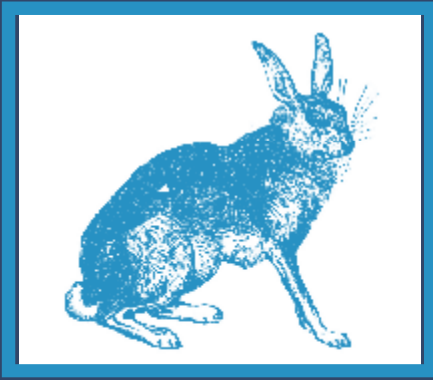


# Harefield History Society



## NEWSLETTER No.15

June 2023

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

### In this Issue

Page 1

Please note the date of the November Meeting.

Page 2



A pretty picture

Page 3

UNDERGROUND

Page 4



A new find

### Editorial

As I sit down to write this newsletter I am happy to say that we have just successfully completed the first full year of meetings since the disruption caused by the pandemic. I realise that, at times, it was a little chaotic with several last minutes changes to the programme, but I hope you agree that we managed to give you a good variety of interesting subjects to get your teeth into. We also managed to organise one excursion which was to the London Transport poster and paintings collection at the museum at Action Town (see the report on page 3)

Of all the meetings in the season, the last, and sadly the poorest attended, was the AGM. It was only a short part of the meeting and it is a shame if you missed it because the AGM is the main opportunity for members to influence the activities of the society. Members receiving this newsletter will get a copy of the minutes which include the proposed programme for the whole of the 2023-24 season starting in September. (The first three meetings are shown below - please note the date of the November meeting which is on the third Monday)

The main feature of the meeting was a talk by Keith Piercy (with photos by John Parkinson) where he presented the latest Progress Report on the effect that HS2 is having on the environment around our village. This is the fourth such report and very interesting and instructive it was. A written version of the report can be found on the society website along with all the previous reports.

#### Programme for the rest of 2023

Sep 25th "Denham Film Studios" by Colin Richard

Oct 23rd "Buildings of Harefield" by Keith Piercy

Nov 20th "Film about the AQD & Harefield House" followed by a Quiz and Xmas Nibbles - hosted by the Committee

(As usual we do not meet in December)

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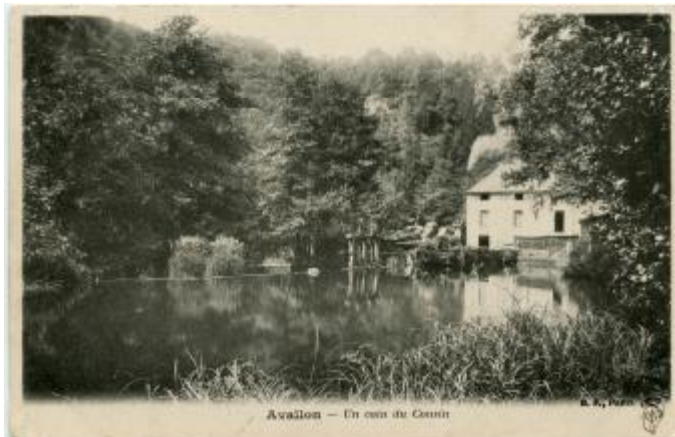
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## Whatever Happened to the Summer House

I recently acquired this pretty little postcard. The caption says "AVALLON - Un coin du Cousin" (a corner of the "Cousin", the local river).

In reality, it was the other side of the card that attracted my attention because it is addressed to:-

Mr G.J.Moore  
Summerhouse  
Harefield.  
Nr. Uxbridge



There is no message or greeting and no name of the sender. It was posted on the 18<sup>th</sup> December 1903 and surprisingly, not in Avallon as you might have expected, but only two miles away in Denham,

So, who was **Mr G.J.Moore** and where exactly was the Summerhouse?

Our chairman, Keith, had already identified the location of the Summerhouse in his talk on "Industrial Harefield" in March. It was, of course, in what is now Summerhouse Lane. There is nothing to see there now but the photo here identifies the location, which is the one on the right of this picture, on the corner

of Bellevue Terrace and Summerhouse Lane, opposite the Hillingdon Narrowboat Association building.

The house was one of many properties owned by the Asbestos Works but, unlike most of the cottages, this was a more substantial residence with five main rooms and a rent of 4/- a week in 1909 (*basic accommodation was four rooms and 3/- a week*) and the land valuation survey describes it as a house and not as a cottage.



