

HISTORY OF 40 FROGHALL DRIVE

The date of construction of Froghall is not known although it has been referred to as Queen Anne in a sale document. Queen Anne was on the throne of England from 1702 until 1714. There have been a number of alterations and additions to the main building. The main entrance was originally on the west side but later on further building added a new front and the entrance was moved to its present position. It is possible to see the different type of architecture where the new front was added on. It is thought the original building was Queen Anne and the later Georgian. When in the 1970's the hall was converted into twelve flats the servants wing on the east side was extended.

"The Cottage" which is now 40 Froghall Drive did not have a separate Land Registry entry until May 18 1976 so that its history up until that date is very much associated with the main property of Froghall. The sale document for the auction in 1945 said it was built later than the main house and was in the Georgian style.

1761 Rocques Survey of Berkshire shows Froghall with its main entrance on the west side which was presumably before the Georgian extension was built. Just north east of Froghall the Green is marked and running from the ENE to the south side of Froghall Coppid Beech Lane is shown. The general road pattern in the area is somewhat different from today. Neither the London Road (Bracknell to Wokingham) nor the Three Frogs appear.

The only available copy is a photostat of a small portion of Roques Survey so that it would be worthwhile following up this source of information.

11. 7. 1840 In an Indenture Maria Crabtree late of Waterloo Lodge, executor of Richard Crabtree leased Waterloo Lodge to John Walters for two years.

26.9.1842 An indenture referred to Waterloo Lodge.

It appears a John Walter who was M.P. for Nottingham and who lived at Bearwood owned Waterloo Lodge. He died in 1847 and it passed to his wife Mary. In an Indenture of Settlement she appointed a certain James Charles Lettcourt in place of Francis Soames to be a trustee jointly with Alexander Dobie and Thomas Cooke.

(The Walter's Arms in Bearwood Road is named after John Walter)

17.3.1843 On a map Waterloo Road was shown joining the Easthamstead Road. The railway did not exist and the farm went further south. The Three Frogs is still not shown.

25.3.1859 In a Re conveyance between Rev William Pochin Larken and John Walter of Bearwood Waterloo Lodge or Waterloo Hall had an area of 193 acres. There was also a reference to other parcels of land. Under this document John Walter paid Rev William Larken £6400 as a consideration.

23.10.1867 On a sketch map of this date a different layout was shown for the Hall and Cottage

1875 Succession Duty on Property in Exemption John Walter inherited from Mary Walter derived from John Walter the elder in a will dated 9.2.1847 Froghall. It was occupied by Colonel Guines at a rent of £150 per year but was then sold to Mr William Goodchild for £6000. This was recorded as the mansion house plus 53.3.11 acres of land. Other parcels of land, 16.1.30 acres - James Gale Barford for £1090, 3.1.5 acres - Mr Marshall Pattens Ash for £500, and 72.2.22 acres Sydney Alex Hankey £6400, were sold off at the same time. Thus presumably the original farm was split up

30.6.1883 An Ordnance Survey map 6 inches to the mile based on a survey 1871-2 shows the building called Waterloo Lodge. A Froghall Green (approx. where St Crispins is now) is shown as is the Three Frogs Public House. The extension of 40 FHD is apparent. The railway is called London and South Western Railway (Staines, Wokingham and Reading Branch)

1889 Ordnance Survey map 1/2500 does not show the glassed area in front of the coach houses (garages). It shows the way down to Waterloo Road is north of the barn/stables. There is an additional structure in front of the study (see sketch)

The information to this date was obtained from the Berkshire Record Office Shire Hall mainly from a bundle of documents Deeds of John Walter Esq. Bearwood (D/E W1 T6 E981) and also from various Ordnance Survey maps held there

31.05.1906 Samuel Holt LOMAX made his will and appointed Charles Henry Lomax, John Chadwick Lomax and William Hamilton Alston as executors. Froghall, formerly known as Waterloo Lodge was a farm with an area of 54.099 acres . It stretched from London Road in the north to the railway in the south, Clay lane was the eastern boundary and Rances Lane the western one. Waterloo Road crossed the farm and there was a drive from the house to it as well as the London Road.

