



Local History Collection

4 - Bishops Farm Close, Oakley Green

Autumn 2020

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Bishops Farm Close is situated on the north-western edge of the hamlet of Oakley Green, some 800m to the south of the river Thames. The site is quite flat; at a height of approximately 26m above Ordnance Datum. The geology, is London Clay. The archaeological background for the Close derives in the main from its location within the archaeologically rich Thames Valley, from which numerous sites have been identified by a variety of methods (Ford, 1987; Gates 1975; Foreman et al. 2002). Approximately 400m to the north a Bronze Age 'burnt mound' has been located by trial trenching (Pine 1996) and immediately to the east lies the early 15th-century timber-framed hall of Bishops Farmhouse Manor, a grade II listed building. Earthworks visible in the adjacent field may also be of medieval origin, comprising a possible three-sided enclosure and ridge and furrow (remnants of medieval cultivation).

One of the oldest properties in the Close is Bishops Farm Manor which was recorded in the Bray Church records of 1288 as being occupied by Michael Bisshop and Edith Busshoppe (hence Bishops Close??). The Bisshop, Bysshopp, Bysshop, and Bishop family lived in the Manor until 1707 and were involved with the neighbouring estate of Bullocks Hatch around 1292. The rental of the Manor was 12s in 1650 and by 1658 had increased to £1 5s 11d per annum. By 1836 the Manor was occupied by Lady Jane Lindores, then by various bankers, doctors, builders and . It was leased in 1958 by a Mr and Mrs Frederick Henderson Jee for £1000 who eventually acquired

the Freehold in 1960 for £3000. In 1968 Mr Henderson Lee died leaving his wife, Joan, the owner. In 1961 Mrs Henderson Lee had met a Mrs. Lambert in Oakley Green who told her that she had worked in the kitchens at 'Bishops' when she was 16. She recalled that "In the early 1900's Edward V11, then The Prince of Wales, used to take a pony and trap ride down from Windsor Castle to 'Bishops' to join his theatrical friends. The hustle and bustle in preparation for a visit from His Highness, she recalled, can well be imagined" (by Joan Jee).

This Manor, part brick with an old tile cabled roof, was a 3 framed bay house built of a part timber frame encased in render with many false timbers over the rendering. There have certainly been a number of alterations to the property since the 15th Century, including one bay being demolished to extend the property.

Charlotte Evans, who currently lives in one of the properties at Bishops Farmhouse Manor, sent these photos of the interior and the Snooker Room with viewing gallery as it was many years ago. If anyone else has any further history or stories to share about the properties in Bishops Farm Close please do get in touch via the Editor and we will include it in future newsletters.

