

Shakesbeer

Newsletter of Shakespeare branch of CAMRA - Real ale in Shakespeare Country and The Vale



FREE
Please
take one

Stratford's only Brewery!



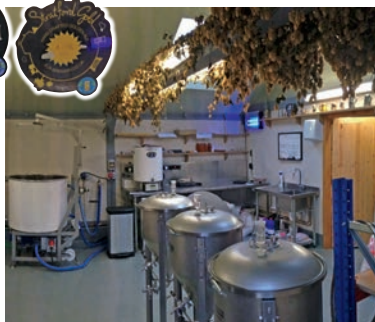
On a somewhat typical November day, I had been invited along to meet Rich Williams, proud owner of the 'Stratford-upon-Avon Brewery' - the first in the town for some years now (the last believed to have closed in 2002 at the former Cox's Yard site). It is good to see that Rich is also another young entrant to the brewing market at the tender age of 25. The brewery is situated on a smallholding farm just north east of the town in a lovely secluded site with a small handful of cows and pigs. The pigs are big winners here too, getting all the spent grain.

The idea for brewing beer for Rich goes back to the time that he became of age for drinking. Having the usual experiments with lager as all young lads do, together with such a large influence from his father, his tastes soon matured on to ale. Fast forward to early Spring 2014 - work on converting an already existing small barn had begun - taking in all the usual considerations for cleanliness and lots and lots of shiny stainless steel amounting to a two BBL (Brewers Barrel

Length) or eight firkins capacity, all being finished late June to start testing. Having spent the last six months researching his market and growing his skills (testing ale), it was decided there was a gap to fill with becoming the only brewery in Stratford - keeping it simple with the name and giving a local focus.

Rich currently is brewer, store man, delivery driver, chief taster ... you get the picture and has been working on a small core range of three beers - *Stratford Gold*, *Blonde Bombshell* and *Dark Star Porter*. Along with this core range, the branding is developing around the emphasis that the brewery is farm based and is about as green as can be with their own small solar farm, wind turbine and water bore hole. On a good sunny day they can brew without the aid of the National Grid and he awaits delivery of an electric van for local deliveries which extends their green credentials even more.

Currently the beers have only been available



at the **STRATFORD ALE HOUSE** in the town and there is a close working relationship between Bill and Rich which has allowed for valuable feedback on the brews as they have been tweaked and tested by customers. A particular runaway success has recently been the *Dark Star Porter*. Hopefully over Christmas you'll also find the full range available at **THE BEAR FREE HOUSE** in town.

We at Shakespeare CAMRA are excited to see another brewery and will watch with keenness as it grows and flourishes and look forward to seeing the beers further afield in time.



● Rich Williams



Use your mobile phone's QR reader to scan

Save the Dates!



Stratford Beer Festival 2015

at Stratford Racecourse

June 12th & 13th 2015

• 75 Beers • 30 Ciders

Courtesy Bus

www.stratfordbeerfestival.org.uk

June 2015

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Scan the QR code to find out more!

Chairman's Letter

*For those of you who normally receive **Shakesbeer** in the post you will be used to a word from our Chairman, Lloyd Evans. We have decided to include this in the magazine so that those who might be thinking about coming and joining the branch in a more active way can see a small summary of what we get up to that previously may not have made it in here.*

Hello Branch Members,

After such an enjoyable day yesterday I feel very positive sitting here this morning starting to compile my letter to the branch. After the success of this year's beer festival in Stratford, the trip that John Bloomfield, our Social Secretary, arranged around a number of the Black Country brewer taps was an excellent way to say thank you to all the members who gave so freely of their time in organising and staffing the festival.

However, even though there are many things to be encouraged about within the branch itself, including the latest membership figures which show a steady increase to the point where we now have the highest numbers ever, the thoughts of the Committee have still been somewhat focused on the events relating to two of our long standing GBG pubs in Alcester.

Having been for so long possibly seen as the "jewel" of our towns in Warwickshire, and was once described in a newspaper article as being a "beer festival town" many of you will know that over the past year both **THE THREE TUNS** and our current branch Warwickshire Pub of the Year, **THE HOLLY BUSH**, have both had reason to stop trading.

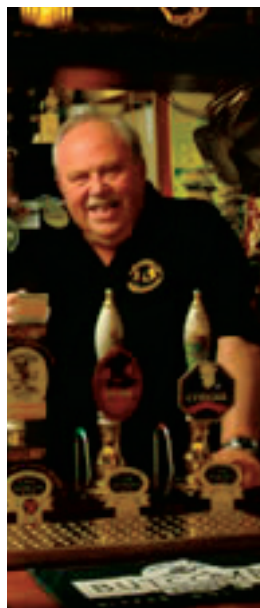
Whilst **THE THREE TUNS** is currently being marketed, albeit at what we understand to be a very high suggested rental value and the town council apparently reluctant to follow through with making this an "Asset of Community Value", the future looks a bit unsure. Unfortunately, the same could be said about **THE HOLLY BUSH** depending upon which rumour is currently in circulation and what you wish to believe. Therefore, it is presently our intention to keep a watching brief on these developments and to hope that Teej manages to provide some clarification regarding this much valued pub.

Meantime, to end on a positive note, can I just say that if you do find yourself in Alcester then Carl at our third GBG listed pub, **THE TURKS HEAD** has continued to sell an excellent pint as well as along with a number of other establishments in the town.

Next Branch Meeting: January 20th
THE THREE HORSESHOES, Wixford B49 6DG

Best wishes as always,

Lloyd






The best things in life are three

Visitor Centre open Mon - Sat 9.30am - 4.30pm all year round
www.hooky.co.uk e: vc@hooky.co.uk

 twitter.com/hookybrewery

 facebook.com/hooknortonbrewery

The Brewery, Hook Norton, Oxfordshire, OX15 5NY 01608 730384


HOOK NORTON
BREWERY

HANDCRAFTED BEERS FROM THE
COTSWOLD HILLS SINCE 1849

Shakespeare CAMRA go all Black Country!

by GWEN GODFREY, Branch Secretary

On a Saturday morning in mid-November, over 30 intrepid real ale enthusiasts set out for a tour of Black Country brewery taps. The tour had been arranged as a way of saying thank-you to those CAMRA members who were kind enough to give up their free time and help make the Beer Festival at the Stratford Racecourse another success. The Black Country taps offer somewhat of a trip down memory lane of not only beer and brewing but architecture too, a number of the stops on the tour are noted for their architecture and interiors as much as they are their beers.

First stop on this marvellous tour was **BEACON HOTEL** in Sedgely, the home of Sarah Hughes Brewery and also the West Midlands CAMRA Pub of the Year for 2014. Having been timed down to a T, the coach arrived at the Beacon five



minutes before their opening time of 12 noon. The Sarah Hughes beer at the Beacon is complemented with an near original historic interior and has a lovely multi hatch bar with serving windows and all beer is served in handled mugs much to the delight of our members. Not surprisingly, *Sarah Hughes Dark Ruby Mild* was a firm favourite, although I do have to say that I preferred the *Amber*. The Beacon was busy as always, with a new local in the shape of Millie the cat which had apparently adopted the pub some time previously.



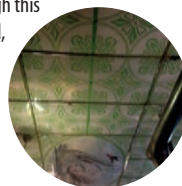
It was then a short journey to the **PARK**

INN, Dudley, the brewery tap for Holdens. Dating back to 1915 Holden's has been a steady brewer and pub owner standing now at 19 pubs. In recent years they have had the foresight to modernise and capitalise on the growth in real ale introducing a new brew house, bottling facilities both for internal and external customers. Whilst at the Park Inn the *Golden Glow*, *Black Country Mild* (after a swift barrel change) and the *Good, Bad & Dudley* went down a treat. The next stop was the **OLD SWAN** in Netherton, otherwise known as **MA PARDOES**. The Old Swan has to be one of the Black Country's most favourite, popular and probably most photographed drinking establishments and until the real ale revival began in the United Kingdom, the Old Swan was one of only four pubs that brewed its own beer.

