

# Harefield History Society

## NEWSLETTER No.13

August 2022

Staying in touch with members and friends of the Harefield History Society around the world.

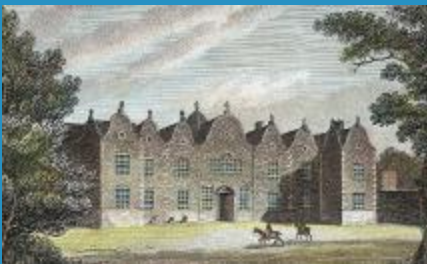
### In this Issue

Page 1

New Season  
The first three meetings

Page 2

Harefield Place



Page 4

Memories  
of  
Butterfield Cottages



### Editorial

It was with some trepidation that I announced in Newsletter no.12 that we would recommence our face to face meetings on February 28<sup>th</sup>. Would anyone come?

As it turned out, I need not have worried and by the time we arrived at the end of the 2021/22 season in June, five excellent meetings had been completed. This included a well attended AGM with lively and constructive contributions from the floor. The most significant decisions taken at meeting were as follows:-

Keith Piercy was elected as our new Chairman and Helen Concher our new Treasurer. Robert Goodchild, Charles Hampshire and Andy Harris agreed to continue in their existing roles of Programme Manager, Secretary and Webmaster. Finally, we welcome Nick Hardey on to the committee.

As you may be aware, since our activities were interrupted by the pandemic, we have been operating without charging members or visitors for attending meetings. Obviously, we cannot continue to be free of charge indefinitely, and it was agreed that fees would be reintroduced at the start of the 2022/23 season, which is nearly upon us. The new annual membership will be £10 and the visitor fee £2 per meeting. *(As requested at the AGM, it is hoped to be able to accept card payments in addition to cheques and cash).*

The programme for the first three meetings of the season are as follows:-

- 26 September - The Liberation of Auschwitz by Nick Hardy
- 24 October - "Finds" at New Years Green & beyond  
by Dr Emma Tellow (Historic Environment HS2)
- 28 November - Harefield and District on Film  
by Robert Goodchild

Newsletter Editor:- Andy Harris

(13 Pond Close, Harefield, Uxbridge, Middx, UB9 6NG)

Website:- [www.harefieldhistorysociety.co.uk](http://www.harefieldhistorysociety.co.uk)

Email Address:- [harefieldhistorysociety@virginmedia.com](mailto:harefieldhistorysociety@virginmedia.com)

## The Harefield Place Estate

For a long time I was confused by the fact that the house called “Harefield Place” is in Ickenham and not, as one would have expected, in Harefield. I understood that Harefield Place was the seat of the Newigate family who owned Harefield Manor and that the mansion was located next to St Mary’s Church.

This was the house, we are told, that in 1602, Queen Elizabeth I visited and stayed several days. Unfortunately, in 1660 the house was badly damaged by fire and, although attempts were made to rebuild it, they said it was never the same again. It was partly pulled down in the 1770s and finally demolished in about 1813. (*The property known as Church Gardens, set back from the road near the bottom of Church Hill, contains the remains of the walled garden*).

A new mansion house was built in 1786 (*indicted by the green arrow on the map below*). It was originally called “Harefield Lodge”, but renamed “Harefield Place” sometime between 1817-1819. The last member of the Newdigate family to live at Harefield Place was Charles Newdigate Newdegate. He inherited the estate in 1833 and added a lake and walled kitchen garden. He sold most of the estate in 1877 to the Cox family, retaining only Moorhall farm and the area around St Mary’s church where the original house stood (*the green dot on the map marks the spot*).

I have recently acquired this map showing the extent of the Harefield Place estate. It is undated but can be no earlier than about 1900 because it shows the Grand Central Railway branch line from Uxbridge to Denham built in the late 1890’s. As you can see, the estate was huge stretching east to include Bayhurst Wood and Mad Bess Wood, west of the canal to Harefield Moor and south to Uxbridge Common.

