

Russian Compound Closed In Upper Brookville

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Norwich House in Upper Brookville

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Early Friday morning, on December 27th, a dozen news reporters with their broadcasting vehicles were on Dosoris Lane in Glen Cove, ready to report on the closing of the Russian estate compound Killenworth. On Thursday, the Obama administration stated in retaliation for Russian hacking in the U.S. presidential campaign, that a Russian Maryland compound, and one on Long Island would be shuttered in 24 hours. Obama took executive action to expel 35 Russian intelligence operatives, giving them and their families just 72 hours to get out of the U.S. As reporters waited outside Killenworth, an announcement by Mayor Reggie Spinello said that the Glen Cove property would not be closed. Instead, Norwich House in Upper Brookville on Mill River Rd. was the target, and all occupants were escorted from the property by noon. President Obama said the Upper Brookville, and Maryland estates were centers of espionage and used for intelligence-related purposes.

Upper Brookville Mayor Elliot Conway said Friday in a statement, "I understand from federal officials that the house has been closed, and the Russians living or staying there have all left, in fact, I was at the front gate today when the last person departed shortly after noon." Mr. Conway referred to the Russian diplomats and staff as quiet neighbors.

The Russians paid \$80,000 for the home in 1952, called Elmcroft, and then Norwich House, was originally built for WWI munitions builder Frank C.B. Page. The property later belonged to New York Governor Nathan L. Miller. It was purchased, as a 38-room brick mansion with outdoor and indoor pools, billiard and sun rooms, on 14-acres. The property was used as a recreational retreat for second-level members of the Russian U.N. Mission. The Russians have used the two estates for vacations, and have enjoyed them for decades. The beaches were especially important, and the Town of Oyster Bay waived parking and beach permits for the country's U.N. diplomatic staff.

In the 1980s, U.S. officials accused



Killenworth in Glen Cove

Photo by Christine Loring

the Russians of espionage at one of the Long Island compounds. A defector named Arkady Shevchenko claimed Killenworth, had spy equipment installed on its top floors.

Killenworth was built in early 1913 for George Dupont Pratt, son of oil baron Charles Pratt. There is an elegant stone and iron gate at the entrance of the beautiful English Renaissance-style mansion and its manicured grounds, which include tennis courts and gardens. The estate was purchased in 1950 by the Russians, for approximately \$75,000. Killenworth is a 49-room mansion on nearly 40-acres off Dosoris Lane. The mansion is regal and in very good condition.

President Obama, while vacationing in Hawaii said, "All Americans should be alarmed by Russia's actions," He stated, the U.S. could take further, covert action, alluding to a reference of a counterstrike in cyberspace. The administration is placing sanctions on, four officials, two cyber-criminals wanted by the FBI, and two of Moscow's intelligence agencies.

Butch Yamali, CEO/President of the Dover Group Hospitality Corp wants to turn Norwich House into a country club or hospitality center. Yamali is in the process of delivering a multi-million dollar offer to the Russian government. He envisions the property as a great fit for Long Island's Gold Coast community, with golf courses, tennis courts and banquet halls. The property has a market value of \$9,350,400.