It is a local landmark; the current building dating from the 1860s but there has been a pub on the site since at least 1835. It has been known as Ma Pardoe's since the interwar years, as its long-term landlady and matriarch was Dorothy Pardoe who owned it until her death in

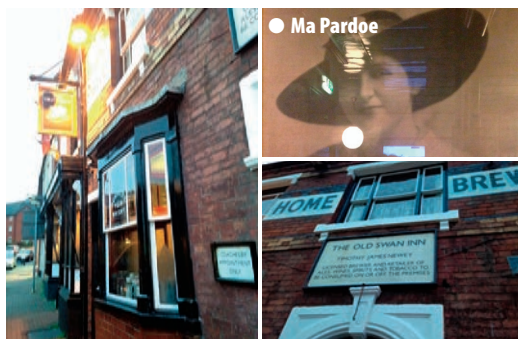


1984, when aged 85 and who was landlady for more than half a century. Such was its fame among the lovers of real ale, that when the pub came up for sale in 1985, a company was set up by CAMRA to purchase and run the pub. Although this company was short-lived, the pub and brewery survived and it is now one of only a handful of pubs in the West Midlands that still brews beer on its own premises.



As well as for its beer, the pub is also known for its decor including a ceiling decorated with vitreous enamel tiles. Due to its heritage and fittings the pub has been designated a Grade II listed building. Today

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6



Shakespeare CAMRA go all Black Country! (continued)

it is run by Tim Newey, who can often be seen in full morning dress, and who restored it to its former glory ten years ago.

The Old Swan is one of the classic pubs of Britain; nothing flashy here, it's just a basic,

● The Bull & Bladder



down to earth drinker's paradise which has welcomed workers for decades and no doubt will continue to do so for many years to come. It is just a real Black Country gem. Then we were back on the bus for a short trip to **THE VINE**, or **BULL AND BLADDER** to locals. Being the home of *Bathams* and having moved here in 1877 originally being a slaughterhouse [how it achieved its local nickname of Bull and Bladder] and having done an excellent job on its conversion have had the good sense to leave it be. This is a very popular local and a visit here will see you transported back to a bygone age with a wealth of features to include engraved glass partitions, ornate carvings and mahogany fittings. We were treated to excellent Bitter and Mild, as well as a much needed buffet! Hungry work this ale sampling business.

The final leg of our tour took us to the **WINDSOR CASTLE**, Lye, home of *Sadlers Ales*. Founded in 1900 by Nathaniel Sadler the brewery was always busy supplying its twelve tie public houses, come 1927 the brewery was mothballed until an historic reopening in winter 2004 and it's once again a thriving family run affair and became an award winning company. With an extensive range of beers on tap, it was difficult to

choose, eight to be precise! *Mud City Stout* was as popular as always, although for me it was the *JPA* that I looked forward to.

All too soon it was time to start the journey home, and as we just happened to be passing **THE WEIGHBRIDGE** in Alvechurch, West Midlands CAMRA Runner-up Pub of the Year for 2014, we had to stop off. The beers were on top form and John the landlord was kind enough to supply some sandwiches to soak up the beer. The Weighbridge is a lovely pub and it was almost missed by one of the Branch's stalwarts (who shall remain nameless), as he awoke from a snooze on the bus just in time to have a swift pint. It wasn't until we were back on the bus for the final leg of the return journey that we realised that another (also nameless) Branch member had not woken at all ... and had completely missed the Weighbridge ...

An excellent trip and many thanks to John Bloomfield, Social Secretary for getting us all home safely. Although he may have had some help from the Dudley's coach driver ...

So if you like what we get up to, keep an eye out on your email inbox for more interesting socials and again next year we will be looking for kind hearted souls like yourselves to help with the beer festival.

Photograph contributions from Mike Hyde & Jason Norledge



“ It wasn't until we were back on the bus for the final leg of the return journey that we realised that another (also nameless) Branch member had not woken at all... and had completely missed the Weighbridge... ”



Pub News & Reports...

Alcester THE HOLLY BUSH

We are very sad to learn that this very popular and GBG listed pub which supplied great food and an even greater beer range (usually having around 6 beers available) has now closed. There was no warning and locals just found a note in the window thanking them for their custom and that they had decided to close the business. This popular local has been operating under the current owner, Teej for the last 16 years. We wait to learn the fate - whether it will be reopened or sold on, as you can imagine there are rumours aplenty!

Broom THE BROOM TAVERN

Following the Shakespeare Branch award of "pub of the season", we can reveal that this has been awarded to the Broom Tavern to reflect their efforts in reopening and reviving a previously closed and run down establishment which was also pubco tied. Now serving great food and keeping a range of ales and ciders and running beer and food festivals, we think they are worthy winners. See article further on for presentation.

Bearley THE GOLDEN CROSS

Sadly this pub has closed once again when it had just been starting to show great promise. Reports suggest that there is a large amount of remedial work required for the waste plumbing in the grounds and it would appear at this time the pubco are not prepared to fund this. Hopefully in future editions we can bring good news about this pub.

Brailes THE GATE

Has earned themselves a place in the CAMRA 2015 Good Beer Guide being one of Hook Norton's 10 pubs to feature in the guide. So congratulations to Ian and Ann who are also former winners of

Beer Drinker, Reader or CAMRA Member - the reports and short stories below all come from people like yourself, so if you find yourself in one of our wonderful pubs, feel free to drop us a note about anything you think should be in this section! shakesbeer@shakespearecamra.org.uk

Shakespeare branch "Pub of the season" Summer 2013.

Coughton, Alcester THE MOAT HOUSE

We can report that this historic inn reopened on the 21st November under the ownership of the Lovely Pub co. having lavished a lot of money to repair the fabric of the building and bringing it into the branding of their other pubs to give a gastro feel. This is more of an eatery than a "drinkers pub" now though, however you can find three ales available which are currently *Sharps Doombar*, *Wye Valley Bitter* and *Purity Ubu*.



● The Moat House

THE THROCKMORTON

Only a stones throw outside our branch boundary is the newly refurbished former Throckmorton Arms. Now in the hands of Sally and Dave of **THE BELL**, Salford Priors, extensive works have been carried out to rid the pub of its former interesting exterior colour and bring about a suitably matching interior. We wish Sally and Dave all the best on their new ventures.

Cleeve Prior THE KINGS ARMS

A recent member visit here informs us that they continue to serve a regular beer from the *Adnams* stable plus up to two guests which are from the Enterprise Inns list - on

this visit it was found to be *St Austell Tribute*. Free WiFi is also available.

Evesham THE TRUMPET

Alongside the regular *Hook Norton* beers on offer here, we can report that they are now also offering a guest ale and on this occasion it was found to be *Greene King's Gangly Ghoul* (October)

THE ROYAL OAK

It's good to report that this tied pub has had its tie changed for the better allowing the customers to explore a more interesting range of beers. At the time of the visit this was found to be *Hog's Back T.E.A.*, *Purity Pure Gold* and *Otter Ale*.

Offenham THE BRIDGE

From our roving reporter we learn that you can expect two to three guest beers here which are normally for larger regional's and on offer on this visit were *Doom Bar*, *Wickwar Old Bob* and *Everards Tiger*.

THE FISH AND ANCHOR

Now under the same management as the attached caravan site to the rear of the pub, you can usually expect to find two beers and on this occasion were *Doombar* and *Wye Valley Butty Bach*. This may rise to a third handpull in time.

Bretforton THE FLEECE

Some pubs just find it hard to stay out of the lime light. October was a busy month for the Fleece hosting the Apple and Ale

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8



Pub News & Reports...

Festival, but to eclipse this Hollywood star Drew Barrymore made a visit whilst in the area too!



Irons Cross QUEENS HEAD

Now fully open after a refurbishment as an all-day carvery & steakhouse; impressive menu as well as carvery. Sadly little or no space for drinkers, most tables are laid for dining. Beer range at the time was *Purity Mad Goose & Gold* plus *Doombar*; all be it served a little on the cold side, they were in good condition.

Stratford-upon-Avon KEYS AND KITCHEN

Former Cross Keys is now rebranded and refurbished as the "Keys and Kitchen" and open for business from early October. At this stage they are starting out with one real ale being *Sheppards Neame Spitfire*.

ONE ELM

During the summer the One Elm has been selling real cider alongside the three beers, for the winter this will change to be four beers of rotating guests.

