

BREMHILL PARISH HISTORY TRAIL

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The Dumb Post Inn

A significant part of Bremhill life

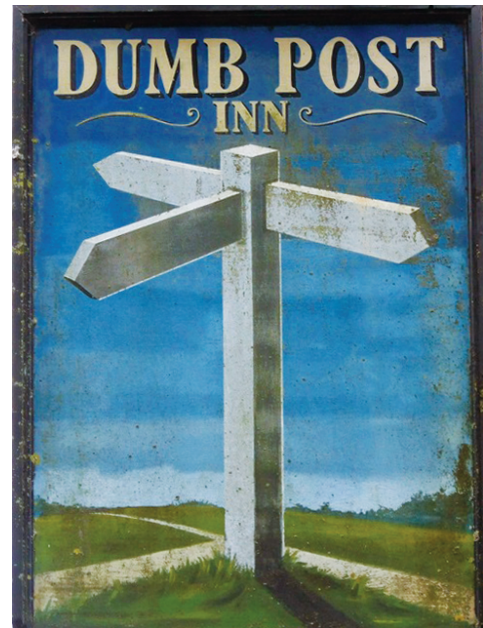
The Dumb Post Inn is situated where four roads meet and has 15th century origins. Formerly it was two buildings, likely to have been a coaching inn and brew house with stables. It also provided a venue for local auctions and hunt meets. In 1845, the Inn was the meeting place of the Tithe Commissioners and in the following year newspaper reports suggested that it was the planned location of an Anti-Corn Law League Meeting, which instead, took place outside the church by the village cross. The Inn was substantially rebuilt in the early 18th century with two storeys, an attic featuring rubble stone walls and concrete plain tile roofs, coped gables and ashlar end stacks. The property was part of the Bowood Estate until 1947 and listed in 1978.

The derivation of the 'Dumb Post' name is open to conjecture. However, it is claimed that the old through road by the pub was used by the Bristol to London mail coach (possibly early 1600's). Locally, if you wanted to send a letter then you put it on the post (you 'posted' the letter). The mail coach would collect it and deliver it, charging for the number of miles it had travelled. A letter to Bath cost more than one to London as the Bristol/London coach took the letter to London and delivered it to Bath on return. When the mail route was changed the actual post was left standing but as the mail coach didn't collect from it... It was a 'Dumb Post'. The inn continued as the local hostelry and the colloquial name stuck.

This was borne out by the Rev. Canon Eddrup, (1823 -1906) in reply to enquiries as to local tradition on the name, he informs that - 'there was standing near the "Dumb Post" inn an old finger-post from which the directing arras had long since rotted away, so that it was reduced to the condition, so vexatious to the pedestrian, in a district with which he is not familiar, of being a "dumb post" indeed! '.

The worthy Vicar of Bremhill amused himself at the time by guessing that perhaps some local wit had indulged his satirical propensities by borrowing from the old direction post a name for the village inn hard by. Subsequent enquiry by him, however, showed that an inn bearing the sign of the "Dumb Post" has existed on the spot, as long as the oldest inhabitant can recall; while the tradition of the house is that the inn originally had no sign, but that the landlord of that

day, compelled by circumstances to give his house some distinctive sign, named it - perhaps in jest, perhaps from annoyance - from the old post that stood outside.



An older version of the pub sign



The Inn was a mail coach stop in the 17th century

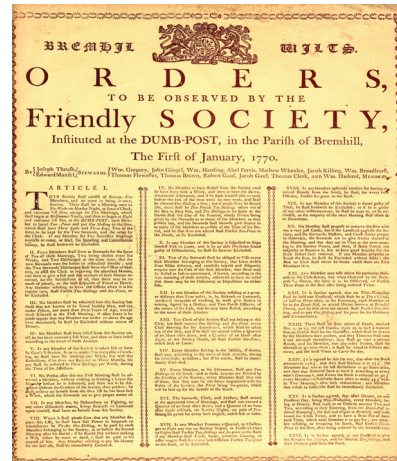


The front elevations remain relatively unchanged after the 18th century rebuild

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www.bremhillparishhistory.com/dpi

