

Milford House

Today the original Milford House consists of three houses with another five properties in the adjacent out-buildings. In front of it, Milford Court has twenty two houses.

In 1905 Milford House was one dwelling with grounds covering 14.5 acres stretching almost to Keyhaven Road. Milford Crescent did not exist until 1929; the main road previously went up Church Hill in front of the church to join the Lymington Road.

In the 13th c. this area was in the Manor of Milford Baddesley owned by the Knights Templar.

By 1608 it was owned by Arthur Swaine who sold the Manor to Robert Rickman but the house they lived in was not in the same position as the current Milford House.

William Rickman, a merchant and four times mayor of Portsmouth between 1736 and 1756, was born in Milford in 1701.

Towards the end of the 1730's William decided to build a new house slightly to the north east of the old building, and this house is the central part of the current Milford House.

Rickman died in 1764 and the house was bought in 1770 by William Reynolds, a London businessman. Some of Reynolds' wealth came from the West Indian sugar trade with two plantations in Montego Bay, Jamaica.

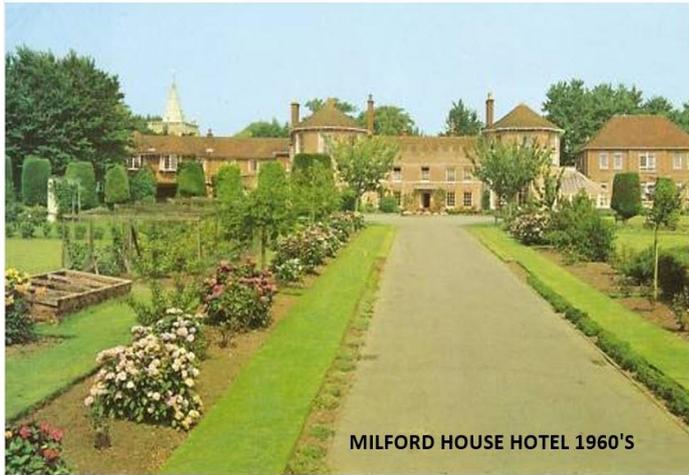
William and his son, Edmund, added the two circular wings in the late 1700s, and the east wing contains a beautiful circular staircase in the style of Robert Adam,

With the sugar trade under threat of the abolition of slavery in the British Empire, William Reynolds' son, William, was in financial difficulties. He and his wife, Sophia (the sister of Mrs Whitby of Newlands), left Milford to live on their remaining Jamaican estate, Catherine Mount in Montego Bay.

The house was bought by Mrs Whitby who now owned all the Milford Manors - Baddesley, Barnes and Montagu. Although she owned Milford House for many years she never lived there, selling it in 1867 to Mr. W. Talbot Agar, the first owner to live in the house for forty years.

Following his death in 1906 his will stipulated that the house should go to whichever of his children bid the most for it. It was Edward who was

successful, and he lived there until his death in 1927. It was then sold for £6,300 to Mr. Goodman of Camberley. Some of the land was sold, and the house itself rented to Mr. & Mrs. George Allan. Allan ran Milford House as a hotel, eventually buying the freehold in 1936 for £5,400.



A company, Milford House Hotel Ltd., was formed in 1945, selling the hotel in 1954 to Mr & Mrs Wells and Miss Cutbill. Following the death of Mr Wells in 1959 his daughter, Mrs Herbert, and her husband returned from New Zealand to help her mother run it as a popular and successful business.

The hotel was sold in 1972 for £158,000 when David Church [Surrey] Ltd., built the twenty two houses that are now Milford Court Milford House itself and its adjacent buildings were turned into eight houses with the original house being 3, 4 and 5 Milford House.

MOSHRS website www.milfordhistory.org.uk is part of the Bringing History Home project supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund and Milford-on-Sea Parish Council.

For further detail see - 'Milford House, Diana K. Coldicott, 1979'