

THE WANDERER—R.I.P.

(REST IN PIECES)



News was received early in 2007 that **The Wanderer** public house in St Paul's Cray was to be demolished to make way for a housing development, writes *Jerry Dowlen*.

It is the end of an era for a pub that apparently took its name from **Cray Wanderers** football club. I say 'apparently' because the only source of this information comes from a Syd Jordan cartoon (right) that was published in the *Kentish Times* newspaper in 1960.

There isn't any other direct evidence, although we have heard it said by older residents that the interior of the pub used to contain photographs and other material that showed a connection to the **Wands**.

If anyone has any information or memories about this we would be most interested to hear about it. Please do contact us.

Tucked away in the largely residential Ravensbury Road, behind the railway station and running parallel to Leasons Hill, the pub evidently had a thriving darts team in the early 1960s but we don't otherwise know much about its former glories.



After the Second World War, St Paul's Cray was the site of a big new housing development in north Kent. Some 10,000 new residents moved there during the 1950s as part of the so-called London overspill housing project. The planners allowed room for churches, pubs and shops and other essential facilities to be built. We presume that **The Wanderer** pub was built during this 1950s local development phase.

If someone did decide to name the pub in honour of **Cray Wanderers FC** this was a nice gesture, and it's certainly true that in the post-war years the football club drew a lot of its support from the St Paul's Cray citizens. As hinted at by Syd Jordan in his cartoon, the **Wands** were not based in St Paul's Cray. The traditional roots of the Club lay on the other side of the Cray Avenue main road, in old St Mary Cray where the Grassmeade or Ted was situated in Chelsfield Road. Nevertheless then, and still to this day, some of the staunchest

side of the Cray Avenue main road, in old St Mary Cray where the Grassmeade ground was situated in Chelsfield Road. Nevertheless then, and still to this day, some of the staunchest Cray supporters or their families originate from the St Paul's Cray area.

In the photograph shown at the top of this page, taken in the mid-1990s, the frontage of **The Wanderer** pub is green (wot, no amber and black?!) and the pub sign is just about visible beside the tall tree on the left (circled).

Goodbye to The Wanderer! It is always sad to see something disappear from the past; the more so when it removes another link between **Cray Wanderers FC** and its heartland in the Crays where the famous old Club was founded in 1860.

[Return to Forever Amber](#)