GOLDEN BEE

October 17th saw the launch night for the national Wetherspoons ale festival month. With lots of brews on offer for the month long event and many collaborative brews to be found like *BROUWERIJ T IJ ISA* - a lovely deep gold India session ale brewed at Caledonia by Roel Wageman. An invitation was extended to the Shakespeare branch

for a VIP launch night event in which we were able to sample a good range of beers along with a few nibbles. There was also a competition run to 'guess a mystery beer' - which was no mystery to Kate a visiting CAMRA member and for her troubles she was presented with a beery box of delights.



Harvington THE COACH AND HORSES

To coincide with Cask Ale Week, Steve and Di put on a 10+ beer festival which was greatly received and fuller coverage of this can be found further inside the magazine. Regular drinkers here also continue to be given a vote on the upcoming guest beers available here.

GOLDEN CROSS

Reopened under new friendly ownership since early summer. On a recent visit found to be serving *Thwaites Wainwright & Doombar*, both good quality; good food available but also has preserved the village pub status, with plenty of space for drinkers, a pool table & jukebox.

Broadway CROWN AND TRUMPET

With the festive season upon us you'll find a great selection of seasonal ales available throughout December and beyond with the following beers - *Stroud Ding Dong* - a lovely smokey porter at 4.2%, *Tom Long, Butcombe Christmas Steps* which is a lovely reddish best bitter at 4.2% and *Stanway Winters Gold*. A lovely destination after a winters walk or a shopping in the Cotswolds.

Pathlow ARMOURIES ARMS

Sadly as reported in the last edition, the whole estate which includes the pub was up for sale and since then the pub has now closed. We await its fate.

Tredington THE WHITE LION

Sadly we learn of another closure here (end of October) with the landlords stating that due to high rent increases and insufficient footfall they find the position here untenable. We await further developments.

Whatcote THE ROYAL OAK

This was found to be closed on a recent visit with significant scaffolding supporting the building with no sign of works taking place. Unfortunately there was no information posted outside to assist with the reason or plight. However a local believes this pub has been shut for some weeks now.

Whichford THE NORMAN KNIGHT

It's good to hear that beer is o' plenty down at this lovely country inn, you'll find along side the weekly events happening here 5 cask ales always incorporating local Micro Breweries and this month you might find *Youngs Winter Warmer, Turpins Mocha Porter, 12 Days from the Hook Norton stable, Whychwood Hob Goblin Gold* and many more. They also have recently said "goodbye" to Guinness and in its place *Wells & Youngs London Stout*. If you were lucky enough to have been in recently you might have been able to test the new brew "GBH" brewed by the onsite brewery - *Patriot* run by pub owner Tim Young. This new beer was greatly received at 5% and contained a new single strain hop from New Zealand called - *Green Bullet Hop*. Also with the festive season upon us we understand pub manager Richard is open to bribes to NOT play Christmas music around the pub!





CAMRA
WARWICKSHIRE
COUNTY
PUB OF THE YEAR
2012

THE NORMAN KNIGHT



The Norman Knight is open seven evenings per week and Tuesday to Sunday lunchtimes serving a choice of up to seven real ales including several brewed on the premises at our award winning Patriot Brewery plus two real ciders and Perry.



Patriot Brewery



With real log fires in both bars during winter months The Norman Knight is a perfect place to unwind and relax, with its enviable position overlooking Whichford village green in the rural Cotswolds district and an in area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.



Popular with walkers and cyclists throughout the year and with our Caravan Club approved CL site at the rear of the pub why not make a weekend of it.



Not only do we serve well kept ales and ciders we also have an eclectic and regularly changing wine list overseen by our qualified wine and beer sommelier Richard which of course leads us on to our fantastic restaurant overseen by our well loved French Chef Jean-Michel.



Jean-Michel has pulled together a well balanced menu combining pub classics interlaced with traditional French and more modern dishes. Regularly changing menus and specials all cooked fresh using locally sourced and seasonal ingredients with plenty of choice means that you will be spoilt for choice either at lunch or for dinner.



Live music features throughout the year covering all musical tastes - check out our website for all the up to date menus, opening times and music, or follow us on Facebook or Twitter @thenormanknight.

THE NORMAN KNIGHT WHICHFORD NEAR SHIPSTON-ON-STOUR WARWICKSHIRE
TELEPHONE 01608 684621 WWW.THENORMANKNIGHT.CO.UK

LocAle

CAMRA LocAle - promoting pubs that sell locally-brewed real ale, reducing the number of 'beer miles', and supporting local breweries. CAMRA LocAle is an initiative that promotes pubs stocking locally-brewed real ale. The scheme builds on a growing consumer demand for quality local produce and an increased awareness of 'green' issues.

The CAMRA LocAle scheme was created in 2007 by CAMRA's Nottingham branch which wanted to help support the tradition of brewing within Nottinghamshire, following the demise of local brewer Hardys and Hansons. Following on from our Locale feature in Shakesbeer Spring 2013 we will be keeping you up to date on the most recent Locale accredited pubs. Below are our most recent locale conscriptors and so you should be able to track down a pint of beer produced with 30 miles of that pub.

Everyone benefits from local pubs stocking locally-brewed real ale...

- Public houses as stocking local real ales can increase pub visits
- Consumers who enjoy greater beer choice and diversity
- Local brewers who gain from increased sales
- The local economy because more money is spent and retained locally
- The environment due to fewer 'beer miles' resulting in less road congestion and pollution
- Tourism due to an increased sense of local identity and pride - let's celebrate what makes our locality different

Accreditation is at the sole discretion of the local CAMRA branch and subject to the licensee agreeing to the following...

- That they will endeavour to ensure at least one locally brewed real ale, as defined by the local branch, is on sale at all times
- Only real ale, as defined by CAMRA, can be promoted as a CAMRA LocAle
- Where the standard of real ale sold falls below an acceptable quality, accreditation will be withdrawn
- That accreditation can be withdrawn at any time at the discretion of the local branch
- That should accreditation be withdrawn, or should the licensee withdraw from the scheme, all LocAle publicity material must be removed from the pub and the licensee cease using the CAMRA LocAle logo.



Definition of Local

The Sustainable Communities Act, which CAMRA strongly supports, provides a definition of local as up to 30 miles from the point of sale. CAMRA recommends that the distance is calculated from the pub to the brewery and should be based on the shortest driving distance. Real ales from regional and national breweries as well as from microbreweries can be

regarded as "local" if they are brewed within what the branch has decided as being the local area.

How do I find a LocAle Pub?

Pubs which have been given LocAle status by their local CAMRA branch can display the LocAle sticker on their windows/doors. The stickers have the

year for which they have been accredited as LocAle pubs by their branch. They may also have posters up in the pub and on the pumps that are serving locally brewed beers there will be LocAle pump clip crowners.

To find a locale accredited pub in this area see the branch website and look for the <http://www.shakespearecamra.org.uk/rainshc/>

Stratford Ale House Stratford :: Fox & Hounds Great Wolford :: Howard Arms Ilmington :: Red Lion Little Compton :: Red Lion Long Compton :: George Hotel Lower Brailles :: White Hart Newbold-on-Stour :: Peacock Oxhill :: White Bear Shipston-on-Stour :: Plough Stretton-on-Fosse :: Gate Inn Upper Brailles :: Bell Inn Welford-on-Avon :: The Fleece Bretforton :: Crown & Trumpet Broadway Castle Edgehill :: Boars Head Hampton Lucy :: Queens Head Sedgeberrow :: Coach & Horses Shipston :: The Black Horse Inn Shipston The Falcon Stratford :: New Bulls Head (formerly The West End) Stratford :: The Bear Stratford :: Norman Knight Whichford Bidford Legion Bidford :: The Golden Bee Stratford :: Armouries Arms Pathlow :: The White Lion Alcester



Coach and Horses, Harvington Beer Festival

by BOB KIRBY

I vaguely recall that **THE COACH AND HORSES**, Harvington ran a really successful Beer Festival over the last weekend in September. Vaguely, because licensees Steve and Di allowed us to house our camper van on their car park all weekend so we could sample all the beers on offer, (14 including the regular *Greene King IPA* and choice of three in the bar), and memories blurred about number eight.