In 1914, on Colonel Cox’s death, the estate was put up for sale and the detailed description of the what it consisted of makes interesting reading.

By Direction of the Executors of the late Colonel Cox.

### THE HAREFIELD PLACE ESTATE.

Extending from the Village of Harefield on the North to Uxbridge Common on the South, the Mansion being about one-and-a-half mile from Uxbridge Station on the Metropolitan and G.W. Ry., the same distance from Kulsip Station on the G.W. and G.C. Joint Ry., and only 15 miles from London. It extends to about

**2,145 ACRES,**

FORMING A COMPLETE RESIDENTIAL AND SPORTING PROPERTY.

The MANSION is well placed in a heavily timbered park of over 100 acres, with three carriage drive approaches, and lodge at each entrance. It has beautiful views over a delightfully wooded district through which a tributary of the River Colne follows a winding course. The accommodation includes a suite of reception rooms which communicate, billiard-room, about 20 bed and dressing rooms, three bathrooms, and extensive domestic offices.

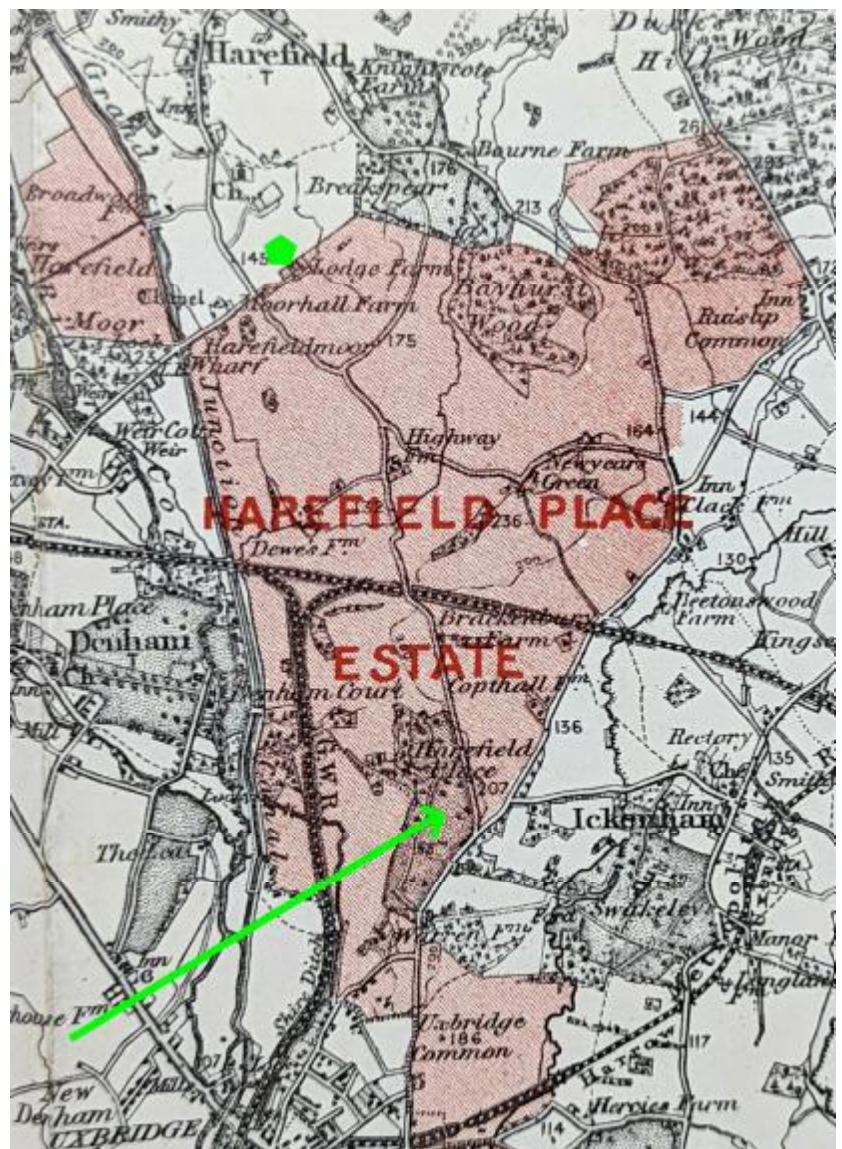
Central Heating. Electric Light. Modern Drainage. Stabling for Ten, and Coachman’s quarters.

