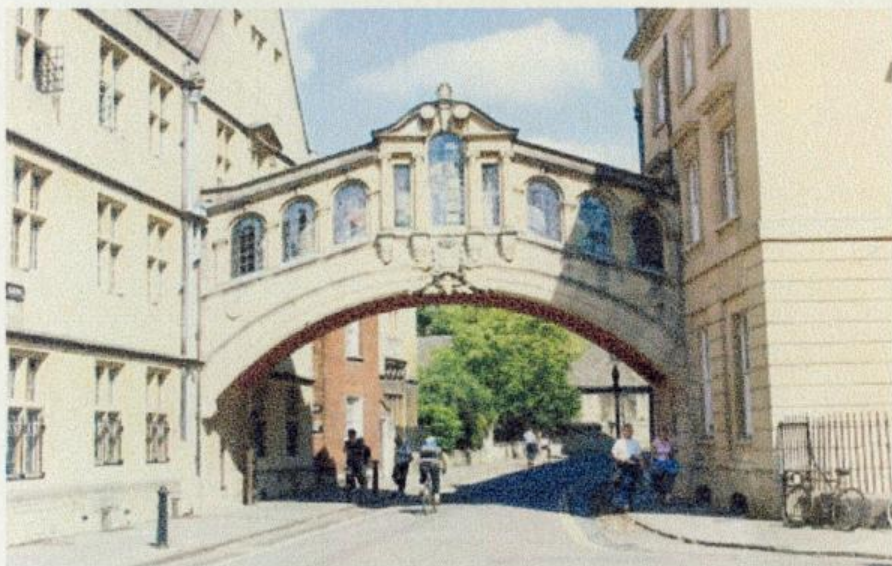


# THE HAREFIELD HERALD



## 2015

The occasional Magazine of  
**Harefield History Society**

5th Issue

**SINCERE THANKS TO ALL OUR SPONSORS FOR THEIR  
SUPPORT IN PRODUCING THIS JOURNAL**



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# EDITORIAL



## **Here we are again with issue number 5.**

I hope you are finding these journals interesting and perhaps even looking forward to their publication. This time there are some articles that are very relevant to Harefield. A transcript of a talk by Caroline Cotton of the Central Library that gives a very interesting commentary on village life during the Great War and Harold Dearing's exploits in WW2, prior to his call up for military service. Chris Emerson can always be relied upon for a report on a Society outing, this time to Blenheim Palace plus other interesting pieces also. Some more wonderful sketches from Will Spencer and photography by David Mercer.

The whole magazine would not exist without the tireless efforts of Rosemary and Philip Causton who together put it to bed and produce the finished article. Many, many thanks to them. Please keep your articles etc. rolling in, for as I never tire of saying 'The Harefield Herald' is for you and also by you.

History never ends, it is always being made. This month our Queen exceeded Victoria as the UK's longest serving monarch. It really is, as one of the boys in Alan Bennett's play 'The History Boys' expounds. History, he said, It is just one \*\*\*\*\* thing after another.

***Gordon Isaacs***

## **Autumn Programme 2015**

### **Hillingdon History Month Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2015**

A Village Scrapbook session and coffee morning will be held in Harefield Library from 10.00am to 1.00pm

### **10<sup>th</sup> November 2015**

A Group visit to the Houses of Parliament has been arranged.

We are limited to 25 members so first come first served.

The Tour commences at 9.55am.

**PRE-BOOKING AT SOCIETY MEETINGS IS ESSENTIAL**



Once a jolly swag - man

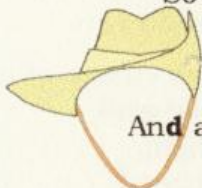
## “... and the Band played ‘WALTZING MATILDA’”

**Editor's Note:** The following poem was recited at the ANZAC Day Service in St Mary's in April as part of the Centenary Remembrances of the Gallipoli landings in 1915. It was spoken by Noel Brown, a retired police sergeant, and created a most poignant picture of the terrible effects of war. It was received with a hushed reverence and I am sure I was not the only person on whom it left a deep and lasting impression. For these reasons I want to give all our readers the chance to savour this poem again.

When I was a young man, I carried my pack,  
And lived the free life of a rover  
From the Murrays green basin to the dusty outback  
I waltzed my Matilda all over.

Then in nineteen fifteen, my country said Son,  
It's time to stop rambling 'cause there's work to be done  
So they gave me a tin hat, and they gave me a gun,  
And they sent me away to the war.  
And the band played Waltzing Matilda,  
As we sailed away from the quay.

And amidst all the tears, and the shouts and the cheers,  
We sailed off to Gallipoli.



How well I remember that terrible day,  
How the blood stained the sand and the water  
And how in that hell that they called Suvla Bay,  
We were butchered like lambs at the slaughter.  
Johnny Turk he was ready, he primed himself well.  
He chased us with bullets, he rained us with shells.  
And in five minutes flat, he'd blown us all to hell  
Nearly blew us right back to Australia.  
But the band played Waltzing Matilda,  
As we stopped to bury our slain.  
We buried ours, and the Turks buried theirs,  
Then we started all over again.



Now those that were left, well we tried to survive,  
In a mad world of blood, death and fire.  
And for ten weary weeks, I kept myself alive,  
But around me the corpses piled higher  
Then a big Turkish shell knocked me arse over tit,  
And when I woke up in my hospital bed,  
And saw what it had done, I wished I was dead.

Never knew there were worse things than dying.

