the north of the High Street. Richard Langley's farm, shown in grey to illustrate an agricultural unit, filled the space between High Street and Church Hill. There were three public houses - the Crown and Thistle (Richard Barnett), the New Inn (John Smart) and the Bugle Inn (Charles Baigent); all have been rebuilt and renamed, and the Master Builder, the Lamp & Mantle (demolished since this article was written—it is now a block of apartments called Rosemount Court) and the West End Brewery presently occupy their sites.

Agricultural and other labourers and their families were predominant among West Enders, and most of the unmarked dwellings in the map were occupied by them - James Brown, George Cleft, Elisha Harvey, William Hinks, James Loader, John Mill, Joseph Moody, Thomas Othen, another John Ramsbury, George Rider, Philip and James Small, James Snook and William Stone were all living here in 1844, as well as others whose occupations are not known.

Almost all the buildings shown in the map (opposite) have disappeared, but those occupied by Elizabeth Pickard and William Smith have survived as the thatched cottages we see today. The plots of others can be identified, and rows of trees still mark the rear boundaries of some of them in High Street and Chapel Road. Nevertheless, the density of housing was low - there were less than 60 dwellings in the whole of the map area, and many of them would already have been quite old.

Outside the eastern boundary of the map, Moorgreen Hospital was the then modern South Stoneham Union or Poorhouse, with a row of half-a-dozen cottages opposite. To the north, Hatch Grange had not yet been built, and the fine avenue of trees had not been planted - Hatch Grange, then in the hands of Jacob Gater's executors, was approached by the track leading from Chapel Road. There was another small cluster of buildings in Moorgreen, including those of two bakers (John Lucas and Richard Moody) and the bailiff (Edward Emery). To the west, at the southern end of Allington Lane, another small group included the 'mansion' of William Henry Gater. To the south of West End Road, near the junction with Chalk Hill, a large group of buildings was known as Newlands Farm.

NB. The South Stoneham Tithe Map can be found on our website as well as in the WELHS Museum.

FROM RURAL ROOTS TO TOWN PARKS

Pauline Berry

Whilst browsing through the Bitterne Local History Society magazine (Winter 2004 edition) I came across an article by Jim Brown which immediately rang a few bells in my head! So following further research I give you the story of another Westender 'who made good'.

Walter Alford, born in 1866 to Benjamin and Elizabeth Alford, grew up in the peaceful rural area of Moorgreen, West End. His father's occupation was recorded as a shepherd in the 1871 Census, but had become a Market Gardener by the 1881 Census. Walter, one of a big family of eleven children, lived somewhere in Burnett's Lane. His formative years were spent working on the land as a farm labourer and he soon knew everything there was to know about the cultivation of plants, flowers, vegetables, fruit trees etc..

With farming in his blood, Walter left home at 18 years of age to work and live in Sholing, on another farm and market garden there. He settled in the Heathfield Road area, off Butts Road, a very rural spot in the 1880's. He married Alice and his business in market gardening became so successful that they soon occupied Heathfield House, a substantial house compared to his humbler beginnings in Moorgreen.

His own family became, like Walter, strong supporters of the Sholing Methodist Church, off South East Road. (In fact, many years later I myself attended this Sunday School as a child and I clearly recall his cheerful son, Ernest, by then a middle-aged man who lived in Butts Road near me, calling out in his usual fashion*"Hallooo there, little Trickey, how are you?"*.

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Walter Alford in his robes as an Alderman
(Photo courtesy of Bitterne Local History Society)



Mrs Alice Trickey and her daughter Pauline (little Trickey) in front of W.A.'s drinking fountain (1947)

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Returning to his father, Walter, his other main interest in life was in public service and he first entered Southampton Borough Council representing Bitterne and Sholing Ward in 1920. As well as being a member of the sub-committee dealing with the gardens and farms of local Institutions, he was the chairman of the Public Lands and Markets Committee for 11 years. By 1927 he had been made Alderman in recognition of his extensive dedication to Southampton's parks.

During his time Walter was involved directly with the provision of the well-known bird aviary and rock gardens in Andrews Park and Bitterne Park, Northam, Millbrook, Burgess Road and Butts Road recreation grounds. One must not forget the Weston Shore promenade with its once proud art-deco shelters, and the popular paddling-pool on the Common.

He attended the opening of Mayfield Park in Weston Lane in June 1938 and a drinking fountain there still bears these words; *"His* (Walter Alfords) *untiring efforts and great interest in horticultural work were largely responsible for the improvement and development of the parks and open spaces in Southampton"*. (By coincidence our own Bob Moody worked as foreman in the same park prior to his retirement in 1971).

Walters death a few days later in 1938, heralded a large funeral and many tributes were paid to his considerable contribution to so many of Southampton's present-day parklands. This is something we, in West End, should not forget, for Walter's roots were once part of our rural past which has rapidly been disappearing under the bricks of "progress".

