

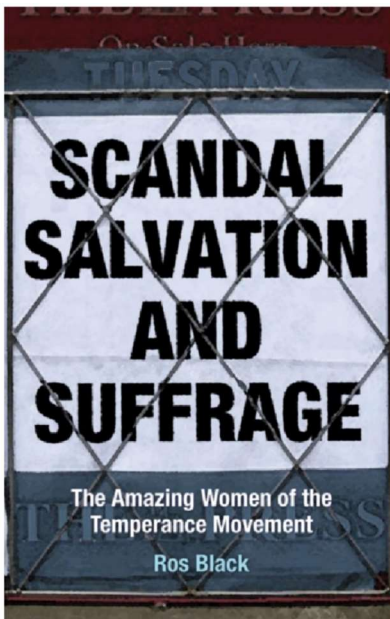


## The Temperance Movement in Surrey and Sussex

On 11<sup>th</sup> August 2021, members of the Haywards Heath & District Probus Club were treated to a splendid and thought-provoking talk by Ros Black. To promote her latest book, the speaker has put together this new talk: *Temperance Tales from Sussex and Surrey* and has been uncovering some fascinating tales of how, in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, temperance meetings were frequently disturbed by youths, often fuelled by free beer from local publicans or brewers.

In some instances, there was significant opposition to the temperance campaigners, especially towards *The Salvation Army*, with Skeleton Armies being formed to mock the Salvationists. But there were also lower-key demonstrations, which disturbed the tranquillity of Sussex villages and towns such as Steyning, Horsham and Cuckfield. In 1897, the *Mid Sussex Times* referred to an incident when the lower part of Cuckfield was filled by a crowd, which indulged in what was described as "ill-timed frolic and indiscreet refreshment". A 'spectator' from Handcross wrote about "covert indecencies" being hurled at "respectable females when the opportunity offered. More drunken men were to be seen rolling about between Pease Pottage and Handcross than ever was seen on days of clubs and fairs".

### The work of the women of the temperance movement



When women had no vote, their temperance work allowed many voices to be heard and their actions to count. In her book, *Scandal, Salvation and Suffrage*, exploring a forgotten but vital element of women's history, Ros Bird explains how closely the temperance campaign was linked to the fight for suffrage. Told through the true stories of real women, we see how they rose above their status as 'the weaker sex' to campaign for restrictions on the sale of alcohol, having recognised that many social problems were caused by excessive drinking – an issue still prevalent today. Some women were admirable but not likeable, while others were more radical and ahead of their time. Sex, slander and scandal all feature in their stories. This book leaves the reader to decide whether there are any lessons to be learned today from the work of these remarkable women and encourages us to remember their hard work and determination. Based on considerable research but written in an accessible way, *Scandal, Salvation and Suffrage* aims to celebrate the work of these extraordinary women and will appeal to those who enjoy social and women's history. It is not aimed at teetotalers - readers can, and should, raise a toast to these extraordinary women.

Source Credit: <https://www.troubador.co.uk/bookshop/history-politics-society/scandal-salvation-and-suffrage/>

### The Temperance Movement

The temperance movement is a social movement against the consumption of alcoholic beverages. Participants in the movement typically criticise alcohol intoxication or promote complete abstinence from alcohol (teetotalism). Its leaders emphasise the adverse effects of alcohol on people's health, personalities and family lives, often leading to poverty and domestic violence. During the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, the temperance movement became prominent in many countries, particularly in English-speaking and Scandinavian ones. It eventually led to national prohibitions in Canada (1918 to 1920), in Norway (spirits only from 1919 to 1926) and the United States (1920 to 1933), as well as local Prohibition in India (from 1948). Much of the temperance movement was based on organised religion, which held women responsible for edifying their children to be abstaining citizens. Nevertheless, temperance was tied in with both religious renewal and progressive politics, particularly female suffrage.

At the beginning of the First World War, the temperance movement received an unexpected boost due to state intervention when the Liberal government passed the *Defence of the Realm Act* in 1914. It meant that pub hours were licensed, beer was watered down and was subject to a penny a pint extra tax. Two years later, the *State Management Scheme* nationalised breweries and pubs in some regions of Britain where armaments manufacture was taking place. At the same time, some temperance organisations connected with the labour movement: for example, the Scottish Prohibition Party, founded in 1901 by a communist temperance activist called Bob Stewart, who followed the British Labour Party on all other issues. It went on to defeat Winston Churchill in Dundee in the 1922 general election.