For no more I'll go waltzing Matilda,

**All around the green bush far and near.**

**For to hump tent and pegs, a man needs two legs -**

**No more waltzing Matilda for me.**

**So they collected the cripples, the wounded, the maimed**

**And they shipped us back home to Australia.**

**The armless, the legless, the blind, the insane,**

**Those proud wounded heroes of Suvla**

**And as our ship pulled into Circular Quay,**

**I looked at the place where my legs used to be**

**And thank Christ there was nobody waiting for me,**

**To grieve, and to mourn and to pity.**

**And the band played Waltzing Matilda**

**As they carried us down the gangway**

**But nobody cheered, they just stood and stared**

**Then turned all their faces away.**

And now every April I sit on my porch

And I watch the parade pass before me

And I watch my old comrades, how proudly they march

Reliving old dreams of past glory

And the old men march slowly, all bent, stiff and sore

The forgotten heroes from a forgotten war

And the young people ask, "What are they marching for?"

And I ask myself the same question

And the band plays Waltzing Matilda

And the old men answer to the call

But year after year their numbers get fewer

Some day no one will march there at all.

Waltzing Matilda, Waltzing Matilda

Who'll come a waltzing Matilda with me

And their ghosts may be heard as you pass the Billabong

Who'll come-a-waltzing Matilda with me?

**Eric Bogle**

**NOTES: "Matilda"** - the backpack and associated gear used by livestock drovers and prospectors in remote areas of the Australian outback.

**"Swag"** - canvas sleeping bag

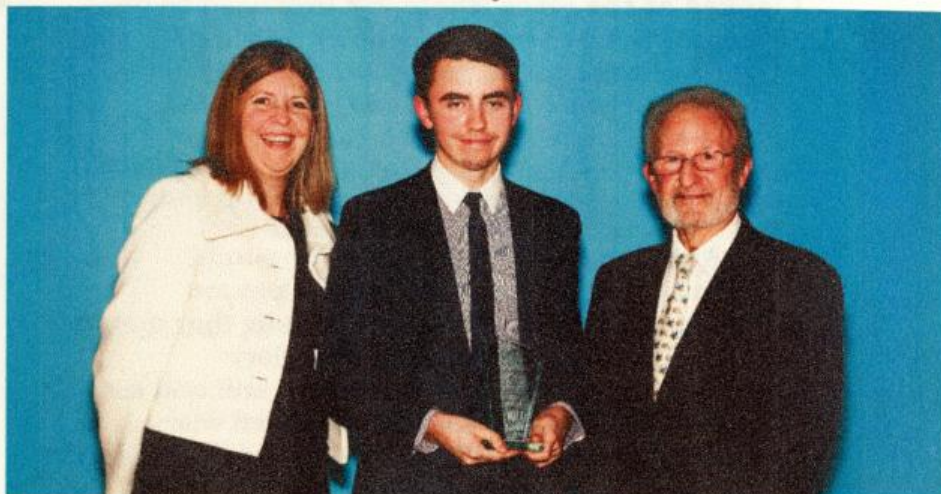
**"Billabong"** - creek or estuary, generally with an outlet to the sea and containing more or less brackish water.

**Historical Note: The Gallipoli Campaign** (April 25, 1915 - January 8, 1916)

# History Society Award Scheme for HAREFIELD ACADEMY



The fifth '**Keeping History Alive**' Award was won this year by Lewis Cheesman and the presentation took place at the Academy's Annual presentation Evening in January. The picture below shows him with the award, standing between the chairman and Helen Walls, Head of History.



*"The value of history is, indeed, not scientific but moral, by liberalizing the mind, by deepening the sympathies...it prepares us to live more humanely in the present and to meet rather than to foretell the future – " Carl Becker*

It is a common theme, at any Parents Evening, for parents to say, "I love history now, but hated it when I was at school". This is something we have worked hard to change at The Harefield Academy. From a student who has not always been as motivated as he now is, the young man who is receiving this award has worked tirelessly in his history studies. His passion for the subject has grown and he has become the biggest advocate of the value of history in society today.

He worked hard, reading and investigating the past to form complex and well-rounded judgements about past events. Lewis loves to debate and has an interest in any topic being discussed. He has grown into a true historian in his 7 years with us and he hopes to go on to study this further at University.

*A page from  
the Sketch  
Book of*

**Will Spencer**

About twenty members visited **HARROW SCHOOL** last December and thoroughly enjoyed the guided tour. Our guide had been a pupil, after university he became a master, house master and, now retired, he is a very knowledgeable guide. We took in the Old Speech Room and the Fourth Form Room which was resonant of swishing canes. Not now though. The school was



founded in 1572 by John Lyon, a local landowner and farmer, for 30 poor boys on his obtaining a charter from the first Queen Elizabeth.

The school now has 850 pupils. It has a tremendous history of service to the state having supplied 19 heroes who were awarded the Victoria Cross for valour in the face of the enemy and six prime ministers. It lags somewhat behind Eton in this respect as they have produced 17 to date but some of Harrow's are quite special. Spencer Perceval has the notoriety of being the only PM assassinated in office. Robert Peel is memorable for the Bobbies – otherwise the police force and there is of course the nonpareil, Winston Churchill, even though it is said that his further education at the RMA Sandhurst was more productive than his days at Harrow.

**Gordon Isaacs**

# HAREFIELD SCOUTS

## *Recollections of Harold Dearing* 1939 - 1943



My family moved from Southall to Harefield in 1938, there were no Scout groups in the Village. Having been a cub and a scout at Southall (Villiers 4<sup>th</sup> Southall Group), I wanted to continue with my scouting activities, (there were a number of photographs on the walls of the School hall indicating that at one time the Scout movement had been very active). The first Uxbridge Scouts were based in a building alongside the canal by the Swan and Bottle Bridge in Uxbridge. I enrolled there and cycled to the meetings every week and to the camping expeditions held in fields off Tilehouse Lane, Denham. The Uxbridge Scouts transported the tents and equipment by trek cart from Uxbridge. I cycled from home and joined the group at the junction of Moorhall Road and the North Orbital Road, and have many happy memories of camp fires, sing-songs and the usual scouting activities.

