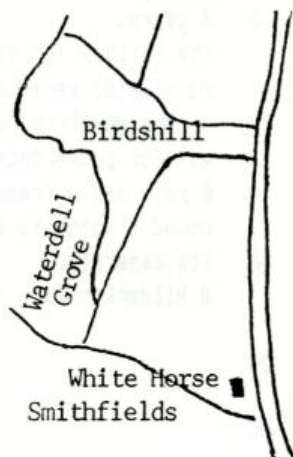


# Harefield History Society

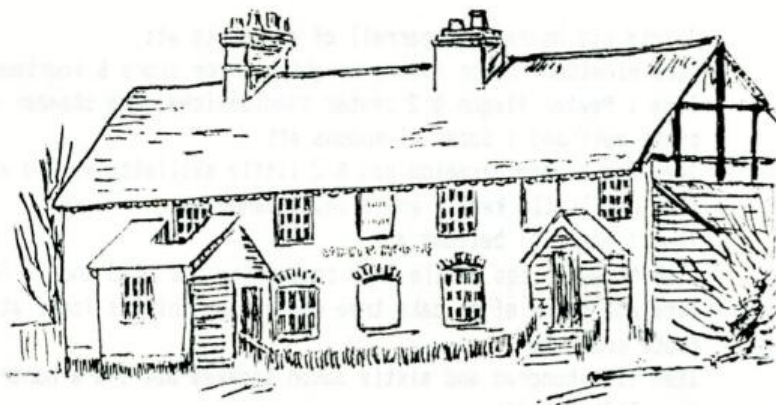
Newsletter No. 20 Spring 1989

## THE WHITE HORSE, CHURCH HILL

Though the name The White Horse is not mentioned before the mid-18th century (1744) the property features in the records of the manor of Harefield from the early years of the 16th century onwards. It was a "copyhold" and a nominal rent was paid to the lord of the manor (8s for many years). It first appears in 1523 as "a tenement in Harefield Street" with a garden and orchard adjoining, and two closes of 4 acres bounded by Smythfield (belonging to the lord of the manor), Byrdshill and Waterdell Grove (see diagram).

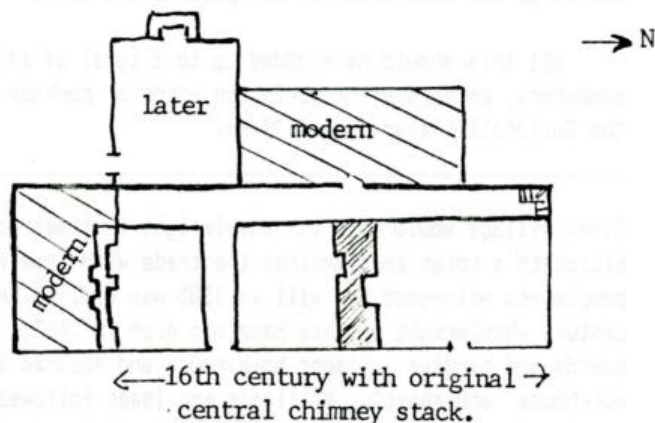


Pre-1523 "John Webbe of Ruyslipp" was the owner - hence the name Webbs which was used long after the Ruislip yeoman had severed his connection. The new copyholders were Thomas Andrew de Ever, Bucks (Iver?) and Agnes his wife. He was a charcoal burner by trade. The property stayed in the ownership of the Andrews family from 1523, through 1546, 1593, 1636, 1653 to 1675. Thomas and Agnes were succeeded by Thomas and Amy, John and Frances, John and Anne, then John's brother Thomas and his wife Elizabeth. In 1675 it passed to their grandchild Martha, daughter of Thomas and Martha Redding of Farnham Royal. She was the owner for about 60 years. Martha was married twice, first to William Nicholl of Cowley, then to Thomas Ridge. The son of her first marriage was John Nicholl of Harefield and it was his son, another John, a gardener, who inherited from his grandmother. The next heir (1772) was John's nephew Thomas Nicholl, a framework knitter of Hinckley, Leicestershire, who disposed of his interest in 1779 to Stephen Salter the Rickmansworth brewer. Thus for 250 years from 1523 it was in the ownership of the one family - which is quite unusual and noteworthy. Did any of the Andrews or the Nicholls ever live at the White Horse? Well, Mary Nicholls, a widow, was apparently in occupation in 1736 and she might have been the wife of John Nicholls senior and the daughter-in-law of Martha Nicholl/Ridge. Martha mortgaged the White Horse on two occasions - for the



sum of £157 10s. In 1741 it was mortgaged to the Rev. Lewis Fenton, once the Harefield curate.

