

Brief Chronology of events which shaped Turn End

- black* Events appertaining directly to Turn End development
brown Activities and events not directly connected with Turn End
blue Other architectural work---completed buildings only

1960-62

Designed and built first house: 'Askett Green" on outskirts of Princes Risborough, Bucks for Mike+Celia White who still live there. This house was widely published and provided the design test-bed for much of the thinking which led to the design of the Haddenham houses.

1962

- April Peter and Margaret Aldington married and moved into nearly completed Askett Green after owners went to work abroad for three years. Paid part of rent in 'kind' by finishing and decorating all interior woodwork and making garden. While living there we actively sought a building plot in a village suitable for a small housing group. During this period Peter was working in the London County Council Architects Dept. (Housing Division) and later as an assistant architect for the Timber Research Association.
- 4 August Margaret developed severe arthritis whilst camping in Wales and was unable to walk.
- 10 August Outline approval for three detached single storey houses on land in Townside Haddenham granted to the executors of the estate of Freeman Clarke

1963

Sometime during this year Peter entered a Redland sponsored competition for rationalised brick housing.

- 26 January Auction of land and adjoining buildings between Townside and High Street in Haddenham. Reserve of £3,000.00 for three building plots not achieved as we were the only bidders, largely because the whole of the South was suffering a total power failure and major freeze-up! Negotiated through rival estate agents later that same day, agreeing the reserve figure.
- 6 February Lloyds Bank agreed a short term loan of £2,700.00 to assist in the purchase pending the release of funds. The purchase price was achieved by releasing all our joint savings with Peter's father supplying the difference (50%)
- February Approached Vendors to request a variation of a restrictive covenant in favour of no.8 High Street which limited the development to three detached single storey dwellings. We wanted to remove the words 'detached' and 'single storey' and have the possibility of considering four dwellings.
- 11 April Completed purchase after failing to move the covenant or the vendors to find a purchaser for 8 High Street. Searches had apparently failed to reveal road widening and building lines on Townside as well as the existence of planning approval for a large housing estate across the road, immediately opposite!

- May Surveyed the site. This turned out to be a major brushwood cutting exercise, just so that we could find the boundaries!...it was a literally impenetrable jungle.
- June Commenced clearing the site. Whilst removing a dead Poplar tree, hailed by an architect near neighbour concerned that we were typical developers about to fell everything! He introduced Margaret to the Haddenham Singers and informed us that there were already ten architects living in Haddenham!
- July Designed an extension for Dr+Mrs Schiller in Kenley, Surrey, built later this year. The introduction was made by Richard Einzig who had photographed Askett Green and whose pictures were largely responsible for the good press coverage obtained by this and subsequent buildings
- Summer Was spent finishing off Askett Green and laying out the garden and courtyard there. Peter left his employment at London County Council architects dept. and started work at Timber Research and Development Association.
- October Designed a house in Whiteleaf for a local builder as a speculation. This was commissioned after he had visited Akett Green.
- 25 October Met Aylesbury R.D.C. District Planning Officer to discuss draft scheme design. He liked the scheme and encouraged a planning application. No mention then of either a road widening line or a building line, both of which rendered the proposals unviable in planning terms.
- December Designed a kitchen for Mr+Mrs A. Aldington (Aunt+Uncle)
- 1 December Submitted a detailed planning application for three single storey linked houses substantially as eventually built.
- 11 December Variation of the covenant finally agreed with the eventual purchaser of 8 High Street. The negotiations apparently included the transfer of a small strip of land! The new owners of no.8 eventually became Clients who have been on-going right through the history of the Practice! (Liz+Howard Quilter)

1964

Designed Prestwood House for the Quilters sometime this year (dates not found)

