

FORM B – BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

2-12	Marion		MRN.XXX
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Town/City: Marion

Place: (*neighborhood or village*): Great Neck

Address: 24 Fraser Way

Historic Name: Elizabeth & Frederick C. Bowditch House

Uses: Present: Residential

Original: Residential

Date of Construction: Ca. 1900

Source: Visual analysis

Style/Form: Queen Anne

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Fieldstone

Wall/Trim: Wood shingle / Wood

Roof: Asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

Garage (1987)

Poultry house (early 20th c.)

Playhouse (mid-20th c.)

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

Octagonal screened porch (after 1974)

Condition: Excellent

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 3.76

Setting: Sparsely settled residential neighborhood bordering the eastern shore of upper Sippican Harbor on the Great Neck peninsula. Dotted with scattered farms in the early 19th century and developed rapidly in the late 19th–early 20th centuries with summer residences. Area is partly wooded with moderate-to-large sized houses on large lots.

Photograph



Locus Map



Recorded by: Lynn Smiledge

Organization: Marion Historical Commission

Date (*month/year*): January 2024

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

MARION

24 FRASER WAY

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

24 Frazer Way occupies a large L-shaped lot on the south side of Fraser Way that stretches west to join the harbor as it drops gently in grade. The house is positioned at the approximate center of the parcel and faces north. The property is maintained primarily in grass with tall pines lining the perimeter. The eastern portion of the parcel, which is shown as marsh land on the assessor's map, is heavily vegetated. A low drystone wall runs along the southern property line behind the house. A paved driveway enters the property from Fraser Way, passing a two-car garage and ending along the north elevation of the house.

The building comprises a two-story, three-bay-by-five-bay, flat-roofed house with steep cross gables and an attached octagonal screened porch. It has a rectangular plan with complex symmetrical massing. Constructed around 1900 and retaining many if not all of its original character-defining features, it is a restrained but handsome example of the Queen Anne style. A shed-roofed open porch spans the façade (west elevation) and joins the octagonal porch at the southwest corner of the house. One-story, hip-roofed enclosed porches occupy the side elevations; both have upper story, flat-roofed projections behind (east of) the cross gables. The dwelling rests on a fieldstone foundation and is clad in wood shingles finished with contrasting wood trim. The roof is surfaced with asphalt shingles; the assessor's card for the property notes that the roof was originally slate. A brick chimney rises from the roof at the intersection of the four cross gables.

The house is trimmed with a molded cornice at the flat roof; deep, molded boxed cornices at the cross gables; narrow corner boards; and a molded water table. The windows at the second story at all elevations are paired, mulled, double-hung two-over-two sash with flat surrounds and molded, eared lintels. The first story openings include single and paired two-over-two windows, and bands of triple and quadruple mulled sash at the enclosed west porch. The main entry, which occupies the westernmost bay at the façade, contains a glass-and-panel door with a large rectangular inset. The door fronts a single wooden step that lands at the lawn. The front porch has beveled rectangular posts and a slat-work railing; the porch frieze has molded trim that matches the window lintels. There is a second entry at the rear (east) elevation of the house.

The octagonal screened porch has large openings with porch posts and trim matching the front porch. The screen panels are divided by a delicate molded grid. Screen doors open to the front porch at the north side and a small deck at the south side. The screened porch is not seen on the land plans drawn up in 1935, 1957 and 1974.

The two-car garage sited off the northwest corner of the house is shown on a 1974 land plan of the property. Front-gabled, it faces west and is clad in wood shingles. A former poultry house is sited behind (south of) the dwelling near the southern property line. It is side gabled with a steep roof and a shed-roofed open porch with a concrete deck. The porch shelters paired, double-leaf vertical plank doors. A small playhouse that mimics the design of the poultry house sits nearby.¹

24 Fraser Way Street is a restrained example of the Queen Anne style, the predominant style for domestic architecture in the United States between 1880 and 1900. Devised by a group of English architects and based on the visual vocabulary of late Medieval models, Queen Anne encompasses a wide range of architectural features from several stylistic traditions. The style was disseminated by the country's leading architectural magazine and by pattern books and mail-order house plans. Identifying features of the Queen Anne style seen in this house include its steeply pitched cross gables, octagonal screened porch, full-width front porch, complex massing, and two-over-two windows with molded trim.

