



The Hundred Parishes

Introduction to a famous local person . . .

HENRY MOORE (1898 – 1986)



Henry Spencer Moore was born in Yorkshire, the son of a coalmine manager. He began modelling and carving at primary school and decided at an early age to pursue a career in art. His studies were interrupted by active service in World War I, after which he studied in Leeds and then London, where he settled. He held part-time teaching posts that allowed time to develop his artistic skills. He married Irina in 1929 and they settled in Hampstead, a suburb favoured by artists and sculptors.

In 1940, after their Hampstead home was hit by a bomb, Henry and Irina Moore moved to a farmhouse called Hoglands at Perry Green in the parish of Much Hadham. They lived and worked there for the rest of their lives.

Moore sculpted in stone, wood and bronze and also drew, including as an official wartime artist. He became famous for his large bronze abstract figures, especially family groups and reclining figures, often with hollow spaces. As his fame spread, he mounted exhibitions around the world. He was commissioned to create large pieces for display outside public buildings, including the Houses of Parliament in London, the German parliament building in Bonn and the UNESCO building in Paris.

Moore's ability to produce many large-scale sculptures to satisfy a worldwide demand made him a very wealthy man. He expanded his workshops and employed an increasing number of assistants. He lived relatively modestly at Perry Green and gave most of his wealth to the Henry Moore Foundation, a charity which today has funds of around £100 million with which it promotes public appreciation of fine arts, in particular the works of Henry Moore. The Foundation manages an enormous archive of Moore's material and supports artists and exhibitions around the world. The Foundation welcomes thousands of visitors each year to Perry Green where they can tour Moore's former home and studio and view many large works on display in the sculpture gardens and adjacent open countryside.

Moore is buried in the cemetery of Perry Green's small church and is commemorated by a very simple memorial stone matching that for his wife.

Further information:

Henry Moore Foundation - www.henry-moore.org

Artsy's Henry Moore page -

www.artsy.net/artist/henry-moore

