

Hamble Pubs

11th June 2015 - Roy Underdown Pavilion

Many stories are told in pubs and some about the pubs themselves, which are often incorrect. The Society's Chairman, Ian Underdown, had recently undertaken comprehensive research to find out the factual history of the pubs in Hamble, which dispelled some of the inaccurate stories often repeated about them.

Ian's well illustrated presentation started with the background history of the development of pubs and alcoholic drinks. He then explained the early records held at Winchester College, which provided accurate information about the drinking establishments in Hamble. The College was the Lord of the Manor of Hamble and it owned the properties in the village, including the pubs.

The first Hamble record found relating to pubs was 'Le Magna Brewhouse' or 'The Great Brewhouse' in 1571. It is uncertain if it was a brewhouse or a pub. Another record in 1622 stated that Henry Russel was presented to Winchester College's Court because he was in trouble and he was described as an alehouse keeper. He had thrown dung on the highway called St Andrews Lane and allowed drunk and disorderly behaviour in his alehouse at the time of a church service on Sunday.

Details were given of the Hamble pub's licensees in the early 1700s, which included John Pierce and his wife Sarah, who transferred from a pub at Bursledon to the Ship at Hamble. A Licensing Session in 1742 recorded that Hannah Israel was at the King & Queen, Thomas Primmer at the Black Bull and Susanna Percy at The Red Lion. In 1793 a sailing sloop was offered for auction at the Bell public house in Hamble. The locations of these pubs are unknown.

Some interesting stories Ian found in old newspapers included a London robber resisting arrest and shooting at a policeman while drinking in the Victory Inn in 1837. Three years later seven intoxicated men drowned after visiting two Hamble public houses and in 1773 smugglers retrieved their seized goods while the fatigued customs officers refreshed themselves in a pub.

Ian gave the history of Hamble's four main pubs, starting with the Bugle. The first record of the Bugle property by name was dated 1656 and an archaeological survey suggests the original building dates from around c.1600. For many centuries the Bugle was linked to the ferry and has been at the heart of village life, particularly with its mariners.

The King & Queen was originally a cottage in Back Street (now Rope Walk) but when it was rebuilt in the mid 1800s the main entrance was from the High Street. From the 1850s to the 1920s the Robinson family were licensees, as well as the village blacksmiths. It was the base of many regattas from the 1870s to 1970s.

Evidence suggests the Victory Inn was started by John Grace in 1806, a year after Nelson's 'HMS Victory' won at the Battle of Trafalgar. The pub has a very interesting Second World War history and still has a table top with servicemen's names carved in it and an illustrated list of boat crew's signatures on the wall.

Ye Olde Whyte Harte was originally a very old cottage which in the 1840s became a grocer shop and soon afterwards a beerhouse as well. From 1877 to the mid 1900s the Hooker family ran the pub and an adjoining bakery. In the 1960s it was renovated by the same owner of the Jolly Sailor and the Fox & Hounds at Bursledon.

Finally, the history of the Coronation Arms which was renamed the Harrier at the beginning of the 1970s was told, including the reasons for its recent closure.

Ian concluded by describing the many competitions that had taken place between the pubs, including the John Merricks Sailing Trust's annual Challenge Cup cricket match, the formation of the Pub Watch scheme and that in 2014 there were 30 licensed premises in Hamble which could sell alcohol.

At the end of the meeting Ian gave to each pub a folder of his source material which he compiled that provided the pub's history. He has also produced a booklet giving the history of the village's pubs.