

PUBS WITH HISTORY

The Old Ship Inn

What is thought to be the oldest pub in Dorchester, the Old Ship Inn in High West Street, has had a complete transformation in every way from landlord to ambience, menus and music.

The new licensee Andy Brunning and his wife, Lucero, who is Colombian and is a great Salsa dancer have more exciting plans afoot after overseeing a major refit for this listed building whose history may be as one of the handful of surviving buildings of the great fires of Dorchester in 1613 or 1622.

But it is all conjecture at this stage. Some have mentioned that the name may originally have related to sheep rather than the sea, as sheep would have been driven through High West Street to market. But the famous sign is also listed and has been beautifully repainted very firmly as a ship.

On the other hand, there's the porthole and there once was a plaque saying it was the oldest pub in town. Town Crier and historian Alistair Chisholm is hoping this will be restored.

Hutchins' History of Dorset notes "The Ship" was kept by William Wilson in 1629. In the Register of Alehouse Recognizances of 1762 to 1765 the "victualler" of the "Ship", George Clark, appears to have paid £10 for his licence. Was it our "Old Ship"? English Heritage listed the building in 1975 partly for its 17th century mullioned windows on the second floor, with what appear to be original frames.

In recent years Eldridge Pope sold it to Marstons Brewery and now Andy and Lucero are delighted to have taken over the reins.



Whatever the truth about the history, the designer from Marstons Brewery beautifully redesigned the inside to create a stylish, contemporary but extremely comfortable and inviting new venue for Dorchester. The bar and kitchen are brand new as are the seating areas inside and outside including the pergola. The four comfortable guest bedrooms have been attractively refurbished.

Despite the head to toe makeover, the olde worlde atmosphere has cleverly

been retained with low ceilings, wooden floors, comfy sofas, quality tables and cosy corners making it a perfect place for enjoying a relaxing drink with friends followed by an excellent meal. Local beers are a speciality of the house.

The new menu includes authentic Latin cuisine alongside the best of British traditional homemade dishes.

All the food is freshly made under the expert eye of head chef Karrin Snellock aided by Nicky Burgess from daily breakfasts starting at 8am, to the exciting lunch selection and the quality evening menu and traditional Sunday lunches. No microwaving here!

There will be regular live music evenings including Saturday March 22 which is going to be a wow of a Salsa Night when the band Cuatro Monos come down from London to play.

Whatever it's true history, this historic pub plays a part in Dorchester's claim to listing fame because High West./ High East Street is the longest single street in the country with the most listed buildings in England according to West Dorset District Council.



The Old Ship Inn

We're opening tonight at 8pm!!

Come and see our newly re-fitted Pub!

The oldest pub in Dorchester, has undergone a transformation into the latest and most significant attraction to the centre of Dorchester in recent years. We now have excellent Food, Ales and Accommodation.

The Old Ship Inn

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Next Dates to Remember

Saturday 15th March: New dinner menu begins at 6pm

Saturday 22nd March:

Live Salsa at the Old Ship with Cuatro Monos, 9.15pm 'til late

Limited tickets available, **BOOK EARLY!!**

£6 in advance - £8 on the door

