

# Harefield History Society

## NEWSLETTER No.16

January 2024

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

### In this Issue

Page 1

Programme for 2024

Page 2 & 3

Two families and a road with a history



Page 4

Two society outings

To a Manor House that is no longer there and a spectacular hidden gem



## Editorial

### HAPPY NEW YEAR

I would like to begin with an apology for the lack of a newsletter during the summer break last year. I had planned to produce one but for personal reasons I ran out of time. I had even begun to worry whether I would be able to complete the show scheduled for the January meeting but I am pleased to say that it is now ready. I hope you are able to come along and enjoy it.

Of course, we are already part way through the 2023/24 season which started with a bang in September with the talk about Denham Film Studios.

In October, Keith gave us a new and interesting talk, shining a light on many of the old buildings in the village. Some of these, I for one, have walked past many times over the years without really noticing. We really should keep our eyes open!

And then in November I was pleased to see a good crowd turn out to see the film about the A.I.D. establishment in the High Street. It is amazing (to me) how this important and pioneering work could have gone on in our village without most residents not knowing.

I hope the rest of this season's offerings prove to be just as interesting.

### Programme for 2024

Jan 22nd "A New Look at some Harefield Postcards" by Andy Harris

Feb 26th "A Murder in Harefield" by Derek Kent

Mar 25th "Agatha Christie" by Helen Concher

Apr 22nd "Harefield & the ANZACs" by Andy Harris & Robert Goodchild

May 20th AGM followed by "200 Years of Booker" -  
From Shipping Line to Wholesale 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 Clare and Marston families and Mount Pleasant.

About a year ago I received a request from a lady called **Sandra Clare** who asked if I could find anyone with memories and/or photos of the prefabs in Mount Pleasant. She provided the following information: -

*My name is Sandra Elizabeth Clare and my maiden name is Marston. I was born in my grandparents' house at 128 Park Lane.*

*My parents were George Frederick Marston of Shrubs Cottages and my mother Mabel Martha Phipps. My father was in the RAF.*

*Their first family home was in a prefab at 30 Mount Pleasant (such happy days). Later they moved to 1 Sullivan Crescent.*

*For Christmas (2022) I was given a 1959 edition map of Harefield which evoked more memories in me than you can ever imagine. In January we came over to Harefield with our grandson to show him where I grew up.*

*At the War memorial, where my Granddad and another relative are remembered (George Marston and Thomas Marston) we noticed an "S Clare".*

*My brother-in-law, Ray Puddifoot, gave me a copy of "We Will Remember Them" from which I learn that "S Clare" was a Lance Corporal in the Scots Guards 1st Battalion. In all the time I lived in the village, or since, I never knew of or heard mention of anyone in Harefield whose surname was Clare. My husband, is William J Clare and he was born in Hillingdon.*

I have been trying to establish whether there is any link between the "S Clare" on the War Memorial and the "Clare" family of my questioner's husband.

Starting with the "S Clare" on the War memorial, we know (thanks to research by Robert Goodchild) the following: -

*He is Sidney Charles Clare (or in some references Charles Sidney Clare). He is referenced in Tanya Britton's book "Harefield War Dead" as born in Stratford Essex, enlisted in London and lived in Harefield. His number and rank are 13753 and Lance-Corporal in the 1st Scots Guards.*

*On the evening of 7th October 1917, the 1st & 2nd Guards Brigade went into their respective sectors on the front near the Broembek, close to where he was killed in action, on 10th October, in a failed enemy counter-attack during the third battle of Ypres.*

*He is commemorated on the church memorial and the Tyne Cot Memorial in Belgium. He is also commemorated on the Bell's United Asbestos War Memorial.*

*On the 1911 Census he was recorded as aged 17, born in Leytonstone Essex, living in Belle Vue Terrace with his widowed Mother, Esther Clare, and working at the Asbestos Mills.*

I have not been able to find anyone else living in or born in Harefield with the surname Clare. Also, there is no Clare recorded as being buried in St Mary's graveyard. Finally, working back from my questioner's husband William, I can find no link in the Clare line back to Esther and Sidney Clare. *(If anyone knows different, please let me know. Ed)*