By the end of the 17th century the house was divided into two, and in 1699 the southern part was being run as an alehouse. The house was still "used as two" in 1748 and in 1801. In 1751 the manor court met at the White Horse (the name by which it was known by this time). The court was an official affair presided over by the lord of the manor's steward; property transactions were recorded there and local regulations enforced. The meeting place of the court was not usually mentioned so it is not possible to say whether or not the White Horse was a regular venue. The acreage attached to the house fluctuated slightly but was probably just under 5 acres for most of the time.



The Royal Commission on Historical Monuments reported on the building in 1923, concluding that it was originally a 16th century rectangular house with a later addition at the back, and two other modern additions (see plan). Though it is timber framed, the east front has been entirely refaced in brickwork.

The drawing of the White Horse is by Margaret Evans.

E.S.Cuthbertson

HAREFIELD WHEELWRIGHTS

A Wheelwright's Possessions: ISAAC KNIGHT of Harefield, died 1665

INVENTORY

	£	s	d	
Inpris his Weareing Apparrell of all sorts att	5	00	00	)
Item nineteen Pewter dishes weighing three score & fourteen pounds att	3	14	00	) HOUSEHOLD
Item 1 Pewter flagon & 2 pewter candlesticks, one chamber pott, one				)
pinte pott and 1 dozen of spoons att		11	00	) GOODS
Item One brasse warmeing pan & 2 little skilletts valued att		10	00	)
Item one little kettle and a sauce panne att		4	06	)
Item 1 paire of bellows att			6	)
Item three peices of elm tree containing one Load and 29 foote val att	2	13	00	The nave or hub of the
Item one peice of an oake tree containing thirtie foote at 5d per				wheel was made of a solid
foote comes to		12	06	block of elm seasoned for
Item five hundred and sixtie oaken spoakes att 14s a hundred	3	18	00	several years.
Item Fifty studds		5		The spokes were of oak,
Item twoe Epp trees		1	08	not sawn but cleft for
Item for fiftie vellies	1	5	00	strength and seasoned for
Item for fourtie oaken peices	1	0	00	4 years.
Item for fower paire of shafts		8		The felloes (or vellies in
Item for five and twenty Ashen peices		10		Harefield) were segments
Item one hundred of studds and sheathes		10		of the wheelrim, made of
Item for foure barrowes unwheeled		10		ash for preference.
Item all the working tools belonging to the said deceased at		15		A rave was a frame fixed
Item all the lumber in the shoppe att	1	5		round a wagon to increase
Item three Raves		1	06	its capacity.
Item one hundred of Sapp Lathes		1		A kilderkin is a cask.
Item two kilderkins att		6		
Item in the close and yards tenne Loades of wood	5	0	00	
Item four peices belonging to the sawpitt		6		
Item three Cowes	5	0	00	
Item one Sedde plough at		5		
Item due and oweing to the said decd for stufte and commodities	10	9		
delivered and sold unto sev'all presens the sum of				

All this should have added up to a total of £45 6s 8d but there seems to have been a slight mistake somewhere, perhaps a transcription error or perhaps a 17th century miscalculation. The original document is in the Guildhall Library, ms 9174/11.

Every village would have its wheelwright in times gone by. John Salter was a "wheeler" in Harefield in Queen Elizabeth's reign and combined the trade with some farming (he left ewes and lambs to his children). Among the people who witnessed his will in 1585 was William Knight who possibly had some family connection with the 17th century wheelwright of this name who died in 1663, leaving "hewed spoakes and vellies", cart bodies, plough boards and handles, timber both rough and squared and all manner of working tools and implements in his "yard workhouse and shopp". William's son Isaac followed him in his trade as wheeler, but only survived him by 2 years. Obviously he died unexpectedly. He had just been married for a matter of months and he did not make a will. His is the inventory which appears above.

The Knights owned and may have lived in a cottage called Gulls in the main street (half way between Bird Lane and Merle Avenue). Later in the century Luke Angell was the wheelwright, and he seems to have lived in the Knights' old house. Luke Angell made coffins as well as carts and wheels and may have done other carpentry and joinery.

