

# Harefield History Society

*Affiliated to the Uxbridge Guild of Arts*

**Newsletter No 37. Spring 1999**



The Church of St Mary the Virgin, Harefield

**Committee:** T Hillier      Chairman  
A Batchelor      Treasurer  
K Davey      Secretary  
V Woodward      Conservation Representative  
M Evans      Editor  
M Marjoram  
M Isaacs  
I Liddell  
R. Goodchild, Programme Secretary

## ***Secretary's Note:***

Thank you, Margaret, for your good wishes in the Autumn newsletter. I should have taken over as secretary in April, but Margaret kindly stayed at her post while I had a knee replacement. I must say that the new one is a great improvement on the original!

A member of the Harefield Marquetry Group once brought along to our Society's meeting a commemorative plaque made by the group for presentation to Hillingdon's twin town, Emden. Interested, I joined the Group and was surprised to find that even someone who is hopeless at drawing and painting can create attractive pictures and patterns with wood veneers. So now I have another very enjoyable hobby, shared with friends within the group, and all thanks to the History Society.

K Davey.

## ***Editors Note.***

This year we did not have our usual conference at Winston Churchill Hall. It was the only occasion when we could meet members of other History Societies and see some of their work, and there were always interesting speakers. Perhaps we have used up all the subjects members can think of? We are to have one in 2000, and it will be the last, unless, perhaps, you can think of new subjects. If so please let the Secretary know.

M Evans



## *What's in it ~ St Mary's Church Open Day, 13<sup>th</sup> March 99.*

The year 1999 is the last year in the church's decade of evangelism, designed to run up to the Millennium. As part of the final year each church in the diocese was requested to undertake an act of mission. As part of the act the Church of St Mary the Virgin, Harefield was opened to the public on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> March.

It is, unfortunately, necessary to keep the church locked at any time when it is unattended, so many people, with a wide range of interests, have been unable to visit at their convenience, the historical and ancient building.

Various attractions were laid on throughout the day. These included our organist, Betty Washbrook, playing soothing background music throughout the morning ~ a fit accompaniment to sitting in the pews, regarding the many monuments and thinking about some of the people whom they remembered.

Light refreshments were served by that group of people who quietly work away in the background, with only the minimal public recognition.

A site which was crowded most of the day with interested and enthusiastic people was the belfry. A group of ringers had rigged up a camcorder in the bell chamber leading to a television in the ringing chamber. It was therefore possible for people to pull a bell rope and actually watch the effect on the television. When the bells were not being rung, it was possible to climb the full height of the tower and come out on the roof. This was attempted by many, including an extremely game 84 year old lady, who were rewarded by an unusual view of the church and of the valley in which the church lies.

Reg Neil had an excellent exhibition of photos in the Anzac Chapel, depicting the church through the ages. These photos included one of a past vicar, the Revd Harland whose granddaughter and great grand-daughter were present on the day. There were also pictures of the present incumbent practising for the London marathon!

The flower arrangers deserve mention since they are another group that don't get public recognition. Harefield is extraordinarily fortunate in being able to call upon a team of extremely skilled and gifted flower arrangers. Their handiwork can make all the difference to the overall appearance of the church and their efforts for this weekend were no exception.

The History Society had been requested to provide tours to explain some of the many items of interest, be it carving, memorials, architecture or other decoration. A team of three, Margaret Evans, Val Woodward and Maisie Marjoram undertook to lead tours and, throughout the day, they could be seen, moving around the Church accompanied by small groups of interested people, a lot of them Church members interested in learning more about their place of worship. My sincere thanks go out to these three ladies, especially Maisie, who came in at the last moment to replace Kay Holmes. Kay, although not ~~actually~~ a member of the society, is an expert on heraldry and had been going to take part in leading a tour. However he was taken ill a few days before and admitted to hospital. I can, at the time of writing this report, <sup>say</sup> that he is thankfully home from hospital. My thanks to Kay for being willing to take part.



## **Fire!**

In the days of the Great Fire of London, 1666, most houses were timber framed and thatched. There were no fire engines. However, as the concept of insurance developed, the idea of fire-fighting became part of the insurance companies' responsibility.

Houses were not numbered, so each company supplied their customers with a metal plaque to fix on the house wall, showing the company's badge.

It has been said that no company would put out a fire in a house showing some other badge, but time brought increasing co-operation. The Middlesex Gazette of February 19, 1881 reported the arrival of a steam fire engine at Uxbridge. A band led the parade following the new steamer splendidly horsed with an experienced whip on the box. The black helmets had been replaced by new ones of burnished brass, and no fault could be found with the turnout. Following were Hanwell's steamer, also drawn by four horses, and those from Watford, Windsor, and Slough. Two thousand people attended Belmont Grounds where Miss Lilian Cox of Harefield Place smashed a bottle of wine with a silver axe, and named the engine "The Perseverance". She then set it in motion and water was thrown to a considerable height. Miss Cox was presented with the axe, made by an Uxbridge jeweller. On the side of the engine were the words "Nunquam non paratus".