- January Whiteleaf house designed and built during this year.
- Jan/February Continued clearing site, still an impenetrable jungle, with the help of a local contractor. Continuous bonfires! Moved with a bulldozer, semi-mature walnut from house courtyard area and replanted in entrance. Resulting hole was to become the courtyard pond!
- 1 January Letter from Aylesbury R.D.C. planning officer informing us of the existence of building line right through the middle of the scheme and suggesting we might move the whole group 35 ft away from the road. Subsequent meetings with him evinced the admission that he was unaware of this when I first showed him the scheme . The advice was to talk to the Bucks C.C Highways Dept. who were completely intransigent! Our first experience of bureaucracy not really being interested in anyone with a burning missionary zeal---and impatience to accompany it. Stalemate and no decision one way or the other (we would have welcomed a refusal to appeal against) led us to seek help elsewhere and we found a willing listener in our M.P John Hall.
- February Brief holiday in Wales. Margaret's arthritic pain stopped for half an hour whilst carrying water from the well--- the first time since 4.8.62

- February Commissioned by John and Pauline Craig to design a group of four houses for themselves in partnership with the friendly local builder who commissioned Whiteleaf house. This project was eventually abandoned but John Craig was to join me as a partner in 1970. (Henton Houses)
- 3 March Letter from John Hall to Minister of Housing and Local Govt.
- 20 March Letter from John Hall to Minister of Public Buildings and Works.
- 25 March Lloyds Bank agreed a Building loan of £5,000.00 rising after a certain stage to £7,500.00
- 26 March Letter from John Hall apologising that he hadn't managed to meet us yet.
- 5 May After discussions with the planners we decided to submit an application for the house farthest from the road only (eventually to become Turn End), pending the outcome of the original application! The design of the house was not changed for this application, so it was not designed to stand alone. This step meant that if we should lose the argument about building lines we would only be able to build two and not three houses. We were not prepared to alter the design concept and negate the aim of building a modern housing group which would knit into the village fabric nor were we prepared to fell many of the trees which had attracted us to the site in the first place! This action was forced on us because we needed somewhere to live by the end of the year when the owners of Askett Green were due to return.
- 27 May Application for one house approved--was this a record!
- 1 June Letter confirming approval
- 4 June Letter from John Hall reporting that he had heard from the Parliamentary Sec. to the Min. of Public Bldgs. and Works saying that he is prepared to relax the Bucks County Council road widening bylaws.
- ? June Started work on site ourselves, digging trenches etc.obtaining water connections and eventually electricity. Peter damaged his back the day before the water connection was due, so Margaret arthritis or no was deputed to dig the water trench! Swinging a mattock got her on her feet again. As work progressed we found Haddenham people very friendly and we were handed scones over the garden wall.
- 12 August Letter from John Hall saying he had received Bucks County Highways Dept. observations on our proposals.
- 19 August Lodged a planning appeal on the grounds of no decision on the original application for three houses. This followed a visit to us by Fred Pooley, then Bucks County architect and planning officer...(Pooley on the phone: "I have received a sixth letter from John Hall"....Margaret: "perhaps you should have answered the previous five") Fred sweet talked us (his great fort ) and made us feel good, but told us very little other than that we gathered he was using us as a test case to try to remove the blanket widening and building lines from all village streets in Buckinghamshire. "I think I would appeal if I were you"
- August/Sept Peter left his employment at TRADA (Timber Research and Development Association) to roof and do the rest of the woodwork on Turn End. This was unplanned, caused by our having purchased all the timber and being let down by the carpenters.
- ? October Received Bucks County Council observations on our appeal which we sent to the R.I.B.A. for advice. They suggested approaching Lord Esher for an expert report.
- 23 October Letter from Lord Esher to David Keate at R.I.B.A. after receiving request to help.
- ? November Preliminary meeting held to discuss the formation of an amenity and planning society because of

concerns about the threats to the village posed by housing and highway developments. This was eventually formed and called the Haddenham Village Society (HVS)

- 27 November Received report from Lord Esher in enthusiastic support of appeal following his earlier visit to meet us on site
- 28 December Move into part finished house (no plumbing, a curtain for a door and a window in one room only). Sleeping bags on the floor for the next couple of years!
- 31 December Unpacked the washing machine, with woodshavings on concrete floor and polystyrene wigwam, Aldingtons had their first bath at Turn End so they might gain acceptance at New Year party!