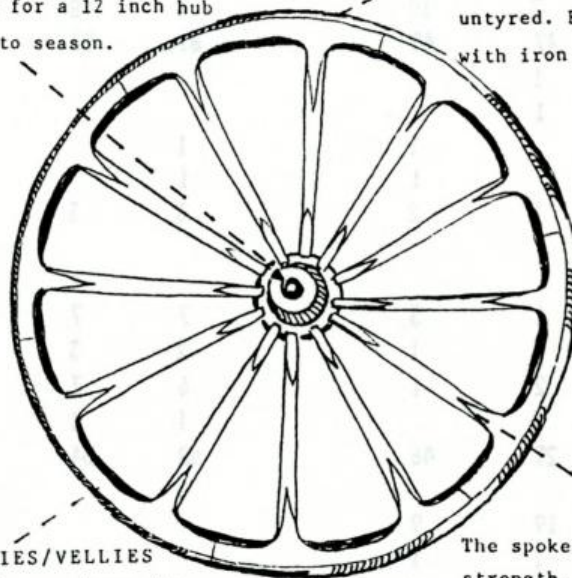
In 1723 Joseph Hone, a wheelwright, bought a property in Harefield Street, a little to the south of Gulls. His descendants flourished, acquired more houses and land, and branched out as farmers and timber merchants. Another wheelwright, William Atkins, also had substantial property interests in early 19th century Harefield.

Carpentry continued to be an ancillary occupation for wheelers on into the 19th century. In 1851 there were two wheelers in business, William Rich a master wheelwright and George Weedon who was a carpenter as well. Two of Weedon's sons worked for him as carpenters. A later wheelwright George Taylor had his "shop" at the Prince

of Wales, now the Prince Hotel, and combined his trade with running the beerhouse. His wife's younger brother was apprenticed to him. He was operating from 1871 or earlier until November 1888 when he sold up and left. He often advertised for workers: "Wanted. Wheelwright's smith, used to heavy work, also a wheelwright"; "Wanted. Wheelwright. Country man preferred". He also advertised carts for sale. From 1861 onwards there seem to have been three and even four qualified wheelers in the village so their skills must have been in demand. Back in the 16th and 17th centuries wheels may not have been "shod" because iron "tyres" were so expensive, but the practice was more common by Victorian times, when a wheelwright's premises often adjoined a smith's. (Sources for this article were the census returns and the manor court records. The material was contributed by Vi Spicer and Elona Cuthbertson)

The nave or hub of the wheel was made of a solid block of elm though oak or ash could be used. Wood for a 12 inch hub would need 6 years to season.

The wheel would be "shod" with an iron tyre by the blacksmith. In days when iron was expensive wheels were left untyred. For hard wear they were shod with iron hoops or iron pieces (strakes)



FELLOES/FELLIES/VELLIES

Segments called felloes made up the wheel rim. The earliest spoked wheels had one piece ash felloes which were steamed into the correct shape. Later, felloes took 2 spokes.

SPOKES

The spokes were of oak - cleft for strength, not sawn. 4 years seasoning was required.

#### Springwell Farm

Springwell Farm is shortly to be auctioned and the Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust has expressed concern about its future; it is advertised as having "development potential" although it is in the Green Belt, the Colne Valley Park and a Conservation area. The buildings and land are forlorn and neglected but are in a marvellous situation (a public footpath runs through its fields).

The farm used to be known as Noakes (also Noks, Nocks, Nokes), a name derived from "oaks". For over 300 years it was in the ownership of just two families and from the 17th century at least was let to tenant farmers. Its earliest known owner was John at Nokes. Later, from 1521 to 1673 it belonged to successive generations of Weedons (anciently "a Wedon"). In 1636 John Weedon held the dwelling house with barns, stable and orchard, and a total of nearly 70 acres of land. The farm seems to have been about this size from earliest times. He also had two weirs, Poke Weare and Home Weare, with fishing in the Colney stream. In 1657 Henry Weedon of Nokes died, and his son Henry (a minor) took possession via his guardian William Baldwin the elder of Rickmansworth. He was to pay his "mother-in-law" (stepmother?) £10 10s a year, and his brothers and sisters were to have £50 each. The youngest sister Mary had not yet been baptized - her father had given her this name to be going on with "not knowinge how short his tyme was".

