



WESTENDER

NOVEMBER—DECEMBER 2005

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LOCAL LEGENDS (1)

MISS SYNGES DONKEY CART



MISS SYNGE (second from the left) WITH HER DONKEY CART



CLOSEUP OF THE DONKEY & CART

It is our intention over the next few issues to use this page to highlight some of the interesting people of West End's past. Some of those featured will have been war heroes, whilst others like Miss Synges featured here was a well known local personality. She lived at Tower House towards the top of Upper New Road, and in those days (early part of the 20th century) the house was in extensive grounds. She and her brother were involved with local Amateur Dramatics then held at the old Parish Hall on the corner of Chapel Road and High Street, the scenery was stored when not in use in the cellar of Tower House and the resourceful Miss Synges used the donkey cart to move the scenery from and to the Parish Hall. There are I am sure many other stories about Miss Synges, let us know. Ed.

West End Local History Society is sponsored by



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CHRISTMAS PAST Images from our archive (CHRISTMAS MEETING 2000)



SOMETHING REMARKABLE....

Review by Stan Waight

I knew that our former Treasurer, Derek Amey, had a great interest in trains, but it wasn't until the October meeting that I found that he also had a great depth of knowledge in classical music. This was demonstrated in a talk that had rather a novel approach - it was really half talk and half concert.

As an American newspaper put it, 'Something remarkable is developing there on the South Coast of Great Britain'; the more remarkable, as a British critic put it, 'in Bournemouth of all places'. That something was the development of the 'band' that subsequently became known as the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra.

Derek traced its growth, against a background of opposition by many members of the Bournemouth Municipal Council by which it was funded. The job of conductor was initially given to Dan Godfrey junior (his father, Bandmaster of the Grenadier Guards, had not responded to an offer), who was given '£95 per week to provide everything, including the uniforms with pill box hats, to play on the Pier, on the Bandstand and in the old Winter Gardens'. There were annual arguments in the Council Chamber as to whether the town needed an orchestra and whether they could afford it. Godfrey had a permanent fight on his hands until he retired in 1934, but he saw the band expand into a full symphony orchestra and his efforts earned him a knighthood.

The first concert was given at the Winter Gardens on Whit Monday 1893, and Godfrey was also instrumental in founding the Bournemouth Municipal Choir in 1910. The orchestra became officially known as the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra in 1953, when it began to receive grants from the Arts Council as well as local authorities throughout the South and West. It absorbed the short-lived Bournemouth Sinfonietta in 1968. The BSO tours widely both at home and abroad, and is a regular feature at the Proms.

Derek illustrated his talk with substantial extracts from five recordings made at various times by the BSO, the earliest being its performance of 'Crown Diamonds' by Auber in 1930. He finished in dramatic style with Hubert Parry's 'Jerusalem' as arranged by Edward Elgar.

TEDDY TOPP'S COTTAGE



The cottage shown in the picture on the left was photographed in July 2005 but is alas no more!

Having lain empty for a while it was demolished earlier this year to make way for a small development of houses in Moorgreen Road just before you pass over the M27 motorway.

Once the home of Councillor Teddy Topp, well known to local people for his sterling work within the community, the cottage has become the latest in a long line of village dwellings to go under the bulldozer in the name of progress.

It is lucky that we had prior knowledge of the fate of this cottage and were able to secure pictures for the WELHS archive before it became brick rubble.

PIGS, POETRY & POLITICS

Pauline Berry

Some of you may remember a few years ago when one of our speakers; Margaret Rayburn (nee Turner) who talked with great enthusiasm about her early life on Langholm Farm, West End (now 'Shergold's in Burnett's Lane). Her detailed, often humorous memories of this small-holding between the Wars, are at last recorded for posterity in her recent book, 'Pigs, Poetry & Politics'.

This sensitive reconstruction of her youth in rural Moorgreen, describes the author's intense relationship with her parents (especially her dominant left-wing and poetic father), her siblings, relations and of course the animals, including the pigs, on Langholm. Such was the influence of politics, that in the late 1930's her home frequently became a sanctuary to European refugees.

