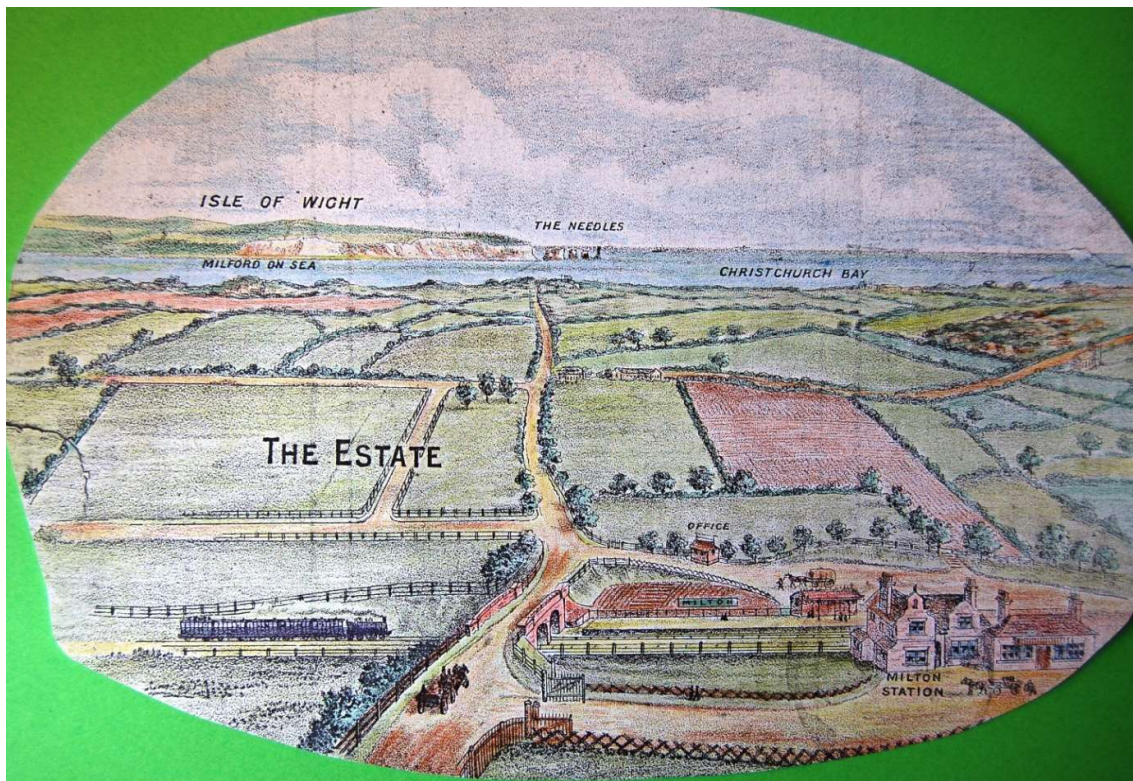


Number One New Milton

A joint project by New Milton Town Council and the Milton Heritage Society are seeking to turn the vacant Railway Station Masters House into a heritage centre for the benefit of the community. The idea was first conceived by Councillor Keith Craze who realised that New Milton was lacking a heritage centre which would tell the history of Milton Parish. He set about negotiating with Network Rail for a lease on the building and then sought approval and funding from New Milton Town Council.

As many readers are aware the arrival of the London and South Western Railway and the building of a station about a mile north east of Milton village created the new town of New Milton. Initially, when first built in 1886 it was simply just a railway station in the middle of the countryside as seen here in this artist's impression taken from the 1894 sale of land catalogue.



