

PERAMBULATIONS

(OR A STROLL ROUND THE HISTORY OF OUR ROADS)

IT'S AMAZING what you notice when you walk round our estate. Rather than whizzing along The Glade and Forest Drive (at no more than 20mph, please!), when you're strolling past all the lovely houses on our roads you get a real chance to absorb the character of this very special area. With this in mind, we'd like to welcome you to what we're calling our Perambulations Page. It's here that we hope you can help us build up a picture of the true character of our estate, the stories of the houses themselves and some of the fascinating people who've lived in them over the past 100 years.

As you may know, most of the village, including our roads, is part of a so-called Residential Area of Special Character (RASC). According to our local authority, Reigate and Banstead Borough Council (RBBC), these are 'mainly low-density areas of housing which have a special and cohesive character worthy of protection. Typically, this character consists of homes within large plots, set back from streets with wide verges, which are surrounded by verdant landscaping and leafiness'. A perfect description of our estate, I think you'll agree!

Parts of The Glade and Forest Drive also fall within a Conservation Area (CA). This is a more prescriptive designation which the local council say describes an area 'of special architectural or historic interest, the



character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. As you'll see from the map on the left, the Kingswood Conservation Area covers part of the lower section of Forest Drive and a section of The Glade going up the hill away from the station, as well as part of Waterhouse Lane. Quite rightly, the council goes on to say that conservation areas 'are not open-air museums, but living communities which must be allowed to change over time in order to remain vital and prosperous'. We at KNECL believe that if our residents have a more nuanced understanding of what defines our area and makes it special, we will become better able to act as custodians for the preservation and enhancement of our part of Kingswood as a special place to live.

And this is where we are asking for your help . . . by telling us about your house, its history, perhaps even the people who lived there before you: in short, helping to compile a document which tells the story of the estate from a new perspective - as seen through the homes and inhabitants which define our area. Perhaps you've got fascinating pictures from the past, documents giving an insight into how The Glade and Forest Drive emerged from the rural farming landscape of the late 19th Century, or just fond memories of you and your family growing up here.

Whatever it is, we'd like to hear from you. There are details at the bottom of this document about how to get in touch.

But first, let's consider the extraordinary variety of unique architectural 'characters' which make up our residential landscape: large or small, old or new, traditional, transitional or modern, 50's or 60's, Georgian, Victorian, Edwardian or Arts & Crafts, they're all here. And, in keeping with our RASC designation, they

are almost all nestled comfortably and harmoniously in spacious grounds, creating a mature, green and verdant landscape for us to enjoy.

Equally, we should not be blind to how the architectural language of our village is changing and is being enriched by newer, modern styles and expressions, not only of buildings, but also by the gardens around them. We should welcome new architectural styles which are defined by the availability of new building materials, technologies, the modern requirements for energy efficiency, a low carbon footprint, different lifestyles and the inevitable pressure brought about by ever-greater urbanisation.

And let us not forget the people who contribute so much to the character, upkeep and beautification of our village. When you consider the significant number of residents who have lived here happily for periods over 20 years and in many cases for as much as four to six *decades*, it says something for the way in which Kingswood has welcomed and wrapped its arms around new inhabitants from all walks of life, cultures and countries.

SO WHERE better to start our perambulations than at **Spinney Cottage**, on the right-hand side just around the corner when you turn from Forest Drive going up the hill along The Glade. As you can see from the picture here (taken circa 1911 looking back down the hill towards the station) The Glade was nothing more

than a country lane until development seriously began in the 1920s. The early, large houses built in this corner of Kingswood all had their own tennis courts (see our article on The Edwardians and Kingswood) and a large part of the area around where Spinney Cottage now stands provided space for courts for, among other households, those of **Fairwarp**, **Ridge House** and **Tanglewood** (all on Forest Drive). The owners of the large Arts



and Crafts-style house next door (formerly **Redleaf**, now **Killara**) acquired the plot on which Spinney Cottage now stands in 1951 and sold it two years later to one Leslie Gordon Guest, who acquired the plans for a fine cottage which he bought from the architects E. & L. Berg, who had built a full-size replica of the house for the Ideal Homes Exhibition at Olympia in 1950 (incredibly, in those days the Ideal Homes Exhibition usually featured three or four full-size replica homes filled with all the latest mod cons and household gadgets).

The house, which comprised four bedrooms (though one was so small it could hardly even fit a single bed in!), a large sitting room/dining area with a highly-unusual curved wall of windows, small kitchen, downstairs bathroom and a WC upstairs, clearly captured Guest's imagination and within a couple of years, Spinney Cottage proudly stood facing at a slight north-westerly angle on the plot. Anyone passing it today can still see the natural stone used in the impressive chimney structure which, together with imposing roof lines, give a pleasant cottage-style backdrop to the imposing gardens that make such a big contribution to the Arcadian character of the estate.