Source: [Wikipedia](#)

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## The White Ribbon Association

The *White Ribbon Association*, formally known as the *British Women's Temperance Association* (BWTA), was founded in 1876, following a women's temperance meeting in Newcastle. It became the foremost women's temperance movement in Britain. The Temperance Movement was at its height in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, campaigning against alcohol consumption and actively trying to get the government to legislate to restrict its sale. Advocates of temperance were concerned about the social impact of drunkenness. The Association was instrumental in bringing women into the public sphere. At its peak, the Association had hundreds of thousands of members who belonged to local branches - the branches formed County unions, affiliated to the national organisation with its headquarters based in London until 2006. Although the variations of names suggest otherwise, the branches and county unions were mainly in England,

The name of the *White Ribbon Association* pays homage to this history. A white ribbon was the symbol of the women's Temperance Movement – women would pin a bow of white ribbon to their clothing to signify their loyalty to the cause – they would refer to themselves as "*White Ribboners*" and signed a pledge to abstain from alcohol. As times have changed, the Association no longer promotes total abstinence but continues its valuable work educating the community about the harmful effects of alcohol, tobacco, drugs and gambling.

Source: <https://white-ribbon.org.uk/our-history/>



**Margaret Eleanor Parker, first president of BWTA**

Picture Credit:

URL: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Margaret\\_Eleanor\\_Parker.png](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Margaret_Eleanor_Parker.png)

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At the outset, the Association featured the U.S. temperance activist "Mother" **Eliza Stewart**. **Margaret Eleanor Parker**, a founding member, served as its first president. The next president was **Clara Lucas Balfour**. **Margaret Bright Lucas**, who toured with Stewart during these meetings, succeeded as BWTA president in 1878. The BWTA achieved more success under her successor, **Lady Henry Somerset**, but ultimately British temperance was destined to achieve less than its U.S. counterpart. Lady Henry was succeeded by **Rosalind Howard, Countess of Carlisle**, known as "The Radical Countess" for her opposition to alcohol consumption. Lucas was a key link in the Anglo-American women's reform networks and a pioneer in the British women's temperance movement.

Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White\\_Ribbon\\_Association](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White_Ribbon_Association)

## The Temperance Society

The *Temperance Society* was founded in Bradford, Yorkshire, England. Joseph Rowntree and his father wrote widely on the subject of temperance. While they acknowledged why alcohol was so popular, they opposed the consumption of alcohol, which they called '*the drink misery*'. Joseph Rowntree wrote *The Temperance Problem and Social Reform* (1899). Rowntree does not appear to have been a teetotaler himself, at least until 1880, as he is said to have owned a personal wine cellar. Drinking chocolate was encouraged as a substitute for alcohol – it is one of the reasons why so many of the great chocolate barons were Quakers, such as Rowntree, Cadbury, and Fry.

Source: <https://www.rowntreesociety.org.uk/explore-rowntree-history/rowntree-a-z/temperance-movement/>

## The British Association for the Promotion of Temperance

In 1832, Preston cheesemaker Joseph Livesey and seven workingmen signed a pledge never to drink alcohol again. Other groups of working men followed the example of Livesey and his friends, and in 1835, *The British Association for the Promotion of Temperance* was formed. At first, temperance usually involved a promise not to drink spirits, and members continued to drink wine and beer. However, by the 1840s, temperance societies began advocating teetotalism. It was a much stronger position as it included a pledge to abstain from all alcohol for life and a promise not to provide it to others. Joseph Livesey opened the first temperance hotel\* in 1833. The following year, he founded the first temperance magazine, *The Preston Temperance Advocate*. In Australia, in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the hotels were called *Coffee Palaces* - often large and elaborate residential hotels that did not serve alcohol.

\* These were hotels providing an alcohol-free alternative to corner public houses and residential hotels. By the 1870s, they could be found in every town and city, some quite large and elaborate.

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## The Glasgow and West of Scotland Temperance Society

The early temperance movement was inspired by Presbyterian Church of Ireland minister John Edgar, who ceremoniously poured his stock of whiskey out of his window in 1829. On 14<sup>th</sup> August of that year, he wrote a letter in the Belfast Telegraph advocating temperance. Edgar and other supporters concentrated their efforts on eliminating spirits rather than wine and beer. The first organisation to promote temperance (*The Glasgow and West of Scotland Temperance Society*) was founded in 1829 by John Dunlop and his aunt Liliash Graham of Gairbraid.

## The Methodist Church

The Methodist revival began in England with a group of men, including John Wesley (1703–1791) and his younger brother Charles (1707–1788), as a movement within the Church of England in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when social evils such as poverty and domestic violence were greatly exacerbated by drunkenness, *Methodism* identified itself with the 'total abstinence' temperance movement. At the time, strong alcohol was inexpensive, and many suffered because of it. Methodism has retained a reputation for temperance, but today, alcohol consumption for Methodists is a matter of personal choice.