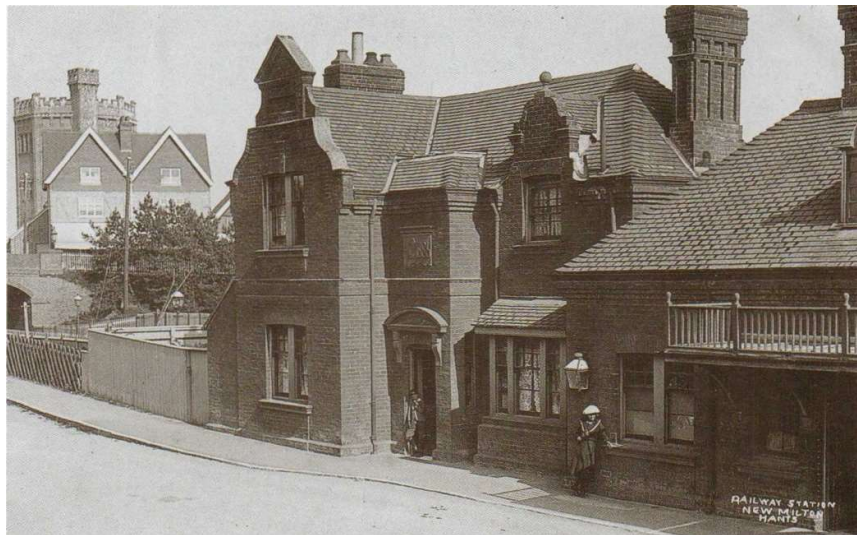
This image suggests to us that the railway station was the first building in this area. We know that soon after the railway station was built other

buildings soon appeared nearby. The line of shops known as Broadway Parade contained the first sub post office in the area which, under the tenure of Emma Newhook, used the name *New Milton Sub Post Office* to avoid confusion and misdirected mail going to the Milton Post Office beside the *Wheatsheaf Public House* in Milton village. In 1896 this name was adopted by the railway company for their new station.

Our home town began life with the railway station. Houses, a hotel and shops grew up around it and joined up with Milton Village to the south west. Milton Parish had always consisted of the villages of Milton, Ashley, Bashley and Barton. At the heart of that conurbation grew a new town.

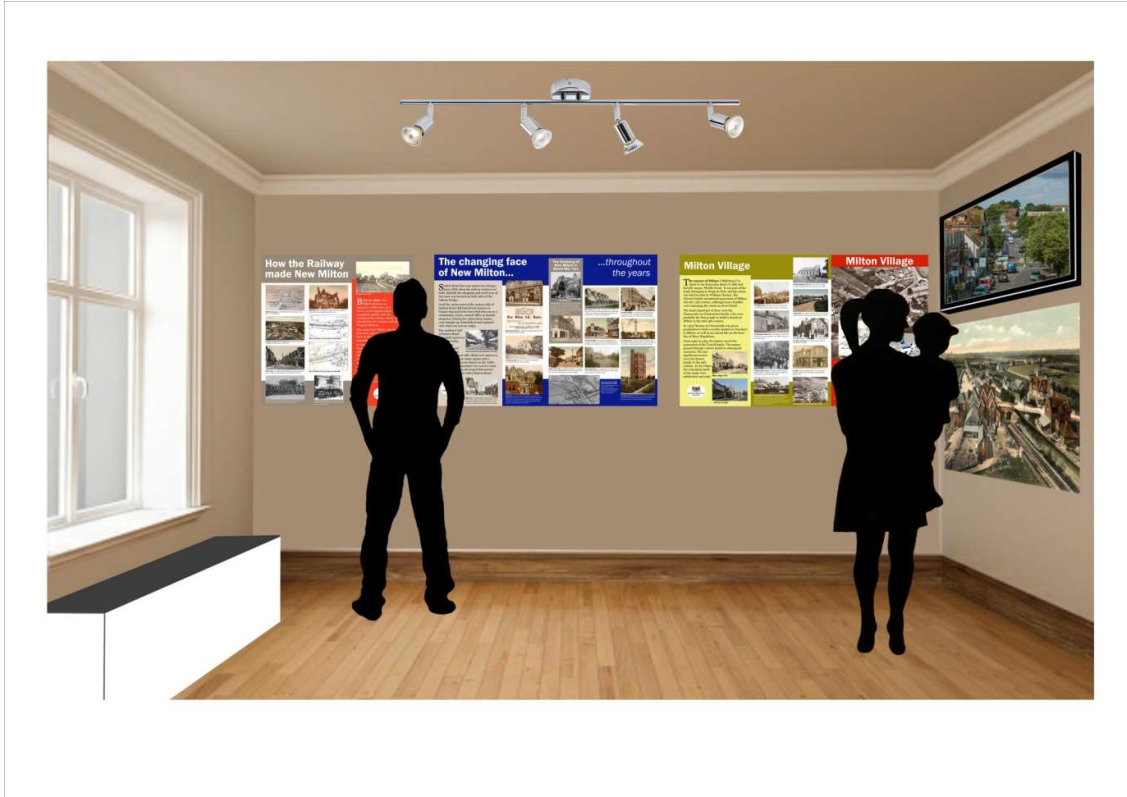
New Milton, born in 1886, was the young pretender in terms of heritage and history. All of the villages in Milton Parish had a long and rich history stretching back to the *Domesday Book* and beyond.