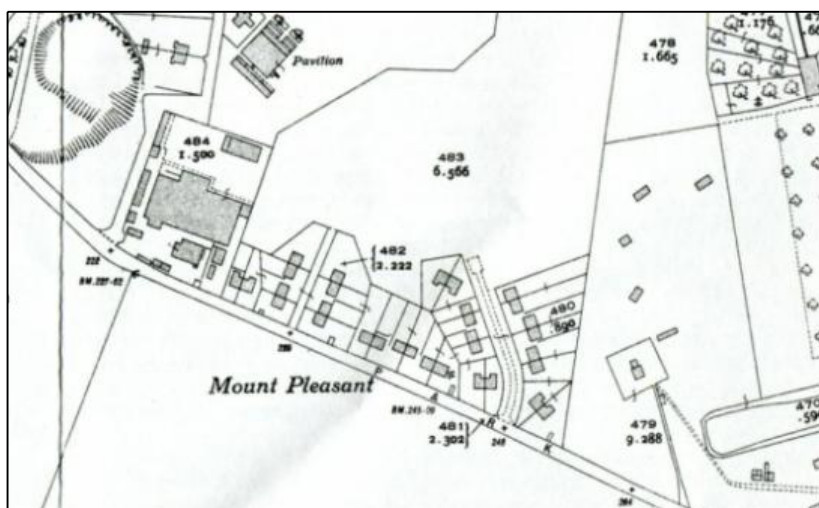
## Mount Pleasant

Getting back to the original question concerning the prefabs in Mount Pleasant, I did have more success. I asked David Marks if he knew anyone who used to live there and who might have old family photos of the prefabs. He came back with the following very helpful information: -

*My wife's grandmother lived in Mount Pleasant in one of the prefabs and two of my former school friends lived in Mount Pleasant but in the original phase of houses built between the two world wars. I am pretty sure that one of them, **Brian Baker**, is related to the Marston family i.e. his mother was the sister of Mrs Marston.*

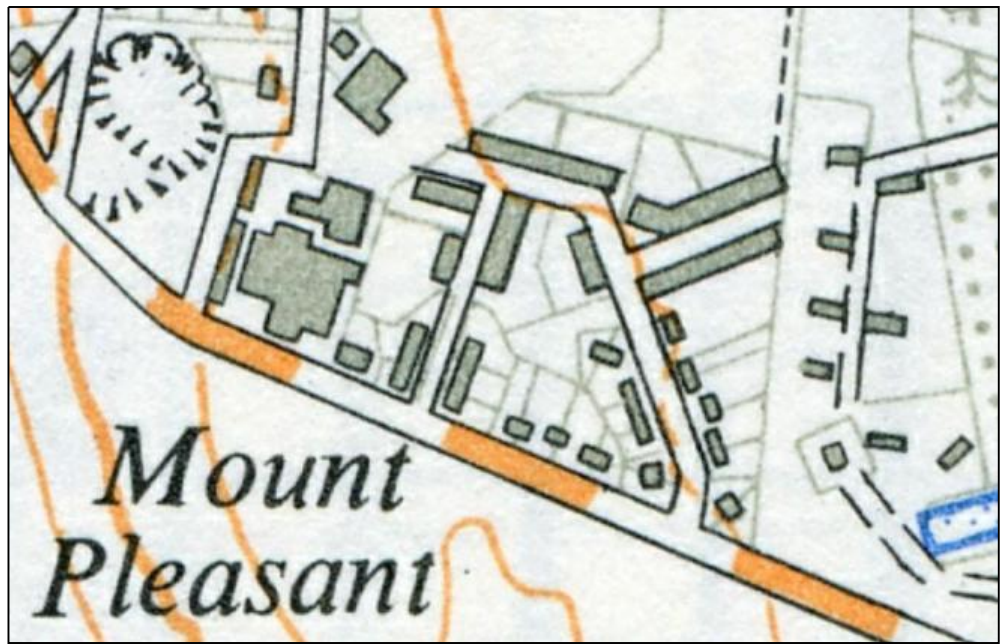
The 1935 map (right) shows the original phase of houses built in Mount Pleasant before WW2. They were built of breeze block, pebble dashed and colour-washed. David went on to say:-

*After WW2 the next phase of houses were built in brick and obviously the pre-fabs*



came after that. My wife Cynthia (nee Thorne) was born at No.34 in 1952 and the family lived there until they moved to 1 Ash Grove.

The second map (which claims to have been updated to 1955), shows Mount Pleasant with additional houses. I assume that some of them are the prefabs. (can anyone confirm this, please? Ed)



David goes on to say:-

I can remember the prefabs being demolished around 1964. Many of the occupants were re-housed on the newly built Gilbert Road estate.

The site of the prefabs is now occupied by modern brick houses, but if you enter Mount Pleasant at the top entrance (nearest to the village) the houses to the right have even numbers and are the original Phase 1 houses (all colour washed) with the final one being (I think No.14), then the prefabs commenced with a spur road going off where No.34 was situated and at the end of that spur was a small farm or small-holding run by Tim Washington who lived at No.1 Mount Pleasant. That small-holding was probably originally part of Harefield Hospital which had its own farm.

which had its own farm.