Just before the Second World War, the Scouts and Cubs were restarted in Harefield. The District Commissioner from Uxbridge introduced Skipper Grimes from Northwood together with a Rover Scout surname of Box, (I have forgotten his Christian name). Meetings were held in the Old School, (where the present Church Hall is now). I left the Uxbridge group and joined the 1<sup>st</sup> Harefield Scouts. We had several weekend camps in fields at the end of Springwell Lane (by permission of Uncle Bill Field, the farmer). In time Billy Field, from White Heath Farm, became Scoutmaster, assisted by Eric Wymer and John Westbrook. We located two ridge tents, that had been the property of the earlier Scout groups, stored in the roof space of Billy Lowder's shop (this shop was the one near the Church Hall recently rebuilt). Billy Lowder continued to let us store the tents in his shop as we had, at that time, no other facilities of our own.

As it was now in war time we had to notify the Police each time we went to Camp, and had to camouflage our tents to the pattern and colours indicated on the drawings given to us. Strictly no lights after dark, minimum torch light to get to the toilets at night, no night-time campfires. The trek cart that we used to transport our tents and personal property was provided by Mr Brown, the Builder, whose house and Yard was in Park Place, Newdigate Road. We unloaded all his



building material, took the cart down to the old School, loaded up the tents, pots and pans and our personal material, then headed off to the end of Springwell Lane, erected our tents, dug out for our latrines and removed the turf for our fire place, have supper and a hot drink and bed and prayed for a dry and uneventful night. Drinking water was obtained from a spring well at the side of the canal (now filled in). It was quite a steep climb back to the camp, milk was provided by the Dairy at White Heath Farm, this entailed a long walk across the fields. Sharing these tasks and the various games, nature studies, etc. made for some very happy weekends, despite the fact that there was a war going on. At the end of the weekend we trekked back home emptied off our gear and restacked the building material on to Mr Brown's cart.

About 1940 the Scot Group moved from the Old School Building in the Village to fields in Mont Pleasant (off Park Lane). Billy Field, the Scout Master, organised the purchase of the wooden hut, the foundations and building of the brick piers. The adults carried out its erection and then we all assisted with fixing the internal plywood sheeting, decorating etc.. The Scout Group continued meeting at Mount Pleasant until about the middle of 1943. Gradually the older members were leaving to join the armed forces, until it left Walter Wheeler and myself assisted by Terry Wymer (who also had a very good singing voice) to run the scouts and cubs, this we did to the best of our ability. As we were not fully qualified (we were both seventeen), the District Commissioner cycled over from Uxbridge to keep an eye on us. During one of his visits, he invited us to take part in a camping competition for, I think it was called, the Stillwell Shield. We declined as we felt we were not organised or capable enough to compete. A week or so later the Commissioner invited us to what he described as a District camp to be held just outside Uxbridge in a field adjacent to the road that runs from Uxbridge to Slough (now a lake because of gravel extraction). We accepted, only then to find out that we were in fact taking part in the competition. We did enjoy the challenge, but without any success. (I cannot remember how we transported all our equipment to the site).

I carried on with the few remaining cubs until I joined the Army in May 1943. Walter Wheeler carried on a few months longer until he joined the Navy. This was the end of scouting until after the War. The Scout Hut remained on the site up to the end of the War when it was dismantled and moved, I believe to Taylor's Meadow. This was done to make space for the construction of the Pre Fab housing units.

Earlier in 1939, prior to the commencement of the War, we had some



training in Civil Defence. One I remember was how to use a Stirrup Pump to put out Incendiary Bombs. (A bit of Being Prepared).

I became a messenger for the ARP, and the scouts were issued with a green arm band with the A.R.P. embroidered in yellow. I was working for Mr Jeffrey, the Headmaster of the Junior and Senior School, and also the Chief Air Raid Warden. Mr Slade, if I remember rightly, was his deputy. Until the communications were properly organised I would cycle to Uxbridge Council Offices with correspondence to and from Mr Jeffrey. (The ARP office was in a wooden hut owned by the Uxbridge District Council on a piece of waste ground previously the site of the Cricketers Public House, now occupied by The Harefield Pharmacy and The Village Bakery.

On the outbreak of war, I, together with other Air Raid Wardens, was in the hut waiting for the Declaration of War to be announced. This was immediately followed by an air raid message Red, this was a warning that an Air Raid was imminent, as sirens were not yet installed at the Police Station. We went round the Village ringing Hand Bells and advising people to take shelter. Fortunately, this turned out to be a false alarm. We then had to go out again to notify everyone.

In 1940 there was the threat of an invasion, and the L.D.V. was formed, later to be called the Home Guard, this was commanded by Major Stafford and other Officers, whose names I cannot recall, NCOs Sgt Wilkinson, Sgt Cook, Leslie Mitchell, (Movietone news Presenter), and several others. Vicar Davies also joined up and a large number of village men. By then there was no need for a messenger in the ARP. Major Stafford asked me to be his messenger and I took part in all the activities. Eventually I was fitted out with a uniform and remained in the Home Guard until at eighteen I joined the Army in May, 1943.