If you want a well-written book which is hard to put down then this is for you. Clearly written with great affection for the time and place, it is a fascinating social document written in Margaret's philosophical style. A good read for Christmas, or anytime, costing £8.50 (Clio Publishing) and available from our museum or the author who lives in Southampton.

SCARLET FEVER AT CHRISTMAS 1915

A seasonal extract from Bob Moody's book "I Remember, I Remember".

....."All the family missed school and Sunday School for six weeks including Christmas one year. I think it was 1915. My middle sister contracted Scarlet Fever, and there was so much of it around the Isolation Hospital was full up, and she had to stay at home all the family were in isolation. My mother had to stay with her in one room, which was the front bedroom, the only room that could be isolated. A blanket soaked in condisfluid was hung over the door.

Father was in quarantine too, so he was able to look after all of us. All the meals and the 'slops' had to be left outside the bedroom door and no one had to be near when the door was opened.

We had a very poor Christmas that year, no presents, no Christmas pud. We had Christmas dinner cooked by my father followed by a stirred-in apple pudding in place of plum-duff. However, I do remember that I got my box of chocs from Sunday School. Miss Drew handed them to me through the sitting room window on Christmas morning. Thanks to the great care taken no one else contracted the fever much to the surprise of the neighbours. My uncle, my father's brother-in-law, came and fumigated the room when the doctor gave the all clear. He sealed up all the cracks round the window and door and lit a sulphur-candle. This had to stay for twenty-four hours and the only murmur that I heard from my mother was that the sulphur had discoloured the brass on her beloved bedstead and it never did come clean again.

ALF HYDE AND THE CHRISTMAS PUDDING (pre 1912)

A seasonal extract from "Tales of Old West End" by Charlie Sillence.

.....One Christmas, when old Alf was on duty at Harefield stables with very little to do, as the household were enjoying their festivities, he decided to go up to the house and ask the cook for the ingredients to make a pudding. When he got back to the Harness Room, he mixed it up and put it on the fire which was always burning there for the Coachmen and grooms to keep warm. After a while, he realised that the pudding would take hours to cook, so relishing a drink, he set off for the White Swan (pub), near Gaters Mill. However, someone at the pub must have offered him a fairly lucrative temporary job, because it was a month before he returned to Harefield, and when he did, there was the pudding still in the pot, standing by the fire. Alf pulled it out and with the help of the other grooms, together with the two bottles of beer he had brought back, they quickly demolished the lot. It must have been some pudding!

A NEW BOOK FROM JOHN AVERY

A review by Nigel Wood

emblems and symbols - a look at the Victorian funeral traditions



Compiled by
John G. Avery
author *The Cholera Years*



The first director general of the Ordnance Survey, Britain's mapmaker. The compass marks his skill as a surveyor, the earth and planets encircle a window typical of church architecture. The orrery an instrument used in astronomy and the deceased's interest in church architecture have skillfully been included on the headstone.
[Sir Henry James grave SOC]

Gabriel sounds the horn to announce the arrival of a new soul, Michael extends a wreath of laurel to comfort the bereaved. The mason's choice of stone and the direction of the grain of the stone has over the years been marred by water seepage on the face [probably of Christ] in the centre stone of the arch. The water rising vertically in the stone has at times frozen and the pressure then flaked the surface of the stone.
[SOC]



Justice holds the scales to judge the case and a sword to administer punishment whilst on the grave a volume of the book of life lies with a sealed clasp. [The grave of the grandson of General Rosas SOC]

Another book from this prolific author, but this time on an unusual topic - entitled "*Emblems and Symbols, a look at the Victorian Funeral Traditions*". This A4 size book, profusely illustrated with specially commissioned photographs, initially explains the origins of Southampton Old Cemetery in 1846 and goes on to explain with the aid of excellent photographs the various types of memorial design. The pictures although in the main are taken in Southampton also include memorials in other cemeteries around the country.

An interesting inclusion is an alphabetical section printed on cream coloured pages which explain the sometimes hidden meanings of objects/wording seen on many Victorian memorials and headstones.

