

Harefield History Society

NEWSLETTER No. 14

January 2023

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

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(Do you recognise this cottage)

Editorial

First of all, I would like to apologise for the rather shambolic start to the season involving twice postponing Nick Hardy's talk which is now rescheduled for January. Robert Goodchild's collection of local interest films was brought forward to fill the gap but several members were disappointed to have missed them and asked that they be shown again (which we may do one day). However, you don't have to wait until then because they can now be viewed on the Society website.

A lot has happened since Newsletter 13 was produced in August. Most notable was, of course, the unexpected end of the second Elizabethan era, the seamless transition into the reign of King Charles III and the rise and fall of the shortest serving British Prime Minister. We are now enduring a severe energy crisis brought on by the senseless war in Ukraine and looking forward with trepidation at what the future may hold.

On a happier note, I am pleased to report that the last newsletter generated several very interesting messages, including a fascinating memoir triggered by the article on Butterfield Cottages (see page 2) and a detailed correction and clarification to the article on Harefield Place (see page 3).

In conclusion, and in spite of everything, I hope you had a Merry Christmas and that we will all have a Happy New Year.

The programme for the first three months of 2023 is as follows:-

23rd January "Auschwitz-Birkenau and Bergen-Belsen" - Man's Inhumanity to Man by Nick Hardey

27th February "Breakspear – The English Pope" by Adrian Waddingham CBE

27th March "Harefield: An Industrial Village" by Keith Piercy

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Memories of Harefield Past - Butterfield Cottages & More

In Newsletter No.13, I included some memories shared with me by Captain Colin Smith (retired), whose sister used to live in one of the Butterfield Cottages near West Hyde. I have received this memoire from David Marks.

I was born and brought up in Harefield and as a family we lived in the lock cottage at Coppermill Lock as my father worked for British Waterways on canal maintenance. From the summer of 1962 to the summer of 1965, when I left school and started work, I was a milk boy working weekends and school holidays for the milkmen working out of the Express Dairy depot in Mill End, Rickmansworth. For the vast majority of that time, I worked Round 16 which covered all of West Hyde, then up to Harefield covering all of Park Lane and surrounding roads, finally finishing in Merle Avenue.

Regarding **Butterfield Cottages**, there was a roadway that went in from Old Uxbridge Road into what was **Pynesfield Farm**. This roadway had a flat concrete bridge, sufficient to take a vehicle over the watercress beds, which were still being worked at that time. To the right of that bridge was a flat concrete footbridge that went to **Butterfield Cottages** (I think there were five and definitely not eight cottages). I also recall the long gardens stretching from the front of the cottages down to the cress beds. Milk was carried to the dwellings in a hand crate (by myself when working) whilst the milkman continued the round. There were two further cottages on Old Uxbridge Road called **Pear Tree** and **Apple Tree Cottages** and then the milkman went into the area in front of the **Jolly Gardeners** pub (closed c1955) to deliver to the houses in **Pleasant Place**.



Location of Pynesfield Farm, with the Jolly Gardener (bottom right) and Butterfield Cottages (left).

Having delivered milk to **Butterfield Cottages**, I took the "short cut" to the **Jolly Gardeners** which was via stepping stones in the water of the cress beds, which no doubt had been placed there for ease of access to the pub (before it ceased to trade) and to the small shop which was next to the pub, but which has now been converted into a house.

The only names that I can recall from that time were the **Brett** family who lived in the last house in **Pleasant Place** (No. 12?), the **Twine** family who ran the shop and **John Power** and his family that lived in either **Pear Tree** or **Apple Tree Cottage**. John was the son of **Jim Power**, the tenant farmer of **Colney Farm** in Harefield. Certainly, the two cottages on the Old Uxbridge Road, plus **Butterfield Cottages**

were the property of **Pynesfield Farm** which had gradually been sold off in various plots over the years with much of it being excavated for gravel. Indeed, the area of water between the footpath that runs from the **Coy Carp** (previously the Fisheries Inn) and Old Uxbridge Road is known as **Pynesfield Lake**.



View from Lynsters Farm (bottom left) to the area of Pynesfield Farm, Butterfeild Cottages and the Jolly Gardener (top right)

Going back to the days on the milk round - I met up with **Joe Ling** the milkman on Saturday mornings at **Lynsters Farm**. Joe told me of an incident during the preceding week at **Pynesfield Farm**. The final deliveries in West Hyde were to **Pynesfield Manor**, which is the big house on the junction of Copperhill Lane and Old Uxbridge Road and then via a short length of track to **Pynesfield Farm** itself. The farm was no longer functioning as a farm but there was a row of cottages within the farm, and a couple of these

were still occupied and had milk delivered. On the day in question Joe had delivered to **Pynesfield Manor** but found the track to **Pynesfield Farm** blocked and the place alive with police. No reason was given at the time regarding the police activity but he was not allowed to deliver to the farm cottages. Later, it transpired that in the aftermath of the **Great Train Robbery** (August 1963) the police had been tipped off that the gang involved in the robbery were hiding at a disused farm. This tip-off was found to be correct except that the farm used by the robbery gang was eventually established as being **Leatherslade Farm** near Oxford and not **Pynesfield Farm**, near Rickmansworth.

