

HISTORICAL SOCIETY SUMMER VISIT TO NEWTON HARCOURT, JUNE 2012

The annual summer evening visit by the Society took place on Wednesday 13th June to Newton Harcourt. The weather was dull and rather unpromising at first but after a brief shower the sun came out and a fine evening ensued enabling the members to enjoy the views of the Leicestershire countryside.

The somewhat remote village of Newton Harcourt is eight miles from Harborough, just west of the A6 main Leicester Road and is probably by-passed by most travellers in the area. The church and the Manor House which were the objects of our visit are separated from the main part of the village by the canal and the railway.

On arrival the members paid a visit to the parish Church of St. Luke. It is one of the smallest in the county and is plain and simple, consisting of nave and tower only. It has its origins in the 13th century and was largely rebuilt in the 1830s. The tower is 13th century and is of unusual construction. The upper half is built in sandstone and the lower part in rounded stones probably taken from the river.

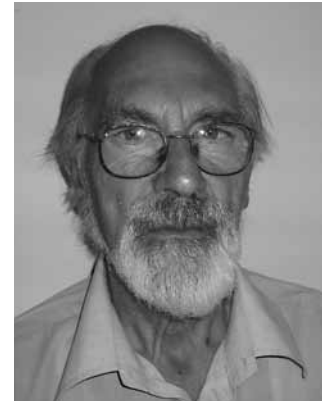
After viewing the church, the party moved across the road to the Manor House which was the main object of the visit as guests of Mr. Anthony Goddard, the current owner.

The house dates from the 17th century and since 1897 it has been the home and office of the Goddard family of architects, and Mr. Anthony Goddard is the sixth member of the family to carry on the architectural practice.

After a welcome and introductory talk by Mr. Goddard, members were free to wander through the three ground floor rooms to view the exhibits and also to descend into the cellar where there is a museum of pieces of art and other memorabilia. Laid out on the tables in the rooms were folios of architectural drawings for buildings which the Goddard family have been the architects including some familiar buildings in Leicester and county for example the former Midland Bank on Granby Street and the Hanbury Schools at Church Langton. There were also many sketch books with drawings made by members of the family during trips abroad.

On display were the designs for the very modern Eco House which Mr. Goddard plans to build in the grounds of the Manor and for which planning permission has recently been granted. It was interesting to compare the modern techniques used in presenting designs with the old fashioned methods of drawing with board and the square and hand colouring of earlier days.

After the tour of the house, most of the members adjourned to the Coach and Horses at Kibworth where dinner had been ordered to conclude the evening's visit.



by Douglas Wooldridge



OUR HOST ANTHONY GODDARD AT THE FRONT OF THE MANOR HOUSE. PHOTO COURTESY MICHAEL BROWN



SOCIETY MEMBERS AT NEWTON HARCOURT .
PHOTO COURTESY MICHAEL BROWN



ST. LUKES CHURCH NEWTON HARCOURT.
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