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## WINSTON CHURCHILL QUIZ

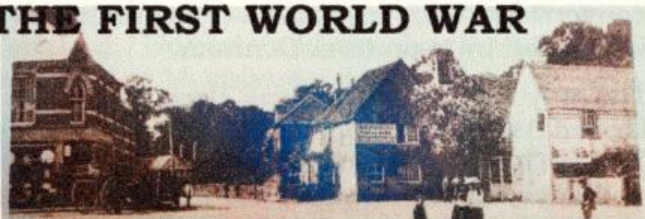
- 1 What was his full christened name?
- 2 It was reported that he somedays smoked 15 cigars. True or false?
- 3 What was the maiden name of his mother?
- 4 He was the elected MP for many years of which Scottish constituency?
- 5 He bought Chartwell in Kent in 1922. How much did he pay for it? *(continued on page 16)*



## HAREFIELD IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR

**Caroline Cotton**

*Archivist at the  
Central Library,  
Uxbridge*



In 1914 Harefield was a quiet, rural village. Its population was slowly growing but was still only two and a half thousand, with an almost equal number of males and females. The people lived mostly in the area around the crossroads and the green and the road leading down the hill to the church and the hamlet of Hill End to the north. Some of the cottages had shops in their front rooms and there were reputedly thirteen pubs, although many were little more than beer houses. Many of the cottages were quite poor. Most did not get mains water until long after the War and there was no gas or electricity until much later. Water had to be fetched from pumps, the wells were shared with several other cottages, and sanitation was earth closets.

The village was on no major transport links. Until well after the first War the only road links were narrow lanes leading to Denham, Rickmansworth, Northwood and Ickenham. The nearest trains were the Metropolitan line at Northwood, two and a half miles away or, from 1907, the Great Central at Denham which linked with London and Uxbridge. By 1914 there was a horse bus to Northwood but most people walked the three miles to Denham station. A local carrier made frequent trips to Uxbridge and would fetch any goods needed for a small fee. It was a special treat to go in with him and spend the day in Uxbridge. This isolation helped deter the new commuters who were building homes in the surrounding areas with good train links.

Until 1914 Harefield was a mostly working class community. There were very few middle class and the only professionals were the doctor and the vicar. Most of the women were either at home or employed in domestic service. Most of the men were employed in agriculture. There were at least 20 large farms in the parish. Hay was the most important crop, feeding the thousands of horses in London. The water meadows along the Colne could give three crops a year. It was transported by barge along the canal or by road. The hay wagons would leave very early in the morning to get to the London markets by 6 am, returning later in the day filled with manure. The carters would stop at several pubs along the road so it was just as well that the horses knew the way home. By the beginning of the twentieth century many farms had

converted to dairying. Much of the milk was sent to commercial dairies in London by train from Denham.

The only heavy industry was along the canal. The largest was the Bell's United Asbestos Company, which employed over 500 men and women. The brickfields were nearby. They employed a large number of men and boys, mostly on piece work rates. A brick worker could bring home about 27 shillings a week, but only by having other members of the family to help. Younger boys would help out after school. Production from the adjoining cement works was used by the asbestos factory. Harefield National School, taking children from the age of 7 to 14 had been long established and an infant school had been started in 1871. In 1908 the two schools were combined into a Council school. Although the school leaving age was 14 many children left at 12 or 13 to start work. Children often played truant, especially during harvest or when there was shooting on one of the estates.

The village had a wide range of leisure activities for the rare times people had off work. There was a football club and two cricket clubs, one attached to the asbestos factory. There was also the Asbestos Athletic Association and a boxing club. The Breakspear institute catered for more cerebral activities and there were two friendly societies the Ancient Order of Foresters and the Hearts of Oak Benefit, a Boy Scout troop and an air rifle club. The presidents and secretaries of these clubs were all taken from the same small group of men, including Mr. Stedall, Rev. Harland, Col. Cox and Capt. Tarleton. No clubs are listed for women.

The pubs were very popular and there was a lot of drunkenness and fighting, especially on a Saturday night. As a result the village had its own police station with at least 8 resident constables. Religion played an important part in the lives of many of the villagers. There were both Baptist and Methodist chapels without resident ministers. Most people

**Harefield Baptist Chapel**



**Methodist Chapel at the far left of photo**



attended St. Mary's where the vicar was the Rev. A. A. Harland from 1865, first as curate then as vicar. He remained vicar until 1920 and died in 1921. His family consisted of 18 children, 9 sons and 9 daughters.

There were 4 main estates in the parish. The largest was Harefield Place, lived in by the Cox family. This was right in the south of the parish although the original house had been next to the church and had been visited by Queen Elizabeth I in 1601. Colonel Cox put the estate up for sale in 1914 but it was not sold until 1934.

Breakspears was the home of Captain William Tarleton. In 1888 he had married a cousin of the Duke of Newcastle and the couple entertained lavishly, including royalty among their guests. They had 12 indoor servants and 17 outdoors, very much a Downton Abbey set up. Their silver wedding party in 1913 included a treat for the village children and a ball for local residents with over 170 guests.

Harefield Grove to the north of the village was built in about 1800. From 1908 to 1913 it was lived in by Mr. Henry Stedall, an iron merchant and his wife. She supported the suffragettes and held meetings on the Common, which were often disrupted by turfs being thrown. The last estate was Harefield Park. It had been built in about 1710 by Sir George Cooke, a lawyer, and had several owners. In 1908 it had been bought by Charles Billyard-Leake an Australian businessman, and his wife Letitia, as a family home, although they had lived there since 1896.

On the outbreak of war life changed, although at the time people did not realise it. The first effect was that new building was stopped. Men on the reserve list were called up and others quickly joined. By mid-September over 60 employees at the asbestos work had been called up and in the first 2 years of the war over 100 men from Harefield were serving. Work in the factories almost stopped, but by September the asbestos works were back in full production and continued so throughout the war. During the war many of the men were replaced by women, often millworkers from the north. The factory worked day and night making millboard for the Admiralty. Many of the workers boarded in the village, giving the families extra income and giving a glimpse of a different way of life. In November 1914 families of Belgian refugees arrived. Some were housed in the Memorial Hall and others in a house on Pinner Road furnished by employees of the Breakspear estate. Several of these refugees worked at the asbestos works. At the end of the war they returned to Belgium.