In 1673 Henry and Elizabeth Cane of Hillingdon acquired the farm - and its tythes, both small and great, which had been purchased from George Pitt, then lord of the manor and owner of many Harefield tithes. There was a dispute over water rights in 1674 and the two stretches of river in which the farm had free fishing were strictly defined (these were two branches of the Colne, one of which was later incorporated into the canal). The Canes, who owned the property from 1673-1847, were a clerical family (they had various livings in Lincolnshire). In 1847 the Rev Thomas Coats Cane sold (£1950 was the sum mentioned) to Edward Brown of Uxbridge, maltster. By this time the farm had watercress beds in addition to its ozier beds, free fishery and "land covered by water". Commercial watercress growing was apparently introduced to the district from Kent in the 1820s (article by Barbara Brown in the Rickmansworth Historian, 24). There was also an extra piece of land, just over 9a, next to the Rickmansworth Rd on what had been Harefield Common - a bonus from the Enclosure award of 1813. At this time the farm was in the occupation of James Gibbins, and it does appear as Gibbins Farm for a time, though the name Springwell was soon to be adopted. Robert Swannell Brownie was the copyhold owner from 1860 and became freeholder in 1863.

Sources: principally the manor court records in the Greater London Record Office.

VI SPICER has compiled the following statistics showing the number of people who were not born in Harefield at the time of the various 19th century censuses, and the counties in which they were born.

From the Census returns  
PERSONS BORN OUTSIDE HAREFIELD

Census year	Males				Females			
	1851	1861	1871	1881	1851	1861	1871	1881
County of birth								
Bedfordshire	3	5	2	5	1	2	1	7
Berks	12	10	7	10	4	8	9	13
Bucks	53	41	47	49	61	53	55	58
Cambs		1	1				2	1
Cheshire		2	1					1
Cornwall		1		1	1		1	
Derbyshire	1	1		1	1		1	
Devon	2	1	1	2	3	3	6	4
Dorset	2							1
Durham						1		
Essex	2	3	1	3	7	7	6	6
Glos	2	6	1	1	2	3	1	3
Hants	4	4	2	1	6	7	2	3
Herefordshire	1		2		1	1	2	
Herts	57	47	29	46	68	54	50	75
Huntingdon					1		1	
Kent			19	9			13	9
Lancashire	1		1	1				2
Leicester	1	1	3	2			3	4
Lincolnshire	1	2			2	3		
Middlesex	86	53	71	71	89	61	86	144
Norfolk	1	2	3	4	2	1	3	7
Northumberland				1	2			2
Nottingham		4						
Oxfordshire	6	9	4	6	8	8	5	10
Shropshire	1			1		3		1
Somerset	5	1	2	2	4	4	3	8
Staffordshire		1	1	1	1		4	10
Suffolk	4	1	1	6	4	5	2	8
Surrey	11	11	6	5	9	9	5	7
Sussex	2		4	2	1	2		4
Warwickshire	5	5	2	3	4	4	5	3
Wiltshire			2	6	5	4	4	9
Worcester		1	4	3	1	1	3	5
Yorkshire	3	2	4	3	5	6	1	2
Isle of Wight					2			1
Isle of Man					1			
Ireland			2	1	1		1	
Scotland	1		7	4	1		1	5
Wales	3						2	1
France	1		1					
All born outside parish	271	215	231	250	298	250	278	414
Total enumerated	768	782	820	751	724	734	726	698
% born outside parish	35%	27%	28%	33%	41%	34%	38%	59%

continued in column 1 of next page

How do figures for Harefield compare with those for other places? Colleen Cox has kindly supplied some statistics for the neighbouring parish of Ruislip which are shown in the table below:

	% born outside parish			
	1851	1861	1871	1881
Harefield	38%	31%	33%	46%
Ruislip	34%	39%	42%	48%

It is clear from the main table (opposite) that most of the individuals born outside Harefield came from Middlesex, Hertfordshire, or Buckinghamshire (the three counties meet at Harefield). Further analysis - for 1851 only - shows that most were born in adjacent parishes: Rickmansworth, 95 (plus 6 in West Hyde); Ruislip, 47; Ickenham, 27; the Chalfonts, 29; Denham, 18; Uxbridge, 12. Persons born in these places accounted for 41% of the total of 569 whose birthplace was not Harefield though they were living there in 1851.

