



Interview with Pauline Peters (assisted by husband Nick) the daughter-in-law of Kath Peters, 22nd February 2021.

Fountain Inn

The bar was on the left and the lounge on the right. On the right were stairs leading to an upstairs room that was used as a hairdressers by a gent who cycled from Griffydam.

There was a cellar for the barrels of beer. Approaching Christmas the cellar also held the Stilton cheese. Rabbits, turkey would hang from the ceiling, so it could be scary if the light went out.

The Fountain was owned by Marstons Brewery whose lorry delivered six barrels of Pedigree beer each week. Each barrel was 36 gallons = 288 pints, so customers consumed 1,728 pints a week. The Fountain also sold two barrels of Mild beer. It was a busy pub, selling an average of more than 300 pints a day. Bill used to pour spilt beer from the beer trays into the barrels of mild.

Women tended to drink Mackeson (a milk stout) or have a gin and tonic.

Kath Peters (Licensee)

Dorothy Kathleen Johnson was one of the daughters of Frederick Johnson of Ivanhoe House, Main Street, Swannington (across the road from the Fountain). Kath was the licensee of the Fountain 1963-1979. Kath was a very smart lady who always changed before opening time and did her make up to look her best for the customers.

Kath used to go dancing in Leicester with her sister Joyce (who later married Daniel Smart) who still lives in Ivanhoe House. Kath's brother, Tom Johnson was landlord at The Station for a while. Kath's mother, "granny Johnson" (Mary Louisa Johnson) still lived in Ivanhoe House and came across each evening for a couple of shorts, at one time she was landlady at the Bluebell in Blackfordby. Kath's sister Louisa (another Mary Louisa Johnson) was landlady at the Royal Oak in Shepshed for a few years.

Kath was a month older than Bill, whom she married in April 1950 in Swannington, she died at the age of 93.

Bill Peters (husband)

Bill Peters was born at the Hare and Hounds (now The Vine) in Bath Street, Ashby.

Bill worked as a rep for Granwood Flooring who provide floors for sports halls and similar organisations. When Bill retired his son, Nick, took over the role.

Bill was an avid golf player at Willesley Golf Club who was good enough to play off scratch (zero handicap). During the evening he served his golf chums in the lounge (many were from Coalville). He enjoyed chatting to his golf friends so much that he would sometimes turn bus loads of customers away, saying that the pub didn't do buses.

Bill died aged 96.



Nick Peters (son)

Nick was 12 when his parents took over the Fountain Inn, so he grew up there. After he started courting Pauline she also helped out. Nick and Pauline worked the Fountain on Wednesday evenings to give Bill and Kath a break. Nick served the miners in the bar and Pauline the golfers in the lounge.

Customers

The Fountain opened 12 noon to 2pm for the lunchtime trade and 6.30-10.30 in the evenings.

During the week the customers were nearly all men. Their wives would join them on Saturdays. In those days children did not really go into pubs, they had to sit in the garden or private back living room. Parents would buy their children Hoyes pop and Smiths crisps - "proper crisps" with the blue bag of salt. Miners worked shifts, so for some of them the lunchtime opening was their "evening drink".

Very little food was sold. The menu comprised soup, plus cheese and onion cobs.

Some of the local gypsies were regulars, they were lovely people. They were illiterate so would bring their post with them so that Nick could read their letters to them.

Kath used to phone through the bets on the horses to Harold Rudkin, an Ashby bookmaker.

New Year's Eve

The Fountain used to be rammed at New Year's Eve. Some of the customers consumed too much, so Nick used to wheelbarrow them home (in the days before being sued for accidentally tipping people out). Nick would wheelbarrow them to the door, they would hand over their key so that Nick could open the door, he would then tip them inside!

Boxer Dogs

Bill and Kath had two very friendly boxer dogs, Gillie and her son Boy. After the pub had closed Bill or Nick would give each dog a tray of beer, Pedigree obviously! This was about a fifth of a pint. Sometimes there would be a lack of communication when one might be tidying the bar and the other in the cellar. As a result both Bill and Nick would give the dogs a tray of beer. This made Gillie a bit tipsy and she would lean against the wall to stand up.

Other Landlords

Norman Fielding was the landlord before Kath. He was very keen on darts.

John Bott (second bungalow up from the Fountain car park) became a landlord after Kath.

Darren Smith (three doors up from Joyce) was also a landlord.