Spinney Cottage's distinctive stone chimney peering out from behind the abundant rhododendrons

A garage and workrooms were added in 1958/9 and the Guest family lived there until 1964 when Derek and Rosemary Satchell, married for just four years, took a shine to it and moved in. The price they paid? £12,250.

But with two young children arriving shortly afterwards, three dogs, a cat and a nanny (who had to use the washing machine outside since the kitchen was so small), the Satchells soon needed to expand, and in 1972 plans were submitted to the local borough council for an extension that would add two extra rooms to the dining/sitting room area, as well as trebling the size of the kitchen. Rosemary and her husband were horrified when the council stipulated that, because it was classed as an 'extension' it must have a flat roof. In Rosemary's own words: 'We did not mince our response' and the council relented!

The Satchells, both academic chemists by profession, raised their children there until both boys grew up and left the area, and when Derek died in 2008, Rosemary took on the running of Spinney Cottage herself.

Having lived in the same house for over 55 years, Rosemary, who is Vice-Chair of the Cheam Academy Network Trust and Chair of the governors of Oaks Park High School in Carshalton, can rightly claim to be one of the village's longest-standing residents, and still manages to tend some of the gardens herself. These stretch to around one acre and have a border with no fewer than seven other houses on The Glade, Forest Drive and Waterhouse Lane. Spinney Cottage falls within the designated Conservation Area and serves as a fascinating design 'bridge' between the original Edwardian and Arts and Crafts-style properties and their modern counterparts, as well as showing how, having moved to Kingswood, some people never want to leave!

NEXT DOOR to Spinney Cottage going up The Glade stands **Killara**, one of the finest and best-preserved examples of a traditional Arts and Crafts-style house. It was built by Costain in 1929 to a classic 1913 design by the celebrated Arts and Crafts architects Paxton Watson and, as well as retaining an almost identical architectural footprint to the original building, features many classic Arts and Crafts interior features. It is one of three-in-a-row very similar designs going up the hill, but there are other examples on The Glade, of this style featuring the traditional 'catslide' roof and decorative first floor window which is typical of many Paxton Watson homes.

Its current owners, Justus and Clare van der Spuy have lived there with their daughter, Isabelle, since 2004 and have, over the years, discovered quite a lot about the house's intriguing history.



Killara viewed from the front with its 'catslide' roof, and bluebells in its spacious grounds

For a start, it wasn't always called Killara. The van der Spuys' next-door neighbour, Rosemary Satchell recalls that it was originally called Redleaf, but was changed by an Australian couple who bought the house prior to 1974. Killara is an Aboriginal word meaning 'permanent' or 'always there', and is also the name of a Sydney suburb.

Neighbours in The Glade recall that one of the earlier owners of the house was a member of the family that owned the John Player tobacco company, in its day one of the biggest manufacturers of cigarettes in the world. In the 60s and 70s, John Player Special cigarettes, in a distinctive blacky glossy packet, were considered the epitome of 'cool' and the company was, for several seasons, sponsors of a Formula One motor racing team. You can still see some of their cheesy adverts from the time on YouTube.

But by far the most interesting occupant of Killara is not a person at all, but rather a fireplace. Justus takes up the story: 'After we moved in, a couple pulled up outside in their rather elegant car and knocked on the front door. They explained they were former owners from many years before who had re-named the house Killara (and had previously lived at another house called Killara on The Glade) and, since they were in the area, had decided to revisit the house that had given them so many happy memories.'

'They introduced themselves as Lord and Lady Welch - I believe her name was Margaret - and were delighted, I think, to see how little the place had actually changed. When we reached the main sitting room, their faces lit up as Lady Margaret pointed to the fireplace and exclaimed delightedly to her husband (John): 'Why, it's still there!'

This is what she told us about the history of this particular feature: it had, she said, originally been the fireplace in the bedroom in which our late Queen was born. Elizabeth Alexandra Mary Windsor entered this world on April 21, 1926 at 17 Bruton Street, Mayfair, where her parents, then the Duke and Duchess of York (later King George VI and Queen Elizabeth) lived. The house originally belonged to the Queen Mother's father, the Earl of Strathmore and Kinghorne, and his daughter, can be seen in this picture leaving 17 Bruton Street for her wedding day in 1923.



However, during the Blitz the house had taken a direct hit and subsequently had to be demolished. The fireplace was one of many items rescued by a firm specialising in architectural salvage and had, subsequently, been bought and installed at Killara. So, pictured below, here it is today . . .





And what about the house from whence it came? Well, 17 Bruton Street, Mayfair, is now the site of a very upmarket Chinese restaurant, Hakkasan, whose façade bears the plaque you can see on the left.