THE CHOLERA YEARS

A Review by Stan Waight

Our own John Avery was the speaker at the first meeting after the summer break, and his subject was the cholera epidemics of the mid-1800s. Not a very pleasant subject you may think, but there were moments of humour when the perceived causes of infection and suggested cures were described.

We were first given a background to this terrible disease, which, once contracted, could kill a sufferer within hours. Rife in the Far East, it arrived at Sunderland from Russia in 1831, from whence it spread throughout Britain. It appears that the bacteria could survive for up to three weeks on damp **Coal** and that coastal colliers provided a perfect means of transmitting them. The compulsory registration of Births, Marriages and Deaths introduced in 1837 provided death statistics for the first time; London mortalities from diarrhoea rose from 393 in 1838 to 2152 in 1846, but the years 1848-9 were the worst in Britain as a whole.

Cholera was, John said, a **Catalyst** or wake-up call, and the changes were oddly associated with the letter **'C'**. It altered the attitudes towards sanitation and personal hygiene, abolished outdated medical theories and practices and, in a way, changed our system of local government.

Censorship was used initially in the local press to prevent panic, and Exeter's Flying Post even argued that worry would leave a reader in a weaker state and therefore more prone to infection! Ships could be quarantined but there was no restriction on inland travel and the **Coaches** of the stage and railway companies freely carried travellers between infected and uninfected areas. Unwashed, **Cast-off** clothing and bedding was passed on between relatives and friends. Individual **Clergymen** showed great dedication, but it was widely held that cholera was as much a divine retribution as the biblical plagues. The **Courts** of our overcrowded towns, where one privy often served numerous households, exacerbated the problem. **Cemeteries** became a new growth industry. **Charles** Dickens and **Charles** Kingsley stirred the conscience of Victorian Britain with their novels.

Social reformer Edwin **Chadwick** introduced powers to allow councils to set up local Boards of Health. Here in Southampton, port superintendent Capt. Engledie was greatly concerned about the death rate among dock workers and petitioned the council for an enquiry. Mayor Laishley said that it did not need a stranger (Chadwick) to think on behalf of the town, but Engledie and his supporters thankfully won the day.

The most important outcome of the period was the move towards **Clean**, filtered water, which, together with improved sanitation and vaccines, was to make cholera and typhoid epidemics of the past.

John ended with a short slide presentation using the most up-to-date technology. It was a jolly good evening despite the morbid nature of the subject.

THREE WEST END HEROES - DOES ANYONE HAVE INFORMATION!



THURSDAY, JUNE 8, 1944

AT SOUTHAMPTON LAW COURTS

Wednesday. — Before Aldermen Sir Sidney Kimber (presiding) and P. Bath, O.B.E., Councillor G. A. Waller, Mrs. J. K. Watkins, Messrs. R. C. Ashby, C.B.E., and A. Bedford.

DEAL IN LARD

"This is a typical case of Black Market procedure," said the chairman to William Buttigieg, aged 43, proprietor of the California Cafe, East Park-terrace, who pleaded guilty on a charge of acquiring 28 lbs. of lard otherwise than in accordance with his permit, on or about April 19. Defendant was fined £25 and was told that if the money was not paid within 14 days he would have to go to prison for two months.

Mr. H. P. Roe, prosecuting, said two employes of Bouts Tillotson Transport, Ltd., had been convicted of stealing lard belonging to their employers. A lorry drew up near defendant's cafe on April 19 and the lorry driver's mate, a lad named Collis, took a quantity of lard into the cafe. He was paid 13s. for it,

Three Brothers: Two Killed; One Missing

RICHARD ROY PETER

The war has brought tragedy to millions of homes, but few parents can have been dealt a harder blow than that suffered by Councillor and Mrs. S. J. Lane, of Firgrove House, Westend, Southampton. In September, 1940, their second son, Richard, a midshipman in the Fleet Air Arm, was killed in action while on a flying operation over enemy-occupied country. Early last month their eldest son, Squadron Leader Roy Lane, was reported missing from air operations, and while they were anxiously awaiting news of him they were informed a few days ago that their youngest son, 21 years old Flight Sergeant Peter Lane, has been killed on active service.

C.E. SCHOOL SPORTS

THE SHORT ARTICLE IN THE SOUTHERN DAILY ECHO OF 3rd JUNE 1944

Going through some papers recently our Archivist Pauline Berry came across the article shown above from the Southern Daily Echo datelined 3rd June 1944. It was a very moving story of one West End family who had lost two sons with a third one missing. Below is the extract from the newspaper:

"The war has brought tragedy to millions of homes, but few parents can have been dealt a harder blow than that suffered by Councillor and Mrs S.J. Lane, of Firgrove House, Westend, Southampton. In September, 1940, their second son, Richard, a midshipman in the Fleet Air Arm, was killed in action while on a flying operation over enemy-occupied country. Early last month their eldest son, Squadron Leader Roy Lane, was reported missing from air operations, and while they were anxiously awaiting news of him they were informed a few days ago that their youngest son, 21 years old Flight Sergeant Peter Lane, has been killed on active service".