1965

Started building Prestwood House? This was a direct labour job managed by the clients. In practice this meant Peter!

Involved on behalf of HVS in preparing proposals for the layout of Banks Park to incorporate a new Library and Health Centre, extensions to the Village Hall and improved parking facilities. It is interesting to note the similarity of these ideas to the layout which exists today!

- ? February Found us glazing the main high-level Living room window---in the freezing dark at 1.00am! This was not due to poor site organisation but because there had been a lengthy discussion throughout the afternoon with a fellow HVS committee member.
- 15 March Further loan installment of £2,500.00 agreed with Lloyds Bank for finishing off Turn End, pending receipt of more funding from Peter's father.
- 30 March Agreed to withdraw appeal following a promise of planning approval immediately we did so.
- May Received final planning approval 17 months after application!--what chance a developer staying that course, let alone standing the costs of the argument?
- May Turn End finally closed in and secure....Aldingtons take well earned Scottish holiday!
- 15 May Haddenham Village Society inaugurated to represent the village on Planning matters, working closely with the Parish and District Councils. Attended by 120 people. Margaret became secretary.
- June Advertised for Oxford students to help dig foundations of other two houses. Started building again! We met and employed Roger Smith (PPE) and Colin Stillwell (History) who returned many times to help with further stages of building both here and on other jobs. Colin eventually became a business partner for a period, and both are still good friends.
- June Surveyed Haddenham Hall for a London architect friend of the owners.
- 9 July First Public meeting of HVS, addressed by Lord Esher.
- August Agreed to supervise extensive alterations to Haddenham Hall. This job was to last for a year.
- October First HVS newsletter.
- 12 November HVS produced a comprehensive year's programme!
- 25 December Christmas at Turn End! House not painted, only half a kitchen and Faher-in-law had to assist with the construction of the dining table before he was allowed to have Christmas dinner!

1966

- January Margaret began working part time as a psychiatric nursing tutor, even though we still had to approach the kitchen via scaffold boards!
- January The chairman of the recently formed Haddenham Village Society and his wife who was our local District Counsellor (Mr+Mrs Carslake) asked Peter to design a living room extension to their house and carry out renovations and alterations to an adjoining thatched cottage. Sole experience of having to supervise the work of a Thatcher!
- January Friends Avril+Brian Wilkinson abandon proposals for an extension Peter designed for their house in Doncaster and commission a new house on a site nearby.
- February Designed a new Group Practice Centre for Drs. Reedy, Macfarlane and Clarke in Chinnor. This turned out to be a fairly seminal building for us largely as a result of the deeply thought out and clearly expressed brief, totally devoid of either example or preconception, written by Dr Reedy. This experience was to influence the way the practice worked from then on.
- 27 February Completion of roof tiling The Turn and Middle Turn. Reached this stage after receiving the loan of an apprentice carpenter from Ivor Newton who was helpful and supportive throughout. (Ivor inherited Walter Rose's business)
- March/April Colin+Roger return to help decorate Turn End
- April Wilkinson house in Doncaster designed and received Planning permission.
- June Turn End nearing final completion.
- 15 July Started negotiations for acquiring no 7 Townside which had a demolition order placed on it. The agreement proposed was that ourselves and our neighbour who owned it would demolish between us, we would then acquire the land to incorporate into our development and he would acquire a strip off us to gain access to the rear of his property. Negotiations went sour and we all fell out! The cottage was, however, demolished. This opened the development up to the street in a way that was not intended and so caused us to re-think the design of the entrance, the result of which was the construction of the present roadside wall and planting.
- July/August Colin+Chris Vincent (another student) decorating The Turn and Middle Turn.
- Summer HVS carried out a Village-wide tree survey which led to Parish Council/County tree planting scheme.
- August Alterations to Haddenham Hall completed.
- 17 August Completion of floor tiling The Turn and Middle Turn
- 31 August Completion of Rendering The Turn and Middle Turn
- September Started building Chinnor Surgery.
- 1 September Purchased mattresses for built in bed (Turn End)---an end to all sleeping bags!
- 11 September Communal TV and VHF aerials fitted.
- 17 October Approached Vernon, Son and Adams, Estate agents in Princes Risborough to sell The Turn and Middle Turn (then called houses 1+2) for £8,000.00 each.
- November Produced sales brochure with the houses now priced at £7,950.00 and £8,450.00
- November Designed a house in Haddenham (Diggs Field) for Miss Diana Alderson and Dr+Mrs Leslie---a job fraught with problems largely caused by the unusual inter-client relationship and their conflicting personalities---not to mention the architect's bloody mindedness!
- November Commissioned by Tim Rock (then assistant editor at Architectural Review) to design a replacement