The history and heritage of our communities needs to be preserved and made available to everyone. An opportunity to do just that has become available.



The Railway Stations Masters house, the very first building, No. 1 New Milton, has become available to rent from South West Rail. A group led by Councillor Keith Craze of New Milton Town Council and the Milton Heritage Society are set to take over the property and transform it into a heritage centre which will tell the story of how our parish has evolved from 1086 through to modern times. The idea is to use each room of the

ground floor of the house to display an exhibition which will tell the story of our local history. Upstairs will be a large room which can be used as a learning centre for schools and youth groups to visit and use. This will also feature further heritage displays.



The exhibitions will consist of maps, images and artefacts showing our very early history through to the arrival of the railway in 1886. Another section will exhibit the history of our parish from the arrival of the railway through to the end of World War One. Another presentation will explain our history in the 1920s and 1930s. The next will tell the story of what happened to our community in World War 2. The final exhibition will present the post 1945 history. It is hoped to include excerpts from oral history recordings where visitors can hear local residents telling of their involvement in our town's history.

As the Victorian staircase is narrow and steep, some visitors will have difficulty accessing the upstairs exhibition material. Advice has been sought from the New Forest Disability Information Service and a large interactive screen containing all of the upstairs material and more will be provided in one of the downstairs exhibition rooms. This will ensure that

disabled visitors do not miss out on the exhibition upstairs and will be able to see everything on display.

It is intended to turn the garden, which is currently a neglected wilderness, into a dementia friendly sensory garden which will become a beautiful gateway to New Milton for those arriving by train. The garden



will be a real opportunity for community involvement with help already promised by the 'Men's Shed' to make raised flower beds and by other keen local gardeners who have volunteered to get involved when the time comes. The garden needs a complete makeover as an attractive feature for people to see when they arrive in our town. It is hoped to make a part of the garden a dementia-aware area where tasks such as potting or planting using suitable tables can be done.

In order to turn this opportunity into a reality the project team need your help. The building has not been lived in for several years and needs to be rewired, replumbed and redecorated from top to bottom.



Display cabinets need to be purchased and exhibition material sourced. The team will be working with a local graphic designer to produce a superb exhibition telling the history of Milton Parish.

The old cafe on the Bournemouth bound side will be returned to its former use as passenger waiting room. In addition it is hoped to create in the room an information hub that will enable local retailers, taxis firms, cafe owners, hotels and bed and breakfast premises to advertise. This area will also highlight to visitors what is happening in our town in terms of events and attractions.

A number of local companies and individual Miltonians have very kindly agreed to sponsor the heritage project or assist it in other ways. A number have volunteered to help work on the restoration and to run the heritage centre after opening. The team behind No.1 New Milton are very grateful to them.

Are you able to make a donation towards this project? Would you be able to sponsor a room? Do you have maps, or photographs or material that the project team could borrow or copy and display in the heritage centre? Do you have time to offer as a volunteer? The project is in great need of volunteers to help in the restoration of the building and afterwards to help open and run the heritage centre. If you can help in any way towards this heritage project please contact Nick Saunders, the Chairman of the Milton Heritage Society via nick@miltonheritagesociety.co.uk or 01425 618549.