ALMOST OPPOSITE Killara is **Kingsworthy House**, built in 2014 in a sympathetic Edwardian style and comprising seven apartments. Kingsworthy House was developed on the site of the original Victorian-style single family dwelling of the same name, which was built in the early 1900s. Perhaps its best-known occupant was the Surrey and England cricketer John Edrich who

lived there in the 1970s with his young family. Edrich was one of the best players of his generation, notching up a total of 77 Test matches for England between 1963 and 1976, and scoring 310 in 1965, which stands as the fifth highest Test score for England in history.

Rosemary Stachell (see Spinney Cottage) recalls that Edrich's son went to Aberdour Prep School at Burgh Heath while her son attended Chinthurst, which meant the two boys often played in school cricket matches against each other. After serving as an England cricket selector in 1981, Edrich and his family moved to South Africa where, some years later, that son was tragically killed in a car crash. Following that tragedy, Edrich and his wife, Judith, returned to Britain and settled in northern Scotland. Edrich died in December 2020.

One of the last owners of Kingsworthy House before it was demolished was Joan Spiers, a Reigate and Banstead Borough councillor for over 30 years and Mayor of the borough in 2015-2016. She entertained many leading Tory politicians there, including former Conservative leadership candidate David Davis. Joan Spiers died in 2016 and her service to the local community is commemorated in a recently-planted row of trees in Waterhouse Lane close to the village shops.

AS YOU walk around our roads, it's intriguing to look at the different house names. Some are fairly obvious – **Waysmeet** (where Forest Drive meets The Glade opposite the tennis club) and **Hill View** (looking north from The Glade over the rooftops to the other side of the valley). There are topographical names like **Hurstwood** and **High Hurst Cottage** on Forest Drive (from the Old English 'hyrst' meaning hillock or wooded rise), geographical ones such as **Brenzett** (a pretty village in Kent) and **Northwold** (Norfolk), and arboricultural ones recognising the woodland from which some of the estate was carved: **High Oaks**, **Birchwood**, **Beech House**, to name but a few. And there are those that incorporate their road's name: four clustered together at the western end of The Glade, and three in Forest Drive.

But there are others that defy categorisation and remain stubbornly obscure to all but their owners. It is one such house that we come to next on the left as we head along The Glade towards the tennis club: **Quinneys**.

The plot on which Quinneys stands was first acquired for £500 in December 1929 by Lilian Tassena Spencer from Ilfracombe, who had a house built there which she named **Miramar**, the same name as the house she had in Devon. Given its location on the coast, Miramar was not the most original name (the word is of Spanish/Portuguese origin, meaning 'sea view' or 'sea sight'). In landlocked Kingswood, however, the name was, to say the least, incongruous.

When Lilian Spencer died in 1941, Miramar passed on to her daughter, who later sold it to a local builder, George Austen Keates. It was when he sold it in 1958 to Mrs Gwendoline Fox of Tadworth for £5,750 that she changed the house name to Quinneys.

So what (or who) is (or are) Quinneys? Well, according to the current owners, Bruce and Pamela Noble, it could well be named after a highly-popular British comedy play first performed on the London stage in 1914. *Quinneys*, by Horace Annesley Vachell, tells the story of Joseph Quinney, the endearing but stubborn head of a family antiques firm whose trenchant views cause problems for both relatives and friends.

Although the play flopped when it transferred to New York the following year, it was still popular enough to be turned twice into silent films (1919 and 1927) and later into a 90-minute drama production by the BBC in 1948.

The Nobles bought Quinneys for £27,000 in 1972 and moved from Woodmansterne with their two young daughters, Penny, then four, and Caitlin, just one, who grew up there. Since then, the house has been considerably extended. As Bruce notes drily: 'We now have a house that's twice as big, with half the number of people living in it.' The expansion of the house, however, maintained many of its original features – not least the electric bell system used to summon the servants (in this, it turns out, Quinneys is by no means unique in The Glade: every self-respecting middle-class household in the 1930s had to have at least one live-in servant).



Quinneys back and front after the extension work

Although past official retirement age, both Bruce and Pamela still pursue business and charity interests. Many will know Pamela from the days when she co-owned Susan Noble, a dress shop and haberdasher's in the village. The shop, which she opened in partnership with her friend, Sue Forrest, a schoolteacher, (hence the compound 'Susan' and 'Noble'), was opened in 1981 and for nearly ten years occupied the site of what is now Symphony World Travel. Pamela, a former fashion buyer for Selfridges, recalls: 'We stocked everything from Christian Dior haute couture to buttons and ribbons, as well as offering dry cleaning and alterations. We even put on highly-popular fashion shows in the village hall.'

In another link to Kingswood's history, one of her customers was Lady Joan Costain, widow of Sir Albert Costain, the last of the founding fathers of the company that built so much of our village and is so interwoven in its heritage.