It was not long before families had the sad news of casualties. One of

the first was Reginald Harland, son of Rev. Albert Harland. Reginald was the 7<sup>th</sup> youngest son. 6 of the sons went into the army, his older brother Edwin had died in the Boer war. Reginald had joined the army from school and became a Captain in the Hampshire regiment in 1911. He had arrived in France on 20 August 1914 and was killed on 30 October near Ploegstreet, where he was buried. A brother officer wrote .....*It was a day of very hard fighting, in spite of heavy fire he continued to watch with his field glasses the movements of the enemy in order to direct the fire of his men, when a bullet struck him in the head.* Two other brothers were injured at the Dardenelles in 1915.

The next family to be devastated were the Evans. Thomas Henry Evans was the son of the late Thomas and Isabella Evans of Hawthorne Cottage, Harefield and husband of Ellen Louise Evans, with whom he had a four year old son. He had been in the navy for 14 years and served in the Somaliland campaign, receiving a medal. He died whilst aboard the H.M.S 'Bulwark' which blew up accidentally in November 1914, killing all but 12 of the crew on board. His brother, Sidney Francis Evans was also killed in action and was a Company Sergeant Major who had been awarded the Mons Medal and the Military Medal for conspicuous bravery. Three of the six Evans sons were killed during the war. For some reason Thomas but not Sidney was commemorated on the war memorial. The Lambs, George and Percy, were 2 of the 4 sons of Eldred and Jane Lamb of Breakspear Road. Prior to 1917, Percy had already been wounded 6 times, the first time on his 21st birthday. He was awarded the Military Medal in 1917 for taking a German trench and holding it for 39 hours, causing the enemy heavy casualties. He was 'wiring out' when he was killed by a shell in September 1917. George had been a gardener, probably on the Breakspear estate and had worked at the asbestos works. He served as a stretcher bearer and was killed in action in May 1918, aged 31, after bringing in several wounded men. In all about 120 men from Harefield are known to have died, about 10% of all the males in the village, although only 77 are commemorated on the village war memorials.

The village produced many heroes who were awarded medals. Two in particular stand out. Robert Ryder and Cecil John Kinross. I will say little about them as there was a special ceremony on the Green last November to unveil commemorative plaques to both of them as recipients of the Victoria Cross. Robert Ryder was from an old Harefield family and when the village heard of his award the children were given a day's holiday. When he came home on leave he was greeted with a triumphal procession through the village, which was captured on film

by Pathe news and can still be seen. Cecil Kinross's father had come from Scotland to Dews Farm in the 1890s, where Cecil was born. In 1912 the family emigrated to Canada. It was exceptional for a village the size of Harefield at the time to have produced two such brave young men, who must have known each other as children as they were born only two months apart.

In the autumn of 1914 Charles Billyard-Leake had realised that the war would not be over by Christmas. Australia had mobilised in August and the first troops had set out by boat in November en route to Egypt. He offered his house, Harefield Park, as a base for convalescing



soldiers. It was quickly accepted and the first staff were appointed, a captain, a sergeant, a corporal and four men to act as ward orderlies with a matron and 5 nurses. When they arrived in March the house was still full of furniture and the Billyard-Leakes had moved into Black Jacks Mill. The hospital was originally intended to house 50 men in the house and 150 in hutted wards but almost as soon as work began the Dardanelles campaign started and it was realised that more would be needed. The first patients arrived on 2 June and more swiftly followed, by July there were 362. Although seriously injured these men had survived the initial trauma so at first there were few deaths. The first was in February 1916, Robert Sidney Wake, who was buried in St. Mary's churchyard, but more were to follow. From January 1916 patients were repatriated to Australia if they were no longer fit to fight.

At first the men who arrived at Harefield had already been treated at other hospitals and only came to Harefield when well enough to

recuperate. As the Dardenelles campaign ended and the ANZACS were transferred to the Western Front it was realised that the huge number of casualties would overwhelm the other hospitals. Harefield was expanded and upgraded to become a proper hospital with beds for a thousand patients. By August 1916 there were 1010 patients, casualties of the Somme. By the end of the war probably about 100,000 patients had been treated.

The patients were brought to Harefield by train to Denham and then ambulance. Life for the men in the hospital was made as pleasant as possible, although they were not allowed to forget they were still in the army. Recreation facilities were provided, many operated by local ladies such as Miss Billyard-Leake and Mrs. Stedall. They ran a canteen with library and billiard rooms, concerts and cinema shows. The Red Cross organised concerts, touring parties and picnics. In their free time the men could go out and although not officially allowed I am sure they visited some of the pubs. However there were no reports of anti-social behaviour from them (unlike the patients at the ANZAC hospital in Southall who were banned from using the local park). The Breakspear institute was popular as were local tea rooms started up by some of the village ladies. To raise funds for the Red Cross a quilt was made. For a contribution of 6d you could write your name on a piece of cloth, which would then be embroidered by volunteers. The pieces were then sewn together to make a quilt. The Harefield quilt, made in 1917, which still survives, has over 600 names on it.

Not unnaturally there were romances. There were at least 7 weddings of Australian soldiers at St. Mary's. Two were Australian nurses, who both married doctors. The first local girl to marry was Hilda Melonie who married Corporal Driver George Cawthan on 16 May 1917. George had volunteered in August 1914 and was one of the early troops sent to Egypt. In April he was at Gallipoli but was sent to hospital in May with tonsillitis, although the doctor could find nothing wrong. He was sent to England in August and was based at Tidworth training camp in Wiltshire. In May 1917 he was still in Wiltshire and was sent to Harefield, with spine problems, in July 1917. How they met is a mystery. George returned to Australia in May 1918, Hilda followed a year later with their young baby on a ship full of the equivalent of GI brides. In late 1918 there was a flurry of weddings as couples faced the threat of being parted as the men were sent back to Australia.