Mews House at the end of his garden in Notting Hill. (Princes Place)

- 8 November Curtains for Turn End---Wow!
- 5 December Double glazing units for The Turn and Middle Turn courtyard doors.
- ? December Putting finishing touches to The Turn and Middle Turn.

1967

Completed Prestwood House?

- 9 January Fitted cushions for built-in seating at Turn End.
- February Diggs Field starts building.
- 15 February Appointed Hillier Parker (London) as selling agents after doing the rounds of London agents.
- 1 March Exchanged contracts for sale of Middle Turn following an accepted offer, a withdrawal due to cold feet, and a re-offer
- April Solicitors of both parties urging a resolution of the problems surrounding 7 Townside.
- April Appointed to do alterations to a six storey advertising agency building in Charlotte Street, London (Garland Compton, John Craig's employers). This was to be carried out as a rolling programme while keeping the agency running. John Craig was the instigator of the appointment and he was seconded to represent the agencies interests and work with me,
- May Wilkinson House starts building.
- May Local agricultural feed manufacturer (Grossmiths/Dalgety) applied to greatly enlarge their warehousing and install a hammer mill and processing plant. Their reputation in the village was already bad. The implications of over twice the total village lorry movements, much larger lorries, noise, smell, increased vermin and visual domination, led to a highly organised opposition. HVS co-ordinated meetings, petitions and traffic surveys.
- June Work complete at Carslake extension and addition.
- 20 June Made an offer of £2,100.00 for purchase of No.9 Townside. This cottage forms the pivotal point of the development layout. It had to be sold because it became part of a bequest, but could not be sold on the open market because it was blighted by the road widening line...so we were able to purchase for £100.00 over the District Valuers price to the County Council.
- 23 June Offer accepted in writing
- 8 July Offered £5,100.00 for purchase of no.16 High Street (this backs on to 9 Townside and together these properties would enable us to access and build garages)
- 18 July Completion of sale of lease (999 years) of Middle Turn to Mr+ Mrs J. Landon. As part of the deal we undertook to provide further garaging within five years.
- 27 July Further loan of £3,600.00 agreed with Lloyds Bank to help fund the purchases of 9 Townside and 16 High Street.
- 8 August Agreement to raise wall between Turn End and the adjacent 'Bone House' (12 High Street) by 2ft.3ins. This achieved privacy not there before due to site levels.
- 27 August Exchanged contracts on no.16 High Street.
- 31 August Completion of conveyance of land at 7 Townside for £100.00 after protracted and unpleasant

negotiations. We eventually did not part with any of our land.

- September Princes Place designed and planning approval sought---obtained in December '68 after protracted negotiations!
- 15 September Completion of purchase of 9 Townside. This enabled access to part of garden of 16 High Street for the eventual erection of garages.
- October Roger Smith helps make the first stages of the garden.
- October Garland Compton started on site. The start of three years phased work, the first three weeks of which saw John Craig handling the job on his own while Peter lay in bed with brucellosis!
- November Chinnor Surgery completed and occupied.
- November Peter offers to resign from Diggs Field contract---frustration! Letter available.
- November Grossmiths application refused.
- 17 November Completion of purchase of 16 High Street with tenants.