Interesting points explained in the book include the fact that 250 different types of stone were used in Victorian times by stonemasons to construct headstones and memorials. Also included are some excellent sketches of monuments by Bernard Lavell who is a member of Southampton Art Society and photographs by Gillian Blake and John Dunkason.

The author, John Avery, is well known in local history circles, a member of West End Local History Society, he also founded the Friends of Southampton Old Cemetery, an organisation devoted to restoring and maintaining the old civic cemetery situated at the bottom end of Southampton Common.

Well worth reading, and bearing in mind that each copy sold contributes to the conservation work of FoSOC, well worth the £4.00 price!

"EMBLEMS & SYMBOLS - a look at the Victorian Funeral Traditions" compiled by John Avery and published by Beech Books, 2005. 33 pages, softback. Price £4.00.

Available from West End Local History Society bookshop or direct by mail from the author John Avery (postage included for UK addresses). Cheques payable to J.G.Avery. 2 Beech Court, Beech Avenue, Southampton, SO18 4TS. Or you can contact John by e-mail at: john@avery7710.freeserve.co.uk

Website of FoSOC:

<http://friendsoldcemetery.mysite.wanadoo-members.co.uk/>

— INFORMATION WANTED —

Any information regarding *Lieutenant James Hallum*, Royal Marines. He is believed to be the Officer commanding the Shutter Telegraph station here at Westend, or Townhill as it was known then between 1806-1815. He continued living here at West End having first a small holding near the telegraph site, later moving to two different dwellings in the High Street. He died on October 25th 1871 aged 79. We have a good deal of information concerning the telegraph and now know its exact location thanks to work carried out by Ray Niblett, so after tying up some loose ends we hope to put all our findings in print in the near future. Please contact the Editor with any information. Many thanks.

STEAM RETURNS TO WEST END

Peter Wallace



THE GARRETT STEAM TRACTION ENGINE 'DOROTHY' IN THE WEST END CARNIVAL PARADE 2005

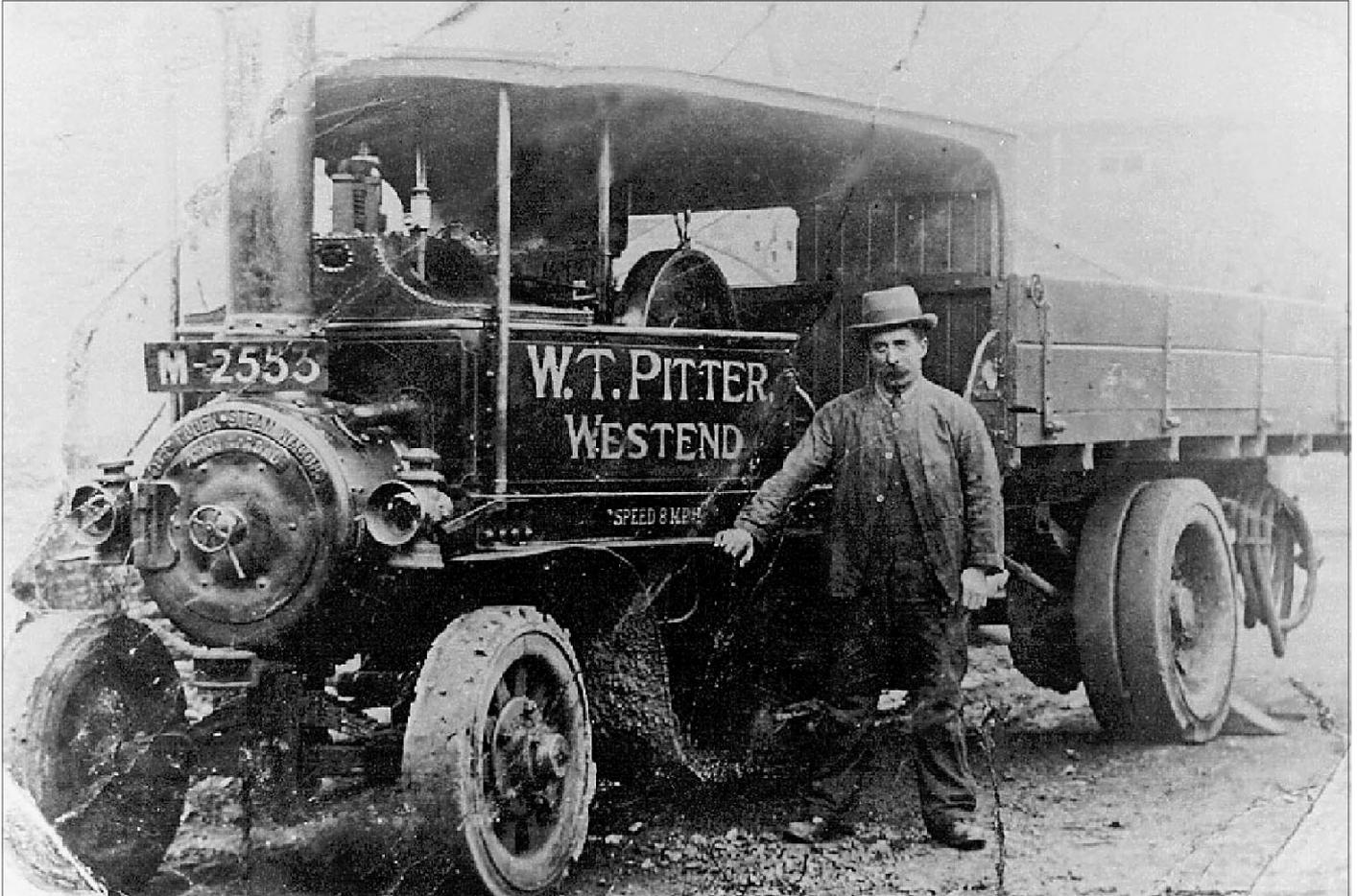
Back in June steam returned to West End in the form of a Garrett Steam Engine named 'Dorothy', which was built, by Richard Garrett and Sons well-known manufacturers of the time based in Leiston Suffolk in 1919.