David sent some photos of members of the Thorne family taken outside prefab 34 Mount Pleasant along with some Rent Books from the 1950s in the name of his late Father-in-Law, Bill Thorne.

Initially, the rent was 18 shillings and 9 pence per week (94p in today's money) but went up the 1 pound and 2 shilling the following year (£1.10)



**UXBRIDGE**  
URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL  
1952-53

Tenant's Rent Card      Ref. No. ....

Tenant's Name Mr. W. E. Thorne  
34 Mount Pleasant

Address HAREFIELD, Middx.

Commencement of Tenancy .....

Landlord UXBRIDGE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL,  
265 High Street, Uxbridge

Medical Officer of Health Dr. O. C. DOBSON, M.D., B.S., B.Hy.,  
M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H., D.P.A.,  
259 High Street, Uxbridge

Inclusive Rent 18/9 per week.

**IMPORTANT**—This Card must be produced when every payment is made

Department of Public Health and Local Authorities, London, 1952

This card is a printed form, intended for use by tenants of premises in the Uxbridge Urban District Council area, who are liable to pay rent. It is not to be used for any other purpose. It is the property of the Council and must be returned to the Council when the tenancy terminates. It is not to be used for any other purpose. It is the property of the Council and must be returned to the Council when the tenancy terminates. It is not to be used for any other purpose. It is the property of the Council and must be returned to the Council when the tenancy terminates.



Cynthia in her mother's arms.

C.W. L.H. T.1481

Harefield CENTRE.

County Council of Middlesex.

BABY'S WEIGHT.

Name Thorne Cynthia

Address 34 Mount Pleasant  
Harefield

Date	Ibs.	ozs.	Remarks.
2.10.52	8	6 1/2	
9.10.52	8	12	
16.10.52	9	3 1/2	
23.10.52	9	10 1/2	
30.10.52	10	1	
16.4.53	15	7	

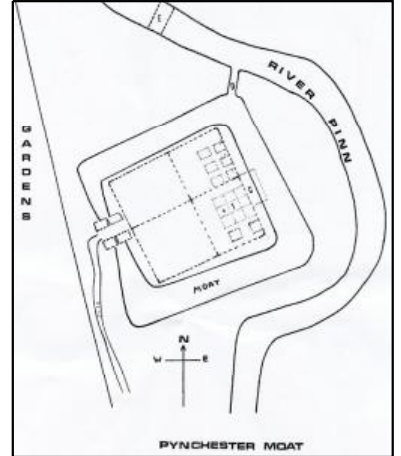
Baby Clinic record card

## Visits to Pynchester Moat and Moor Park

Tucked into a bend of the river Pinn and behind the gardens of houses on a quiet residential road in Ickenham, lies the site of a medieval moated manor house. In fact, the only remains that can be seen (and even those with difficulty) are part of the moat that surrounded it and the mound, now heavily overgrown, where the buildings once stood. Nevertheless, the site is of serious historic significance being one of only a very few known such sites in Greater London.



One Saturday in July, three members of the society joined a guided tour of the site organised by the Hillingdon Archives and Museum Service. We were warned to be dressed for rough terrain, stinging nettles and biting insects, and, in spite of heavy rain on the day, everyone booked on the tour turned up. (I guess this is testament to the dedication of members of societies like ours – or are we just mad!)



Anyway, our guides were very knowledgeable and the whole experience was well worthwhile.



Robert looks on as our guide leads Keith and the rest of the group through the jungle.

The site of the original house.

The mansion, used as the club house for **Moor Park** golf club, is not often open to the public. However, it is a grade 1 listed building and the arrangement with the golf club requires the **Moor Park Arts Society** to run the occasional tour. Charles, grabbed the chance when the opportunity arose and invited members to sign-up for a visit. At the appointed time about two dozen people gathered in the drawing room for tea and biscuits during which we were given a short history of the house. We learned that the original house was built in 1617 in the deer park that once belonged to the 15th century palace called the "**Manor of the More**" and which had been demolished in the 1570s. (*The palace was located on what is now the playing field of Merchant Taylor's prep school*).



Over the years, the new **Moor Park** passed through at least 20 owners. During this time, the house was rebuilt or remodelled several times, ending up, in 1937, owned by Rickmansworth Council who leased it to the **Moor Park Golf Club**.

After the talk, the party was split into two groups each hosted by an enthusiastic and very knowledgeable volunteer from the Arts Society who conducted us around the spectacular house and beautiful grounds. It is well worth a visit if you can bag yourself a ticket.