1968

- March Grossmiths second application led to repeat HVS action and refusal July '68
- 29 March Appointed further Agent to try and market The Turn
- May Diggs Field finally complete!
- 12 May Houses published in the 'Observer'
- 23 May Wilkinson House occupied.
- 18 June Chairman of HVS wrote to County Planning Officer, after he had addressed the society, volunteering support and practical help in the preparation of a Village Plan.
- August Published in the 'Architectural Review'
- July/Sept. Published in 'Concrete Quarterly' for the first of four occasions!
- 4 September Exchanged contracts to sell a lease on 'The Turn'.
- 27/29 Sept. Margaret and Peter represented HVS at Civic Trust conference at York Uiversity.
- October Planning approval for alterations to 16 High Street which we still owned and had agreed to alter for John+Pauline Craig.
- October on Colin+Roger lived in 9 Townside and worked on alterations to 16 High Street which was to be eventually sold to John+ Pauline Craig. A hard winter with no facilities! Insisted they attend Turn End twice a week for a bath and food!
- 17/18 Oct HVS carried out 24 hour total traffic survey of village.
- 25+29 Oct Public inquiry re. Grossmiths. Peter represented HVS as expert witness. Appeal refused. In Bucks Herald of 31 Oct District Planning Officer paid tribute to the part played by HVS--and so he should-- we did his job for him!
- October Apparently by this time Peter's work had appeared in 27 publications in 6 Countries!
- 19 November A baby daughter---Clair!
- 5 December Completion of sale of lease of the Turn to Mr+ Mrs J. Creaser

30 December Completion of purchase of 8 High Street including two planning permissions for houses in High Street. After obtaining improvement grants this was converted into six flats for rent. This purchase enabled extensions to Turn End garden to be made, a dividing wall and Sittery to be built, and secured the future of a number of trees which until then had been outside our control.

1969

February Designed additions and major alterations to a house in Turville Heath for the daughter of John Piper.

February 5 Very nice letter of appreciation for Diggs Field from Mrs Leslie.

February 24 Princes Place mews house starts on site.

March Published in 'Deutsche Bauzeitung'---Germany

June Published in 'Progressive Architecture'---U.S.A.

July Designed alterations to John Piper's studio, work carried out this year.

August Started building Turville Heath.

31 December Planning application to build two double garages on land at end of 16 High Street garden accessed through part of garden of 9 Townside and creating a garage yard as an extension to the existing shared forecourt.

1970

January Formed partnership with John Craig.

14 January Obtained grant for improvements to 9 Townside and Planning permission for Conservatory link between kitchen and main house. Work carried out immediately. (actually used a builder!)

Late Jan All hands on late night session fixing living room flooring at 16 High Street---with 14 month old baby joining in!

28 January Planning approval for Garages.

Jan/Feb Designed house in Barnstaple for old family friends.

February Bucks County Council publish a consultation document 'Haddenham Village Plan'

February Completion of work to and sale of much altered 16 High Street to John and Pauline Craig, and they move in. Two thirds of garden retained to provide land for garages and eventually a new garden for TurnEnd (No-Mans)

February Completed Turville Heath.

February Completed Princes Place.

March Holiday on Tresco---the coldest wettest and windiest spring they had experienced for years and the start of a whole string of soaking wet holidays!

Spring Completion of work to Garland Compton---at last. This job should have launched the practice into the London office refurbishment scene---but it didn't, despite good pulicity!

May Barnstaple House started on site.

27 May Rachel born.

- June Designed new Opticians shop in Doncaster for Brian Wilkinson.
- July Started building above---a speed record for the practice!
- July/Aug Designed major extension for Teddy Craig, John's father. (Cutler's Orchard)
- August Commissioned to remodel a Peak District coach house for Ray and Pat Fowler. He met us as the rep. (later sales director) of Sissons Sinks which we used in most of our buildings. This was to be a self build job carried out over the following three years. (Burrows House)
- 2 September Published in 'Architects Journal'
- September Published in 'Homes and Gardens'
- October Opticians shop completed.
- October Presented with R.I.B.A. Southern Region Award for Turn End etc. (announced In July)
- 26 November Haddenham Village Plan adopted by the County Council '.....act as a guide for intending developers and as a basis for determining all future planning applications in the village.' It designated a large core of the village as a conservation area. Although the price of this was a proposed expansion of the population by 1200, HVS viewed it as a major step forward. Turn End etc. were designated as 'Buildings which contribute to the character of Haddenham.'
- November Commissioned by Elsie Rose (daughter of Walter Rose, author of 'The Village Carpenter') to design a memorial on the site of the family's Quaker Burial Ground which due to a typical piece of planning insensitivity, suddenly found itself at the end of a new suburban-type shopping parade. This commission was carried out by John Craig with great tact and diplomacy. The developer contributed to the cost. At one meeting when John asked him why he had planned the development in a manner that necessitated felling every tree on the site he provided the classic response that 'they were all in the wrong places'!