It was originally supplied new to William Flowers and Sons Ltd. steam timber saw mills situated in Pangborne, Berkshire, where it was used for hauling logs, sawn timber, driving saw benches and other equipment as well as more general duties. During WWII it was used for hauling timber ammunition boxes made by Flowers as part of the war effort to the local railway station for shipment to the Ministry of Supply.

Falling into disrepair following an accident in the mid 1940's when it slipped into a roadside ditch, it eventually entered preservation in a sorry state in 1952. Since being preserved the engine has had some loving owners and some less so! The current owner, Malcolm Hudson from Hedge End acquired 'Dorothy' during 2004 and has lavished much love and attention on her since that time.

Steam was also seen and used in West End during the same year as 'Dorothy' was built. A local haulage contractor by the name of William Thomas Pitter acquired a Foden Steam Wagon M – 2553 as you can see
Continued on page 7

Continued from page 6

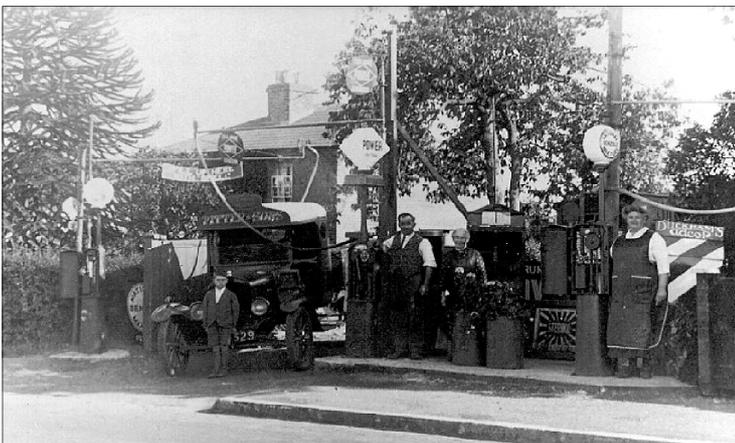


PITTERS STEAM LORRY (The only known picture of this vehicle)

in the picture above it was restricted to 8 miles per hour, that would be limited to only 5 miles per hour whilst towing. Prior to this everything was horse drawn.