HAREFIELD  
A Century Ago  
From the local press  
Collected by Margaret Evans

The 1880s were years of population growth in Harefield. Between 1881 and 1891 the number of inhabitants rose from 1503 to 1867, a sharp increase. The asbestos factory at the Harefield Mills was said to be "the largest in Europe" (letter from the works manager, August 1888) and business seems to have been good: "The company has this year secured a contract for several years to supply asbestos packing for the British Navy". Railway Companies and Steelworks, Collieries, Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, Chemical and Filtration Works, bought Harefield products and foreign customers included the German Navy as well as firms in Europe, Canada, Australia, India, China and Japan. Coles and Shadbolt's Cement Works also offered employment. One of the workers there, Thomas Bull aged 20, had a nasty misadventure on a barge in London. A can of paraffin exploded and he was badly burned. Another mishap at the Cement Works: Edmund Groves was emptying a barrow of dirt into a pit when he fell down the shaft 40ft. He was got out and carried to the Cottage Hospital where he was said to be recovering. In July James Pringle, 15, from Denham was working at a kiln at the works "when fire came down and burnt him in a terrible manner". It is interesting to note that the manager of the asbestos mills lived in the large house adjoining the mills, and that a Mr and Mrs Shadbolt were at Rylstone, Church Hill, not far from the cement works.

Trade Union Recruitment

In November 1889 a deputation from the Gasworkers and General Labourers Union attended a meeting on the common. Between 600 and 700 people assembled to listen to Mr Welsh who informed the brickmakers that bricks were sold at 38s-42s per thousand but only cost about 17s to make; similarly, most of the agricultural labourers' true earnings went to the landlord and the

parson. Parsons were the greatest enemy of the working class, he declared. Rather than sending souls to heaven they did more to send workers' bodies to paupers' graves. Mr Welsh wanted to form local branches of his union. Mr Brown moved a motion, seconded by Mr Winship, that a branch be formed in Harefield. About 60 people joined. The meeting was most orderly and dispersed quickly.

Agriculture

Farming was still important in Harefield. A report on Middlesex agriculture for the previous year did not paint a particularly rosy picture. The harvest had been long and expensive. Few samples of wheat were fit for the mill. Three quarters of the hay was mouldy and inferior. Clover was bad and root crops much lighter than usual. Prices were "cruel" and there was no sale for some kinds of produce. The report welcomed the "Ground Game Act" which must have been designed to keep down the numbers of hares and rabbits which caused great damage especially where vegetables and young fruit trees were grown. Sundry advertisements:

SALE Timber on Noakes Farm (Springwell) 60 trees, 30 elm, 16 beech, 10 oak, 2 ash, 2 cherry.

WANTED Situation as carter or general farmhand. Good ploughman, stacker and thatcher. H. Watkins, Knightscoate Farm.

SALE 850 oaks in Bayhurst Wood. H.R.Cox.

WANTED Smart young man as groom and cowman. Dews Farm.

SALE A few loads of meadow hay G.Treadaway, Copthall.

SALE Freehold, tithe-free estate in present owner's occupation 43 years, owner now retiring, Crows Nest Farm. Very eligible for erection of gentleman's residence or building sites, 100 acres 1st class grass land, farm house and buildings and 5 cottages. (Sold to H.R.Cox of Hillingdon House)

Landed Gentry in 1889

Mrs Agnes Drake, widow of the late W.W.Drake of Breakspear, died on May 30 at Eaton Square, aged 89. There was a simple funeral in Harefield Churchyard. The cortege arrived at 1pm and a large number of parishioners attended. Mourners were Mr F.Harcourt Powell and Capt. G.Powell (brothers), Mr Tarleton, Col. and Mrs Vernon, Mr H.R.Cox, Mr W.Kennell, Mr Monckton, J.R.Nicholson, Mr Webster, all the Breakspear tenants. The Rev Harland read the service and the coffin was placed in the vault beside Mr Drake.

WILL OF THE LATE MRS DRAKE Value £63,000. She left £15,000 to the children of her brother G.H.Powell and there were other smaller bequests. Breakspears and estates at Deptford, Cranfield, and Garsington to Alfred Henry Tarleton. House at Eaton Square and residue of estate to Thomas H.Powell.

(In 1889 Breakspears was let to the celebrated W.S.Gilbert who gave the annual school treat that July. "It was a complete success with delightful weather. The children enjoyed the open air games. Prizes of books and toys were given. There was a band in attendance and dancing on the greensward. A grand display of fireworks

closed the day's entertainment.")

DEATH on Sept 27th at Harefield Park, William Frederick Vernon D.L. late Capt. 68th D.L.I. in his 82nd year. He was the second son of the late General H.C. Vernon of Staffs. He succeeded to his uncle George Cooke's estate at Harefield Park in 1840. He was educated at Harrow. He will be succeeded by his brother Lt Col George A. Vernon J.P. For many years he led a retired life occupying himself with literary labours and archaeological study. He was buried in the family vault at Harefield Church. The large body of mourners included his tenants H.Cooper (Limeworks), C.Brown Jr, C.Wassell (Flourmills), H.R.Brown, G.Brown, C.J.Filkins, J.F.Nicholas, C.Filkins Jr, C.Brown sr (steward of the estate)....The funeral was by C.Brown & Son.

