

ROUNDAABOUT
RINGWOOD & FORDINGBRIDGE

NOW and THEN

The Crown Hotel, Ringwood.



The Crown Hotel pictured at the turn of the century

ture this bus was driven by a coachman named 'Bussy' Cheater, who also took hotel guests for a tour of the area.

Throughout the 20th century the Crown remained a popular venue for guests, especially those coming to Ringwood for the fishing. Many local clubs and societies held their functions there and plenty of parties and concerts took place

For two hundred years the Crown Hotel at Fridays Cross was one of Ringwood's most foremost inns. Formerly named the King's Head, it became known as the Crown Inn in about 1801 when local brewer Stephen Tunks transferred the licence of his coaching inn in the Market Place (now Old Bank House) to Fridays Cross. Under Tunks's ownership the new Crown Inn flourished with subscription balls held regularly in the Crown Assembly rooms during the Regency period. This was also the time when its coaching days were in full swing, with the Portsmouth & Plymouth coach changing horses there every day.

With the coming of the railway in 1847, the coaching trade diminished but later landlords of the Crown adapted to this new form of transport by sending a horse-drawn bus to meet passengers at the railway station to bring them to the Crown.

In the early 20th cen-

in the large Squire's Room.

However, old listed buildings are expensive to maintain and by the turn of the Millennium the owners Eldridge Pope decided to sell off the hotel. Two hundred years of history came to an end when the Crown Hotel closed, although the Crown Tap on the other side of the coaching arch still continues as a pub. The Squire's Room now belongs to Ringwood Masonic Lodge and has been re-named Unity Hall.

The exterior of the main building facing onto Southampton Road has changed very little in the last hundred years, except that sadly the splendid projecting lamp above the doorway is long gone and the brickwork is now painted. After a complete internal make-over and a spell as a pizza restaurant, the ground floor of the old Crown has

now moved into the 21st century as a modern bar and restaurant called Seven Fish.



The Crown Hotel - now The Seven Fish pictured in December 2008

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