Of course, what we should have done was take more advantage of their new 'paddle of beers', three thirds for the price of a pint (pictured), though I'm sure the end result would have been the same. It was certainly the best use to date of the pub's stunningly refurbished function room, (skittle alley), which housed 10 of the ales and three of the ciders. A good range of real ales, both

and drink with the added delights of entertainment starting in the afternoon with Harvington's ladies choir The Songbirds, followed by The Harvington Ukulele Group winding the festival goers into a frenzy of sing-along fun. The evening saw Stratford based duo 'Rough and Ready' continue the good work.

Our best of intentions, to say thanks and leave early on Sunday were scuppered when landlord Steve announced all festival



● A paddle of beers

strength and styles, local and far-flung as well as four real ciders made sure there was something to suit all tastes. My own favourites were *Kinver Breweries 'Khyber'*, a 5.8% IPA and *Flipside's 'Russian Rouble'*, a deliciously dark and liquoricy stout weighing in at a mighty 7.3%. *The Rouble* amongst the beers and *Thundering Molly*, a 6.0% cider were clear favourites and I believe amongst the first to sell out. Day 2, Saturday saw plenty more to eat

“...landlord Steve announced all festival drinks were on sale at £2.00 pint and we were forced to stay another day, enjoy the atmosphere some more and crawl home on Monday after a third night in the car park...”

drinks were on sale at £2.00 pint and we were forced to stay another day, enjoy the atmosphere some more and crawl home on Monday after a third night in the car park. Much as I'd like to report on the Sunday evening 'Fun Quiz' I'm ashamed to say I was 'beered out' and missed it. I'm assured that, like the entire weekend it was great fun. If there is a model way to run a small successful beer festival then I think Steve, Di and the team at The Coach and Horses, have hit upon it. I and many others look forward to the next one.



Shakespeare CAMRA Good Beer Guide Selection Process

by PETE GO

Many people ask me what is a Good Beer Guide Pub. Well the simple answer is one that gets into the guide! However the process to obtain this status is a lengthy one and involves many CAMRA members throughout the area.

The purpose of the Good Beer Guide (GBG) is to inform people where they can obtain a good pint of beer across the whole of the UK and is a campaigning tool to promote real ale. If a pub is in the GBG it should be one where you, as a customer, feel that you have obtained good value for money and have experienced a good pint of real ale.

Beer quality has to be a starting point for selecting entries but cannot be the only consideration. The GBG should recommend pubs that not only offer excellent real ale but also excel in other areas. The selection processes needs to consider what a beer lover would like and expect. Also it needs to suggest not just pubs with quality real ale but those with unusual beer and a broad and varied selection. The range of pubs chosen for the guide has to appeal to a broad spectrum of pub goers, the

majority of whom want to visit pubs with not only good beer but a good atmosphere and a warm welcome, as well as good food, family facilities, clean toilets and comfortable surroundings.

The process starts around April of each year and comes to a conclusion in March the next year when the selection processes take place followed by the submission of pubs to be included in the GBG. A GBG pub is a place where you can consistently enjoy a very good pint of beer in a pleasant environment where you are made to feel welcome.

The most important factor in the selection of a pub is the quality of the beers served. It does not always depend on the beer range, or whether they are to everybody's individual style preferences, but just is it a pint that you feel is served as the brewer intended. This is a difficult one as everybody views beer in different ways and one of the reasons CAMRA introduced a beer scoring system:

www.camra.org.uk/nbss

A beer score is fine but how do you let others know about your experience? You can let the local branch know of how you

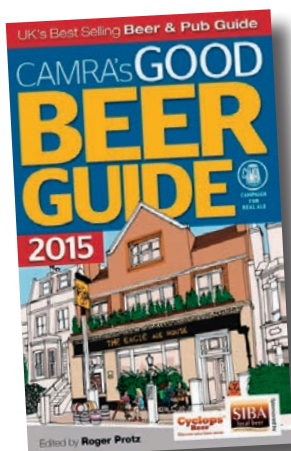
got on by passing on this information to them. There is now a fully functional system that enables this to take place and lies within the web site WhatPub?

whatpub.com

This site has been set up with the help of thousands of CAMRA members collating information on all the pubs within the UK. The site gives people a quick and easy guide to pubs in the area in which they are visiting. It is not a GBG listing but gives pub details including descriptions, opening times and location. If you are a CAMRA member you can log into the site to view pubs plus submit beer scores. These scores are collated into the CAMRA branch areas and each branch will review the beer scores within their branch. These beer scores are discussed at branch meetings and, most importantly, at the GBG selection meetings. They are reviewed to see where some pubs are failing in supplying good beer quality or where other pubs are on the up. Sometimes it highlights where more reviews by people on the committee are required to ensure that the system is fair and ensure that beer scores submitted are not biased by unscrupulous scorers, although this is rare.

Of course beer scores are not the only criteria for a GBG selection. For a pub to be put forward at the GBG selection meetings the whole array of what makes a good pub is discussed and people are encouraged to air their views. Factors of interest include:

- Price and value
- History and architecture



WHAT DO THE SCORES MEAN?

0. No cask ale available.

1. **Poor.** Beer that is anything from barely drinkable to drinkable with considerable resentment.
2. **Average.** Competently kept, drinkable pint but doesn't inspire in any way, not worth moving to another pub but you drink the beer without really noticing.
3. **Good.** Good beer in good form. You may cancel plans to move to the next pub. You want to stay for another pint and may seek out the beer again.
4. **Very Good.** Excellent beer in excellent condition.
5. **Perfect.** Probably the best you are ever likely to find. A seasoned drinker will award this score very rarely.

ADFREY, GBG SELECTION OFFICER, SHAKESPEARE BRANCH

- Food • Accommodation • Family facilities
- Disabled facilities • Gardens • Special/ community events • Cleanliness • Welcoming

At the first selection meeting a list of suitable pubs is proposed – this is about twice the branch GBG allocation in each county. Members then go out to each pub proposed to perform a review. The reviewer and landlord discuss the pub details by completing a GBG review form. It also gives further insights of the pub's eligibility because the reviewer has made a visit too. These forms are then submitted back to the GBG Selection Officer for entry onto the main CAMRA database and are discussed at the final selection meeting. The purpose of the final selection meeting is to propose the final pubs which are to be selected for the GBG plus any reserves if allowances become

available. There is a fair vote by people present at the meeting but this is not open to those who have a vested interest in the outcome of the process, such as landlords who are also members of CAMRA. The branch final selection list then goes onto CAMRA HQ in March who then compiles the GBG from the selections from all the CAMRA branches across the UK. Proofs are checked for updates and then the process finishes with the culmination of the press release of the GBG in early September. It makes a good read in paperback and is also available for you to download to your smart phone as well.

GBG 2016 SHORTLIST MEETING

Tues, 6th January 2015, 20:00-22:00

The Bear (Clopton suite), Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire, CV37 7LT

GBG 2016 FINAL SELECTION MEETING

Thur, 19th February 2015, 20:00 – 22:00

The Bear (Clopton suite), Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire, CV37 7LT

BUS TOUR - We are proposing running a bus tour around some of the pubs on the shortlist which have been earmarked for requiring further visits plus a GBG review. Those going on this trip are requested to attend the Final selection meeting to view their thoughts on each pub visited. The date of the trip will be the end of January/ February and will be a Saturday afternoon/ evening and the route will depend on the outcome of the Shortlist meeting – see web site for further details.

It would be great to see as many of you there as possible at the January and February Selection Meetings so please put the dates in your diaries for next year.

- Four Real Ales
- Real Cider
- 5 Star Food Hygiene Rating
- Cask Marque

plus *Quiz Night* every Sunday!

FOOD SERVED:

Traditional Pub Food & Sunday Lunches
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CAMRA
**Pub of the
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Spring 2013**



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Sat. 12-12 :: Sun. 12-11.30

Brewery News...

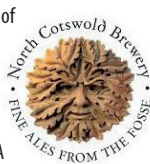
EVESHAM BREWERY

We learn recently that Evesham Brewery are brewing again and have been since September. They had been awarded silver in the 'Ale of the Festival' at Evesham Pie and Ale Festival. Mostly only available at Bar 24 at the moment, you will find 'Asum Ale' and 'Asum Gold' at £2.20 pint.