Matured grounds. Stone-paved and gravelled terraces, level and sloping lawns, tennis court, rock and Italian gardens, avenue and woodland walks, walled kitchen gardens, and a suitable complement of glasshouses. Cottages for Gardener and Bailiff, Model Farmery, First-rate Covert and other Shooting.

Several Agricultural Holdings with excellent Home-steads, rich pasture, and fertile Arable Land.

The Estate will be offered by AUCTION at the Estate Room, 20, Hanover-square, W., on Tuesday, June 23rd, 1914, in 21 convenient Lots.

Solicitors: Messrs. FLADGATE and Co., 2, Craig’s-court, W.C., and W. P. C. WILLES, Esq., Uxbridge.



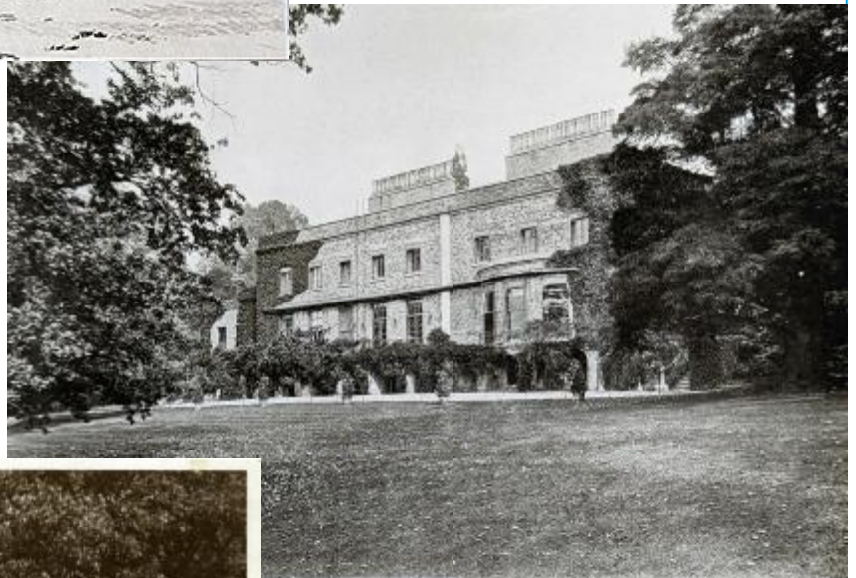
In 1935 the house was acquired by Middlesex Council and became Harefield Country Hospital.

Nowadays Harefield Place contains a number of luxury apartments.



This is an engraving of about 1795 showing the original Harefield Place located next to St Mary's Church

This image is the new Harefield Place when it was still a private house.



Harefield Place - South-West Front.



MIDDLESEX COUNTRY HOSPITAL. HAREFIELD PLACE

Harefield Place when in use as a hospital.

Finally, this is Harefield Place today. It has been converted into 25 high quality apartments.

It is pleasing to see how little the outward appearance has changed over time, a testament to the work of the original architect and builder.



## Memories of Harefield Past

*I received an interesting message from a gentleman on my "Friends of Harefield" mailing list, Captain Colin Smith (retired), who now resides in the far north of Canada. The following are extracts from our correspondence.*

My own experience of Harefield was with my sister's home at No. 8 Butterfield Cottages, where she lived with her husband John Moore. His parents lived at No.6 or 7, until they were moved to a home and died. I took most of my leave with them while I was a Cadet Officer with the British tramping company Silver Line. Even after I'd got all my licenses and was shipping out on foreign ships, I still took my leave there.