After some research on the Internet we have managed to establish the following details regarding Squadron Leader Roy Lane. Serial number 41028 Flight Lieutenant Roy Lane, nicknamed "Lulu", served with 41 Squadron RAF until August 1943 when he was posted elsewhere. He was killed in action in Burma on 26th April 1944 when he held the rank of Squadron Leader.

41 Squadron was reformed on 1st April 1923 and by late December 1938, had received its first Spitfires. It was one of the few units during the World War 2 that flew Spitfires exclusively, constantly receiving the latest updated versions as they became available. 41 Squadron saw limited action until May 1940, when it provided air cover for the BEF's evacuation from Dunkirk. Later the squadron was to play a major role in the Battle of Britain, and by years end they had accounted for around 100 enemy aircraft. Amongst notable operations carried out by the squadron were the operations against the German warships Scharnhorst, Gneisenau and Prinz Eugen, after their escape from Brest in February 1942, the squadron also provided air support for the ill-fated Canadian Raid on Dieppe in August 1942. Unfortunately we don't know when Roy joined the squadron only when he left it in August 1943. At that time the squadron was part of 11 Group stationed at Friston in Sussex, having arrived there on 28th May 1943 from Biggin Hill and earlier at Hawkinge in Kent. After Roy left the squadron it moved to Tangmere in Sussex. Squadron Leader Roy Lane, the son of Councillor Sidney John Lane and his wife Edith, is buried and commemorated at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission Taukkyan cemetery in Burma (Myanmar), grave 17.A.24.

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SQUADRON LEADER ROY "Lulu" LANE

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Taukkyan War Cemetery is situated just outside Yangon which was formerly known as Rangoon near the airport about 35 kilometers north of the city.

Both the other sons of Councillor and Mrs Lane were killed during the war. Service number 1319609 Flight Sergeant (Pilot) Peter Lane of the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve died on active service aged 21 on 1st June 1944 and is buried at the CWGC Stourbridge Cemetery - Sec. T. Grave 16.

Midshipman (A) Richard John Lane of the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve at H.M.S. Peregrine was killed in action, aged just 19 on 30th September 1940 and is commemorated at the Lee-on-the-Solent Memorial on Bay 1, Panel 6.

We have so far found out very little about these two other brothers war service and their subsequent deaths, just that Richard served with the Fleet Air Arm and that Peter was also like his brother Roy a pilot in the RAF and died on active service. We would be very much obliged if anyone could throw any further light on this tragic story. In West End we had a similar tragedy in the Great War when three sons of Frederick & Elizabeth Curtis of Moorgreen where all killed on active service. George Henry, Leslie and Frederick John Curtis are commorated on the Helles Memorial on the Gallipoli Peninsula. (see *"Men Who Marched Away"* book , a copy of which is in the West End Museum)



TAUKKYAN WAR CEMETERY - RANGOON, BURMA

41 SQDN R.A.F. BADGE

!!!! ARTICLES WANTED !!!!

We have been fortunate in recent times to have had some very interesting articles written for or commissioned by Westender, this of course always relies on society members, readers and members of the public providing the material. I would like to thank all the many people who have contributed to Westender and to making it the success that it certainly is, however, I still need more of the same.

Anyone out there who has a story to tell of local history, not necessarily of West End, but also of the wider area of Southampton, of interesting family connections, of little known local events, anything in fact which should be put into print for posterity, please contact me at the address shown on the front cover, I can take your material in writing, or by e-mail. If you have pictures to illustrate your article so much the better. I look forward to all these articles no matter how long or short - Remember **Westender needs you!** Ed.

KEN PITTER

1918 - 2005

It is with great sadness that we have to report the death of local man Ken Pitter, who passed away recently on 25th August aged 86. Ken was born on 1st November 1918 in West End at the house that still serves the Pitter family firm of Coliseum Coaches. Ken was a pupil at West End Infant and Junior School and ultimately became a School Governor. He left school at 15 to work for his father, William Thomas Pitter. On 11th May 1940 Ken married Joyce at Bitterne Church and in 1943 he was called up for army service - serving until peace returned in 1945. Ken always a very hard worker built up the family business to what we see today, retiring at the age of 65, his sons David and Kerry continue the family tradition.



Ken was an active supporter of Bitterne & Woolston Rotary Club which he joined in 1968, remaining an active fund-raising member until his death. He leaves his wife Joyce (a former Mayor of Southampton), four children, nine grandchildren, and ten great-grandchildren. Our condolences go out to his family and friends on their sad loss.

Ken's funeral took place at St James'Church, West End on Wednesday 7th September 2005 at 3.00pm. with tributes from Norman Best and Russell and Mark Pitter. Private cremation at Southampton East Chapel followed the funeral service.

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.

1919 Donald Pleasance, 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.

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

THE NEXT MEETINGS ARE ....

November 2
TRAFALGAR — a good day's work!
Madeleine Selby

December 7
CHRISTMAS BUFFET, QUIZ, SLIDE SHOW & RAFFLE