William Thomas Pitter started his working life as an apprentice Carpenter & Wheelwright to his father William Pitter who moved to the area from Ropley in Hampshire with his family, initially he found work at Eastleigh Railway Works.

William started the transport business from their present premises in Botley Road West End during 1899 and it is still being used to this day by the Pitter Family for their various operations.



PITTERS GARAGE IN 1928



PITTERS PREMISES IN 2005

THE OLDEST GAME?

Peter Andrews

Some while back I put in the museum here at West End a set of Dibs. These were given to me by the Head Mistress, probably confiscated from some lad, of our local school. A more technical term for the game is Knuckle Bones.

I was wondering if this game could be the oldest still in existence, though I haven't seen anyone playing it for some years as other activities, like television have taken over!

There's a illustration in one of my books of five women, three standing and two crouched down (*see illustration at right*), one has three 'dibs' on the back of her hand and two dropping down.

This is of a painting on a marble panel from the first century B.C. and is itself a copy of a Greek original 400 years earlier, which was created by Alexandros of Athens and was entitled 'The Knucklebone Players, Herculaneum', and is on show in Naples.

Perhaps we could revive this game and have challenge matches with Hedge End, though somehow I think TV will win every time!



PENTELITHA

The picture above is a painting on marble from Herculaneum in the archaeological museum in Naples

!! GOODBYE !!

By the time you read this article Doreen and Ray Niblett, both staunch supporters of WELHS for many years, will be in Western Australia—not for a holiday, but permanently to live. After a “recce” holiday last year they have both decided to follow their daughter and her husband to Western Australia, south of Perth and settle down to enjoy the milder climate and wide open spaces. They will both be missed, but we wish them “bon voyage” and a great time “down under”.

Ray many of you will know is our Webmaster who designed our excellent website and continues to maintain and add to it as required, and is known for his monumental work with the 1845 Tithe Map and bringing it within the reach of our website viewers (check it out on our website!). Doreen has been doing sterling work on our behalf both with her DTP (Desktop Publishing) skills, producing pamphlets, books and our beautiful Christmas cards (now unfortunately out of stock) for which she painted the original watercolours (one of her other talents is as a skilled water-colourist), as well as organising our library and cataloguing documents, maps etc.. in our archive.

Ray has very kindly agreed to continue as our Webmaster, albeit at long range. Obviously there will be a pause of several months before anything new appears on our website, due to Ray's move, buying a house in Oz and settling in and getting a telephone connection etc..

All the WELHS Committee and members wish to send them their warmest regards and thank them for all their hard work on behalf of the Society and wish them a wonderful retirement time in Australia. I am sure this will not be the last we have heard of them.

Ed.

TRAFALGAR - a good days work

A Review by Stan Waight

We all know Madeleine Selby of old, and have come to expect the very best of an evening's informative entertainment from her. She did not disappoint us at our November meeting, when she talked about Nelson's famous victory off Cape Trafalgar. During question time she confided that she had been very excited by the celebrations in the bicentennial year, and this had shone through in the enthusiasm with which she delivered her address. Her style was almost lyrical, and it was clear that she knows the subject well and is an enormous admirer of the great man.

Madeleine gave us three ideas to start with - the denial of the sea lanes to Napoleon, the glory of Britain and the establishment of Nelson as a folk hero. There was a natural progression to the presentation, but there was such a wealth of fascinating detail that it is impossible to give Madeleine full credit for it. It began with a very short biography of the admiral and here, because the evening was about Trafalgar, Emma Hamilton didn't get a mention. The political background to the battle came next, with the need for a strong navy to prevent the invasion of Britain by the arch-enemy. The preparations for engagement, the battle itself and Nelson's death were then described in the most graphic of detail, and the talk ended with an account of the return of his body to England for a great state burial in St Pauls.

Incidentally, the title of the talk, "A Good Days Work", was taken from a typical understatement in the Royal Navy's archive.

The great burst of applause at the end reflected our appreciation of a hugely entertaining talk, and I for one am delighted to see that Madeleine will be speaking to us again in the Spring.