NORTH COTSWOLD

As it is the season, lovers of darker beers and North Cotswold ales will find their popular seasonal *Winter Solstice* available through until February. A traditional ruby easy drinking



winter warmer, 4.5%.

HOOK NORTON

Hook Norton along with their respective landlords and ladies were very pleased when the 2015 Good Beer Guide was launched to find 10 out of their 40 pubs with a place, one of which being our very own **THE GATE** at Brailles. Quite an achievement. In celebration of this you can see the shires - Major and Albert getting new shoes! You should also keep a look out for Hooky's new seasonal ale - *Greedy Goose* which is apparently is a honking good ale @ 4.2%.



WHALE ALE

We learn that the dynamic fellows over at Whale Ale have landed themselves with a three month contract (Jan to March 2015) to supply JD Wetherspoons nationally with their ever popular *Ruby Moby*. Ed and Tom are over the moon with this



opportunity and would love to you to tweet them a picture if you spot the beer in a Wetherspoons. tweet: @WhaleAleCo

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON BREWERY

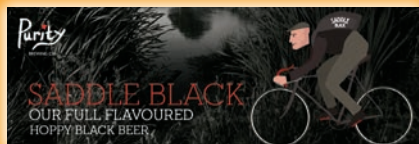
We often get to report on pub openings and closing, but not all that often on new breweries. So stop the press can report that now in operation they are busy finding their feet and perfecting brews. Anyone having frequented



THE STRATFORD ALE HOUSE over the last few months may have already sampled some of their beers (see front cover for full story).

PATRIOT

Tim Young, Brewery owner reports that he is experimenting with a new single hop from New Zealand called - Green Bullet Hop and has produced a very well received 5% beer GBH which he intends to put in to production in the next few weeks.



PURITY BREWING COMPANY'S

cycling inspired seasonal beer, *Saddle Black*, is now available again in cask. Re-launched for the winter again at Birmingham's Pure Bar and Kitchen, this popular beer will be available until April 2015.

This Warwickshire based brewery have always been big supporters of cycling and as well as releasing the beer, have also developed a range of cycling jerseys to celebrate their commitment to the cycling community.

Purity's Head Brewer and keen cyclist, Flo Vialan, created the beer following

discussions with the MD and mountain bike fanatic, Paul Halsey, about dedicating a drink to the British cycling community.

With a nod to Brookes England and Pashley Cycles (Midlands businesses) which Purity feels an affinity towards, the brewery set about creating a beer to reflect a synergy of values, passion and craftsmanship. The full flavoured, black beer uses chinook and cascade hops to give a full smoky and citrus aroma, combining a mix of black pepper, deep fruits, orange and spices. Roasted malts provide a taste of chocolate and espresso, while smoked malts ensure a

well-rounded finish for a full-bodied taste experience. *Saddle Black* comes in cask at 5.1% and is now bottled at a full bodied 7%. The drinks and cycling jerseys are now available online and at the brewery shop in Great Alne, near Stratford-upon-Avon, a popular cycling location and where the brewery proudly displays its branded Pashley Bike.



SADDLE BLACK

AVAILABLE IN
CASKS & BOTTLES
DRAUGHT ABV 5.1%
BOTTLE ABV 7%

OUR
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BLACK
BEER

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www.puritybrewing.com

Making Hogan's Cider

Are you interested in cider making? Like most CAMRA members, when I joined the campaign (some 35 years ago!) I was only interested in drinking ale. But nowadays I also like an occasional pint of cider (or three). It's a great thirst quencher and it's certainly not just a summer drink.

Hence, when I heard that our local University of the Third Age (U3A) had organised a trip to Allen Hogan's cider making plant, I was keen to go. I even joined the group to do so. U3A is for retired people and has the slogan: "Learn", "Laugh" & "Live".

We found out that, as Allen Hogan expanded from very small beginnings, he needed a bigger plant than was possible to install in Haselor where he started out. So he moved his operations to a farm which grows its own cider apple near the Malvern Hills in Worcestershire. In fact, it's just over the border from Herefordshire, which is the largest centre for growing cider apples in the world. Apparently south-east Herefordshire has no less than 10,000 acres of apple orchards (some 6,000 football pitches). That's a good location then! He still keeps his admin base in Haselor, however.

In 2005 Allen Hogan initially started pressing 6 tons of apples into cider but he now presses some 400 tons per annum. Now that's a big expansion but it doesn't compare with the really big boys. HP Bulmer is the biggest, pressing some 115,000 tons and using 25% of all apples grown in the UK. H Weston & Sons Cider is pretty big too, pressing some 25,000 tons a year. It is also only 10 miles from Allen's pressing plant and Allen uses them to carry

out the bottling and keging functions for his cider.

So how do you make cider? Very simply. Grow some apples, harvest them, squash them, mince them, let them rest for a while, press them, store them to let them ferment, let the sediment settle, pour off the liquid and drink it! Just like that! But of course, it's not quite that simple and, if you are making cider as a business, one big issue is how you get a consistent product.

We all know that brewers of ale try all sorts of recipes for their brews. They may choose to have the colour lighter or darker, the nose more fruity or citrusy or the flavour more

malty or hoppy. They choose different combinations of hops, malts and various tweaks etc and there you are! But what's even more important is that the recipe will guarantee a near identical product from each brew. Cider makers have no such luxury as the primary ingredient - cider

apples - vary considerably from variety to variety, from farm to farm and from year to year, depending on the weather. So what I was really interested in was how Hogan's manages to get consistency in the colour, nose, taste and aftertaste of the regular bag-in-boxes (i.e. real cider) brands that he makes and sells. He describes his regular boxes as follows:-

HAZY DAISY (3.9% abv) - a medium-sweet cider. Slightly cloudy in appearance,



this cider has an abundance of apple fruit aromas and flavours with a hint of citrus and berry, delicately balanced alongside apple sweetness.

PICKER'S PASSION (5.3% abv) - a delicious, easy drinking medium cider with a warm honey colour and a distinctive apple aroma, combining rich peaty undertones with the fresh taste of bittersweet apples.

PANKING POLE (6.2% abv) - a dry cider which gets its name from the long pole used in the orchard to shake the cider apple harvest from the trees. This is a classic



golden cloudy cider with typical cider apple bitterness and fruit aromas. Dry on the palate, its complex flavours deliver a strong finish.

So how does Hogan's get consistency with the taste of his ciders? After an initial blend, a final blend checks the sweetness and acidity of the cider. Fresh apples are then added at the blending stage to give a pleasant aroma and extra sweetness. I also found out:-

- there are over 300 varieties of cider apples;
- the taste of cider apples is much duller than eating apples;
- Kent & Suffolk cider makers tend to use eating, rather than cider apples, giving a thinner taste;
- the greater tannin content in cider apples results in a much richer taste; and
- that some mega cider makers add lots of glucose as a fermentable sugar and have some products which are close to the 25% legal minimum content of apples.

At the Hogan's plant the apples are washed and transported to be milled and pressed via gravity in water and a screw lifting device. They then rest before being pressed in an enormous Bucher-Guyer Swiss press. In fact, 65% of world apples production is pressed

by their equipment and the latest versions of their machines cost no less than £400k+ each. Wow!

This pressing process translates 75+% of the volume or 80+% of the weight of the apples into juice. His plant has six large fermentation vessels, which are used for different varieties & batches of apples. They are then blended before being transported to H Westons & Sons for bottling & kegging. The transportation is in 25 ton tankers.

Fermentation takes warmth to really get going, so it takes longer in winter than in summer. Therefore Allen adds a small amount of Champaign yeast to help the fermentation process in his 12 large fermentation tanks. An added bonus is that it gives more consistency of taste than completely relying on wild yeast. And that's all there is to it!

What a great day out. A big thanks you to Allen Hogan for investing his morning in showing us how his cider making plant works and to Alcester U3A for setting up the visit. I "learnt" a lot about cider making, I "lived" by enjoying several tasty ciders and I "laughed" a bit too! I shall certainly keep an eye open for any future trips on the U3A's agenda - perhaps they'll arrange a visit to a local brewery?



Cider News

HOGAN'S
CIDER

Hogans

Hogan's Cider, the award-winning Warwickshire based craft cider and perry makers, have reduced their on-line delivery charges by 50% in a bid to make their real cider and perry more affordable.