1912 An Ordnance Survey map 1/2500 or 23.344 inches to the mile using an original survey of 1870 revised in 1909 called the building Frog Hall. It showed Waterloo Road and Waterloo crossing on the railway. The glassed area in front of the coachhouses was shown plus a further extension beyond the study (see sketch)

10.4.1915 S H Lomax died.

11.12.1916 J C Lomax died

06.11.18 Charles Henry Lomax and William Hamilton Alston sold Froghall to James Thomas SYDENHAM

13.5.1921 J T Sydenham made his will with his wife Ada amongst his executors

08.08.1921 J H Sydenham was last seen alive on this date and was found dead on 22,8,21 at Easthamstead Wood Easthampstead.

06.03.1922 Froghall purchased by Vaughan Adrian STOKES Captain in H M Army who was a local farmer

26.7.1927 James ROLT purchased Froghall from V A Stokes

01.10.1930 Charles Etwell had a yearly tenancy from James Rolt. Etwell was a farmer who ran cattle and grew hay in the fields east and west of the drive. He also ran the local milk delivery business. James Rolt was a Kings Councillor and made Froghall his retirement home.

He and his wife Grace had a large establishment with as many as eight servants in the house and a large force of groundsmen. The head gardener lived in the lodge at the top of the drive (now No 2) whilst his second gardener lived in a cottage on the opposite side of London Road. He had previously been the coachman for the Rolts but when they moved to Wokingham they employed a chauffeur who lived with his wife and two sons in the Cottage. For many years two landaus were kept in the garages although never used.

(The chauffeurs name was Lane and much of this section of information has been supplied by his younger son Frank)

During this time the grounds were well kept. The drive up to London Road was gravel flanked by grassy banks and a profusion of rhododendrons. At this time the cottage had open fires and no central heating. The study was known as the tack room without internal access from the dining room. It had a typical split stable door as access from outside and a metal stove with stack below the window.

In the courtyard against the wall was a brick built metal topped bunker in which were stored two gallon tins of petrol. In the house the staircase was steeper and commenced further back with the present cross beam going right across.

1938/9 First Grace and then James Rolt died and are buried in All Saints churchyard - on the left inside the gate entrance from London Road

30.12.37 Town Planning Agreement between Richard Lowndes, Charles Medway, Frederick Charles Ihlee and Berkshire C C

14.9.39 Harmar Ltd bought the property and 53 acres for £5500

Mar 1940 Permission was granted to W Timothy DONOVAN to use Froghall as a nursing home

22.4.40 Harmer Ltd sold Froghall and about 10 acres of land to James Cooper

BUDGE and Alice BUDGE with right of way from London Road for £2500. They ran a nursing home in Froghall.

29.9.40 The yearly tenancy with Etwell terminated after one year's notice.

31.12.40 An agreement between Harmer Ltd and the Budges permitted a sewage discharge through a pipeline to connect with a public sewer in Waterloo Road.

1944 Ordnance Survey 6 inches to the mile. The extra piece on the extension no longer exists

7.9.45 Froghall was put up for sale by the Budges but did not reach the reserve price

8.3.46 Sold to James BUZZACOTT for £8000 (for and as a donation to S A E Homes) to be known as the Nurse Emily Buzzacott Home in the memory of Miss E Buzzacott. He had renamed it Buzzacott Hall and the Salvation Army ran it as an old peoples home until they moved out themselves as they found it too expensive.

Somewhere about this time there was an idea to convert Froghall into an hotel but this was turned down because the drive was considered too narrow if cars were parked in it for a fire engine in case of emergency to come down it.

14.9.54 Auction of Froghall and remaining land except for the cottage.

22.11.54 J Buzzacott completed the sale of Froghall and land including the Barn and buildings (now 42 FHD) etc. to P S Telling. The conveyance contains a reference to water pipes to be maintained between the water company main and where it enters the cottage property.

27.12.70 James Buzzacott died.

31.7.71 National Westminster (as executors of J Buzzacott) passed 40 FHD to Betty MILLER (previously J B 's housekeeper)

2.6.75 L D and A T Roland purchased 40 FHD from Betty Miller.

A number of changes were made soon afterwards

1. The wall between the dining room and the kitchen was knocked down and the dining room extended from front to back
2. A new kitchen was built in the old utility room and a small back porch added.
3. The main bedroom upstairs was split and a new bathroom built at the back. The existing bathroom upstairs which only had a bath and a hand basin was abandoned and turned into a bedroom nicknamed "The Cell." It also contained the airing cupboard with the hot water

storage tank. At this stage it was so small that the bed had to be built in.