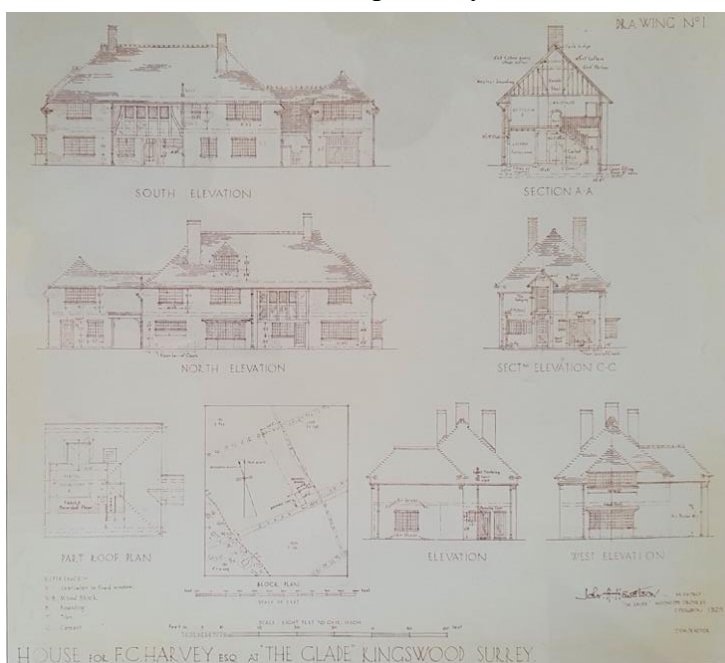
Like many of the houses towards the western end of The Glade, Quinneys has extensive grounds which require considerable maintenance, and have attracted one particular garden pest. No, not aphids or blackfly, but deer. For some years the Nobles – like several of their neighbours – fought a (largely-losing) battle against roe deer which would eat all the vegetation and strip bark from younger trees. Bruce says: 'We tried lots of ways of trying to keep them out, but nothing seemed to stop them. However, in the last couple of years they seem to have disappeared and moved on to pastures new.'



AND SO we, too, will move on to pastures new . . . further up The Glade, on the left-hand side moving towards the tennis club, where we find another of the road's notable properties, **Old Oaks** (above), built in the late 1920s as development along the road gathered pace. To find out a bit more about it, let's turn back the clock 92 years . . .

MAID – check. Gardener – check. Chauffeur – check. Well, when you've just paid £6,000 to have a fine new home like this built on The Glade, you need the staff to make it all run smoothly. This was the way of the English middle classes when a Mr F. C. Harvey moved into Old Oaks, an imposing oak-timbered five-bedroom house which had just been completed in 1929. The maid was obviously live-in; she had a small bedroom in the eaves reached by a narrow staircase. With its extensive grounds, the gardener was on duty full-time at Old Oaks but didn't need to live on site. And the chauffeur? Well, probably best not to ask whose bed he occupied!

This, then, was how Old Oaks functioned for its owner, Mr Harvey, his wife and their daughter as the Roaring Twenties rolled over into the more troubled 1930s. We do not know much about the family, but their legacy can still be seen here today. The beautifully-crafted architects' drawing of the property has been unrolled and dusted off (see right) and now takes pride of place in a frame on the main staircase, and the ingenious control panel for the system of electric bells used to summon the servants to any part of the house can still be seen in the kitchen.



In fact, the past came calling for the house's present owners, Kevin Connolly and Shirley Clark, just before Christmas about four years ago. Kevin recalls: 'There was a knock on the door one day and a man I can only describe as an Ian Carmichael lookalike (think Bertie Wooster) introduced himself with an unlikely request. He said his grandmother had lived in the house as a small child and he wanted to surprise her when she came to stay for Christmas. Would it be at all possible if he drove past on Christmas Eve with her so she could see where she had grown up?

'And, sure enough, come Christmas Eve a car pulled up outside with the grandmother inside. She didn't know that we were in on the secret and was trying to get her grandson to drive off when she noticed us opening the front door.

'Eventually we coaxed her into the house and she was transformed, remembering all the features of the place that she knew as a little girl. It was a really emotional moment.'

Some detective work by Kevin and Shirley seemed to make the story fit together. As they discovered, although Mr Harvey had bought the house in 1929, ten years later it was occupied by an old lady, presumed to be his widow, and her daughter. It seems that the daughter had a child of her own and the father was not around, so the maternal grandmother opened her home to them. This young girl was the old lady now standing in Kevin and Shirley's hallway. She recalled to them how she had hated to leave 'this happy house'.

Perhaps it is not surprising that she recognised so much within the house since it retains many of its classic original features, including fine Art Deco fireplaces. Indeed, Old Oaks from the outside today looks exactly the same as it did when it was built over 90 years ago, including a distinctive detached two-storey garage with a snooker room above.

The house's name comes from the magnificent row of oak trees that form the plot's easterly border and which, like many more in the substantial back gardens of the property, are the subject of council-applied Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs). No new building is allowed within a certain distance of a tree protected by a TPO, and Kevin and Shirley hope this will act as a safeguard against future over-development of the site and help retain this part of the estate's Arcadian nature.