Harefield farmers and shop keepers benefited from the hospital as from November 1915 all foods were bought on the open market. Fresh milk



was supplied and bread came from Colletts General Stores. As the hospital grew staff accommodation was in short supply so local houses were rented to house the nurses. One occupant of the hospital who was a great favourite with staff and patients was their mascot, a wallaby named Jimmy. He had been presented to the hospital by Miss Birdwood, daughter of the Commander in Chief in 1916. Sadly, in May 1918 he was shot by a local farmer who did not know what sort of animal he was.

Many famous and important people visited the hospital. The king and Queen came in August 1915; the excitement of the local children can only be imagined. As the numbers of men coming to the hospital with severe injuries increased so did the number of deaths. From late 1916 to 1919 the sight of a funeral procession became a common sight in the village; the local people would always stop and pay their respects. When it was realised that the hospital did not have a flag with which to drape the coffins the local school lent their Union flag. After the war it was given to a school in Adelaide and I understand it has now returned to Harefield. As soon as it was realised that there would be many burials Sir Francis Newdegate-Newdegate, Governor of Tasmania and lord of the manor of Harefield arranged for a part of the church yard to be set aside for the ANZACS. Sir Francis and Mr. Mills, MP, offered to erect a memorial but this was deferred until after the war. Capt. Tarleton offered to take the responsibility of grassing the graves and keeping them in good order as a very little thanks offering. Originally wooden crosses were supplied to mark the graves, but in 1917 a fund was started among staff and patients to erect headstones. This responsibility has now been taken over by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. There are 112 graves there, 111 soldiers and one nursing sister. Ruby Dickinson, who died of influenza in June 1918. In Australia the 25<sup>th</sup> April was first proposed as a day to commemorate the soldiers at Gallipoli in 1916.



have done so every year since then.

The first ANZAC day to be celebrated at Harefield was in 1917 when there was a service at the graves in the morning and sports in the afternoon.

In 1921 the schoolchildren first processed to the cemetery to lay flowers on the graves and they

As the war drew to a close the number of patients admitted greatly decreased. Most of the staff returned to Australia and the local workers were laid off. The hospital finally closed at the end of 1919 and the house was empty. It was bought by Middlesex County Council in 1921, but that is another story.

Armistice day, November 11 1918 was wet and miserable. When the news was heard at midday workmen downed tools and the school closed. The asbestos works closed down and did not reopen for 3 days. The school children marched through the streets. At the hospital the ban on alcohol was relaxed and drinking was the order of the day!

As the hospital closed down it left a huge hole in the life of Harefield. The cheerful Australians, millworkers from the north and Belgian refugees went home. There was little work for the returning men and for the families of those who had not returned life would never be the same. Harefield would never be the same. The people of this quiet village had been exposed to the lives of people from very different backgrounds; northern millworkers, Belgian refugees and the Australians. The men returning from war had been exposed to even more different influences

For Harefield the First World War and the ANZACS cannot be divided.



## WINSTON CHURCHILL QUIZ

*(continued from page 8)*

- 6 His favourite dog was called Rufus. What breed was it?
- 7 He reported on the Boer War for which newspaper?
- 8 In which category did he win a Nobel Prize?
- 9 Name the last constituency he represented as their MP.
- 10 He was the first person to receive an Honorary Citizenship, of which country?



# Society Visit to Bladon and Blenheim Palace



*Article by Chris Emerson*

*Photographs courtesy of David Mercer and Gordon Isaacs*

*With sketches by Will Spencer*

Blenheim Palace and Bladon are interesting places within an easy ride of us and worthy of more than a one day visit. This year's Harefield History Society excursion was important as it marked the 50th anniversary of Winston Churchill's death. This was another delight and another very successful venture between Denham and Harefield History Society. It was a beautiful July day and the atmosphere was relaxed. This, of course, was possible because, again, everything was perfectly organised by Gordon. He takes on the responsibility so that we can be perfectly carefree. Free of all cares and worries.

In anticipation of a wonderful day we boarded the luxurious air conditioned coach on Harefield Village Green at 8.30 am. After picking up our friends in Denham we ventured on to the M40. The journey was uninterrupted and we arrived at Bladon village for a short visit to see the family burial plot of Winston Churchill.



BLENHHEIM PALACE



BLADON CHURCHYARD  
JUL 19

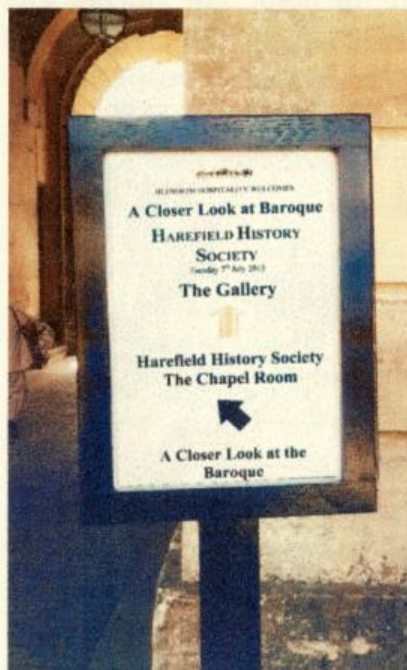
Bladon is now famous for the grave of Sir Winston Churchill in the graveyard of St. Martin's Church where, in 1965, he was buried at the head of the grave of Lady Randolph Churchill, his mother, and alongside the grave of his father, Lord Randolph Churchill. Churchill's grave is inevitably a tourist attraction but the village appears ill-suited to accommodate the crowds that arrive.