During the late nineteenth century Harefield relied on Rickmansworth for fire service. After water pipes had been laid in the village in the 1890's, Captain Tarleton of Breakspears set up his own fire engine, manned by his own staff, and they usually arrived before the others, which led to some disagreement about who had the right to use the hydrants.

Today we are at a stage, it seems, when everything costs too much and the number of fire engines is being cut down. Perhaps we should add some horse drawn engines ~ it could be better to have some slow ones than none at all.

M Evans

## ***Report on the Harefield Village Conservation Area Advisory Panel***

At the moment the subject about which the panel is most concerned is that of the Conservation Area Review.

The Borough Committee responsible for the review seems to have been taken aback by the strength of feeling in the village against their proposals. First, and foremost, why do they wish to take Langley Farm, Breakspear Road North, out of the conservation area? These days one inevitably suspects an ulterior motive behind their reasoning, especially as the council owns the farm. There are also one or two little pockets of land that the Borough committee wish to remove, notably the land on which 12A, 14, 14A, and 14B Northwood Road stand. As our Panel has had to fight hard to contain development of this parcel of land, and to prevent further listed trees from being destroyed, we question the reasoning behind the Committee's wish to remove this particular plot of land from the proposed conservation area. A meeting is to be held at the Civic Centre on the 25<sup>th</sup> March when the Conservation Area Review Body will present their final report.

## **Mediparc**

This appears to be somewhat of a "dead duck" at the moment in view of the uncertainty of



the future of Harefield Hospital.

### **Parking outside 2, The Green.**

A short sustained campaign to stop the resident driving across the Green in order to park his car outside the cottage proved successful.

### **“Rhodes” and “Devaris”, Breakspear Road North.**

The owner of these two properties has applied for permission to convert the two houses into a 12 bed care home. Parking will be one of the major problems and the owner wishes to “take over” the lay-by opposite to ease the situation. The Panel feel that this is inappropriate as the lay-by was built to ease congestion at the Football Club.

### **14 and 14A, Northwood Road.**

The owner now wishes to demolish both properties and replace them with two detached, 5 bedroom, properties. As the present houses have become somewhat dilapidated this can only be an improvement. However we haven't heard yet what is to become of the dentist. The whole proposal has yet to be discussed with the Planning Officer.

The Panel feel that traffic calming schemes should be considered on the approach roads to the village and have expressed their concern at the number of heavy goods vehicles driving through the village, in spite of warning notices.

Finally, a list of appropriate historical names for new developments has been submitted to the Planning Department.

V Woodwards.

## **Bibliography**

( Books about Harefield, also books containing individual items about Harefield )

Notes on the Parish of Harefield 1872 by W J Vernon

Extracts from Registers and Descriptions of Monuments in the Parish Church,

3 booklets by Rev H S Cochran

Historical Account of Parishes in Middlesex 1800 by D Lyson

Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, volume for Middlesex 1937

Middlesex by Sir Clifford Radcliffe

Victoria County History of Middlesex, Volume 3, 1962

Art and Architecture of London by Ann Saunders

Middlesex Village Book, Federation of Women's Institutes 1989

Harefield and her Church 1972 by W Goatman

History of Moorhall 1937 by H S Cochran

Harefield at that time of day 1976 WEA Class

Harefield's Old Buildings 1982 by M Evans ( booklet )

Here and There in Harefield 1987 WEA Class

Gregory King's Harefield 1992 by E Cuthbertson

Life and Work in a Middlesex Village 1984 by G Tyack



## *Extracts from the Middlesex Advertiser*

As the century and millennium draws to a close, we now have a local paper, Harefield Gazette, which provides local residents with news, information and (dare I say it) gossip. Invaluable for those who are forced to spend Monday to Friday working outside the parish boundaries due to the lack of employment opportunities within Harefield. The decline of our industry is another story. Would any of our members like to make a few notes on this subject for a future newsletter.

The following articles extracted from the Middlesex Advertiser were published during the 1890's and show what life was like in Harefield 100 years ago. From the society archives in Harefield Library, these transcripts have been carefully copied from the original newspapers by Margaret Evans and as a document provide an invaluable reference for that period of local history. My thanks go out to Margaret for being so meticulous with the careful highlighting of names and places, so useful for reference.

**1890 1st February - Uxbridge Petty Sessions.** John Lofty, Robert Bugbee, Richard Cook, William Lofty, G Trumper, David Jones and William Hughes, Labourers. Summoned for being drunk and disorderly. P.C. Budgen and P.C. Copeland heard voices near the Breakspear Arms and found Mr Butler a baker from Ruislip in the midst of about 40 men. They accused Mr Butler of running over a man with his horse and cart. The PC's found he had not, but a man was drunk in the lane. The men went into the Breakspear Arms but the police tried to prevent them after they had been flung out. The Police were hit and sent for assistance. Fined £1 or 10s

**1891 18th June - Post Office.** Excitement was caused by a contest for the postmastership over several months. Mr E Quickenden decided to retire. Disposed of his business to Mr Marchant who expected to be installed as postmaster. However, a rival Mr Collingwood Brown had strong claims. He was a native, a churchman, a good conservative and a son of a guardian. Mr Marchant was a stranger, a chappeller and with unknown politics. Petitions, bets were made. In the end the prize was obtained by Mr Brown.