AS WE continue our perambulations past the tennis club, you will notice the characterful property called **Little Thatches**, beside the green at the top of Forest Drive on the left. Little Thatches is now the only house with a thatched roof on our estate roads after **Yew Tree Cottage** (further down The Glade on the right) had its thatch removed during major extension work a couple of years ago.

It is noticeable that, heading down the hill towards Outwood Lane, by and large, the houses and the plots they sit on become slightly smaller. When they were built, this probably reflected their distance from the railway station in an age when cars were still an unaffordable luxury for many families. Over the years many of these houses have been extended by their owners; the smaller sizes of plots often limiting the opportunity to demolish and build a much bigger house on the same site.

DURING OUR perambulations, we have been looking at house names. Not surprisingly, given its proximity to Chiphouse Wood, many of the names on the estate incorporate types of trees: Holly, Willow, Beech, Birch, Cherry, Laurel, Pine, Ash, Briar, Larch and Yew. But by far the most common 'tree names' include Oak in their titles: seven in all on the estate. It might have been eight, but for the couple who moved into the next house we will look at, **Valkary House**, on the left as we walk down the hill past the entrance to Glade Spur. In a recent issue of *The Village Voice*, their son, John Goldsmith, recalled his memories of the house, which was called Five Oaks when the family moved in in 1964.

John writes: 'As an eleven-year-old boy, I well remember my father, Derek, standing in the bay window of Five Oaks. Wreathed in blue tobacco smoke from the Balkan Sobranie in his briar pipe, he was wrapped in thought looking down the garden. Eventually he turned around and said: 'I'm going to offer the asking price of £10,500 for this house.'

Mrs Connie Willing, whose husband had recently died, was delighted as the house had been on the market for some time following his death. My mother, Joan, on the other hand, was horrified, declaring: 'We can't *possibly* afford it!' At the time we were living in a small house in Watford and the gap between the two financially meant we would require the maximum mortgage available. This was what worried my mother.

The next shock came a couple of days later when the local estate agent got in touch to say that another couple had also offered the asking price and that they intended to invite both parties to make a further offer, which in effect turned the sale into an auction. After much angst, my father offered £10,578. The other party offered £10,570, so we 'won' the house by £8!

The first thing my parents did when we moved in was to change the house name to Valkary House. Valkary was the place in Ceylon, now Sri Lanka, where my parents had got engaged in 1951 so it was poignant, although for some reason the house name spelling was slightly different from the place in Ceylon, perhaps an Anglicisation.

We lived happily there from 1964 to 1980 when the house was sold because my parents moved to the South of France, to enjoy sailing around the Mediterranean in their retirement. My father died in 2001 and my mother returned to live her last days in Devizes, Wiltshire, near where I was living at the time.

My brother, who still lives in the area at the top of Box Hill, and I spent our teenage years at Valkary House. I started playing tennis at Kingswood Tennis Club, just 200 yards up the road, while my brother, Adrian, preferred golf and used to bike up to Kingswood Golf Club in Sandy Lane.



Valkary House as it looked in 1975

It seems to me that Kingswood remains much the same as it was back then, although most of the houses are larger and the village shops have changed. Lloyds Bank has gone; it was where I opened my first personal account, which I still have to this day. And the little supermarket is now a restaurant. The Pigeon Pair pub by the railway station is now the Kingswood Arms, the local butcher has gone, but the wine shop is still there, albeit no longer a branch of Threshers.

Although it's regarded as a tranquil spot where nothing much happens, on a recent nostalgic drive around the area I was reminded how we witnessed a dreadful fire at a neighbouring house in The Glade, on the left just before the right turn into The Chase, in the late 60s. It was caused by a chip fat frying pan catching fire and burning the whole house to the ground. I will never forget the anguish of the owners that day.

Driving up The Chase that day, where it joins Waterhouse Lane, I also passed the house of our local GP, a Dr. Dick, who ran his practice from there. He treated me for stress-related shingles as a 19-year-old when I was in the Royal Navy, while on my submarine training course at HMS Dolphin in Gosport.

Driving around, I well remember 'borrowing' my mother's Datsun from the garage when she was on holiday and driving to Silverstone in it - almost crashing it on the way! She never found out.

However, she certainly knew about my love of cars. To her eternal credit, she helped finance my first Aston Martin purchase, at the age of 23, while we were still living there and kept it in the garage at Valkary House, while I was at sea. I sold my mustard coloured MGB Roadster and, with the help of her £500, bought a DB4 Vantage for £2,150. It needed substantial work, which I could not afford to do, therefore I learnt to do it myself. This led to me forming an Aston Martin specialist restoration company, Goldsmith and Young, in 1980. I still run the company today in Mere, Wiltshire. I wish I still owned that first DB4 as it's now worth about £750,000. However, some consolation is that I still look after it for the current owner.

