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SUMMER PROGRAMME 1986 Continued

The last visit of the Summer Programme was to Chenies Manor House on the 20th September. A very pleasant afternoon as I recall, we were escorted round the house by the owner, whose family had occupied it for many years. I'm afraid I cannot recall the historical part of the visit but there was the distraction of the very nearby Church bells announcing a wedding and later as we emerged from the garden, we found ourselves entangled with the guests at the reception which was being held in the garden. A lovely setting for such an occasion. (I wonder if Joy Foster remembers the deception she played outside the Gents. (don't ask me, ask her). During a walk round the grounds, a very old oak tree was pointed out to us, something like 200 years old, beside it was a replacement which had been provided by the Duke of Bedford, a relative of the lady of the house. There was a Physics garden, and well trimmed hedges enclosing the gardens near the house. One of our Summer days.

In October a visit was arranged to Harefield Place which is now "an impressive but functional Headquarters for the E.B.I.C. Division of the Dun and Bradstreet Corporation". After the usual security checks we were ushered into the Board Room and given a 'briefing' by the P.R.O. before being let loose among the many well appointed offices, having been forewarned where we were not to go. Arrangements had been made for the Staff Cafeteria to be at our disposal and before we left we were able to pick up a photostat copy of "A History of Harefield Place".

A visit to Manor Court was arranged in November, another old house with a very chequered history, empty and neglected, awaiting a future. There have been several suggestions for its use but nothing conclusive as yet.

It would be appropriate here to record our thanks to Robert Goodchild, our Programme Secretary, for all his work in arranging these many visits. I would say my favourite was Parham Park. Thank you Robert. And now to refresh our/my memory on the Winter Programme.

1986

September - A Page of London History by Mr J.P. Hewetson (Pikeman)

It was an illustrated talk with details of the various duties and ceremonies the pikemen performed, their historical dress and its origins. One of their many duties is to escort the Lord Mayor of London, walking beside his carriage at the Show.

October - Church Bells - Mr D. Struckett

(see December issue of Harefield Month for a detailed report
Thank you, Joan)

1986

November - The Museum of London: Recent Archaeological Digs in Uxbridge

This talk was given by Mr John Mills, a member of the Brentford section of the Museum on London's, Department of Greater London Archaeology. With the re-development of Uxbridge many old buildings have been pulled down but it has only been within the last three years that 'digs' have been organised. The excavations have provided information relating to the earlier prehistoric settlement of the area. This was the subject of Mr Mills talk.

1987

January - Christmas Social at the Harefield Cricket Club

Another very pleasant evening this time without snow or hoar frost. The welcome glass of mulled wine and a good spread of food. (Our thanks to the embers of the Committee and others who contributed). For those of us who were members of the 'Harefield History Group' it was a pleasure to welcome back Mr Geoffrey Tyack our Tutor. With the aid of tape recordings supplied by Reg Neil and equipment by Robert Goodchild, Mr Tyack was able to give us a very real picture of life in Harefield - at that time of day. The Social was well attended both by members and friends.

On 26th January Mrs Vi Bardey gave an interesting talk entitled 'Dating the Past'. After telling us of her interest in various items she had collected over the years, with the help of Mrs Diedre Whiteman, Vi began to date some of the objects brought along by members. With the aid of reference books on display we all became involved and I'm sure it was an enlightening evening for us all.

As I'm sure most of us know that both Vi and her husband John have been unwell. A letter was received from Vi while convalescent, thanking members for their card and pot plant. Vi also received a letter from Dr. Paul Strickland and the Scanner Management Committee for the donation of £5 from the Harefield History Society.

February - The Museum of London. Recent Archaeological Digs in West Middlesex (Stockley Park) - Mr John Cotton

The Stockley Park area has been a 'tip' for many years, Property Developers have now moved in but did grant permission to The Museum of London Archaeology department to work for 8 to 10 weeks on the site. Evidence of early settlements were discovered on various sites and from this information it is possible to build up and reproduce models of these early settlements. (I did see a leaflet in the Library entitled Stockley Park, which I intended to look at before this newsletter but perhaps Joan may be able to fill in the gaps).

March 23rd - History of Buttons - Mrs Miller. This will be the last of our meetins except of course for the

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING on Monday 27th APRIL to be held in the Library

at 3 o'clock

FORMER HAREFIELD HEALTH CENTRE

A meeting was called by Mr Philip Colehan, Borough Librarian on 16th February at Harefield Library. Representatives of interested Societies were present, also Councillors Craxton and Abel.

Mr. Colehan explained that the Council has now acquired this building, but it is thought that only half of it will be available as the rear half is unfit for use and will probably be pulled down. However the front half offers premises almost as large as the existing library.

It finally transpired that most groups wanted meeting space plus some storage, and usually in the evenings, often once or twice a month. The Playgroup and Youth Group would require space during the day, the Youth Group in evenings as well. It was suggested that the latter might use the rear half if they offered to renovate it themselves.

All exhibitions would still take place in the actual library which is to be improved and carpeted, with some shelves on castors, and probably will open on Mondays also.

Apart from a meeting hall, 3 toilets, one for handicapped people, and kitchen facilities will be provided. Also a small office or interviewing room, with space for the Residents Association's copier and typewriter.

History records will be retained in the library and space will be available for a cabinet, so that these are still available for public use.

Storage for chairs will be provided.

HAREFIELD HISTORY SOCIETY RESEARCH GROUP

The first meeting of this group was held on 6th December 1986. Meetings will be held monthly and whenever possible in the Library so that any reference to the existing archives will be readily available. This is not a "closed shop" and any member who feels able to contribute will be welcomed. Several of our members already have projects in hand.

1. Keith Piercy is preparing a set of maps of Harefield pre-1900.
2. Lorraine has been working on Scrap Books from 1930
3. Valerie Woodward is working on her Family History and is doing very well, I hear.
4. Elona Cuthbertson has completed a manuscript on Harefield 300 years ago.

There were several other suggestions of surveys that members might like to pursue. The second meeting on 11th February was held at the Library and the archives were studied. These are continually being added to and there is a wide field of research to be done. More research could result in new publications. Upgrading the Newsletter was suggested or publishing a separate journal for sale, perhaps two a year. It was generally thought that the journal should be a separate publication and the Newsletter to remain for 'domestic' news. Other societies to be studied. The next meeting will be held at the Library on Wednesday 8th April at 8 o'clock.

SUMMER PROGRAMME 1987

- 16th May - Worcester and Sudley Castle. Cost £7.00
20th June - Royal Tunbridge Wells and Hever Castle. Cost £6.50
19th July - Swakeleys House - Open Day
26th Sept. - Chiswick Village - Osterley House - Chiswick House
4th Oct. - Swakeleys House - Open Day.

Please contact Robert Goodchild if you are interested.

Having completed my three years with the Committee, this is my last newsletter and I would like to take the opportunity to thank all the members who have contributed to it during that time.

Sincerely, Maisie Marjoram.