## Temperance Chartism

In 1838, *Chartism's* mass working-class movement for universal suffrage included something called "*temperance chartism*". Faced with the refusal of parliament of the day to give the right to working people to vote, the temperance chartists saw the campaign against alcohol as a way of proving to the elites that working-class people were responsible enough and should be granted the vote.

## Other Activists

Catholic priest Theobald Mathew persuaded thousands in Ireland to sign the pledge to abstain from alcohol. Members of the *British Women's Temperance Association* were also responsible for persuading men to promise never again to drink alcohol. *The Band of Hope* (founded in Leeds in 1847), a temperance organisation for working-class children, also helped to increase the number of teetotallers.

Source: <https://spartacus-educational.com/REtemperance.htm>

## **In passing, I should mention...**

### The trainee accountant

As a sixteen-year-old articled trainee accountant in the mid-1950s, I was often sent from Hove to Worthing with a senior audit clerk and started to learn the job of being an auditor. The destination was the *Temperance Building Society*. Frankly, I can't remember too much about the auditing assignment. Even if I could remember, professional etiquette prevents sharing of what I found or learned, but I can tell you that it was not exciting work.

Over the years, I often wondered what happened to the *Temperance Building Society* and, out of curiosity, I looked it up the other day. The full name was the *Temperance Permanent Building Society*. It merged with the *Bedfordshire Building Society* in 1974 and was renamed *Gateway Building Society*, with its Registered Head Office being in Regent Street, London, with the Administrative Headquarters remaining in Worthing. It was taken over by the *Woolwich Building Society* in 1987 and, after becoming a PLC, became part of Barclays Bank in the 2000s. In my research, I came across an organisation called *Graces' Guide*, the leading source of historical information on industry and manufacturing in Britain. Their web publication contains 144,680 pages of information and 230,362 images on early companies, their products, and the people who designed and built them found something about the *Temperance Permanent Building Society*, from 1891 – long before my time! If you click [here](#), you will find that the Society was established in 1854 and by 1891 was offering shares paying an astonishing 4% a year in interest.

### My wife's Great Uncle

Edwin Hines was my wife's Great Uncle (the brother of her paternal Great Grandfather). In 1881, he was a miller and was working as such in Small Dole, Sussex.

There is no trace of him in the 1891 census, but by 1901 he was living at Monarch Buildings, Southwark, married with two sons, aged under two, and working as a 'journeyman miller.' It was said that he was ashamed that he had spent all the family money on alcohol. Tragically, in 1904, after a drunken argument with his wife, Edwin Hines left Monarch Buildings and announced he "*was going to take to the water*." He did not return home that night but was found, tragically drowned in the River Thames, two days later.

The Coroner's Report was published in the Times.

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## Further Reading

Ros Black mentioned many other people and organisations involved in the Temperance Movement. Some (in alphabetical order) are mentioned below with hyperlinks for readers to follow up:

- ❖ **Anne Jane Carlisle (sometimes as Carlile):** The celebrated Presbyterian Temperance campaigner, Anne Carlisle, turned many a person in Ireland away from alcohol. Among her supporters was the Temperance Society leader Fr Theobald Mathew, with whom she overcame religious differences, supporting each other in saving souls from the excesses of drinking. <https://www.anglocelt.ie/2020/08/15/anne-jane-carlisle-a-life-of-loss-temperance-and-hope/>
- ❖ **Catherine Booth – The ‘Mother’ of the Salvation Army:** Catherine (born Mumford) was married to William Booth. From an early age, she was a serious and sensitive girl with a strong Christian upbringing and became concerned about the problems of alcohol. <https://www.salvationarmy.org.au/about-us/our-story/our-history/founders-william-and-catherine-booth/>
- ❖ **Crystal Palace Temperance Venue:** The story of the 1851 Great Exhibition and its iconic venue, Joseph Paxton’s Crystal Palace, is well known. What is perhaps not so well known is the influence that Temperance had on the ‘Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations’. <https://www.alliancehousefoundation.org.uk/single-post/2017/07/01/temperance-the-great-exhibition-and-the-crystal-palace>
- ❖ **Four Pillars of Temperance:** Cardinal virtues are four virtues of mind and character in classical philosophy and Christian theology. Prudence, Justice, Fortitude, and Temperance were suggested as the essential virtues required for a virtuous life. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cardinal\\_virtues](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cardinal_virtues)
- ❖ **National Temperance League (NTL):** In the United Kingdom, the *National Temperance League* was founded in 1856 due to an amalgamation of the *National Temperance Society* and the *London Temperance League*. The *Royal Navy Temperance Society*, which began as a society of abstainers aboard the HMS Reindeer, became a subsidiary of the NTL as a result of the regular provision of financial assistance. <https://memorialdrinkingfountains.wordpress.com/the-temperance-movement/the-national-temperance-league/> and <https://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/38734.html>
- ❖ **Sarah Robinson:** Sarah Robinson was a British temperance activist. She set up the *Aldershot Mission Institute* in 1863 to cater to the town's garrison. Throughout the 1860s, she travelled around British Army camps and garrisons distributing bibles, holding prayer meetings and providing games and reading material to the soldiers. She established the *Portsmouth Soldiers' Institute* in 1874 to cater for soldiers travelling through the port. For her efforts, she was nicknamed the "Soldier's Friend" and received some recognition from the government. Robinson suffered from a spinal problem that limited her mobility in later life, though she continued to travel widely to raise funds for her missions. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sarah\\_Robinson\\_\(activist\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sarah_Robinson_(activist))
- ❖ **The Band of Hope 1847:** The Band of Hope was first proposed by Rev. Jabez Tunnicliff, a Baptist minister in Leeds, after the death in June 1847 of a young man whose life was cut short by alcohol. In the autumn of 1847, with the help of other temperance workers, including Anne Jane Carlisle, the Band of Hope was founded. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hope\\_UK](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hope_UK)
- ❖ **The Sailors’ Friend: Dame Agnes Elizabeth Weston:** also known as Aggie Weston, she was an English philanthropist noted for her work with the Royal Navy. For over twenty years, she lived and worked among the sailors of the Royal Navy. The result of her powerful influence is evidenced in the widespread reform which took place in the habits of hundreds of men to whom her name was a talisman for good. In her day, one naval man in six was a total abstainer. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agnes\\_Weston](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agnes_Weston). See also: "You Don't Make a Torpedo Gunner Out of a Drunkard:" Agnes Weston, *Temperance, and the British Navy* at: [https://www.cnrs-scrn.org/northern\\_mariner/vol09/nm\\_9\\_1\\_1to22.pdf](https://www.cnrs-scrn.org/northern_mariner/vol09/nm_9_1_1to22.pdf)
- ❖ **Thomas Cramp:** Thomas Cramp was the founder of the *East Grinstead Temperance Society*. He was born at Lewes in 1810, where his father was a veterinary surgeon. He spent his boyhood at Bexhill and came to East Grinstead as an apprentice. He married Miss Jane Pretty, the daughter of a Wesleyan minister, in June 1841. He had begun his total abstinence practice four years earlier – this was total abstinence from tea and coffee as well as alcoholic liquors, water being his only beverage. The Society he started met with violent opposition. <http://www.sussexhistory.co.uk/history-east-grinstead/east-grinstead-history%20-%200282.htm>
- ❖ **World’s Women Temperance Association/Union (WCTU):** This Association was founded in Cleveland, Ohio, USA in 1874. After Frances Willard took over leadership in 1879, the WCTU became one of the largest and most influential women’s groups of the 19<sup>th</sup> century by expanding its platform to campaign for labour laws, prison reform and suffrage. With Willard’s death in 1898, the WCTU began to distance itself from feminist groups, instead focusing primarily on prohibition. <https://www.history.com/topics/womens-history/womans-christian-temperance-union>

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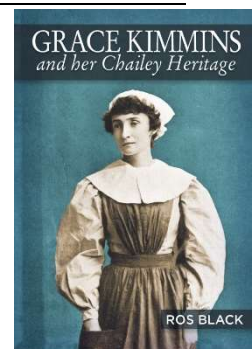
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## About the Speaker



Ros Black, who lives in Haywards Heath, is a popular speaker and author. She previously managed a charitable organisation, which provides housing and support to disadvantaged people. Ros now writes about women who did similar work but in very different times - primarily in Victorian England. She delights in uncovering forgotten heroines.

Her latest book is *Grace Kimmins and her Chailey Heritage*. It tells how Grace Kimmins started with her social work in the Bermondsey slums in the 1890s and moved on to establish her unique craft school for disabled boys in Chailey, Sussex in 1903, through two World Wars, to the takeover of Chailey Heritage by the NHS in 1948.



Ros has written three other books:

- ❖ *A Talent for Humanity - The life and Work of Lady Henry Somerset*
- ❖ *Duxhurst - Surrey's Lost Village*; and
- ❖ *Scandal, Salvation and Suffrage - The Amazing Women of the Temperance Movement*.

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