So Kingswood saw the start of my lifelong interest in historic motorsport and tennis, and for that I will always be grateful.'

Interestingly, since then The Glade has gained another ‘oak name’ house: **Fairoaks**, whose name was changed from Polhawn by the new owners a few years ago.

A FEW doors further down from Valkary House is the rather quaintly-named **Verdala**. It was built in the mid-1930s in a pleasant cottage style and has been extended three times since then: by the house’s second owner, Mr J. Bowie, who built a double garage on the west side, then, most extensively, by the next owners, Nigel and Mary Cole, in the summer of 1976 – the hottest summer of the 20th Century – adding a new sitting room with a full-width balcony, a garden room and a new, much larger master bedroom with the latest must-have, an en-suite bathroom. At the same time the rear gardens were completely re-landscaped. Finally, in 2008, the current owners extended the kitchen and added a utility room.



Verdala as it is today. You can see the extensions both left and right of the original building

The Coles bought Verdala to move into after their marriage in 1969 and lived there for 27 years until moving to a house close to Walton Heath Golf Club and, latterly, following Nigel’s death, his widow moved into Tadworth village.

When Alistair Sinclair and his late wife, Lynne, bought Verdala in 1996 it came with a unique set of documents tracing the history of what is now the Kingswood North Estate right back to 1873 when the area was made up of Chiphouse Farm, whose lands were divided into a series of smallholdings, between Highhurst Wood at the station end of the estate, and Chiphouse Wood at the other. These documents, made up of original deeds, conveyances and maps show how, having been parcelled up and sold, this area of land gradually evolved into the estate we know today – first from the station end into Forest Drive, The Glade and The Chase in the mid-20s but gradually extending further down in the 1930s to give us the roads and houses we know today.

The papers also show the piecemeal nature of this expanding development: a title deed from 1933 when a Miss M. Bartholomew bought the patch of freehold land on which she was to build Verdala, shows undeveloped land all around her plot.

When the Coles bought the house in 1969 it had originally been advertised at £12,750, although the eventual price was considerably less, Mary Cole recalls. Note the sizes of the four 'double' bedrooms! Also the reference to a 'tradesman's entrance'.

MICHAEL EVERETT & Co.

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Ref.2485 "VERDALA", THE GLADE, KINGSWOOD

Please telephone Mr. J. A. M. Bowie at Mogador 2762 before calling.

TYPE AN OUTSTANDING CENTRALLY-HEATED DOUBLE-FRONTED DETACHED RESIDENCE. There is an oriel bay window feature to the ground floor and an arched gateway to the tradesmen's entrance. The property was soundly built about 30 years ago and has white snowcemm rendered elevations throughout. There is a wide frontage to The Glade and a sweeping tarmacadam semi-circular drive to attached double width garage to one side. The property is well decorated throughout in most tasteful and elegant tones, and is in excellent order.

SITUATED IN A DELIGHTFUL POSITION IN THIS SOUGHT-AFTER AREA. Convenient for Kingswood station, shopping centre, etc. Within easy reach of Kingswood and Walton Heath Golf Clubs.

GROUND FLOOR SPACIOUS ENTRANCE HALL 10'0 x 7'5 (clear floor area) giving most useful additional accommodation. Oak strip flooring, radiator, cupboard under stairs.

CLOAKROOM with hand basin and w.c.

DELIGHTFUL DOUBLE ASPECT LOUNGE 18'6 x 11'6, oak strip floor, coved ceiling, bay window, marble Adam style fireplace with attractive timber surround. Casement door to terrace and patio at the rear which is completely secluded and overlooks woodland.

DINING ROOM 10'10 x 10'9 with tiled fireplace, attractive wooden surround. Master radiator on time switch. Serving hatch to kitchen, deep built-in glass cupboard.

"L" SHAPED KITCHEN 9'7 x 9'4 with sink unit and double draining boards and cupboards under, mixer taps, wall cupboards, "Ascot" water heater. Gas point. Radiator, door to side entrance with built-in garden and storage cupboard.

Easy staircase to:-

FIRST FLOOR

LANDING

FOUR DOUBLE BEDROOMS:

- (1) 12'3 x 10'10 with radiator, deep built-in cupboard.
- (2) 10'10 x 10'9 with radiator, deep built-in cupboard.
- (3) 11'6 x 9'9 with radiator.
- (4) 11'6 x 9'0 with radiator.

HALF-TILED BATHROOM with panelled bath, hand basin, mixer taps and spray attachment, towel rail, airing cupboard with immersion heater, copper two compartment storage cylinder.

SEPARATE W.C. with $\frac{3}{4}$ tiled walls.

Fitted loft ladder to fully boarded and fibre-glass insulated loft.