The original village was probably centred around St. Martin's Church which overlooks the village on the higher ground. Here on the hillside there are some narrow streets with small cottages and terraces, and the old village shop. The village name is derived from an earlier name for the River Evenlode, the 'Bladene', which runs just to the west of the village. Iron Age remnants have been found at the 'Round Castle' on Bladon Heath and this is evidence of early settlement in the area. The early history of Bladon is chiefly concerned with the quarrying of limestone which was



*St Martin's Church*

used in many of the local buildings. The village, along with nearby Woodstock, was also a centre for the glove making industry. The Parish Church of St Martin was originally 11th or 12th century, but was rebuilt, twice in the 19th century: firstly in 1804, and then again in 1891. Bladon also has a Methodist church.



Blenheim Palace was built in the early 18th century to celebrate victory over the French in the War of the Spanish Succession. In particular, it was built as a gift to the 1st Duke of Marlborough, John Churchill, the military commander who led the Allied forces in the Battle of Blenheim on 13th August 1704. Marlborough himself received the surrender from Marshall Tallard, leader of the French forces, following the battle.



To honour the Duke's heroic victories, Queen Anne granted his family the ruined Royal Manor and park at Woodstock, along with £240,000 with which to build a house to mark the occasion.

This year 2015 marks many important anniversaries in relation to our 'Greatest Briton', Sir Winston Churchill.

These include the 50th anniversary of his



*The bed where Winston Churchill was born*

It was another wonderful day; perfectly organised and brilliantly executed.



death, the 75th anniversary of his first becoming Prime Minister, and the 75th anniversary of the United Kingdom's 'finest hour' at the Battle of Britain. To honour this commemorative year, Blenheim Palace is hosting a range of activities and events dedicated to Churchill and his era, which spanned the better part of a century.

The afternoon concluded in the tea rooms of Blenheim Palace with the traditional summer afternoon fare, the cream tea. Perfectly laid on by Gordon! You spoil us Gordon!

With little effort we made our way to the coach and we arrived back in Harefield with the evening ahead of us.



# Society Visit to St Edmund Hall, and the Botanic Gardens, Oxford

*Photographs by courtesy of David Mercer*

Thanks to our member John Buxton, who planned the day, we had a very pleasant and educational visit to Oxford in late July. The individuals were to make their own way to Oxford and to meet at the University



*Sketch by Will Spencer*



Botanic Garden at 11am. Would you believe that the last ones arrived as the clock tower of Magdalen College chimed the hour. Wonderful!



The garden was created in 1621 and claims to be the oldest in the country. It was funded by the Earl of Danby who put up £5,000 (nowadays worth about £3.5 million) to start a physic garden which from the outset was committed to 'promoting learning and glorifying nature' much as it still is today. The oldest tree in the garden is a yew dating back to 1645 and although not originally planted for its medical properties yews have subsequently provided the material for two very important drugs used in the fight against cancer. The ground was owned by Magdalen College and is sited on the banks of the River Cherwell. Part of the area was a Jewish cemetery until Jews were expelled from Oxford, and England in 1290. There are over 800 different plants in the 4.5 acres and it is most beautifully and meticulously maintained. A bevy of gardeners were working on the grounds which are a credit to all concerned.



We then moved on to St. Edmund Hall, known locally as 'Teddy Hall' for our pre-arranged lunch which was well received by all and special arrangements were in place for our vegetarian and gluten-free requirements. The college is named after St. Edmund of Abingdon (1278) who entered the history books as the first Oxford educated Archbishop of Canterbury. Some

better known graduates include Al Murray (the Pub Landlord), Terry Jones of Monty Python fame and Jeremy Paxman. Originally a Hall it became a college in 1957.

There are 38 colleges in Oxford and six Halls. What is the difference you may ask? Is it just nomenclature? Well not exactly. Colleges are governed by its fellows and Halls are governed by its corresponding Christian denomination. After lunch the party split up and went their own ways. Some to Christ College, some to other colleges, maybe some even went shopping, God forbid!

I went with a few others firstly to New College. Full name is The Warden and Scholars of St. Mary's College of Winchester in Oxford. Founded in 1271 by William of Wykeham and the under-graduates are mainly, perhaps wholly, Old Wykehamists



otherwise known as Old Boys of Winchester School. New has 422 undergrads almost twice as many as St. Edmund Hall. We then moved through the back streets and attractive alleys of Oxford, managing with much dexterity to miss the many cyclists hurtling by, under the Bridge of Sighs (see front cover) past the Bodleian and the Sheldonian theatre and on to Brasenose College the alma mater of John Buxton himself during the mid-50s when he gained his history degree. A delightful college overlooked by the dominating Radcliffe Camera. This is a large domed structure intended as a science museum but nowadays more widely known as a reading room for the Bodleian although it is still a museum itself. Why camera I asked myself? Camera is the Latin word for room hence

its present usage is quite apposite. It was founded by John Radcliffe, a retired doctor, who is also remembered in the name of the large general hospital serving Oxford, The John Radcliffe is graced by the knowledge that my four grandsons were all born there.

We had lost Christine Emerson by now, John Buxton was reviving old memories of his student days so Paul Mander and Charles Hampshire and I visited the University church of St. Mary's which not only has a long history as it is basically the starting place of the University and was used not only for worship but also as a Court of Law amongst other duties and many of the Oxford martyrs were sentenced to their fates within its walls. There is a plaque in the church listing those unfortunates and I was surprised that there are over 40 of them.