**1892 11th June - Athletic Sports.** The most successful ever. Organised by the Foresters and Football and Cricket clubs, in the field lent by G. Webster Esq. The weather was all that could be desired. A Brass band under Mr Spratley played. The following gentlemen competed, but not for prizes; L. Webster, G. Manckton, G. Harland, A. Harland. The judge was H. Ward Esq. The referee Mr Collingwood Brown. The starter Mr Blud. Handicappers Mr J. McCallum, G. Winship, J. Ratcliff and S. Blud. Prizes were presented by Miss Webster.

1 mile flat-G. Nicholas, W. Wesley, Puddifoot 100yds flat-C. Fane, W. Morley, Gristwood  
High Jump-A. Harland, G. Harland, G. Groves, A. Pearson Long jump-B. Webster, G. Groves  
100 yds-G. Groves, D. Carter, A. Collett Hurdle- G. Grove, C. Fane, A. Pearson

1/2 mile-G. Monckton, W. Webster, W. Prickett, G. Nicholls

10 Ft. water jump with hurdle and furze- A. Harland, G. Haarland, G. Monckton, B. Webster, L. Webster, C. Brown Jr, A. Pearson. Many alighted in the water affording great amusement.

3 Legged race-B. & M. Webster, L. Webster & A. Harland, D. Carter & W. Prickett, C. & G. Brown

**1893 4th November - Slough Petty Sessions.** Philip Irons and John Sargeant of Harefield charged with stealing 7 savoy cabbages and 5 sticks of celery at Denham. Sargeant 21 days hard labour, Irons 10.

**1895 23 March - Excitement.** At 1 to 3 pm in the valley appeared a fine stag followed by hounds and riders. It amused the workers at the asbestos factory, and ultimately found its way to the Lime Works and was captured. 2 to 300 men and women work at the Asbestos factory.

**1896 20th June - Report in the Sheffield Telegraph.** The vicar of Harefield has been offered an incumbency at Rotherham. It is worth £750 a year and Harefield has only a nominal emolument. It will be a great loss to Harefield if he accepts it. **27th June - The Vicar.** The Rev. Harland has decided to remain in Harefield after 26 years in the parish.

**1897 26th June - Diamond Jubilee.** Every person over school age was given a dinner on the village green under an erection of rick-cloth lent and erected by farmers in the parish. Everything was supplied by the parishioners, cooking and waiting all done by them. Over 1000 people dined at 1 o'clock. At 3 the athletics sports began, lasting till 6. Dancing followed till 9.30 when a bonfire was lighted. It was a great success. An impromptu duck hunt in the village pond caused much amusement.



## **1999 Programme**

26 April Annual General Meeting followed by  
Valerie Woodwards, An insight into Harefield House and the  
AQD laboratories

### **Summer Programme**

Saturday 15th May Visit to Leeds Castle and Gardens near Maidstone, Kent  
We will be visiting one of the best preserved Norman castles in  
England. In addition to the beautiful house containing mediaeval  
furnishings, French and English furniture, tapestries and  
paintings and grounds, with beautiful gardens, a maze, its Avery  
and many varied wild fowl, there is an added attraction, a  
Festival of English wine and food.  
For further details contact Robert Goodchild

Tuesday 29th June A Guided walk around Rickmansworth conservation area, lead  
by Geoff Saul, chairman of Rickmansworth Historical Society.  
We will meet on the upper level of Northway Car Park behind  
the Iceland store at 7 p.m.. The walk will last about 1 hour.  
Anyone with spare seats in their car or who will experience  
difficulty in getting there, contact Robert Goodchild who will  
endeavour to pair up these people.

Tuesday 21 September A guided tour of Shakespeare's Globe Exhibition and  
theatre. Followed by a matinee performance of Julius Caesar in  
Shakespeare's Globe Theatre. To celebrate the 400th  
anniversary of the first performance of Julius Caesar at the  
Globe on 21st September 1599. This performance recreated in  
period costume and music, and an all male cast as originally  
performed in 1599.

### **Winter meetings**

27th September Don Mitchell - Farming through the ages.  
This talk with a display is provided by our local farmer. Farming  
being of great local interest being the main source of  
employment in Harefield well into this century.

25th October Ken Kirkman - Pinner chalk mines.  
Following the recent publication of his book on the same  
subject, Mr Kirkman will present a slide show on this local  
industry.

22nd November John Butterworth - Industrial Porcelain  
The former manager of Park Lane Porcelain in Harefield will  
share his knowledge of the industry with which he was  
associated with for many years.