April 27 Mrs Mabel Cox wife of Mr Frederick Cox of Harefield Place died at Cannes last Saturday aged 53 (the funeral was at Woking Cemetary).

#### The Memorial Hall

This building at the junction of Rickmansworth and Hill End Roads was a centre for all sorts of activities - bazaars and other fund raising events, temperance teas, concerts and a variety of improving lectures. The Vicar, the Rev Mr Harland, gave a talk on Japan. It was mainly about mission work there, but with the aid of his powerful magic lantern he presented "some vivid scenes". The hall was packed and there was a certain amount of noisy behaviour - "it might be wise in future to exercise some discretion in the matter of admission". The Victoria Cricket Club's 26th annual concert was also well attended. The local paper's reporter complained of discourtesy. He was not allowed to occupy a seat for which he had paid, and was told to sit at the back or leave!

#### Water Works

A century ago the Rickmansworth and Uxbridge Valley Water Co. which still supplies Harefield was proposing to pipe water to 8 parishes in an area extending from Rickmanswoth to Harlington, and with a combined population of 19,000. The new works, opened in April 1889, were near the main road at Drayton Ford, Mill End and contained an artesian well going 300 ft deep into the chalk. "The chief springs were found in beds of flints at 142 ft and 270 ft. The water comes up clear and brilliant and of a slight blue tint noticed in all chalk springs, and is of uniform temperature all the year, 52-53 degrees." Another artesian well had been sunk "at the bend in the valley of the Colne" and this water was to be pumped to a neighbouring hill at Harefield where a site for a reservoir had been secured. The building was of brick but had a stone faced pediment and front on which were carved the names of the 8 parishes it was intended to supply.

#### A Curious Incident

A sow belonging to Mr J.H. Nicholas of Woodbine Cottage had a litter of 12 pigs. The same night it was attacked by a ferret which took away one piglet, then sucked the

blood of five others which died. The sow was so frightened that she could not eat, developed lockjaw and had to be killed. This serious loss was due to the neighbour's ferret escaping from its hutch.

#### Polite Notice

Benjamin W. Somerville, baker and corndealer, returns thanks to the gentry and inhabitants of Harefield for their patronage over 40 years, and begs to inform them he has disposed of the business to Mr Collingwood Brown.

Collingwood Brown begs to inform the gentry and inhabitants of Harefield and neighbourhood that he has purchased the goodwill and business of a baker, corn dealer etc as carried on by Mr B.W. Somerville and hopes to merit their continued patronage.

#### 1989 EXCURSIONS

Saturday 10 June 1989 SUFFOLK

#### CAVENDISH MANOR VINEYARDS AND VILLAGE

Morning visit to listed manor house, exhibition of bygones in barn museum, tour of vineyards and winetasting. Picture postcard village green with attractive group of thatched cottages.

LAVENHAM Once the centre of the woollen cloth trade this is possibly the finest medieval town in England. It has a lovely church, an ancient Guildhall which belongs to the National Trust (shop and tearooms) and many beautiful timber-framed buildings, large and small. These include the Priory, a Grade 1 listed building rescued from decay by its present owners - who used to live in Eastcote. This has a refectory restaurant, herb garden and craft shop. A guided tour can be arranged for an additional £2.50. There are antique and gift shops and plenty of cafes in the compact little town.

Cost £6 FOR SOCIETY MEMBERS ONLY. £6.50 otherwise. Departure from Harefield (Village Green) at 8.30 am.

Sunday 16th July 1989

Afternoon visit to Dorney Court near Windsor. This 15th century mansion has been occupied by the same family for 400 years. It has a great hall with lots of old portraits and the house is full of atmosphere and interest. Refreshments will be provided after the tour of the house. There is "pick your own fruit" for anyone who is feeling energetic.

Cost (to cover admission to house, tour and tea) £3.50  
Transport by private car is available.

Saturday 9th September

A DAY IN RYE is being arranged.

If you have any queries about these events, please contact Robert Goodchild, 76 Peerless Drive, Harefield, Tel 823993. He will take your bookings now.

The Harefield Newsletter is edited by Elona Cuthbertson, 4 Coppermill Lock Tel 823059