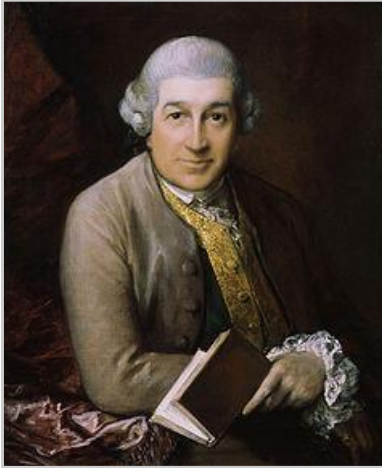


Beer and Buildings

An architectural **pub trail** of Bath
22 May - 7 June 2015

Garricks Head

7-8 St Johns Place Bath BA1 1ET - Tel: 01225 318368 - www.garricksheadpub.com



Rob Parry, manager

Former home to Beau Nash, the Garrick's Head is a grand building with stately proportions. As you enter by the central doors two rooms that sit either side of the staircase have evolved into the dining room to the left and bar on the right.

Its location next to the Theatre Royal always makes for an interesting and colourful crowd in the bar, while the dining room is mostly an oasis of calm. The grand, high ceilings of the Garrick's Head give it a sense of occasion and make it a special place to pass time in celebration or otherwise.

Portrait of David Garrick
by Gainsborough

The Garricks Head was constructed by Thomas Greenway for Richard 'Beau' Nash circa 1720. It stood in splendid isolation just outside the city walls and was evidence of the expansion of Bath in the early 18th century. The house was referred to locally as a palace and this further enhanced Nash's image as the 'King of Bath'. The building is grade II* listed.

Beau Nash was born in Swansea in 1674. Encouraged by his father he endeavored to make a name for himself through various ventures. A taste for the good life led to him being sent down from Oxford University in disgrace. A short stint in the army followed but he found the discipline too demanding. He also tried his luck at the Inns of Court but did not relish the studying required. However, all was not lost and with a flair for organising social events he was attracted to Bath. Here he found his vocation and was elected as the City's Master of Ceremonies. Following scandals involving gambling and alleged profiteering Nash later found himself severely in debt. In 1735 he moved to modest lodgings just around the corner which is now home to the Ciao Ciao restaurant. Here he died in 1761 aged 86.



In 1805 his first 'palace' home became a pub and a new adjoining building housed the Theatre Royal which had moved from its premises in Old Orchard Street. It came as no surprise when the new pub took its name from a famous actor, David Garrick, who had performed in Bath on many occasions and was regarded as a major influence on all aspects of theatre during the 18th century. In 1831 a bust celebrating the thespian was placed above the entrance to the pub where it can still be admired today.

Left: Beau Nash's residence as it may have looked in the time of Beau Nash. J.Greenaway 1858



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The Garrick's Head and Theatre Royal c1930

On Good Friday in 1862 a fire believed to have started in the nearby Theatre Tavern quickly spread to the Theatre Royal and caused serious damage. As part of the refurbishment, the main entrance to the theatre was moved to its present position in Sawclose. In the process the theatre expanded into the ground floor of the Garrick's Head.



The Garrick's Head is renowned as the most haunted pub in Bath. One ghost is the Grey Lady who threw herself from an upstairs window following the death of her lover in a duel with her husband. Her hauntings of the theatre and pub are said to leave behind a lingering scent of jasmine. More alarmingly landlords and bar staff over the years have reported incidents of a poltergeist throwing candles and cash registers across the bar. You have been warned.....



The Garrick's Head has been a regular entry in CAMRAs Good Beer Guide over the last five years and is in the 2014 edition. It serves 4 real ales sourced from regional brewers including some rarities. The pub is owned by the same people who run the excellent gastro-pub The King William on The London Road. So the food is locally sourced and top notch!

Pete Riley May 2015

Sources:

A Few Famous Inns of Bath & District - J.F.Meehan

Keys & Ale : Bath and the Public House- Bath Industrial Heritage Centre

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