At the time of purchase the property was in need of considerable repair. The whole attic and first floor were treated for woodworm and most of the floorboards replaced. The single garage roof had just about fallen in and was replaced. The horizontal steel beams had corroded to such an extent that they had bowed and it was impossible to open the right hand side doors of the double garage. The entire glass area was taken down, the steel beams replaced and the structure rebuilt.

1.12.75 For £150 a strip of land 12ft by 41 ft was sold to the owner Mr J D Andrews of 38 to give him a vehicular access from his house to Froghall Drive. However a covenant was applied so that no further building on 38's land except for a one storey garage without the written consent of the owner of 40 FHD. At this time the barn was part of 38 FHD and used as a general purpose store and garage. The vehicular access was up the private road from Waterloo Road. The exact boundary of this land has never been marked out on the ground and the grass in front of both houses has been left as one. However there is a vertical scratch mark on the bricks, now obscured by the red telephone box put there by the present owners of 38 FHD - Ian McKenzie and which is about one foot too far south, which indicates the true southern boundary of this strip of land. (All this eventually became irrelevant when a further land sale took place in 2001 – see later)

Aug. 1987 The slates at the front and side nearest 38 were re-laid.

Apr. 1988 The roof over the double garage was rebuilt.

June 1989 Planning permission was received for changing the existing single storey original extension into two storeys and moving the south wall of the house 4 ft 7 in out so as to enlarge the kitchen and create a large new bedroom plus a second (ensuite) bathroom. The back small bedroom provided the bathroom space and the passage access to the new bedroom.

April - August 1990 The extension was completed. The foundations, brickwork, general building and plastering were done by Cliff Watts of 47 Patten Ash Road Wokingham. The owner acted as his own main contractor who did all the drawings, obtained planning permission and complied with the building regulations. An electrician, a plumber, carpenters and slaters were all employed as sub-contractors. When the single storey was demolished it was found that the roof structure was in poor condition with wood worm and general rot thus it was a good thing that the extension had been carried out. Traces were found of the original central heating. A properly constructed brick duct was discovered containing two two inch galvanised unlagged steel pipes leading just below ground level into the extension. Traces of this duct can still be found in the bed at the back of the garden running as if

towards the visitors servants quarters. It is believed that the boiler was situated underground in a room between the fruit shed and the house. There is an existing stack on the end of the sheds but no fireplace inside the shed itself.

One major innovation when the house was extended was the change in the plumbing. An unvented hot water system was installed together a state of the art central heating boiler and controls. The hot water storage tank (now pressurised) was installed in the new airing cupboard in the new bathroom and the old one in the Cell plus its cupboard removed. At the same time the cold water tank in the attic was disconnected and taken away.

June 2001 The land immediately in front of 38 Froghall Drive belonging to 40 Froghall Drive was sold to Ian

McKenzie for £15,000. This enabled him to redevelop the front of 38.

The wall at the front

being part of the original wall of the walled garden was demolished and fresh walls built.

(This had the advantage of squaring up the front of the properties and reduced the area of lawn that

40 had to keep cut but was totally unable to see from their house. The disadvantage was that the

Froghall Drive Residents Association were then unable to hold their summer BBQ on this reduced area site in front of 40)

Mains Drainage.

40 Froghall Drive is connected to council drains in Waterloo Road. The sewer runs along the east side of the house with a manhole outside the dining room. It then runs under the extension alongside the east side of Froghall. The next manhole is in the south east corner of Froghall where the sewer from 42, Froghall Drive joins it. After that it turns west in front of 44 FHD and behind Froghall. There are a number of manholes along it at this point. Finally it crosses the land finally joining up with the main sewer in Waterloo Road. The majority of Froghall Drive is on a private sewer system which is joined by a sewer from Priests Avenue but finally reaches the council sewer in Tattersall Close. The council has not adopted this Froghall/Priests As it is not up to their standard and the residents are not prepared to pay for the upgrade.

Froghall Residents Association was formed many years ago essentially to raise some money to buy drain rods which are available free of charge to all those who contribute to the fund.