Allen Hogan said: "Cider is heavy to send through the post and our glass bottles mean our products are fragile. Historically this combination has meant expensive delivery charges."

Allen continued: "It seemed crazy to us, as we continue to expand globally, that



customers could buy a Hogan's Cider cheaper in Hawaii than in Hartlepool!" To redress this situation Hogan's Cider have re-negotiated their UK delivery charges and passed these savings directly on to their on-line customers. Sarah Edmunds, Marketing Manager at Hogan's Cider, said: "In 2013 on-line sales in the UK hit £91bn and now account for 1/5th of all retail spend. On-line shopping has changed the retail landscape forever and consumers now expect the convenience of on-line delivery without a price premium. We felt that our delivery charges needed to better reflect our customers' expectations."

Shakespeare CAMRA Autumn Pub of the Season

The Broom Tavern

We are pleased to announce that the **Autumn Pub of the Season** has been awarded to **The Broom Tavern**. A group of CAMRA members were pleased to make the presentation last week to the thrilled owners, Fritz Ronneburg and Richard Walton. Sharing the celebrations were also regulars enjoying a pint and a bite to eat on a cold November evening.

Pub of the Season is awarded to pubs who our local branch feel are in tune with CAMRA's aims and objectives. For example - beer quality and choice, community spirit and hosting beer and food festivals. Currently the Tavern is serving four handpulls plus a cider made up of two Purity Ales plus guests. They also make it their aim to use local produce wherever possible. Since The Broom Tavern has reopened, it has gone from strength to strength.....from once a uncertain future having closed its doors (with the threat of residential development), to now a thriving community local hub. Great food courtesy of Head Chef Fritz, together with a warm welcome from an attentive team make this 16th century pub a wonderful choice whatever the time of year.



The Broom Tavern



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www.thebroomtavern.co.uk

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 @TheBroomTavern

CAMRA's National Winter Ales Festival 2015

Where: The Roundhouse, Derby, DE24 8JE

When: Open from Wednesday 11th - Saturday 14th February 2015

In 2015 CAMRA's flagship National Winter Ales Festival will return to Derby for the second year running, with over 400 beers available the Festival will showcase some of the very best ales, ciders, perries, bottled world beers and mead in three separate areas.

In 2015 CAMRA's flagship National Winter Ales Festival will return to Derby for the second year running, with over 400 beers available the Festival will showcase some of the very best ales, ciders, perries, bottled world beers and mead in 3 separate areas. Located beside the Pride Park exit of Derby Railway Station (just 93 minutes from London) Derby's historic Roundhouse could not be in a more convenient location. Four Brewery Bars have been agreed: multi award winning *Blue Monkey* from Nottingham; innovative *North Star* from Derbyshire both in the Main Hall, Derby's

very own *Brunswick Brewing Company* in the Music Marquee and Yorkshire's shining gem *Brass Castle* in the Carriage Room. The National Winter Ales Festival is home to CAMRA's prestigious Champion Winter Beer of Britain Competition which sees the four winter styles of beer (porters, stouts, old ales/strong milds and barley wine/strong old ales) being gathered from across the UK to be judged and a winner declared. Though the festival itself has lots of pale beers and golden ales to choose from too. The website www.nwaf.org.uk will be updated regularly with details of

admission prices, live entertainment, tutored tastings and special hotel rates thanks to our partners at www.visitderby.co.uk

There are no advance tickets as this is a pay on the door event. Well behaved and supervised under 18s are welcomed until 19:00 each evening, after which they must leave due to a licencing requirement. The feedback from 2014 revealed that our customers loved the building, the beer quality and selection as well as the hot and cold food which was available. So why not join them and come and see Derby at its beerly best!!



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For further details contact Nigel on 01386 831173
Email: nigel@thefleeceinn.co.uk www.thefleeceinn.co.uk

Check out the website for forthcoming events

Shakespeare
CAMRA
Worcestershire
Pub of the Year
2013



The Cider Press



It's that time when all the cider producers are in full swing and we reported to you in the last edition, a simplified process on how this works. We are blessed in Shakespeare branch to have a small scale cider producer who also makes an event and quite a show out of this - so I took the family along to find out.

October saw the annual **Apple and Ale Festival** at **The Fleece**, Bretforton. This event held over a long weekend starting Friday is a wonderful event for all members of the family. The core part is the pressing of the apples for the years production ahead. This is done using a traditional very large screw press and takes in lots of local apples to produce juice for fermenting. To aid production and keeping to tradition along with muscle power, this

was assisted with some vintage Bamford stationary engines. This year also saw the opportunity to assist this with the addition of a blender mounted on a cycle - a very green way to crush the apples! Alongside the main event of the apple pressing, you will find a beer and cider festival taking place in the marquee with vintage apple and pear varieties and some great cheeses. Entertainment came in the form of local morris men and a traditional mummies play. I am sure I spotted landlord Nigel Smith dressed as granny smith. Children were also well catered for with a small skittles game and outdoor chess. A worthwhile visit with plenty to see and do.



You can find "real" cider in the following pubs in Shakespeare Branch...

- **CASTLE INN**, Edgehill, OX15 6DJ
- **CROWN AND TRUMPET**, Church Street, Broadway, WR12 7AE
- **OLD RED HORSE**, 17 Vine Street, Evesham, WR11 4RE
- **ROUND OF GRAS**, 47 Bretforton Road, Badsey, WR11 7XQ
- **THREE HORSESHOES**, Wixford, B49 6DG
- **WHITE LION**, Evesham Street, Alcester, B49 5DS
- **COACH & HORSES**, Station Road, Harvington, WR11 8NJ
- **FLEECE INN**, The Cross, Bretforton, WR11 7JE
- **LORD NELSON**, 69 Priory Rd, Alcester, B49 5EA
- **STRATFORD ALEHOUSE**, 12b Greenhill Street, Stratford-on-Avon, CV37 9QB
- **WHITE BEAR**, High Street, Shipston-on-Stour, CV36 4AJ

And hopefully more...





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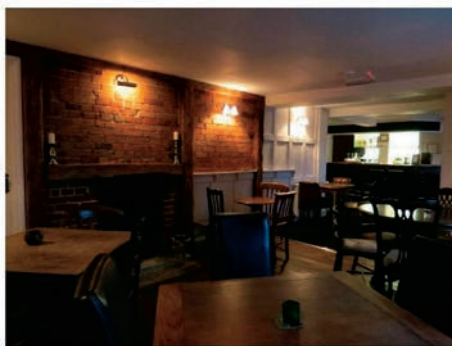
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Hop Production is Up!

by **ALAN WHITBREAD, FOLK SINGER & CONCERTINA PLAYER**
ALCESTER COURT LEET ALE TASTER www.alanwhitbread.co.uk

I recently saw a short article about hop production in the Daily Mail. Now I don't usually read the Daily Mail – it was pointed out to me! Anyway, it was good news – yes, good news – and in the Daily Mail as well! UK hop production was up, 65% over the last four years in fact.

And why, you may ask. It is all because the taste for real ale from small-scale “craft breweries” in the USA has had a phenomenal rise over the last few years. So much so that many of their brewers are seeking all sorts of hop varieties and importing hops from the UK. As we all know hop production in the UK has been declining since the heyday in the 19c. In a century UK hop acreage has plummeted from 77,000 to just 2,500 and now accounts for only 1.6% of world production. Germany and USA dominate global production with about 30% each. Now there are only 2,500 acres of hop fields in Britain – a fraction of what there once was. However, UK farmers sold 600 tonnes of hops in 2013 compared to 365 tonnes in 2009. Of course, due to the UK's milder climate, our hops take on more delicate, milder flavours and can be used to produce beers such as Indian pale ale. Britain's

hop farmers have been saved due to an overwhelming thirst for American real ale. The small American brewers want something distinctive to differentiate themselves, not only from the big boys but also from the beers produced by other craft brewers which, using USA hops, often have a piny, citrusy taste. Hop growing in the UK takes place in many counties, including Sussex, Kent & Surrey, but over half the production now comes from the West Midlands counties of Worcestershire, Herefordshire & Shropshire. Therefore, in 2013 the Hop growers in those counties came together as a marketing organisation, forming Hopshires (see www.thehopshires.co.uk). More strength to their arms! Apparently there are already 2,500 craft ale breweries in America, but analysts think that there are at least five years of good growth left, maybe ten. So get to it UK hop growers – increase your acreages!