The previous Vicar and famed poet of Bremhill, the Reverend William Lisle Bowles (1762 - 1850) in his service to the community was a contributor to the Dumb Post Friendly Society founded in 1770. A framed copy of the Society's Orders (articles) are still displayed on the wall of the inn to this day. The Members met every six weeks and spent two pence on food/ale and put a shilling in the collection box. Fines also provided extra income. The fund gave members sickness benefit for three months and a lesser amount for a continuing illness. The money was also used for member burials and for the wake at the Dumb Post Inn on the day of the funeral which other members were required to attend. There was also the Festival Day on Whit Wednesday. After a lunch members had to walk to the 'Bell and Organ' in Bremhill village (now a private house) via an old ceremonial path known as 'Parade Walk', then go around the village cross twice and have a short pot of ale each time. The bell ringers at St. Martins Church were paid the sum of six shillings for their ringing on the occasion.



The articles are still displayed on the pub wall to this day

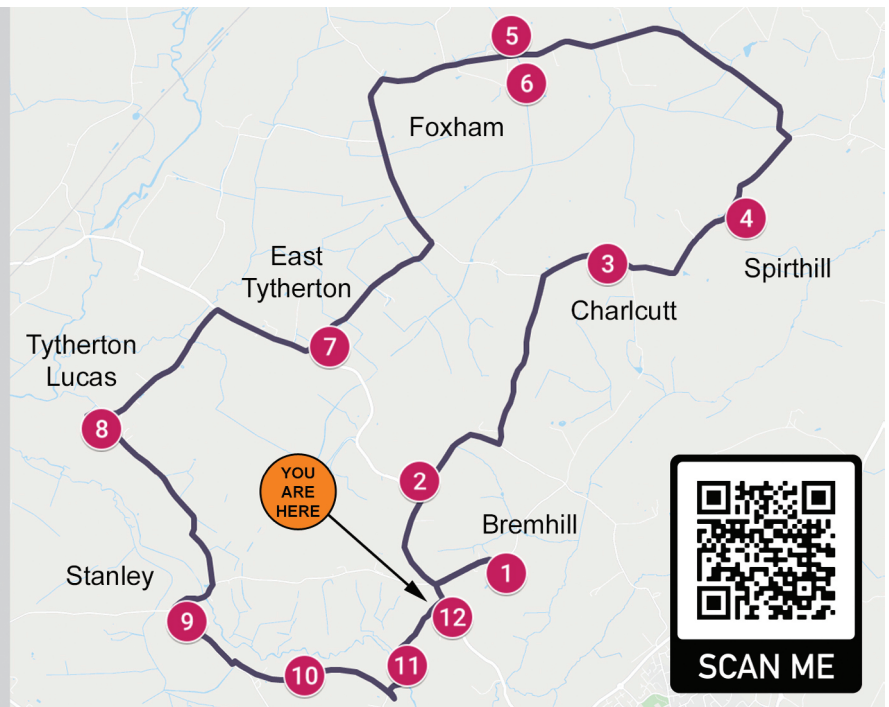
In 1837, some of its funds were stolen in a daring burglary on a night in January. Three villains fastened the front door to prevent inmates from escaping and entered via a ladder through a chamber window. The landlord's daughter was knocked to the ground and three boxes of money were stolen, one containing £50 from the Friendly Society and a substantial amount from the landlord Mr. Frayling. The Society was dissolved in 1863 with assets of £249, but in 1979 the Friends of St. Martin was formed, re-awakening the spirit of the original Friendly Society, holding local events to raise money in order to help support the fabric of the local church, and later, to support worthwhile projects and groups in the Parish. The Bremhill Village community must have been well served by ale houses as documents reveal that there was one named the 'Pig and Whistle' and another called the 'Tatter Arm' now lost in time.



Brewing was a long established business at the Inn

Other sites of interest on the History Trail

1. Medieval Village Cross
2. Maud Heath's Monument
3. Charlcutt Reading Room
4. Old Orchard
5. Foxham Canal Locks
6. Cadenham Manor
7. Moravian Church
8. St Nicholas' Church
9. Stanley Halt
10. Stanley Abbey
11. Hazeland Mill
12. Dumb Post Inn



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