The Harefield Place Estate - Revisited

Our Chairman, **Keith Piercy**, sheds more light in what really happened to Harefield Place.

On page 9 of the March 2021 issue of *HTRA News (journal of the Harefield and Tenants Resident Association)*, there is a statement that **Harefield Place Manor House** “**was demolished in 1813 following a devastating fire**”. Depending on how the word “**following**” is interpreted, other than suggesting that the demolition was because **of** the fire and not **by** the fire, this is a statement of dubious accuracy. (*A more accurate version of this story appeared in our own Newsletter no.13, but even there the details were very thin.*)

Now, **Keith**, gives us the full story. The short version is that **Harefield Place** was badly damaged by fire in 1660. Two wings survived with foundations and outbuildings, and in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries the house continued to be lived in, and the central part of the house was rebuilt.

The **Newdigates**, who owned the house, lost interest in the later eighteenth century and eventually sold it along with the surrounding land. Later they built a new manor house near **Uxbridge**, which became the **current Harefield Place**, and they no longer required the older house. The purchasers of the old house had other places in Harefield where they lived, and probably neglected the former manor house.

The **Newdigates** repurchased the **old Harefield Place** in December 1812, and the house was demolished around this date. The word “**following**” (as used in the HTRA article) therefore covers a period of **a century and a half**.



Sir Charles Sedley, 5th Baronet was an English noble, dramatist, politician & patron of the arts. He was principally remembered for his wit and profligacy.

To add a little more depth to the facts, the fire was caused by **Sir Charles Sedley** reading in bed. One version alleges he knocked over a candle, another that he fell asleep while smoking, but either way he set fire to his bed and bedding.

Two surveys of **Harefield Manor** in 1693 and 1708 record that what was left after the fire were two lodges, out offices and the foundations of the old house. Eventually **Sir Richard Newdigate** (died 1710) joined the two lodges with a hall with Dutch gables. A draft for a parish map of 1708 shows **Harefield Place** as a single building plus a series of outbuildings.

Sir Roger Newdigate was lord of the manor 1734-1806. He was also lord of the manor of **Arbury** near Nuneaton in Warwickshire. There is no doubt that his preferred residence was **Arbury Hall** where he renovated much of the interior. This renovation survives, reflecting both the Strawberry Hill Gothic taste of those times, and also considerable expenditure. This explains why in 1761 Sir Roger sold **Harefield Place** plus three farms, some fields of other farms and some fishing rights to **John Truesdale**, a gentleman of Westminster, thereby raising a considerable amount of money.

Sir Roger had no children, so he left **Harefield Manor** (separate from Arbury) to his nephew **Charles Parker**. In order to provide Parker with a home and manor house, in 1786 he began the construction of a “modern villa” called **Harefield Lodge** by taking (with doubtful legality) some land from Uxbridge Common. The house has developed into the **modern Harefield Place**.

*John Truesdale's date of birth is unknown and I cannot find an image of him. What I have found is that his wife was **Mary Garner** and they had four daughters (**Elizabeth** 1744, **Sarah** 1747, **Frances** 1749 and **Harriott** 1755). The connection with the **Truesdale Clarkes** of Swakeleys House is through the **Reverend Thomas Clarke** who bought the house in 1850. He was the rector of Ickenham. Clarke's son **Thomas** was married three times and his third wife was **John Truesdale's** third daughter **Frances**. At that time he changed his surname to **Truesdale Clarke**. He succeeded his father in ownership of the house in 1796. Ed.*

John Truesdale died in 1780, and his widow and daughters sold Harefield Place to **William Baynes**. The Truesdale (later Truesdale-Clarke) family also owned and lived at **Swakeleys Farm**, and although **John Truesdale** styled himself as of **Harefield Place** there is a lack of evidence he actually lived there or maintained it. In 1799 **William Baynes** was succeeded by his son Sir Christopher, whose estate was centred on **Broadwater Farm**, for whom **Harefield Place** was secondary. A map drawn for the 1811-1813 enclosure suggests the Baynes holdings at **Harefield Place** had been returned from farmland to parkland, with two farms closed down and field boundaries removed. In December 1812 **Jane Parker**, widow of **Charles Parker** and guardian of his son the lord of the manor, who was a minor, bought the lands sold by **Sir Roger Newdigate** in 1761 which lay east of Church Hill. She had no use for the old manor house, so either she demolished it after the sale or **Sir Christopher Baynes** may have done as part of the sale.