After I'd emigrated to Canada in 1973 I still stayed with them while in England, where I went to study for further qualifications. The family had moved (I don't know the date) to 26 Springwell Gardens.

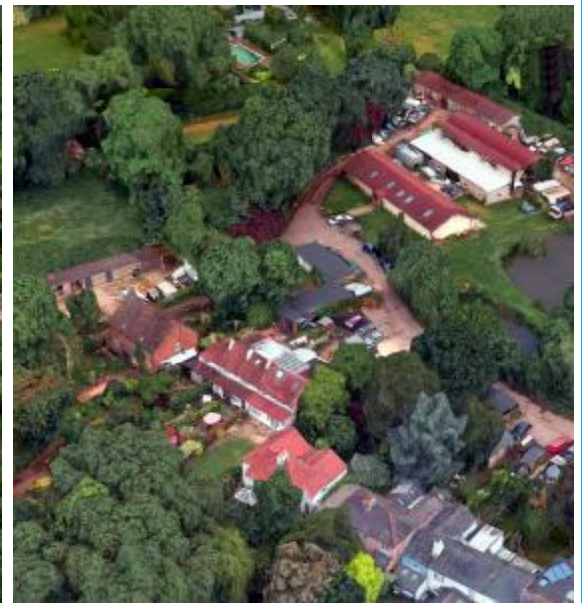
One day I tried to walk to the Cottages to see if they'd changed. I know we had to cross the watercress beds on a small bridge to reach the cottages with their lawns and vegetable gardens in front of them. The sound of the water running through the beds on a quiet night as I crossed the bridge is a magical memory of my time there. But I could not find the tiny footbridge over the watercress beds and had to give up.

*I responded as follows:-* I had not heard of Butterfield Cottages but have found them on the map just off the Old Uxbridge Road near West Hyde (see attached photos). The postal address is now Rickmansworth and there are now only four cottages (numbered 1-4). It could be that the original cottages have been replaced or converted.

However, I cannot locate Springwell Gardens. There is a road in Harefield called Springwell Lane but no number 26 (most of the houses only have names). Another possibility is 26 Springwell Avenue in Mill End, which is just a mile away along the Uxbridge Road towards Rickmansworth.

*Here is an extract of Colin's reply:-*

Thanks for the aerial photos. I didn't recognize anything, so (looking at the map on-line) I started from the pub on the corner (*that's the Oak*) I 'walked' to where the cottages should be. Turning at the right place I was able to go down the lane past where the bridge over the water-cress beds should be. By backing up I eventually found where the small bridge



had been. Sadly the cottages have been badly redeveloped and have lost their charm. I suppose progress is inevitable, but why does it have to be so destructive and ruining what they were built for, i.e. tied cottages to the farm nearby?. There can't be many around who still remember them the way they were.

When I retired from the sea I couldn't bear the idea of joining the modern world. What life seems to lack today is a certain 'edge', something to push against. For me it was the sea, until I left it. After that I couldn't settle down either in urban England or Canada. The climate and the bush up here gives me something to push against, something on the line every day, Be it the -40°C temperatures we're having right now, the treacherous driving, the wild life (grizzly bears), the treacherous icy roads and the constant power cuts, and years when there is no dentist nor motor mechanic in town.

Actually, the way things turn out I may have to come back to where my sister and nephew live now, the Canal Cottages that are just over the bridge over the Grand Union Canal on Springwell Lane. My nephew, who's lived his life in the West Hyde, Mill End, Harefield area, is ill. Everybody knows him as 'Budgie' Moore.

I'm now 75, so not as energetic as I used to be. I don't travel so well, but I would like to see him one last time. He was my drinking companion when we used to go to The Tree opposite the BP service station on the Uxbridge Road for 'Quiz night'. I see it's closed too, as is the pub at Maple Cross. Soon England won't be like England any more, but I will be long gone.

All the best Colin

*If anyone can add anything to this story, please let me know. Thanks Editor*