So we now turn to **George John Moore**. From the 1911 census we find him, aged 27, living at **3 Park View Cottages** in Hill End Road (*photo as it is today*) with his wife of three years, **Mildred (nee Prior)**, and working as a clerk at the Asbestos Works.



I wondered why, in 1903 when the postcard was sent, would a clerk, then aged only 19, be living in one of the better houses owned by the company he worked for. I needed to know more, so I dug a little deeper.

In the 1901 census I found George living with his Uncle & Aunt, **John & Isabel Melonie** at one of the 28 properties owned by the Asbestos company (*in the census they are all referred to as "Copper Mill"*). **John Melonie's** profession is described as **Cashier** at the Asbestos Works, a relatively important occupation. As the Asbestos Works owned the Summer House it would make sense if they had rented it to him. This is confirmed in the 1911 census, where John Melonie (now widowed) is still the Works Cashier and his address is now shown as The Summer House.

In an attempt to find George Moore's parents I looked at the 1891 census where I found him, aged 6, living with his maternal Grandparents, **George and Ann Melonie** and three uncles, William 23, George 22 and **John** 20 at 13 High Street. (George Melonie was a gardener at Harefield House.) Next, I looked up **Gorge and Ann Melonie** on the 1881 and 1871 census where I found two daughters, **Emily Ann** and **Ellen Jane**, and another son Arthur. I reasoned that one of the daughters must have been **George Moore's mother**. And so it was. I found a marriage between **Emily Ann Melonie** and a **John Moore** on 31<sup>st</sup> May 1883. I also found that their son, **George John Moore**, was born on 27<sup>th</sup> September 1883.

So, why was George living with his grandparents? The answer is that, sadly, his mother, **Emily**, died in June 1885. As for his father, John, I found him on the 1891 census living in Marylebone with his widowed mother.

Finally, **George and Mildred Moore** were still living at 3 Park View Cottages in 1919 but I can find no trace of any children.

*(If anyone knows what happened to George & Mildred or the Summer House, the Editor would love know)*

# London Transport Museum

## Visit to London Transport Poster and Art Archive - 16 May 2023

Members of the Society joined members of the Hedgerley Historical Society for a guided tour at London Transport's Acton Depot. This is where artefacts not on display at the London Transport Covent Garden museum are stored. It was the first museum repository open to the public.

As we waited for the tour a wonderful video of a metropolitan railway journey was viewed in black and white showing pre war Middlesex mostly as undeveloped fields.

Walking past old trains and ticket booths we went upstairs to a controlled environment where the art works and posters are stored. We were split into two groups as the rooms are not huge.



My group saw the posters first. Most are in cabinets but a selection were on display. Some famous and familiar, others which we had never seen before. We viewed posters from many decades and in different styles. Often the iconic London Transport logo was subtly inserted and sometimes being the only clue that it was an LT poster. Some of the older posters were in map form, some advertised sporting events or sightseeing and entertainment opportunities. A few were promoting safety such as cartoons to move along the platform. Some were pure art.

The heyday of the poster was probably the 1920s and 1930s when Frank Pick was head of the organisation. Pick believed in fitness for purpose and the power of good design to enrich life.

See [Frank Pick: the man behind London Transport's identity | London Transport Museum \(ltmuseum.co.uk\)](https://www.ltmuseum.co.uk/frank-pick-the-man-behind-london-transport-s-identity/).

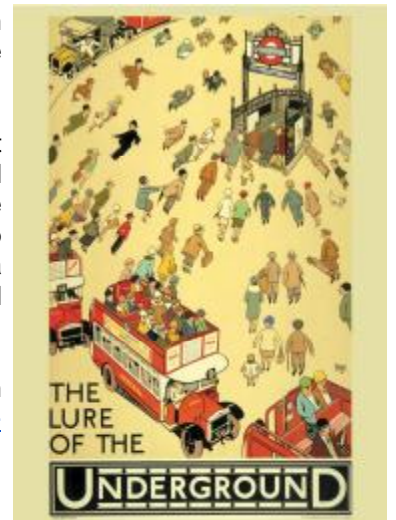
The art and posters were commissioned originally because the new tube lines were not attracting the required number of passengers, and once deployed the posters helped improve passenger numbers and profitability. Our guide stressed that every poster had a target market within the passenger possibilities; a big market was women otherwise stuck at home as the housewife while the man was the breadwinner, and the posters suggested plenty of reasons for the women to travel into London.