Froghall in General

1. Buckhurst Grove

On 22.11.54 a builder Telling bought Froghall (temporarily called Buzzacott Hall) and about seven acres of surrounding land from Buzzacott. The latter retained "The Cottage" now 40 Froghall Drive and carried on living there with his housekeeper Betty Miller.

Telling built the houses in Buckhurst Grove but was unable to sell them until he provided a private footpath from the blind end of Buckhurst through to Froghall Drive so that the residents had easy access up Froghall Drive to the bus stop in London Road near the Three Frogs. Telling had also sold Froghall to the Charlesworths who insisted that there was a gate at each end of the footpath and the residents of Buckhurst be provided with a key. This footpath and gates form part of the property of No 46 Froghall Drive. Over the years this footpath and in particular the locked gates fell into disrepair but were reinstated by the owner. However when he died his widow had the locks removed as she found it difficult to open them so that she could get through to Waterloo Road and the Rances Lane shops. Unfortunately this meant that all and sundry could make their way through from Waterloo Road and security became a problem in and around Froghall and the blind end of Froghall Drive. (2004) All being well the owner of 42 (Alan Scott) hopes to re-establish the lock on at least one of these gates when the new owner of the property to the west of the footpath improves the fencing and gates on his land. .

Land registry maps of 1964 & 5 show this footpath but 46 Froghall Drive is not marked as it was not built until later.

Land registry maps dated 1973 show both the footpath and 46 Froghall Drive. It ends on the land leading from the right of way alongside Froghall leading to 46 Froghall Drive. Thus people coming from Buckhurst would walk over land which presumably belonged to 46 Froghall Drive.

Changes

1. North of 40FHD was the walled garden which also contained a glass house. This area plus other land was purchased by Andrews from Telling and he then built was in now 74 Waterloo Road. Later on Andrews built a house within the walled garden and subdivided this plus the barn from the original parcel. The Andrews then moved into this house (Nether Staples 38 FHD) A further house was also built again accessed from the private road off Waterloo.

2. In 1988 Andrews sold 38 FHD to Wheeler a builder who bought a house, moved into it, extended and or refurbished it, then sold it. He split off the barn which one of his sons bought and did a barn conversion. The interior of 38 was upgraded and more bedrooms introduced. Unfortunately about this time financial matters were difficult and both Wheeler and his son had to move on. The converted Barn was repossessed by the morgagetors (Barclays) and for a short time was rented out. In 1993 the owner of 74 Waterloo Road purchased the Barn and had to do quite a number of repairs as the original conversion had not been carried out very well.

38 FHD was bought by the McKenzies and over the years further improvements including a double garage carried out.

3. When Tilling built Buckhurst Grove he brought his foreman carpenter George Tapsel with him as general foreman. He moved into and eventually purchased a building which was line a rooms to the east of the Hall. These rooms were originally sleeping quarters for the servants of visitors to the Hall. At one time a generator and storage accumulators were installed in the end room to provide electricity to the hall and the cottage. Eventually these were removed when the buildings were connected to the mains supply. Tapsel also purchased the old fruit storage building with the chimney stack at one end which he used as a general (junk) store.

Tapsel carried many alterations and additions to the rooms and lived there with his wife and three sons for many years. This became 42 FHD. When he died in 1987 he left the house to his wife and the store to two of his grandsons (sons of the two of his sons who were still in the UK - the third son had already emigrated to Perth WA). Eventually his wife who had difficulty moved into sheltered accommodation and the house stood empty for a long time. In 1995 it was sold to a developer, knocked down and a four bedroom house built in its place. At the same time the storage sheds were recombined with the property and used by the builder as a store etc. However the first purchaser of the new house did not want the store and eventually it was sold off and was split into two. The end nearest the barn was rebuilt and became a garage for it. The other part was purchased by the owner of the house on the private road behind thus giving him access to the right of way alongside FHD.

4. In the original grounds of Froghall was a large lake containing an island. A lawn led down to the lake from the Hall. When the Charlesworths sold the Hall in April 1971 to Den Hill Securities Ltd for £16,500 presumably the rest of the land was split off. In May 1972 it was then sold to Hoti for £49,500 who extended the servants quarters end and subdivided the whole into twelve lease hold flats.