

## History of the Roebuck and Chiswick

The Roebuck has been licensed from at least 1732 and was one of the main coaching inns in Chiswick High Road. The pub was known for its fine bowling green and extensive stabling and was where the Manorial Court usually held their meetings.



The census of 1826 shows just Henry Gough at the helm of the Roebuck before the pub passes in the 1839 census to George Ball.

The 1841 census shows George as the publican at the age of 55 with his 60 year old wife Elizabeth Balls, Betsey Balls (35), Grace Balls (25), George Mumford and Jephoeel Grain a 20 year-old Ostler, George Boyd a 30 year-old traveller and Edward Brown a 55 year-old waiter.

In the 1851 Census Elizabeth mysteriously becomes 14 years older than George and Betsey is revealed as their niece from Devon. George Mumford is listed as 'Grand Nephew'.

By 1861 Betsey is now the inn keeper, George her nephew is still there and they are joined by two servants and a boarder. By 1871 George has taken over and is joined by Elizabeth Balls his cousin, so the pub stays very much within the family until 1878 when Thomas Secker takes over at the age of 34.

The original building was demolished in 1890 and replaced by the present building with statues of roebucks adorning the pediments.

The pub's name has been changed many times in recent years. It was re-christened the Chiswick Eyot in 1983, reverted back to the Roebuck in 1989, renamed the Rat and Parrot in 1996 (despite protests from local residents) and the Bird Cage in 2002. It was restored to its original name again in 2006.

### Chiswick

Chiswick is a district of West London which (along with our lovely pub) contains Hogarth's House, the former residence of the 18th-century English artist William Hogarth; Chiswick House, a neo-Palladian villa regarded as one of the finest in England; and Fuller's Brewery, London's largest and oldest brewery. The River Thames meanders through Chiswick and is used for competitive and recreational rowing, with several rowing clubs on the river bank; the finishing post for the Boat Race is just downstream of Chiswick Bridge.



*The earliest known photograph of Chiswick High Road, taken in 1863. LB Hounslow Local Studies, Chiswick Library.*

Originally, Chiswick was an ancient parish in the county of Middlesex. Having good communications with London, it became a popular country retreat and part of the suburban growth of London in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It became the Municipal Borough of Brentford and Chiswick in 1932 and part of Greater London in 1965, when it merged into the London Borough of Hounslow.

Chiswick was first recorded c.1000 as the Old English 'Ceswican' meaning "Cheese Farm", as the riverside area of Duke's Meadows is thought to have supported an annual cheese fair up until the 18th century.

The population of Chiswick grew almost tenfold during the 19th century, reaching 29,809 in 1901, and the area is a mixture of Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian housing. Suburban building began in Gunnersbury in the 1860s and in Bedford Park, on the borders of Chiswick and Acton, in 1875.

During the Second World War, Chiswick was bombed repeatedly, with both incendiary and high explosive bombs. Falling anti-aircraft shells and shrapnel also caused damage. The first V-2 rocket to hit London fell on Staveley Road, Chiswick, at 6.43pm on 8 September 1944, killing three people, injuring 22 others and causing extensive damage to surrounding trees and buildings. Six houses were demolished by the rocket and many more suffered damage. There is a memorial where the rocket fell on Staveley Road and a War Memorial at the east end of Turnham Green. By the start of the 21st century, Chiswick had become an affluent suburb.



Postcard photo of Chiswick High Road c. 1900

Chiswick has always been home to the rich and famous, with many notable celebrities being born here or choosing it as their home. In the twentieth century, the novelist E. M. Forster (1879–1970) lived at 9 Arlington Park Mansions in Chiswick.

Notable people born before the Second World War include The Who rock musicians John Entwistle and Pete Townshend. Later the musician Phil Collins was born here in 1951, the singer Kim Wilde in 1960, the illustrator Clifford Harper (1949), actress Kate Beckinsale (1973) and comedian Mel Smith (1952–2013).

Among those who have lived in Chiswick are the novelist Anthony Burgess (1917-1993), who lived at 24 Glebe Street in the mid-1960s; pop artist Peter Blake, who has lived in Chiswick since 1967; actor Hugh Grant, who grew up in Chiswick, living next to Arlington Park Mansions on Sutton Lane; singer Bruce Dickinson of the band Iron Maiden; TV presenter Kate Humble; model Cara Delevingne; singer Sophie Ellis-Bextor; TV journalist Jeremy Vine; the actors Phyllis Logan and Colin Firth; TV presenters Clare Balding, Sarah Greene, Gavin Campbell, Mary Nightingale and the celebrity duo Anthony McPartlin and Declan Donnelly... .to name but a few. You may see one or two in the pub!

### Local Attractions

The National Archives: Just a mile away from Chiswick on Ruskin Avenue, Richmond, you will find the National Archives, the official archive of the UK government. They collect and secure the future of the government's records, from Shakespeare's will to tweets from Downing Street; and preserve it for generations to come, making it as accessible and available as possible to all.

The London Museum of Water and Steam: Around a mile away in Green Dragon Lane, Brentford ... "Be amazed by the massive historic engines that pumped Thames water to London's taps and follow in the footsteps of Charles Dickens to explore London's exciting watery past. Get hands-on to find out more about the gruesome details of the capital's watery past, and water's role in the Victorian battle for public health, in our new interactive Waterworks. In the Waterworks and the new outdoor Splash Zone you can test your muscle power as you have a go at water-pumping machines from throughout the centuries".

Chiswick House and Gardens: Discover Lord Burlington's villa, now an English Heritage property inspired by Andrea Palladio and Inigo Jones; along with 65 acres of gardens, from classical vistas to ponds, fountains and an 18th century wilderness.



Chiswick House and Gardens