

THE ROYAL BELL

Historic Photographs of the Royal Bell



This photograph, circa 1890, shows the original Royal Bell hotel built in the 17th century - one of the important hotels and post houses for Bromley. The stuccoed front and canopied bays are characteristic early 19th century 'Regency' alterations to this venerable landmark for Bromley.



A view north up the High Street with the Royal Bell on the right side. Some of the buildings in the background still survive.



A rear view of the original Royal Bell shortly before its re-building in 1898. It was a timber framed structure with clay tiled roofs.



This photograph shows the new, enlarged Royal Bell shortly after its construction in 1898. Behind the horses to the right is the Bell Tap public house.



This hand coloured postcard from 1906 shows that the decorative plaster parquetry to the projecting window bays were once painted a terracotta tone. We would like to reinstate this original colour scheme as part of the Royal Bell restoration. Also visible is the ornate cast iron canopy above the main entrance. This is another historic feature that we would like to re-introduce as part of our restoration strategy.



This rare interior period view of the Royal Bell shows the Ballroom in the early 20th century. We think that this image probably shows the original decorative treatment of this space which could form a starting point for our restoration of this room. Parts of this plaster ceiling survive in the 'minstrels gallery'. Note the popular Aesthetic Movement 'Sunflower Motif' wall paper which was popular in the late 19th century.



This early 20th century view shows the west first floor function room. Lively wall paper, Arts & Crafts electric lighting and panelled fireplaces are important features of these rooms.



By the mid-20th century new shopfronts had been built into the ground level of the Royal Bell Hotel. We propose to re-introduce traditional shopfronts to these spaces to create an active street frontage to this part of Bromley High Street.