AMPLE 13 AMP. ELECTRIC POINTS THROUGHOUT

OUTSIDE ATTACHED DOUBLE GARAGE 19'6 x 15'9 with double up-and-over door. 3 large built-in cupboards for garden storage. Recently constructed terrace behind the house with an ornamental parapet wall. Deep patio built into the house. WELL LAID OUT GARDEN with lawns, flower borders, shrubs, etc. Well wooded towards the rear. An extra $\frac{1}{4}$ acre can, we understand, be purchased if required.

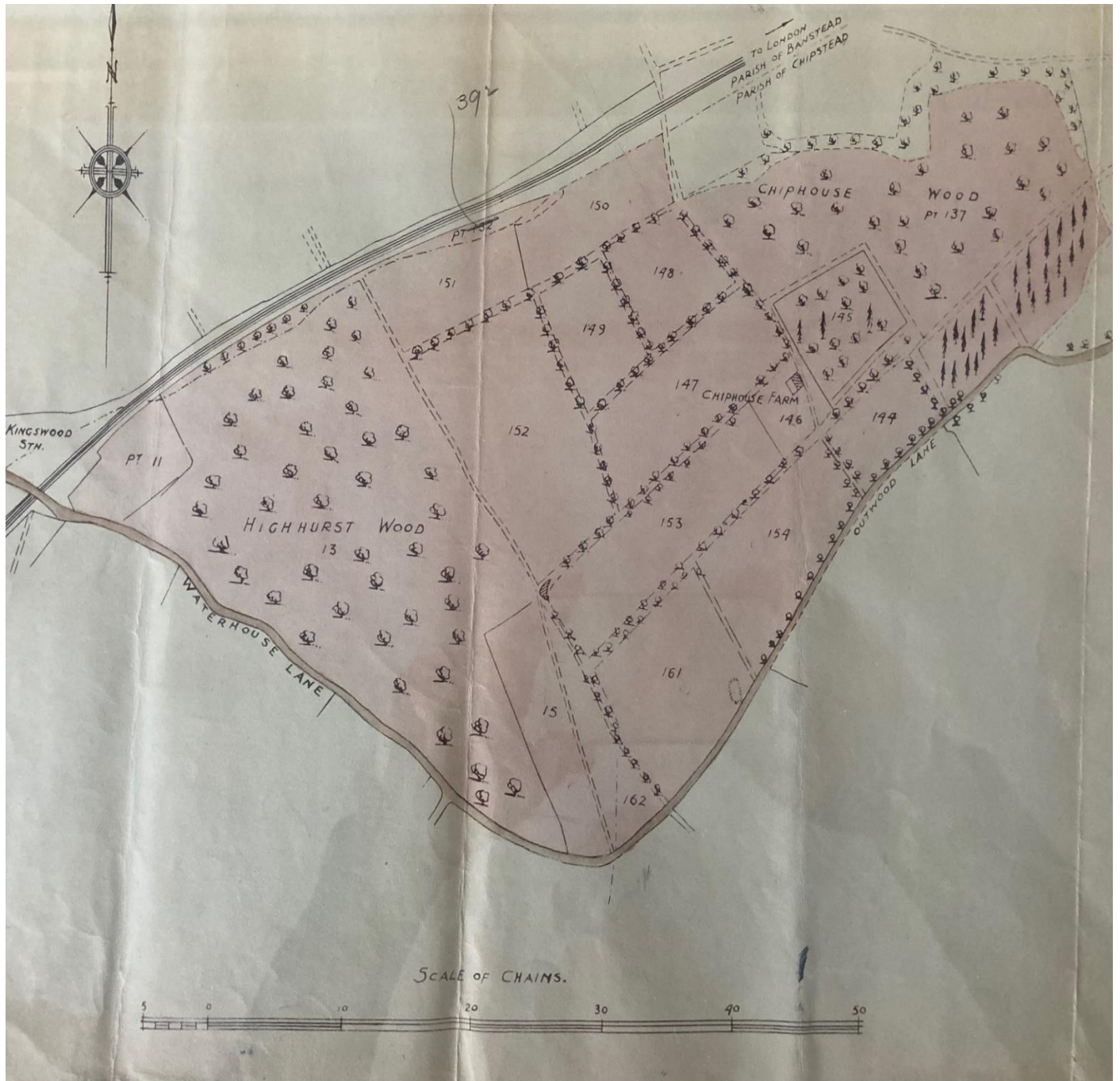
RATEABLE VALUE: £198 (Payable at 11/7d. in the £)

PRICE

£12,750

FREEHOLD

This map, incorporated in one of the earliest title deeds, shows how the area that now covers Forest Drive, The Glade and The Chase, looked in the 1870s when, apart from the two wooded areas, the land comprised Chiphouse Farm and a series of parcels of land, variously described in the documents as Pasture, Rough Pasture, Arable and Plantation. By 1906, the title deeds show all this land had been sold, in individual parcels and was now in the hands of three men, making it ripe for development.