1971

- February Published in 'Architecture+Urbanism'---Japan.
- March Barnstaple House completed.
- May Margaret elected to Parish council---the start of a six year stint during which served on these committees: Greens and open spaces, Finance and general purposes, Highways and footpaths, Village Hall, Street lighting (chair) and worked on the Parish Guide.
- June Burrows House approvals. Planning permission not needed---thank goodness! How this speeded things up!
- June Quaker Burial Ground completed.
- July Cutler's Orchard started building. Ivor Newton the main contractor.
- December Planning application for 200+ houses on edge of village which led to protracted negotiations with Parish Council and involvement of the practice to try and improve the standards---with little success! Interesting sketches by John Craig clearly demonstrated the environmental disaster of current highway rules. The perceived intentions and the practical application of the Village Plan seemed miles apart!
- 13 December Completed purchase of 6 High Street which was, after major alterations, to become the office of Aldington+Craig and provide land for Turn End garden extension. New garden areas were gradually

created during the following four years.

1972

Started converting 6 High Street for use as Practice offices. This work was done over a number of years as funds permitted. We did a lot of the work ourselves, John Craig helped a lot and occasionally our architectural assistants were roped in! The building was organised in response to a brief written by John, the main interviewee being our secretary.

February Cutler's Orchard completed. Teddy Craig moves in and within days the evidence of the building site has vanished due to his pre-planning and skills as a set designer!

1973

May Margaret elected to District Council as an Independent. Served on Housing, Environmental health and Personnel committees. Also a Manager of Haddenham C.of E. Primary School.

December Burrows House completed. Many late night hours and a great deal of tolerance by Pat of Ray's obsessive urge to complete it!

1975

16 May Bought Bone House (12 High Street) to acquire a small area of land at rear to facilitate access to part of garden of 16 High Street (No-Mans) retained after sale of house to John+Pauline Craig

October Margaret on Aylesbury Vale Community Health Council as a District Council representative ('75-'76) and then an Oxford Regional Health Authority nominee (to Oct'81). Chairman from Nov'80 to Oct'81

1976

29 June Lease of The Turn assigned to N. Deacon

16 July Bought very small area of land at rear of 10 High Street to add to that from Bone House. This finally connected No-Mans to the rest of the garden.

1979

February Moved Aldington+Craig office to 6 High Street (while Margaret was lying in bed with Pneumonia!) and later converted the studio at Turn End into a room for Clair and Rachel.

1980

14 July Lease of The Turn assigned to R.W.Faulkner

1981

June Garden opened to the public for the first time as part of the National Garden's scheme. This was part of a Haddenham gardens scheme.

- October Margaret appointed to Aylesbury Vale Health Authority on which she served for 5 years. Also helped to found Haddenham Third World Link.
- 14 December Repurchased the lease of The Turn for Peter's parents

1982

- May Started making garden in 'No Mans'

1984

- 29 April First Independent NGS opening.

1986

- October Margaret became a Home Visitor for Arthritis Care and returned to C.H.C. as an Oxford nominee. Both these continued until July '94.

1992

- July 20 Completed rationalisation of boundaries and compilation of various parcels of land so that the deeds etc. accurately reflect what is now the reality on the ground!

1993

Converted Girls' room back onto a studio/television room

1996

English Heritage recommend Turn End for Grade 2* listing.

1998

- July 15 In his wisdom the Minister agreed listing at grade 2 only