“Now there are only 2,500 acres of hop fields in Britain – a fraction of what there once was. However, UK farmers sold 600 tonnes of hops in 2013 compared to 365 tonnes in 2009.”

We Did It

Landmark victory for pub goers and beer drinkers

News from
CAMRA HQ



Tim Page, CAMRA Chief Executive said:
"Today's landmark Parliamentary vote helps secure the future of pubs. CAMRA is delighted that, after ten years of our campaigning, MPs have today voted to introduce a market rent only option for licensees tied to the large pub companies - a move that will secure the future of the Great British Pub."
"The Government was defeated by 284 votes to 259 with MPs from all parties voting in favour of a new clause to the Small Business

**NO TO PUBCO
GREED**

YES TO PUBS



Bill that will empower pubco licensees to choose between a tied agreement and a market rent only agreement that will allow them to buy beer on the open market. Allowing over 13,000 pub tenants tied to the large pub companies the option of buying beer on the open market at competitive prices will help keep pubs open and ensure the cost of a pint to consumers remains affordable. The large pub companies will no longer be able to charge their tenants prices up to 60 pence a pint higher than open

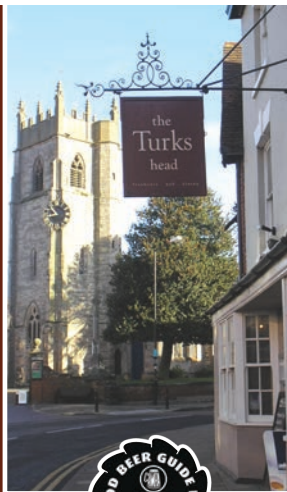


market prices."
"This simple choice should spell the end of pubco licensees being forced out of business through high rents and tied product prices. "Thank you to the 8000 CAMRA members and campaigners who lobbied their local MP to help make this happen and to those MPs that voted to support pubs. CAMRA are now urging the Government to accept the outcome of the vote."


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Gwen's Story

Aged 21 (ha!)

Warwickshire

Shakespeare Branch Secretary



CAMRA volunteer

I joined CAMRA years ago when living in Cambridgeshire – it seemed like a good idea at the time, as with the number of beer festivals I went to, it meant that I could get in for free. I then went on a few social events and through the local CAMRA Branch I started to find out what CAMRA was really all about. I soon felt committed enough to become a Life Member. After helping at a few beer festivals, it wasn't long before I was asked if I wanted to come along to the local Branch AGM – I left there as a member of the Committee as well as continuing to be involved with the Branch beer festivals.

Following relocation to Warwickshire in 2009, I sat on the side lines for a while until meeting up with the Shakespeare Branch on social events. They seemed a good crowd and when I attended some Branch meetings I found they had time for socialising as well as the formal meeting. So when in 2011 the Branch was in need of a Branch Secretary, I was happy to volunteer.

Branch meetings take place every month, if you're a CAMRA member who is happy to be contacted by email you will have seen reminders about these from me. But there is also a good social side to the Branch and it's great to meet up with like-minded people.

Now what will your story be...



Stratford Beer Festival - Beer of the Festival

A Visit to Exmoor Ales

Stratford Beer Festival, like many other CAMRA events, is the catalyst for a number of spin-off events, not least a trip to thank the brewer of the beer voted beer of the festival by our customers. This year, *'Exmoor Beast'* a delightfully dark porter with tastes of chocolate, coffee and treacle toffee was chosen from the 72 on offer and a trip to the Somerset town of Wiveliscombe, the home of *Exmoor Ales*, was on the cards.

Fortunately, for the 'confusion of pensioners', i.e. those Shakespeare CAMRA members who no longer work for a living, the Minehead Beer Festival, an annual pilgrimage took place just 15 miles from the brewery and presented the perfect prelude for our September visit. The majority of us arrived



at Wiveliscombe on the Tuesday to explore and ready ourselves for a brewery visit the following day. Courtesy of **THE WHITE HART HOTEL** we parked our various motorhomes and vans on the car park and one of our members even pitched a tent on the beer garden. Needless to say we eagerly partook of the ales excellent

food and not least first class breakfast at the hotel.

We were greeted at Exmoor Ales by Managing Director and owner, Jonathon Price who gave us a brief history of the breweries 35 years and showed us round the traditional, if somewhat old fashioned and labour intensive brewing process. We were introduced to head brewer Adrian Newman who accepted our grateful thanks and a Beer of the Festival Certificate from organiser Julian Stobinski.

Jonathon then took us to his work in progress, a new brewery site just a couple of hundred yards from the current set-up. Jonathon has huge ideas including an element of modernisation, eco friendliness and at least doubling the brewery's current output of 10,000 brewer's barrels, (about 2.9 million pints).

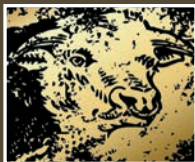
Immensely impressed by the new site, the plans and the intention of being in operation by Christmas we invited Jonathon to lunch with us and all retired to The White Hart Hotel for refreshments and more chat. It was only after he had gone back to work that we were informed that he'd left 'gift packs' and bottles of

Exmoor Beast to share for all those who visited. This was the absolute pinnacle to an already superb visit and needless to say, we went away a very happy bunch. Our heartfelt thanks to Jonathon and Adrian for our welcome and their generosity but most importantly, for brewing such wonderful beer.



Julian presents the 'Beer of the Festival' certificate to Adrian Newman (centre) and Jonathon Price (right)





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The Editor reserves the right to amend or shorten contributions for publication.
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200 and still counting!

Shakespeare CAMRA member, John Ross, has been recording and counting each pub he visits for the first time, each year. In past years, he has logged just over 200 pubs per year. This year he recorded his 200th pub on 6th October.

"On that date we (John & Sue) visited **THE OLD SPOT INN** at Dursley, previous CAMRA National Pub of the Year, where we informed the landlady of this momentous occasion and explained the significance of our visit. John enjoyed a pint of Gloucestershire Stout and Sue had a half of cider along with a "light" lunch – which turned out to be mega.

After lunch we were presented with a chocolate brownie pud with a candle, 2 pints of stout to take home, an Old Spot souvenir glass and an Uley bar towel – gobsmacked.

Many thanks to The Old Spot Dursley and the welcoming staff – looking forward to our next visit."

*Yours
Sue and John Ross*



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Contact "Shakesbeer" at **shakesbeer@shakespearecamra.org.uk**

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- Our monthly newspaper, 'What's Brewing', informing you on beer and pub news and detailing events and beer festivals around the country.
- Reduced entry to over 160 national, regional and local beer festivals.
- Socials and brewery trips, with national, regional and local groups.
- The opportunity to campaign to save pubs and breweries under threat of closure.
- The chance to join CAMRA / Brewery Complimentary Clubs that are exclusive to CAMRA members. These clubs offer a variety of promotions including free pint vouchers, brewery trips, competitions, and merchandise offers.
- Discounts on all CAMRA books including the Good Beer Guide.



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The Merry Little Hop

with Alan Whitbread, Folk Singer & Concertina Player,
Alcester Court Leet Ale Taster www.alanwhitbread.co.uk



Here's a little song about hops. It has an infectious chorus and a chance to experience a cocktail of beer, whisky, rum, gin, brandy and cider without the hangover! It was written by Graeme Miles (1935-2013) from Darlington. He made a big name for himself as a singer/songwriter, with his lyrics about the grime of Teesside and the feelings of real people.

He had a number of jobs during his life, including being a warden at Westerdale Youth Hostel, a stonebreaker (but not as a convict!) and an archivist at Middlesbrough's Dorman Museum. But his passion was songwriting. In the 60s he became a national name when he had a radio programme with Ewan McColl and Peggy Seeger, the American folk idol. And in 2012 he was honoured to receive the English Folk Dance and Song Society's Gold Badge, which is awarded for outstanding achievement.

He didn't write love songs or songs with girl's names. He wrote about everyday life, mostly being poetic about Teesside - and getting poetic about Teesside takes a real gift. He wrote songs entitled "Ring of Iron" & "Blue Sunsets", describing the pollution, the grime & hard working conditions of Teesside industries, "Sea Coal" about gathering & selling coal thrown up by the tide and "Shores of Old Blighty", describing the emotions of the emigrated servicemen heading to Germany.