The posters were a historic journey over time and both fascinating and beautiful. The groups swapped over and we went to the art store. Here original artworks are stored on pull out racks. Some were paintings later turned into posters, sometimes with slight alterations, others pure works of art commissioned and perhaps hung in offices. They encompassed a range of styles including modern abstract. My favourites were scenes of rural London and a fascinating black and white map where London was represented as an island. There was also a map showing pre-war London when Harefield, Ruislip and Ickenham were small villages surrounded by farmland.

Unfortunately due to copyright issues one could not photograph individual works however, much can be seen at [Collections - Search | London Transport Museum \(ltmuseum.co.uk\)](https://www.ltmuseum.co.uk/collections-search/).

The museum discovered some forgotten art which is valuable, such as work by Eric Ravilious.



For lovers of art and design the tours ended much too soon as it is only possible to see a fraction of the collection but it was a most interesting and worthwhile trip, enjoyed by all who attended.

For those unable to attend our tour, the depot run open days when the public can see the collections. Details at [Art and poster store tour | London Transport Museum \(ltmuseum.co.uk\)](https://www.ltmuseum.co.uk/art-and-poster-store-tour/)

Charles Hampshire

## Four Acres Revisited

In newsletter No.7 (April 2021), I published an article about a house called "Four Acres". It was built about 1911 and, according to the architect's picture shown here, was located in Harefield. At the time, I had never seen the house and had no idea where it was located or even whether it really existed.

I reported that it really had been built and that it still exists but with a different name, ARIHANTA. It is located on Northwood Road as you leave the village, on the left just before the turning to Shrubs Road. I think the reason nobody recognised the house is because it cannot be seen from the road.



HOUSE AT HAREFIELD. Architect, Mr. ERNEST NEWTON, President R.I.B.A.

The 1939 Register shows Four Acres was then occupied by Albert Cyril Sharwood who is described as a Chartered Accountant and, by 1939, was the Managing Director of Samuel Hanson & Sons Incorporated (Wholesale Grocery). By the early 1930s the company had established a thriving trade in tinned lobsters (from Newfoundland) and tinned salmon (from British Columbia) and had built a large canning factory at their headquarters in Toddington, Gloucestershire.

During the Second World War they supplied the armed forces but eventually got into difficulty when they could no longer get enough US Dollars to buy fruit from California and salmon from Alaska and Canada for processing at the canning factory. So, not for the first time in the company's history, diversification was the answer and they bought a small business in Suffolk called Home Grown Chicory.

It was at about this time (1945) that the following photograph was taken at Four Acres in Harefield.



SAM. HANSON & SON, LTD.  
Four Acres, Harefield, Middlesex.  
1945.

Photo taken by R. ROBERTS & SON  
25, Abchurch Lane, London E.C. 4

I assume that the man with his arms crossed in the close up is Albert Sharwood (*he and his wife would have both been 46 in 1945*) but who are the other 90 people? Can they all be Samuel Hanson employees? If so, I wonder where they all stayed because surely there was not enough accommodation in the house for that many.

On the other hand, perhaps this event was a celebration of the end of the war and that business people from the local community were invited too? (I will put a close up of the whole photo on the website). (*Thoughts and / or comments to the editor, please*)



Meanwhile, back to the story. Chicory growing in the UK dates back to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century when Chivers & Sons (the jam makers) set-up a factory near Lakenheath in Suffolk. The chicory plant is a root vegetable looking like a large parsnip. After harvesting (which was originally done by hand) the roots were washed, chopped up, crushed and dried (much like sugar beet).

A new rival factory was built nearby in about 1935 by a Mr. Charter De Cock, a Belgian who brought in seasonal workers from Belgium in the winter for drying and process the chicory crop. The workers went home each summer until the outbreak of World War Two when they were unable to return. Instead they were accommodated in old railway carriages at the factory.

After the war, Mr De Cock sold the factory to Samuel Hanson & Sons. They transferred the chicory processing to their factory in Toddington where they made instant "coffee" - in reality, it was a mixture of coffee and chicory. The business continued to evolve over the years until 1965 when they accepted a friendly takeover by Cerebos for a sum of 195,000. Nowadays chicory is grown in France, South Africa and Nebraska in the United States,

