



Afrim, landlord of Horse & Groom

Horse & Groom

One of the oldest
pubs in London

By Marina Kaloghirou

If you watched Lord Julian Fellowes' TV drama, *Belgravia*, you'd probably remember John Bellasis, the baddie, meeting Turton, the butler, at the pub, Horse & Groom, to secretly weave their treacherous plot.

Belgravia may not appear too interesting at first glance. Rows of similar terrace houses, foreign embassies, buildings owned offshore as investments and empty



Horse & Groom at night



It is a favourite watering hole for locals and visitors alike who come from all over the world to experience its charms and savour its fine ales.



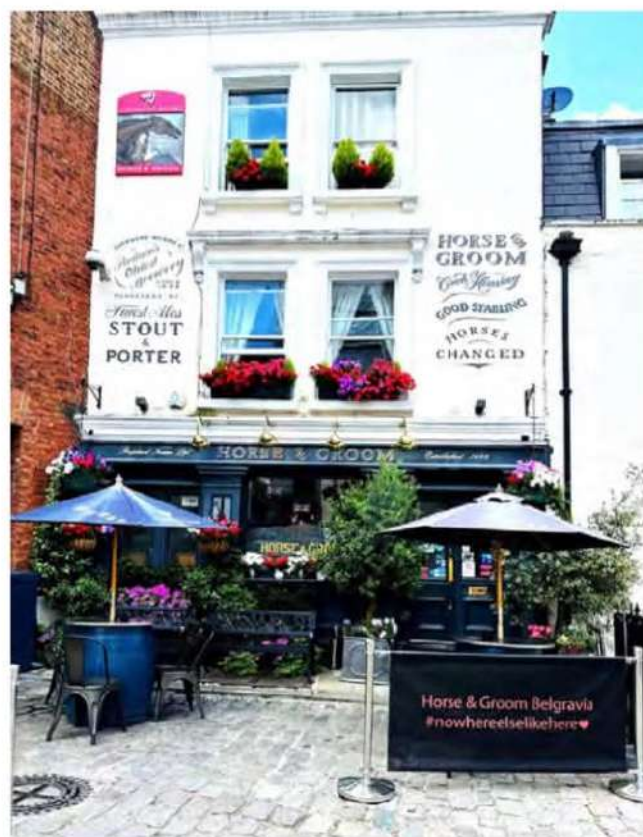
for much of the time. However, look a bit closer and there are so many interesting little side streets and interesting buildings. The old Five Fields is just below the surface and it is still possible to trace some of the old roads and locations of the Five Fields and Ebury Farm, which have transformed into the Belgravia we see today. There is plenty more to explore.

Horse & Groom, as its name would suggest, is said to have started life in 1698 as a Coaching Inn. Shepherd Neame, its brewery supplier, started supplying pubs in that year.

By the 1800s, once the grandeur of Belgrave Square was attracting aristocracy from all over the country and from abroad, it became not only a social space for locals, but also for travellers, tradesmen and politicians, too.

Nowadays, Horse & Groom is comfortably tucked away in Groom Place, originally called Chapel Place, the charming cobbled mews that runs between Chapel Street and Chester Street, right in the heart of Belgravia. It is still a favourite watering hole for locals and for visitors alike who come from all over the world to experience its charms and savour its fine ales.

Fish and wonderful chunky chips are hard to resist but there is a full menu offering starters, mains, sandwiches and puddings, and all the choices you would expect.



Horse & Groom by day

The pub's landlord, Afrim, a charming man originally from continental Europe, has been running it for more than twenty years. Much liked and respected by the community at large, he was even given an award recently for his remarkable charity contributions.

Indeed, when he is not serving his very fine ales and his very decent 'pub grub', Afrim gets involved with fundraising activities. He is particularly interested in and has raised great sums for The Lily Foundation, a charity dedicated to supporting people whose lives have been affected by mitochondrial disease.

They fund research to improve diagnosis and develop treatments, always hoping to ultimately find a cure.

And yet with all of his activities, you'll still find him at his pub welcoming everyone with a big smile on his face, full of energy ready to take your order.

Cheers, to Afrim! ▲