THORPE HAMLET HISTORY GROUP

Article 8 : THORPE HAMLET PUBS
By Debbie Russell

A version of this article was published in St. Matthew's Church Magazine. Numbers after the pub names refer to the map on the final page - pubs currently open shown in green, former pubs in red.

Thorpe Hamlet over the years could boast of having 22 public houses at one time, and today we have only 9 (10 if you include the QUEEN OF ICENI [1] at the Riverside complex) and 2 of these are under threat of closure, so I thought I would look back at all these watering holes for the Thorpe Hamlet locals and decided we can all go on a paper pub crawl!

So if we start at the bottom of Gas Hill and look across the road a few years ago the BISHOP BRIDGE INN [2] stood from 1830 until 1959 when it was demolished. At the bottom of Gas Hill on the corner was the KING'S ARMS, this became THE BRIDGE HOUSE in 1975 to 2012 when it changed its name once more to the present name of THE LOLLARDS PIT [3]. The building dates from 1760. The present name of LOLLARDS is after the unfortunate people who were burnt at the stake close by because of their religious beliefs. A couple of doors down was the EVENING GUN [4], this dated from 1836 and was just a beer house until 1867 when it got the full licence to be called a public house. This was named because of the gun which was fired by the nearby Britannia Barracks every evening and the sound could be heard from the pub so it is said. The pub closed its doors for the last time in 1964 and was demolished, the Cotswolds Furniture shop now stands in its place.

If we walk back towards Ketts Hill we will come to the DUKE OF YORK [5] on Bishop Bridge Road, this was a beer house when it opened in 1810. It was badly damaged in the air raids in April 1942 and closed in 1967, this was demolished and the site re-developed. A bit further along the road we then come to the LORD RAGLAN [6], this dates from 1855 and closed in 2002, this was converted to a private house. Now we head across the roundabout to the CASTLE [7] which stands on Spitalfields, it's the only surviving building on the road. This opened in 1845 as a licenced property and today still retains its original name.

As we start the climb up Ketts Hill we come to the KETTS TAVERN [8] but it was also known as THE KETTS CASTLE (a bit confusing with the CASTLE behind it), this opened in 1827and closed in 2015. The pub had a name change in the 1980's and became the OLD BILL and was done out in the style of old police cells however when it changed hands again it reverted back to the KETTS TAVERN until early 2015 for a short time it was called the VIRTUOSO. This is now closed and for sale as a private house. Next door to the KETTS separated once by a passage stood the OSTRICH INN [9], it dated from 1850 and was badly damaged by the Norwich flood of 1912 when the entire front of the building collapsed. It was badly damaged in the bombing in 1942 and had to be demolished. Pre-

fabs were put up on the site later on, and when they were removed it became the car park for the KETTS TAVERN.

Up the hill we trundle to the WINDMILL [10] on Knox road, this has seen some changes to the building over the years. It was originally a two storey house, then in 1922 a new house was built next to it and the original building pulled down and then in the 1930's a flat roofed extension was added to the side of it. The future of this pub is unsure at the moment.

Now we wander down Plumstead Road to the HEARTSEASE [11], this was once an old coaching inn and was situated when it was built on part of Mousehold Heath, it was also near the old racetrack. It dates from 1839.

Next we go down Harvey Lane to find the MORRISON LODGE [12]. This was built in 1939 just after the new council estate was built in what was once the grounds of the nearby Mousehold House. It was built to service the tenants of the new estate. It closed in 2005 and new houses stand in its place. Now we walk down the rest of Harvey lane onto Thorpe Road, there we come to THE REDAN [13] also known in the distant past as the HERO OF THE REDAN, this was named in honour of Sir Charles Ashe Windham from Felbrigg. This opened in 1859 and closed in the 1990's, it is now a Cantonese Chinese restaurant. The CREMORNE GARDENS [14] was situated down Frogs Hall Lane and had a fairly short life, it opened in 1861 and closed in 1910. A bit further along we reach the EAST END RETREAT [15], opened in 1851 until 1965 when it became known to many locals of the hamlet as the MUSTARD POT until 2011 and is now THE FAT CAT AND CANARY a fine real ale establishment.

If we continue along Thorpe Road we will come to the COACH AND HORSES [16], another fine real ale pub with its own small brewery at the rear of the building, this was opened in 1830 and still retains its original name. If we carry along Thorpe Road along to Carrow Road we reach the CLARENCE HARBOUR [17], when it opened it was just a beer house but became a licenced pub in 1863 until its closure in 2004. It was demolished and a row of new houses stands on its site.

Now that's the pubs on the outskirts of the Hamlet, let's go to the others that are tucked away!