He also wrote humorous songs. For

instance, there was "The Woeful Scarecrow", which catalogued the woeful life of a scarecrow - having to stand still, with no rest for his arms, with the hot burning sun & cold winter rains and with a pauper's clothes to wear & a heart full of sorrow. Shame!

I particularly like "The Duchess of Kent" about a visit to open a new hospital ward, which ended up with Duchess & Mayor drinking too much ale at the now-closed Baltic Tavern, Ayesome, Middlesbrough, a pub which had a reputation for hard drinking and accommodating ladies of the night. One verse was "Now the beer in the Baltic were heavy, the beer in the Baltic were strong. The Duchess went wild over a pint of brown mild and was singing The Match Factory song".

Where did it all come from? In the words of Brian Peters, a famous contemporary folk singer: "Such economy, such an eye for detail and such devastating social comment. That's genius!"

*In the words of Brian Peters, a famous contemporary folk singer:
"Such economy, such an eye for detail and such devastating social comment. That's genius!"*



The Merry Little Hop...

God bless the merry little hop
That brings us all good cheer
For without the merry little hop
We would never know strong beer
We would never know strong beer

Here's praise indeed for the barley malt
From which fine whiskies come
And praise indeed for the sugar in the
cane

From which does come brown rum
And praise indeed for juniper
With its berry black as sin
For without the juniper tree
We'd not know fiery gin. Hey!
God bless ...

Here's praise indeed for the golden grape
That hangs upon the vine
For without the golden grape
We'd not know brandy wine
And praise indeed for the apples on the
bow

That in the autumn grow
For without the apples on the bow
Sweet cider we'd not know. Hey!
God bless...

And so we raise our glasses high
To admire that amber glow
There's not a brewer throughout the land
Who'd not have us to know
That the ale he brews is honest and true
The finest and the best
But without the merry little hop
It would never pass the test
God bless...

And now we'll put our glasses down
All empty to the dreg
We'll call on the landlord good and loud
To tap another keg
And as we watch the liquid flow
And admire that glorious sound
We'll raise our glasses one more time
And sing another round
God bless...

IF YOU WANT TO HEAR AND JOIN IN WITH THE CHORUSES OF TRADITIONAL SONGS IN THE SHAKESPEARE CAMRA AREA, TRY THE FOLLOWING PLACES:-

- Second Tue at **THE COTTAGE OF CONTENT** at Barton (over the river from Bidford) B50 4NP
- Every Thu at **THE FLEECE** at Bretforton (a NT property in the GBG) WR11 7JE
- First Fri at **THE NORMAN KNIGHT** at Whichford (GBG) CV36 5PE
- First Sun at **THE GATE** at Upper Brailes OX15 5AX
- Second Sun at **THE BLUE BOAR** at Temple Grafton (near Binton) B49 6NR
- Third Sun at **THE MARY ARDEN** at Wilmcote CV37 9XJ
- Fourth Sun at **THE BLACK HORSE** at Shipston on Stour CV36 4BT



Shakespeare Branch Diary and Beer Festival Round up



DECEMBER

- 9th** Branch Meeting & Social pub walk about, **THE LORD NELSON**, Alcester
13th CAMRA West Midlands Regional Meeting, **BOWLING GREEN**, Lichfield, WS13 6QJ
27th CAMRA West Midlands Regional Awards, **BARTON ARMS**, B6 4UP

JANUARY 2015

- 6th** GBG long list selection meeting, **THE BEAR**, Stratford CV37 7LT
14th Beer Festival Planning Meeting, **STRATFORD ALE HOUSE**, CV37 6LF
20th Branch Meeting, **THE THREE HORSESHOES**, Wixford B49 6DG

FEBRUARY

- 5th to 7th** **TWESBURY WINTER ALE FESTIVAL** GL20 5PX www.twesburycamra.org.uk
11th Beer Festival Planning Meeting, **COACH AND HORSES**, Harvington WR11 8NJ
6th to 7th **REDDITCH WINTER ALE FESTIVAL** B97 4LB www.redditchwaf.org.uk
17th Branch Meeting, **THE PEACOCK**, Oxhill CV35 0QU
19th GBG Final selection for 2016 entries, **THE BEAR**, Stratford CV37 7LT

MARCH

- 11th** Beer Festival Planning Meeting, **THE FLEECE**, Bretforton, WR11 7JE
17th Branch Meeting, **THE GEORGE**, Shipston, CV36 4AJ

See Shakespeare CAMRA web site for the latest news and updates on meetings: www.shakespearecamra.org.uk

CAMRA Branch Contacts

- **Chairman:** LLOYD EVANS chair@shakespearecamra.org.uk
- **Secretary:** GWEN GODFREY secretary@shakespearecamra.org.uk
- **Treasurer:** SUE ROSS treasurer@shakespearecamra.org.uk
- **Membership:** JOHN ROSS membership@shakespearecamra.org.uk
- **Pubs Officer:** KEITH BARKER pubs@shakespearecamra.org.uk
- **APPLE Contact:** JOHN ROSS cider@shakespearecamra.org.uk
- **Branch Contact:** KEITH BARKER contact@shakespearecamra.org.uk
- **Branch Young Members Contact:** TOM COYTE bymc@shakespearecamra.org.uk
- **Campaigns Officer:** JASON NORLEDGE campaigns@shakespearecamra.org.uk
- **Editor - Shakespeare Newsletter:** JASON NORLEDGE shakesbeer@shakespearecamra.org.uk
- **GBG Selection Officer:** PETE GODFREY gbg@shakespearecamra.org.uk
- **Public Affairs Officer:** JASON NORLEDGE publicaffairs@shakespearecamra.org.uk
- **Social Secretary:** JOHN BLOOMFIELD socials@shakespearecamra.org.uk
- **Website:** KEITH BARKER websupport@shakespearecamra.org.uk

Are you interested in joining your local Shakespeare CAMRA committee?

We would like to hear from you if you could help us to help our local members.

Do you have a few spare moments during the week you could help our local committee with organising social events - if so we would like to hear from you. Or could you assist in gathering news or assist publishing this magazine by being part of our editorial team. What about liaising with the local landlords and pubs within our branch? If so we would like to hear from you however much time you can spare in any capacity.

Please contact us if you have any questions or would like to join: chair@shakespearecamra.org.uk





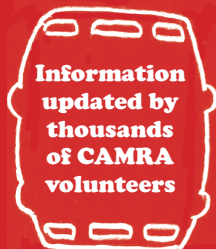
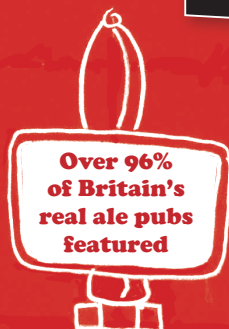
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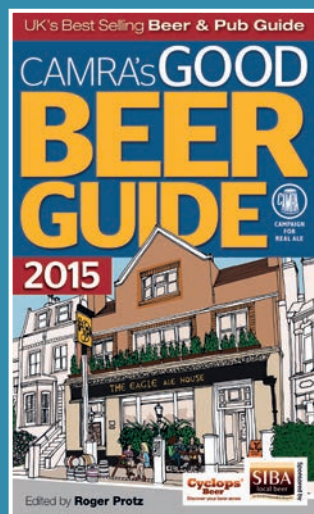
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*Further discounts available by phone or visit www.camra.org.uk/gbg

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Shakespeare's CAMRA Pub of the year 2012

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Black Rat Cider - 4.7%
<http://www.molesbrewery.com>



Stroud Brewery
Ding Dong - 4.2%
<http://www.stroudbrewery.co.uk>



Stroud Brewery
Tom Long - 3.8%
<http://www.stroudbrewery.co.uk>



Moles Brewery
Black Rat Perry - 7.5%
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Winter evenings and Christmas get-togethers are perfect for sharing good times with friends and family. But no festive gathering would be complete without our 'little friend' Butty Bach – a smooth, satisfying premium ale brewed using locally grown Fuggles, Goldings and Bramling Cross hops. 4.5% ABV

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