

Falmouth Harbour Office History

The early site of the Falmouth Harbour Office which dates from 1870 was at the bottom of the hill that leads onto Custom House Quay. This was named Commercial Buildings and is now the Front bar and Harbour Lights fish & chip shop. The first Harbour Master was Captain Richard Sherris.



A flag pole was erected in front of the office and used in rough weather to indicate that local boatmen could charge double fare. The Harbour Office moved to its present site, when 44 Arwenack Street was purchased in 1923

The two large buildings to the left of the flag pole were the Customs bonded warehouses; these premises became Taylor's garage and are now Trago Mills.

44 Arwenack Street was originally a private residence, built in 1864 and the original owners were, Rourkes Gurnie, George Wodehouse Gurnie, John Henry Gurnie & Right Hon Wodehouse – Baron Wodehouse. It is thought that the building was built to be able to view Falmouth docks as Samuel Gurnie and Lord Wodehouse were on the original committee in 1858 that instigated building of the dockyard.

The building has had various occupiers over the years; in 1892 Lakes postal directory has Thomas R. Googh, tobacconist listed as being in the shop to the left of the front door, a Conservative working men's club on the ground floor and the Chamber of Commerce on the first floor.

In 1904 the property was purchased by John first Earl of Kimberley, in 1916 Thomas Smith Curtis, Basil Addington Goad, Earnest Alfred Collyer Lloyd & Charles Fredrick Booth are named on the property deeds. 1920 records that Earnest Alfred Collyer Lloyd's name was removed from the deeds and Henry Teasdale Berks name was added.

On August 11th 1923, Right Hon John Earl of Kimberley, Thomas Smith Curtis and The Falmouth Harbour Commissioners purchased the property and it has been the Harbour Office since then. The Harbour Office itself was originally in the basement with the access from Custom House Quay, the ground floor office was the Falmouth Harbour Commissioners board room, the first floor has been a Halifax Building Society and has also been occupied by Christie Winn & Co Chartered Accountants.

The shop has also been occupied by Cox & Rawlings, Electrical contractors and was the studio and shop for the local marine artist Tony Warren from 1978 up until his death in 1994.

A possible new Harbour office with combined visitor's amenities is planned to be built on North Quay.