

FRANCIS CONSTRUCTION

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*The history  
of the family  
business*

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## *BEGINNINGS*

It all started back in the 1940' with Etienne Barrett, our MD's great grandfather, who was Mayor of Reading at the time with an entrepreneurial mind and big ambitions.

As former aircraft engineer, he spotted potential for growth of the aviation industry, and increasing demand for airfields for aircraft to take off and land.

*1940'*

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*It was here in Berkshire, where he opened one of his businesses focussing on airfield construction, where both his sons, Colin and Rodney worked.*

*To enable the earthwork projects, the family became one of the first UK importers of Caterpillar machinery.*





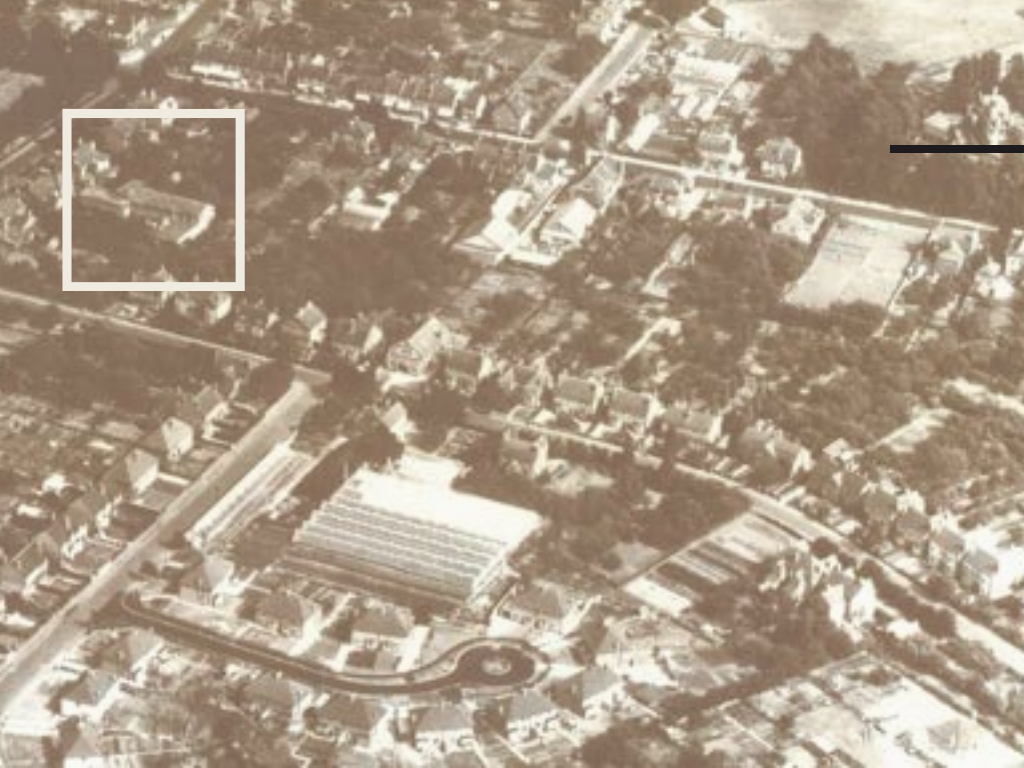
Rodney on his wedding day

## *REBELLIOUS BROTHERS*

But Etienne's sons had other business ideas and strong drive to fulfil their dreams. This, on occasion, led them into trouble and even meant they got fired from their father's company.

*1950'*

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Tilehurst Office seen in the upper left corner

*1964*

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## *THE NAME*

Two young men soon started their own construction and infrastructure business.

They did not have to create the name, the business was called C&RB Construction.

It yielded in 1964 when the two brothers acquired construction and joinery company, Francis Construction, which was founded in 1889 by the Francis Brothers and based in Tilehurst.





## MARKING PRESENCE

Initially, Francis Construction worked mainly with Reading Borough Council, delivering infrastructure projects to meet the needs of post war era England. At the time Reading was an expanding prosperous town.

Soon, the company was serving the wider area, aiming to become a local contractor of choice.

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Over the next three decades, the company welcomed new clients and through delivery of the projects locally, became a part of the community.



Every day at 7am all employees met at the offices to then be driven to the project sites in the back of vans, as was the way at that time.

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# *RELATIONSHIPS*

Relationships and quality have always meant a lot. Colin and Rodney often visited the construction sites to spend time with their clients, tradesmen and labourers.

Apprenticeships have a long tradition at Francis Construction. Young people have always benefited from training within the company and many have gone onto long and successful careers, some staying with the business for over 40 years!





Francis stays true to the sectors it operates in, focusing on long term outcomes for projects, long term relationships with clients and its supply chain, whilst looking at innovative ways to improve the value it offers.



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*Healthy body, healthy  
mind*

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Francis team have always enjoyed sports and creating a bond among teammates that goes beyond the field.

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# *OUR VALUES*

Family  
Quality  
Integrity  
Ownership  
Agility

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Where do they come from?

They come from what we have always shared, even if unwritten; they reflected our identity and the way we connect.

What role do they play ?

Together, they act as a compass.

How do they apply?

Our values are lived, and felt – not scripted.



*1980'*

Rodney introduced his son to the company and in 1980 Mark took control of the family business from his father and uncle.

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# 2000

To accommodate the growth of the business, Francis Construction moved from its original premises in Tilehurst to its current office in Thatcham. This meant more space for business operations, including expanding joinery division, and even better access to the locations we cover.

The old grounds were redeveloped into 12 retirement units.



*2015*

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Mark handed over to his son Will as  
the Managing Director.

He holds an important position  
within the company today as  
Chairman of the business.





*NOW*

Will is the third generation of the Barrett family to run the business and under his direction the company has steadily grown whilst delivering high quality and exciting projects across a range of sectors and clients.