By the time this map was drawn in 1922, the extent of development can be clearly seen. The Glade and The Chase stopped well short of where they reach today. Their expansion eastwards can be plotted using the dotted lines and a faint pencil-drawn arc in the top right-hand corner. The site where Verdala was to be built 11 years later is marked by a pencilled cross shape cutting through the word Chiphouse.



And to answer the question you're no doubt all asking: what is the name Verdala all about? Well, it's a small place in Malta where a British garrison was stationed from the 1850s to the 1970s. It also boasts (if that's the right word) its own 'Verdala' wine from the local vineyard. Having been bought a bottle by a friend who had just returned from holiday on the island, Alistair says: 'I can assure you it *doesn't* travel well!

FOR THE moment at least, let us retrace our footsteps back up towards the tennis club, but now turning right and down the hill along Forest Drive. Just where Drive Spur branches off, there are two pairs of semi-detached houses, one of which is called **Kerrier** . . .



The house, originally known as **Petit Tor**, was built in 1927/28 by William Percy Costain's company and is half of one of only three pairs of semi-detached houses in Forest Drive with a further six on the adjacent Drive Spur and one more pair in Beechwood Avenue. Clearly, they are all smaller houses and located on smaller plots than the majority of houses on the KNECL estate and popular rumour has it that they were built by Costain for his foremen and their families who were then supervising the construction of the later houses. However, it seems more likely that they were put up to attract lower middle-class people who could work in and build up the new shops and businesses then being started in Kingswood village and its surrounds.

The house's first owner was Albert Ernest Hellings, who bought it from Costain for £900 on December 31, 1928, the deeds being signed by William Costain personally. Albert Hellings' occupation was variously a stock broker's clerk and bank clerk. He had served in the Army Service Corps in the First World War and appears to have remained single throughout his time in Petit Tor. He died in July 1963 in Devon.

Hannah Milnes Roberts was Petit Tor's second owner, having bought the house from Albert Hellings on September 30, 1935. She was then a 44-year-old high school mistress and spinster and she, too, lived in the house alone until her death on June 19, 1977, a period of some 42 years, making her one of the road's longest-standing residents. Apparently dying intestate, Miss Roberts' solicitors sold the house in January the following year to its third owner, Robert Howard Morphew and his wife, Susan Elizabeth.

Mr Morphew worked in the TV and electrical businesses and stayed in Petit Tor until December 1985, during which time he added a two-storey kitchen and bedroom extension to the western side of the house (in September 1978) - the only significant change from its original design. The Morphews moved to Tadworth in 1985 and Petit Tor was then purchased by William and Daphne Robertson in December of that year.

Mr and Mrs Robertson had only lived in the house for six years when Mr Robertson sadly died and Mrs Robertson decided to return to her native Devon to be closer to her family.

It was at this point that the current owners, Bob and Ginny Crawley came on the scene. They bought Petit Tor at the end of January 1992, and one of the first things they did was change its name to Kerrier, the district in West Cornwall which has family connections for them both.

The house is now some 94 years old, having had five separate owners during its existence, the longest living there for 42 years and the shortest for six.

CONTINUING BACK along Forest Drive towards the village is a house which, as anyone passing it by can see, does what it says on the tin. **Little House** (no definite article, note) was built in 1925 by Costain and, incredibly, has had only three owners in its 96-year existence.

The first were a Mr and Mrs James, of whom very little is known, but who sold Little House in the 1930s to one Eric F Morgan and his wife, Dorothy, born in 1897 and 1900 respectively. Mr Morgan was a bank cashier working in Croydon, and he and his wife owned the house until 1958 when Maurice and Zoe Adams bought it for £3,900. Commander Adams was still a serving Naval Officer at the time and the house was let to tenants for a three-year period while they were in Malta.

The view from the Little House before the Adamses moved in was very different from what it is now as no houses had then been built to the North, giving Mr and Mrs Morgan, the previous owners, uninterrupted views across Forest Drive and the fields now occupied by **Timbers** and **The Spinney** to the railway line, as this rather wintery scene shows.



View from Little House gates across Forest Drive to the railway c 1950

When Commander Adams retired from the Royal Navy he became a much respected teacher at Nork Park School and a local borough councillor, becoming Mayor of Reigate and Banstead in 1981/82 and being appointed an Honorary Alderman in 1996. Incredibly, 63 years after the Adamses first bought it, the house remains in family hands to this day.



Forest Drive looking West towards Waterhouse Lane and the village c 1950

IF YOU would like to share your house's history or have any stories about those who have lived here since the estate was built, we'd love to hear from you. You can contact ALISTAIR SINCLAIR by email at ajdsinclair@knecl.com or by phone on 07751 202646, or BOB CRAWLEY at Robert.crawley@knecl.com or 07455 916071. We'd love to hear from you . . .