So the demolition of **Harefield Place** is a direct result of the loss of interest and neglect by the gentry who owned it, and the influence of the fire of 1660 is arguable at best.

(The contributions to **Harefield** history of the **Sedleys** and **Truesdales** is commemorated by two road names in South Harefield).



Swakeleys House

Memories of Harefield Place in the 20th Century

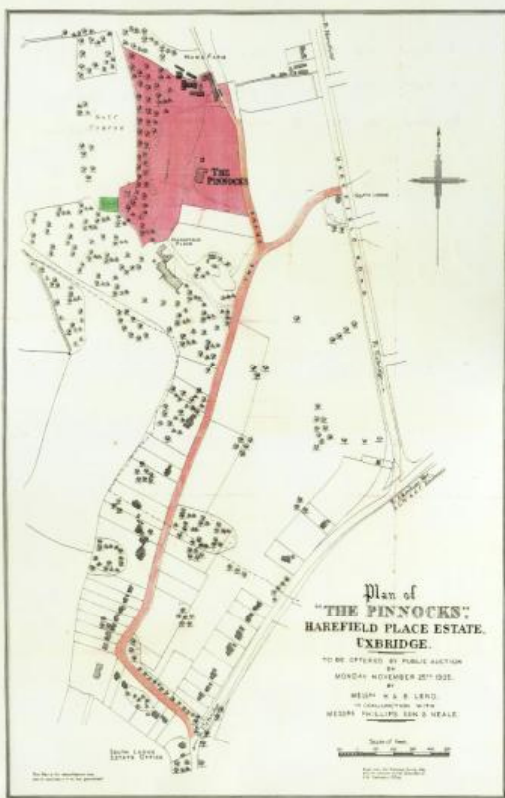
Another response to the **Harefield Place** article in Newsletter No.13 came from **Marilyn Adcock**. She writes to say that her mother, **Edith** (maiden name **Collins**), worked for **Harefield Place Estates** in the 1930s, originally for a **Mr Rose** (for three years), and then for **Dew's Sand and Ballast Pits** (for about 7 years). She was still doing some bits for them in 1940. She lived with her family at Bury Street Farm in Ruislip and cycled to work each day. She often talked about it and I have some old photos from that time.

Dew's Estate Office was in **South Lodge**, a little thatched cottage (right) at the southern end of the Harefield Place Estate. One photo shows my Mother standing in the doorway. I know **South Lodge** no longer exists but does **North Lodge** still stand? (Answer, Yes - see below)

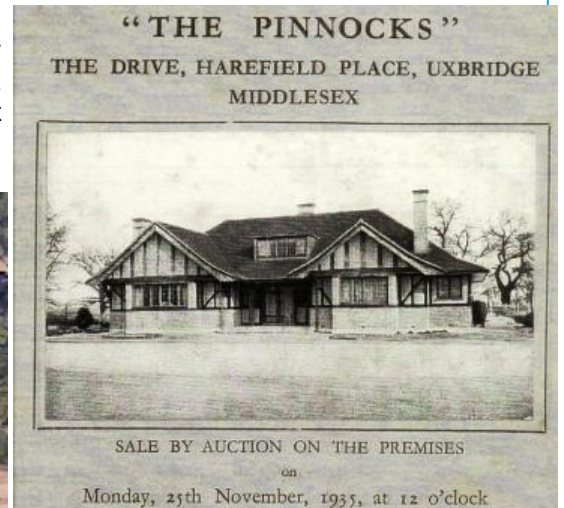


Mr George Rose lived on the estate in a house called **The Pinnocks**. When he retired (ill health) another Mr Rose took over the business.

Marilyn asks whether **The Pinnocks** still exist. (*The answer is No*). Its location can be seen on the map below, just north of the Harefield Place mansion.



The **Pinnocks** was sold by auction in 1935 and there is a photo of the house in the front of the catalogue.



The photo on the left shows a recent image of Harefield Place with the site of **Pinnocks** at the top right, (then a building site).



On the right is a later image with a new building on the old "Pinnocks" site.



Other photos kept by Marilyn's mother.



The photos on the left are thought to be from inside the **Harefield Place** mansion.

The photo in the right is a 1939 newspaper piece showing the ornamental gates to the Harefield Place Estate.



Marilyn asks if anyone can confirm whether the photos really are from the mansion and whether the gates still exist in any form.