FINAL CURTAIN CALL FOR THE WEST END LITTLE THEATRE CLUB

"Curtain Call" was the name of the latest production offering from the West End Little Theatre Club, it marked the 60th Anniversary of the group which has provided so much entertainment and enjoyment for West Enders over the years. Unfortunately, due to rising costs and falling membership the much reduced membership of WELTC have decided to call it a day, they will be much missed by our village! Founded in 1945 by the vicar of St James Church, Ivor Jeffery-Machin, its first production was in January 1946 - J.B.Priestley's "Dangerous Corner" - albeit a trifle risky. The club also produced this play again to celebrate its 50th anniversary in 1995, with the part of the radio announcer being played by Alan Daw who also played the same part in the 1946 version. Alan has the distinction of being the only founder member still active today. In the early days the club toured its productions to various Army and RAF camps in Hampshire and to venues such as Netley Hospital, Southampton Borough Hospital (now the General Hospital), Bishops Waltham, Hedge End and Curdridge etc.. Performances in the early days were held in the old Church Hall at St. James Church but later moved to the Parish Centre in 1981. The club has over the years produced 136 full length plays, with many one act plays at Carnivals and Art Festivals. In 1972 the club was awarded the prestigious "Gerald Whiteman Cup" at the Fareham Arts Festival, an excellent result as this was the first time they had entered!

SCHOOL ITEMS WANTED FOR THE MUSEUM

We hope in the near future to set up a local schools display in the museum. This will be centred around one of the original desks from Hilldene that we have had donated. We have been setting aside such things as ink wells, dip pens, school bell, teachers whistle etc.. But still need the following items: St. James School cap, preferably with badge attached, St. James School badge and or tie, St. James School blazer with badge. If anyone has any of these items and is prepared to loan or preferably donate them to the museum it would be much appreciated and will help us no end. Thank you.

PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS FOR 2006

January 4
DID SHAKESPEARE COME TO
HAMPSHIRE
George Watts

February 1
HAREFIELD—from Gentry to housing estate
Keith Marsh

March 1
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
plus
A LOOK AT OLD WEST END ARCHIVE
IMAGES

April 5
THE CUCKOO IN THE PHEASANT'S NEST
 (Southwick House and D-Day)
Madeleine Selby

May 3
THE CAPTAIN'S LADY
 (The Tale of the Indomitable Mrs C.B. Fry)
Ron Morris

June 7
HEADACHES, HAEMORRHOIDS & HERBS!
Mary South

July 5
VITAL SPARKS!
 (Women and The Music Hall)
Jean Cook

August 2
A WALK AROUND WEST END'S HERITAGE
 (Details to be advised nearer the time)

September 6
WILT WAKE AN OLD DREAMER?
 (Tubby Clayton and Toc H)
Geoff Watts

October 4
ASPECTS OF NETLEY HOSPITAL
Nigel Wood & Lin Dowdell

November 1
THE HISTORY OF SPECTACLES
Ivan Downer

December 1
CHRISTMAS BUFFET, QUIZ,
SLIDE SHOW & RAFFLE

Thanks are once again due to our Secretary, Pauline Berry, who has worked hard to bring us another years worth of speakers covering a diversity of subjects—well done Pauline!

On this day (December 7th.) in.....

- 1732** The original Covent Garden Opera House in London, designed by Edward Shepherd, was opened.
- 1783** William Pitt the Younger became the youngest of Britain's Prime Ministers—aged 24.
- 1817** Captain Bligh, captain of the 'Bounty', died in London.
- 1894** Ferdinand de Lesseps, French diplomat, engineer and promoter of the Suez Canal, died aged 89.
- 1941** Some 360 Japanese planes attacked the US Pacific Fleet anchored at Pearl Harbor in Hawaii.
- 1972** Apollo 17 was launched, with Eugene Cernan, Ronald Evans and Dr Harrison Schmitt - Cernan and Schmitt making the 6th moon landing.



Well its that time of year again!
 The Officers and Committee would like to thank everyone for contributing to the successful year the Society has had and to wish all our readers and members a very Happy Christmas & a Peaceful and prosperous New Year