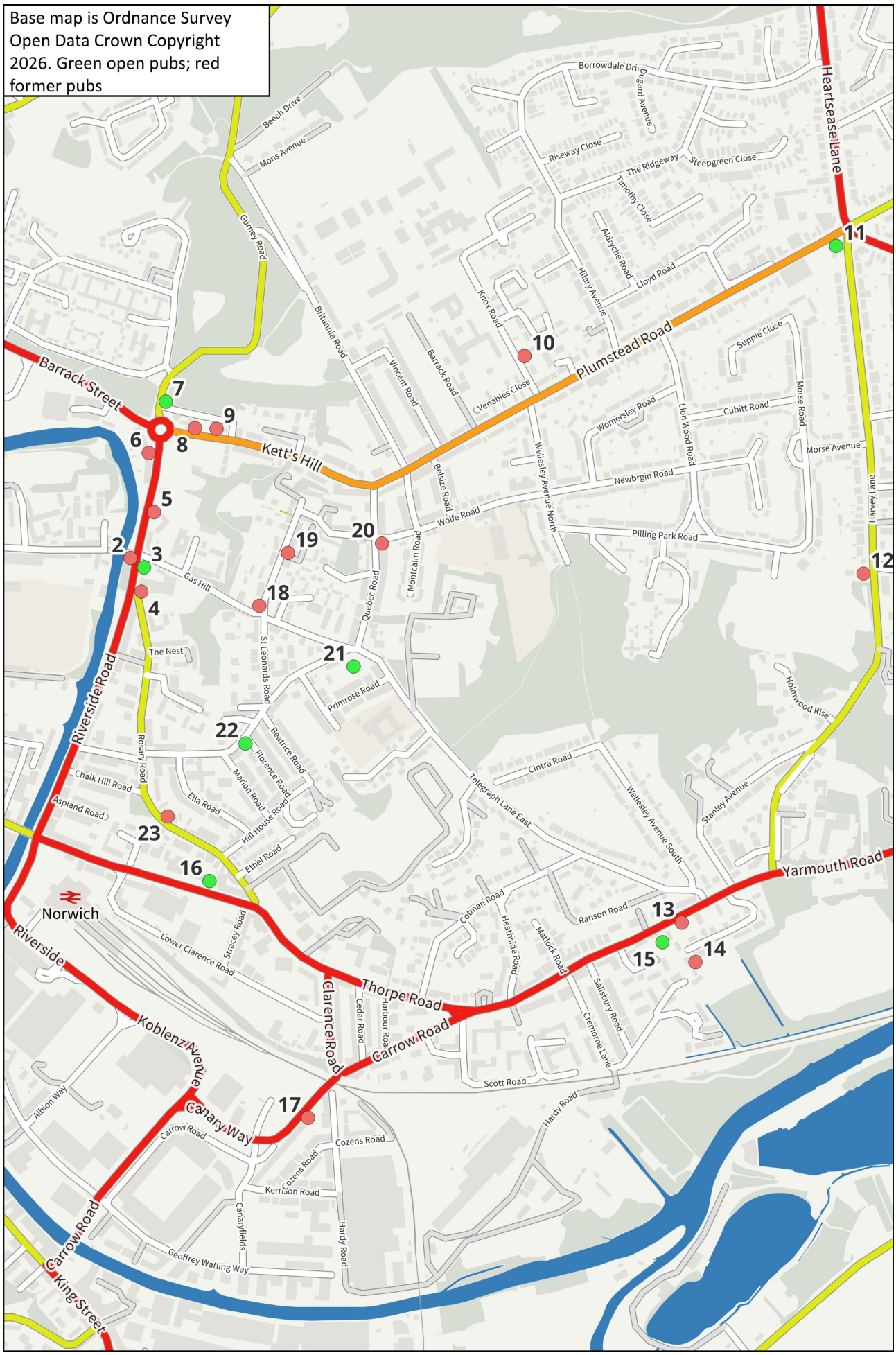
If we start back at the bottom of Gas Hill and slowly climb to the top we get to the SHIP [18], perched at the top it was a handy drop in for workers at the Gas Works, the Ship dated from 1851 to 1974 when it was demolished for new houses. Along to St Leonards Road heading for Ketts Hill now and we get to the BAKERS ARMS [19], this too was a beer house until being giving a full licence in 1861. The Bakers closed its doors in 2009 and was converted into a house. Now we follow St. Leonards Road along until we get to Quebec Road and we see the QUEBEC [20] on the corner, it opened in 1886 and now sadly under the threat of closure.

Walk down the hill from the Quebec and we get to the WILLIAM IV [21], this was once called the MOUSEHOLD TEAROOMS when it opened in 1842. Down the hill to the other

end of St. Leonards road to the JUBILEE [22], opened in 1887 and in the 1980's for a short while named the HANOVER HOUSE- it was re-named back to the JUBILEE when new owners took it over.

Our final stop of our drinking establishment tour past and present takes us on to Rosary Road to the ROSARY TAVERN [23], opened as a beer house in 1836 and closed its doors in 2011 to be converted into a private home.

So that's the end of our paper pub crawl of pubs some long past and a few present, I hope you enjoyed it! Now it's time to put the kettle on for a good old cup of tea!


Base map is Ordnance Survey Open Data Crown Copyright 2026. Green open pubs; red former pubs
Barrack Street
Kett's Hill
Plumstead Road
Heartsease Lane
Riverside Road
Thorpe Road
Yarmouth Road
Carrow Road
Clarence Road
Canary Way
Koblenz Avenue
Norwich
Riverside
King Street
Gurney Road
Britannia Road
Barrack Road
Vincent Road
Knox Road
Venables Close
Hilary Avenue
Aldrychie Road
Lloyd Road
Borrowdale Drive
Dugard Avenue
Riseway Close
The Ridgeway
Steepgreen Close
Timothy Close
Supple Close
Morse Road
Morse Avenue
Harvey Lane
Womersley Road
Lion Wood Road
Cubitt Road
Newbrgin Road
Wolfe Road
Pilling Park Road
Wellesley Avenue North
Belsize Road
Montcalm Road
Quebec Road
Gas Hill
St Leonards Road
Primrose Road
The Nest
Rosary Road
Chalk Hill Road
Aspland Road
Ella Road
Hill House Road
Marion Road
Florence Road
Beatrice Road
Ethel Road
Stracey Road
Lower Clarence Road
Cintra Road
Telegraph Lane East
Wellesley Avenue South
Stanley Avenue
Holmwood Rise
Cotman Road
Ranson Road
Heathside Road
Matlock Road
Salisbury Road
Cremorne Lane
Scott Road
Hardy Road
Harbour Road
Cedar Road
Cozens Road
Kerrison Road
Canaryfields
Geoffrey Watling Way
Albion Way
Carrow Road
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