Oxford is a lovely city, a bit overcrowded by visitors, but so full of history. Lovely architecture, the whole place reeks of education and learning and I came away very envious of all those who spent three university years or more within its confines.

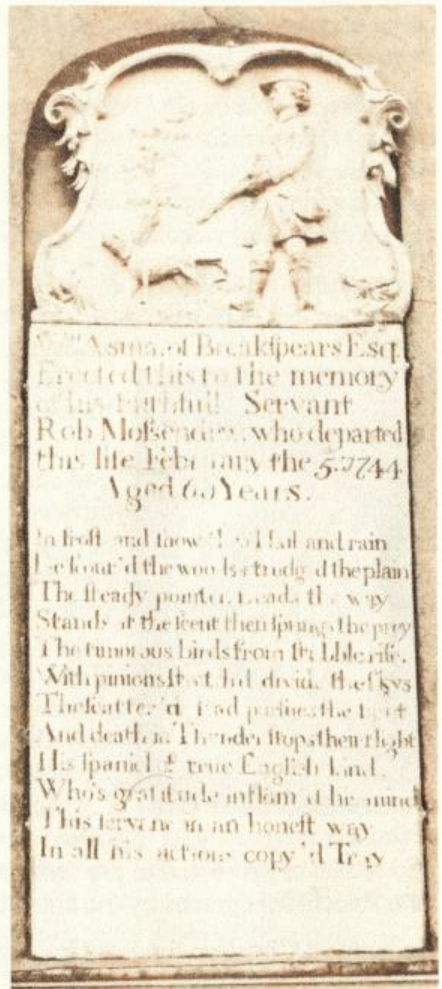
**Gordon Isaacs**

## A Dog Called Tray

The well-known memorial to Robert Mossendew (died in 1744) close above the doorway into St Mary's Church, Harefield, Middlesex, shows a huntsman/gamekeeper ('faithful servant') of William Ashby of Breakspears. With gun in hand he is accompanied by his dog - 'Spaniel of true English. kind'). In typical 18<sup>th</sup> century fashion there is an accompanying verse ending with, *'This servant in an honest way, In all his actions copy'd Tray'*.

I have always been slightly puzzled by this apparent dog's name and wondered whether the name was a bit of poetic licence to rhyme with 'way'. I am not sure if Robert Mossendew's actions being compared to a dog is particularly complimentary, but we must suppose it was meant well.

Recently I came across a picture of Mary Anning (1799 -1847) who was famous in her day for collecting fossils at Lyme Regis. The painting shows her with her dog Tray. This dog also seems to be a 'Spaniel of the true English kind'. Popularity of names has its ups and downs, with some remaining in vogue for generations - witness the Johns and Marys for humans. Dogs' names are not so well documented but can be expected to have their own vagaries. I have been unable to shed any convincing light on the name Tray from dictionaries and other works of reference. Whatever its origin it clearly lasted for at least 100 years after Mossendew's dog.



Robert Mossendew's memorial at St Mary's Harefield



Thomas Campbell (1777-1844) in a poem entitled 'The Harper' wrote, 'And wherever I went, was my poor dog Tray'.

Heinrich Hoffman (1809-1874) wrote in a poem for his children entitled 'Cruel Fredric' with the line, 'The trough was full and faithful Tray, Came out to drink one sultry day'. And again, 'At this good Tray grew very red, And growled and bit him till he bled'.

A later reference is from the American composer Stephen Foster (1826-1864), still well known for such songs as 'Jennie with the light brown hair', and 'Swanee River'. His 'Old Dog Tray' is a typical sentimental lyric-'The morn of life is past, And ev'ning comes at last. It brings me a dream of a once happy day, Of merry forms I've seen, Upon the village green, Sporting with my old dog Tray'.

But what of the origin of Tray, the name? I now have found that it was used by Shakespeare in his play 'King Lear' of 1605. Lear, his wits lost, raves, 'The little dogs and all, Tray, Blanch, and Sweetheart, see them bark at me'. This clearly suggests that as a dog's name, Tray was already well known in Elizabethan times. Its use by Robert Mossendew is interesting, but the origin of its use is a mystery.

Colin Bowlt

## ANSWERS to the WINSTON CHURCHILL QUIZ on pages 8 & 16



1. Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill
2. True
3. Jenny Jerome
4. Dundee
5. £5,000
6. Poodle
7. Morning Post
8. Literature in 1953
9. Woodford, later re-titled Wanstead and Woodford
10. United States of America

# **Winter & Spring Programme 2015/2016**

**28<sup>th</sup> September 2015**

Jacqui Scott

The History of St Vincent's: the Hospital on the Hill!

**26<sup>th</sup> October 2015**

John Buxton

London's Bridges: a Tale of Two Cities

**23<sup>rd</sup> November 2015**

Susan Hewlett, Geoffrey Hewlett & Martin Davies

The Road Through the Isles

## **2016**

**25<sup>th</sup> January 2016**

John Spinks

The Great (?) Train Robbery

**22<sup>nd</sup> February 2016**

Lara Marshall & Len Barron

The History of Public Libraries

**28<sup>th</sup> March 2016**

Paul Croft

The Battle of Waterloo, 1815

**25<sup>th</sup> April 2016**

Annual General Meeting

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# HAREFIELD HISTORY SOCIETY

Meetings on the fourth Monday monthly  
from September to April (except December)  
at the Park Lane Village Centre, Harefield,  
commencing at 8pm.

**Chairman:** Gordon Isaacs (01895 825501)

**Secretary:** Lorraine Piercy, (01895 822371)  
Hillside,  
Park Lane,  
Harefield,  
UB9 6HR

**Treasurer:** Janet Williams, (01895 820304)