

Strand on the Green

A London village and its pubs

c. 600BC

- Carbon dating of river skulls indicating early human habitation

Roman Era

- Pottery found in the area

13th & 14th Centuries

- A hamlet commonly called 'Stronde' or 'Strand' existed from the 13th to 17th century (from the Old English word meaning a bank or shore). This was a fishing community (mostly catching salmon and eels with nets and pots) and a cross-river ferry service to Kew. It was one of several medieval settlements that later became Chiswick. In early days there was no riverbank path, just a line of interconnecting wharves.

15th Century

- 1484 - First recorded riverside inn - The **NAVIGATOR'S ARMS** (named after the London Navigation Company whose barge was often moored and maintained nearby). The pub was later renamed the **MAYPOLE** and is now the **CITY BARGE**

16th Century

- 1593 - known as "Strand Green" with 13 houses

17th Century

- 1630 - population of 31 persons
- 1658 - first almshouses built
- 1694 - The house that became the **SHIP INN** recorded, it still exists today as a private home
- One of four villages officially merged to form Chiswick

18th Century

- 1722 - **BULLS HEAD** licenced (earlier building said to have connections with Oliver Cromwell)
- 1722 - The **SHIP INN** licenced
- Mid - century **STAR** and **GARTER HOTEL** licenced
- 1751 - **BELL & CROWN** licenced
- 1759 - First Kew Bridge opened by the future King George III with seven timber arches. With improved accessibility to Kew the neighbourhood became fashionable and prompted several Royal courtiers to move to the area, as a result land values grew. Consequent building of smart large houses and growth of small industries along the waterfront, including malt houses, repair yards, barge builders and wharves. (At this time Chiswick enjoyed a reputation for producing some of the finest barley in England which needed storage and river transportation)

- 1759 - Small pub the **INDIAN QUEEN** licenced near north end of Kew Bridge (possibly earlier called **POCOHONTAS** after the renowned Native American who briefly lived at Brentford)
- 1760 - known as “Strand under Green”
- 1777 - City of London Navigation Committee started collecting river tolls using barges stationed on Oliver’s Island; the funds raised being spent on improvements to navigation on the river.
- 1786 - the **MAYPOLE** licenced
- 1789 - second Kew Bridge opened by George III, built entirely of stone as with the Thames’ strong water flows the earlier wooden structure proved unsatisfactory

19th Century

- By 1800 a continuous footpath ran along the bank, it was liable to flooding at high tide; orchards and market gardens lay behind the waterfront properties
- 1805 - Economic decline after Grand Junction Canal (Later Grand Union) opened at Brentford linking London to the Midland canal network for the first time, diverting local industry and freight further up-river
- 1807 - the **MAYPOLE** renamed the **CITY BARGE** (after the Lord Mayor of London’s barge often moored for maintenance at a nearby wharf)
- 1814 - **BELL & CROWN** acquired by Fuller Smith & Turner
- 1820s - further economic decline due to the Royal family leaving Kew for Windsor, along with their extensive retinue,
- 1829 - listed hostelrys included the **SHIP** and the **STAR** (both subsequently closed)
- 1850 - Kew Bridge rail station opened (London and South Western Railway). Quick access to Waterloo station started speculative building in the area.
- 1860 - area now called Strand on the Green
- 1860 - Pier House Laundry in operation, one of London’s largest and a major local employer with up to 200 before automation
- 1860 (approx.) - **EXPRESS TAVERN** opened (next to the station)
- 1869 - Kew rail bridge opened, (now carries District Line and London Overground)
- 1870 - **STEAM PACKET** opened, named after steam launches providing a regular service running further up river from Kew Pier (opposite the pub)
- 1874 - Celebrations after the Kew bridge tolls were abolished (previously the rate was 1/2d per person and 6d per horse in both directions)
- 1894 - The new Richmond lock and weir reduced the scouring effect of downriver tidal flow at Strand on the Green causing a muddy deposit to develop over previously clean hard shingle
- Late century - remaining local industry was succumbing to building development, and with increasing pollution fishing was dying out as a prime livelihood of local families
- End of century - embankment walls built to give direct access to riverbank houses rather than via wharves, each individual house owner was responsible for their own section, some used steps to aid access and add a degree of flood prevention

20th Century

- 1905 - third Kew Bridge opened by Edward VII
- 1907 - **BELL & CROWN** rebuilt
- 1910 - **SHIP INN** closed and converted to a private house
- 1941 - blast from a parachute mine (probably aimed at the railway bridge) destroyed 60 houses and the **CITY BARGE** was severely damaged, threatened with demolition but later reprieved; only the old bar survived into the rebuilt structure; the bridge survived
- 1947 - 39 buildings elevated to 'listed' status under the then new Town and Country Planning Act
- 1964 - In an episode of Doctor Who 'the Dalek Invasion of Earth' the Tardis materialised under the railway bridge and was subsequently trapped when the bridge collapsed (!)
- 1965 - Beatles movie 'Help!' partly filmed in the **CITY BARGE** and neighbouring area
- 1972 - Two adjacent cottages added to the **BULLS HEAD**, both were condemned as 'unfit for human habitation' in 1958 after flood damage but were extensively restored and had won a Civic Trust award in 1967
- 1973 - Pier House Laundry closed
- 1970s - Last local industries finally replaced by housing development
- 1980s - **STEAM PACKET** closed (later becoming the Dome Café and then Café Rouge - also now closed)
- Pier House Laundry site redeveloped as office accommodation with original façade retained
- 1982 - Thames Barrier commenced operation to limit the height of river high tides, previous incidences of flooding the local footpath and property much reduced
- 1983 - **STAR** and **GARTER HOTEL** closed but the façade retained, first converted to offices and later apartments
- 1984 - Conservatory added to the **CITY BARGE**
- 1984 - **BELL & CROWN** expanded adding two adjoining shops, and adding a conservatory.

21st Century

- 2014 - **CITY BARGE** and **BULLS HEAD** both refurbished
- 2016 - Major fire at refurbished offices on the Pier House Laundry site
- 2019 - The three surviving pubs all offer an interesting selection of real ales with good quality food. From a recent investigation:
 - ~ **BULLS HEAD** - managed by Chef & Brewer (a Greene King pub brand), Trumann's and Greene King ales, six pumps, good value menu, interior feels old and rustic
 - ~ **CITY BARGE** - managed by the Metropolitan Pub Company (another Greene King pub brand), rotating variety of draft craft and guest ales served through five pumps, elaborate menu, good river view from terrace and plus riverside seating
 - ~ **BELL & CROWN** - managed by Fullers, Fullers ales + guest, four pumps, interesting but expensive menu, small bar, terrace and riverside seating.