¹ 1935 and 1957 land plans for the property show the poultry house in its current location. The playhouse is shown on the 1974 land plan.

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HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

This house is located on Fraser Way, a short lane off Point Road in the Great Neck section of East Marion. Great Neck is bounded on the east by the Weweantic River and on the west by Sippican Harbor. Point Road, formerly called Great Neck Road, branches off Wareham Road (U.S. Route 6) and runs southeast roughly parallel to the eastern shoreline of Sippican Harbor. The 1903 map shows this as an unevenly settled area with most buildings concentrated along the eastern shore of the harbor.



1903 map.

This house first appears on the 1903 map with Mrs. F.C. Bowditch shown as the owner. The property was acquired in three land purchases along the shore of Blankinship Cove by Elizabeth [Mrs. F.C.] Bowditch in 1900.

Frederick Channing Bowditch (1854-1925) of Brookline, the son of William Ingersoll Bowditch and Sarah Higginson, was the grandson of Nathaniel Bowditch (1773-1838) and Mary Ingersoll. Nathaniel Bowditch of Salem was the renowned mathematician and navigator and author of *The American Practical Navigator*. An autodidact, he was an important figure in the Boston scientific community. Also a businessman, Nathaniel Bowditch was the president of the Essex Fire and Marine Insurance Company and the inventor of the preprinted business form. Nathaniel's grandson Frederick C. Bowditch attended Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Harvard Law School. A lawyer, he specialized in property conveyances and was president of the Conveyancer's Title Insurance Company.² In 1897 he married Elizabeth Thompson Forster (1874-1945), who purchased the subject property three years later. The appearance of this Queen Anne style house suggests that it was built for Frederick and Elizabeth Bowditch shortly after they acquired the undeveloped property in 1900.

In 1935 the property, which consisted of a 14-acre parcel of land, a dwelling house, and several outbuildings, was conveyed to the couple's daughter Elizabeth Bowditch Fraser (1899-1999) and her husband James R. Fraser (1898-1892). Elizabeth Fraser subdivided the large property (see land plans below) and in 1982, conveyed the subject property (Lot 2 on the 1974 plan below) to her children Jean Fraser and Allan Fraser. Jean Fraser (1923-2007), a graduate of Wells College in New York, was married to Stoddard Greenwood Spader (1916-1996). Stoddard Spader attended Yale University and served as a captain in the United States Army Air Corps in World War II. They both taught at the Brooks School in North Andover, where Stoddard Spader served as headmaster. In 1990 Jean Spader and her brother Allan Fraser conveyed the property to Jean and Stoddard Spader's son, James T. Spader, the American actor and current owner of the property.

Title Research

Date	Book-Page (Certificate)	Grantor	Grantee
03-01-2016	46643-82	James T. Spader	James T. Spader
06-15-1990	9807-81	Jean F. Spader & Allan Fraser	James T. Spader
12-27-1982	5268-415	Elizabeth B. Fraser	Jean F. Spader
05-05-1938	1746-219	James R. Fraser	Elizabeth B. Fraser
03-22-1935	1687-231	Elizabeth F. Bowditch Trust	James R. Fraser
09-15-1900	806-307	Lucy E. Ellis	Elizabeth F. Bowditch
08-02-1900	811-374	Massachusetts Harbor Commission	Elizabeth F. Bowditch
06-19-1900	811-63	Ella C. Peters	Elizabeth F. Bowditch

² "Fred C. Bowditch," *The Boston Herald*, Boston, MA, October 9, 1925.

