

## Bugle Inn - Hamble

Over the last few years much has been discussed and written about the Bugle and the controversial development of its site. Prior to this, information about its history has been told but it is not clear how much of this is based on factual evidence. As part of the refurbishment of the Bugle an archaeological survey had to be undertaken and it has helped to find out more about its historical background.

Previously it had been said the Bugle dated back to the 12th century and a notice board on the outside of the Riverside bar repeated this but no one could give a source for this information. There is a good selection of pictures of the Bugle from the beginning of the 1900s, many showing its connection with the Hamble-Warsash Ferry, some calling it the Ferry House.

The Hamble tithe map of 1839 shows "The Bugle Inn and Ferry House" owned by Mrs C. Bradby but a survey of 1813 states "The Bull Public House, garden etc, with the Privilege of the Ferry across Hamble River" with Captain M. Bradby as the copyholder. When W. Cooper & Co Ltd, the brewers of East Street Southampton, took over the lease in 1889 they paid more annually for the ferry (£16) than they did for the Bugle (£14). The Bugle/Ferry connection lasted until 1982 when the brewers Watneys sold the ferry.

The oldest part of the Bugle, which fronts the Lower High Street, is a Grade 2 listed building. Although it has the appearance of an early 19th century building some people thought the original structure could have been as early as the late 1400's or early 1500's. As part of archaeological survey two trenches were dug in the car park and in one they found a 18th century coin and a Roman brick or tile in the other but much of the archaeological strata had been removed by previous ground works.

Throughout the demolition, refurbishment and alterations to the Bugle Inn a building recording and archaeological watching brief was carried out, which showed the building to have an oak frame structure (much in a poor condition) with brick infill and Queen strut roof. The archaeological report suggests that from all available evidence that the original building dates from around c1600 and there were no indications that it had been converted from or built on an earlier structure. It seems likely that it was built as a single lobby-style house but may have been later divided into three cottages.

The extensions to the rear were mostly 20th century but one was of an early 19th century date. Also immediately behind the listed building two caches of clay pipes and pottery dating to the late 17th or early 18th century, a well and rubbish pits were found, probably within the original gardens.

This is the evidence that was found. Now let us surmise that as it was originally built as a single dwelling in a prime position it was most likely occupied by a prosperous owner, may be a merchant trading in goods by sea or dealing in fish. What happened between this time and being a 19th century inn is not clear but at some point, perhaps in the 18th century, it may have been divided into three separate cottages with the occupants being of lower status such as fishermen or artisans. This last part is not based on factual information but just conjecture and a story that could be told in a pub!

*Information from the Archaeology Report courtesy of the County Archaeologist and Hampshire Museum Service.*