

Metro-land

In 1915 some enterprising person in the publicity department of the Metropolitan Railway Company in London had a brilliant idea. He (or she) came up with the suggestion that the area of woodlands, open fields, villages and towns beyond Harrow should be named 'Metro-land'. The idea was seized on and between 1915 and 1932 an annual official guidebook of the railway company had as its title the magic word – 'Metro-land' with its distinctive front covers ablaze with colour pictures of Northwood, Rickmansworth, Chorleywood, Amersham – and Moor Park. In a final edition in 1932 when few houses had been built in Moor Park, the editor described its attractions: 'three golf courses have been laid out in the spacious park on the side of the railway, and a good start has been made with one of London's most beautiful residential districts'.

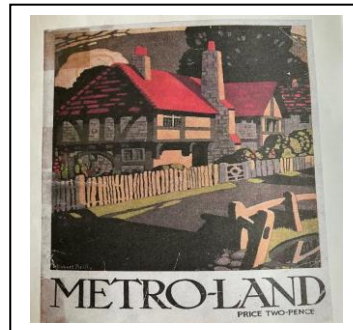
By this time Moor Park had its own station. 'Sandy Lodge Halt' had been built and opened in 1910 with two wooden platforms linked by a wooden footbridge. The station was most convenient for golfers heading for the recently opened Sandy Lodge Golf Club and for guests staying with Lord Ebury at the mansion and playing golf on his private course. In 1923, the 'Halt' was dropped and the station had a double name – 'Moor Park and Sandy Lodge'. In 1950 this was simplified to the briefer 'Moor Park'.

Among the station's increasing number of passengers was John Betjeman, writer and poet who became Poet Laureate in 1972, Betjeman seized on the name 'Metro-land' as a romantic title and in 1973 he wrote a long poem 'Metro-land'. Betjeman was an enthusiastic although inaccurate and wild golfer who visited, played and wrote about the Moor Park golf course:

'Did ever golf club have a nineteenth hole
So sumptuous as this?'

In a later poem, he raved about the station:

'When I was young, there stood among the fields
A lonely station once called Sandy Lodge
Its wooden platforms crunched by hobnailed shoes
And this is where the healthier got out.'



Quietude and seclusion at a price

A topic that grabs every Moor Park resident's attention is the answer to a query, 'How much is my house worth?' However, 'worth' isn't the right word. The question might be: 'If put my house up for sale, what price should we ask?' Buyers in the 1920s and 1930s of Moor Park's first houses, advertised for sale by the Moor Park Company, faced prices at the top of the range but modest by today's standards. The first houses to be built, on Sandy Lodge Road and Main Avenue and offered for sale by the Unilever Property Department, were priced at £1900. A sales advertisement in the Metropolitan Railway Company's magazine 'Metro-land' in 1924 described an attractive dwelling: 'a five-bedroom house, including fences, drains and all fittings' at a price of £3200. Another 'compact and roomy' house at the same price of £3200 had 'drawing-room, dining-room, loggia, garage and a spacious veranda.' The architect who set the style for these houses favoured a neo-Elizabethan appearance with half-timbered gables and low-walled front gardens. Another Metro-land article was

even more effusive: Moor Park's attractions were of an estate of 'private roads with a gatekeeper to prevent day trippers roaring through on motorcycle combinations.' Furthermore, 'Moor Park is the most luxurious of all the Metro-land estates. Here one might enjoy quietude and seclusion (without isolation) with all the amenities of residents in an old English park, yet without the responsibility of ownership.'

In the 1930s, during the Depression which even affected Moor Park, prices fell. We have a picture of a house in a different style - not fake Elizabethan but more 1930s - of plastered walls, larger windows, a covered loggia and wide drives for more than one car. Price? An even more modest £1,425. Something of a contrast with a Moor Park house recently offered for sale by local estate agents for £5 million and rising. How times change.

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 with a beautiful view which can never be spoiled overlooking Golf Course and permanently open grounds, within easy reach of Rickmansworth or Moor Park Stations and close to Merchant Taylors' School.

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 erected in undulating Parkland, contains 4 Bedrooms, Bathroom, Lounge, 20 ft. by 12 ft. with covered Loggia, Dining Room 17 ft. by 13 ft., Kitchen, Scullery and a Garage, 16 ft. by 8 ft.

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Price FREEHOLD £2,225

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CONNECTED

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The above are typical examples of the houses erected and in course of erection at Moor Park, designed in the inexpensive efficient style of modern architecture, blending utility of accommodation with attractiveness of elevation.

ILLUSTRATIONS AND PLANS OF THESE AND OTHER HOUSES AT MOOR PARK

contained in a booklet which also describes the three eighteen hole golf courses, magnificent Club House, tennis courts, etc.

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 Immediately available

THREE GOLF COURSES
 High altitude. Gravel soil
 Scenery of rare Beauty
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Personal inspection always welcomed
 Full particulars from Estate Office
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104

MOOR PARK Residential Estate

Beautifully Wooded Heights
PROTECTED DEVELOPMENT

Three 18 Hole Golf Courses
Hard & Grass Tennis Courts
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Particulars of Choice Freehold Building Sites from
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 and the Principal Agents.

105