

Five decades at the *Three Compasses*

Here in the UK we are accustomed to quaint village pubs, with histories that stretch back for centuries. Take the Three Compasses in West Hanningfield for example.



Parts of this pub date back to 1425, and the first record of the building being used as an inn is in 1738, when one Martha Onton became the first innkeeper. More astonishingly, in the case of the Three Compasses, however, is the fact that the present landlady, Rose Cotton, has been pulling the pints in the pub for nearly fifty years. Martha in the 18th century lasted a mere 38 years, whereas Rose is still going

strong at the age of 84, having arrived at the pub in 1971.

For the first fifteen years Rose ran the pub with her husband Kenneth, an ex-WW2 Spitfire pilot. Following Kenneth's sad early death Rose bought the pub outright in 1986 and continued as landlady, eventually being joined by her son John.

Today the Three Compasses is still a very traditional pub, with two bars, a huge open fireplace, a wood burner, and various memorabilia of Kenneth's Spitfire-flying days around the place.

Regular customers visit to have a drink and play the occasional game of cards. The pub is very dog-friendly with one of the bars being flagstoned, making it a popular destination for dogwalkers.

Traditional pub food is served at lunchtimes and evenings with a popular roast lunch on Sundays. At lunchtimes, sandwiches – toasted or not – and filled jacket potatoes are on offer, together with the main meals menu, containing dishes such as homemade steak or chicken pies and meat or vegetarian lasagne – nearly everything on the menu is home-cooked on the premises. A daily specials board could feature a curry, chilli or salmon fishcakes, again, all homemade by Rose and her team.

With the pub flourishing, Rose has no plans for retirement. 'Why would I?' she asks and, as she's made a good job of it for 47 years, who are we to argue!

Food available: Lunchtimes, midday–2pm. Evenings, 7pm–9pm Tuesday to Saturday. Ample parking. Church Road, West Hanningfield, Chelmsford, Essex CM2 8UQ. Tel: 01245 400447