



Issue 47 Winter 2011

FREE
Please
take one



Shakesbeer

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

Pubs under threat ...what YOU can do about it

We all know that pubs are continuing to shut at an alarming rate. Statistics from the British Beer and Pub Association show that there are still as many as 25 a week shutting. Last year about 1,300 pubs were lost for good and that represents about 13,000 jobs.

Theories abound as to why this is the case, ranging from supermarket trading to the impact of the smoking ban and our own changing leisure habits. There is probably some truth in them all.

CAMRA's own research has shown that almost twice as many 'tied' pubs close for good compared to those 'free of tie'.

In a tied pub the landlord is obliged to buy beer from the company from which the premises are leased. (Punch Taverns and Enterprise Inns are the market leaders). This generally means that the tenant pays substantially more for beer than independent publicans, who are free

to buy from any supplier and as a result can shop around for the best deals.

CAMRA has been tirelessly battling this inequality for a number of years with successive governments and the Office of Fair Trading. More recently they forced a parliamentary inquiry which recommended fundamental reforms requiring Pub Companies to provide free of tie and guest beer options.

The Parliamentary Select Committee recognised that the big pub companies are slowly destroying countless pubs through excessive rental demands and inflated wholesale beer prices but we now need the Government to act on the Committee's

response.

So far more than 3,000 people have contacted their MPs and asked them to tell the Government that now is the time for Pub Company reform, but just one final push is needed to convince the Government to act on the Committee's recommendations.

Please take just 2 minutes to visit the campaign website at <http://bit.ly/backpubwatch>, or use the CAMRA website, www.CAMRA.org.uk, to send a pre-written email to your MP asking them to call on the Government to back these recommendations.



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See our website www.shakespearecamra.org.uk



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SHARE OUR TASTE FOR REAL LIFE

Pub News...

Cleeve Prior, Evesham

A branch welcome to a new team breathing fresh life into **The Kings Arms** as partners Bryan Marshall, front of house and chef Peter Seville took over this Enterprise lease in early September. Both huge fans of real ale and good food, the couple are already exploring the variety of beers they can offer, possibly through the SIBA scheme and playing with menus. Two beers on offer when we visited, Adnams Southwold and Otter Bitter, made a pleasant change and were in excellent condition. In a battle against a growing trend of fast food the couple are introducing 'Slow Down Sunday' where slow cooked classics such as rolled belly of lamb and heels of beef will be on offer. The general dining offer though will be quite flexible with everything from pub classics to a full a la carte menu available.

The pub is certainly a leap of faith as neither have previous hands on pub experience, although Bryan has worked, (front of house), in a Michelin Starred restaurant. This is Peter's first kitchen after training, following a successful run in BBC's 'Masterchef' where he came in



10th out of 20,000 entrants. Certainly the couple are proving a hit with locals and attracting discerning drinkers and food lovers. We wish them the very best of luck in their venture.

Alcester

Another real ale pump in Alcester, this time at **The Turks Head**, High Street. Amongst much 'pomp and ceremony' branch member the Reverend Cannon David Capron launched a fourth pump early in October. Licensee Carl Buxton says he installed a fourth pump at the Turks in response to customer demand after discussing various options with



regulars and decided to do so 'with a bit of theatre' to coincide with National Real Ale Week.

We are certainly happy to see it and very happy that Carl turns over sufficient quantities of real ale to warrant it.

Oxhill

Close but no cigar for Pam and Yvonne at **The Peacock** who narrowly missed a national accolade in the Morning Advertiser Pub Awards. Our own respect and admiration goes out to them though as one of the most active charity fundraising pubs in the area. So far this year a local pub quiz added £300 to £700 collected in sponsorship

by two locals participating in The Great North Run, £300 was raised for local charity Shipston Home Nursing and a quiz and raffle raised over £500 for 'First Response' a local organization first to arrive at accidents etc. and assess the need for paramedics and other services. It's a wonder the locals have any money left over for beer!

Stratford

Huge congratulations on two fronts to landlord Roger, wife Helen and all the team at **The West End**. First the pub's inclusion in the CAMRA Good Beer Guide 2012, an accolade indeed, and second,

the Shires Magazine Overall Award of Excellence for pub food.

The pub keeps a range of real ales from around the UK as well as regularly featuring local brewers such as North Cotswold. More importantly their first Beer Festival took place over two

days in November and featured ales from Scotland, Lake District, Isle of Man and many areas of England and Wales. Proceedings commenced at 1230 on Friday 25th when the Festival was opened by The Mayor, Mr. W. Dowling. In Roger's own words, "We try to offer something for everyone, both our regulars and new faces". They're certainly doing that.

Shipston

Alas **The Falcon**, of which we had such hopes, has closed its doors. There is, however, work going on in there and we expect it to reopen with a new landlord in early December.

Pub News...

Stratford

Excellent news from our one of our Good Beer Guide favourites. **The Bear at The Swan's Nest** are adding beer pump number 8 extending their range still further. The majority (6 out of 8) will be dedicated to regional beers and the other two to 'nationals'. Our man in Stratford is still nagging for a permanent real cider so...watch this space.

Evesham

They're just trying to get us worried. **Strawberry Fields** closed its doors in mid-October but only for about three weeks. Following a major refurbishment it now boasts a new front extension, posh loos and new furniture and fittings. At least the beer has stayed the same.

Wickhamford... again Even the most illustrious publications get it wrong sometimes. Frank and

Sharon, who we welcomed to **The Sandy's Arms** in the last issue, didn't stay long and actually left the pub before the newsletter was published. Now we welcome Laura Milward and partner Benj Carter who, just to add to the confusion will be getting married about the time this issue is published and so will be Laura and Benj Carter. The couple were living in the village when the pub came available and leapt at the chance to run it. Dumbleton born Laura appreciates the good local crowd who use the Sandy's but hopes that a period of consistent management might encourage back many villagers driven away by the recent repeated changes. Benj, a chef for over ten years intends to enhance the menu and increase restaurant turnover and between them the couple will bring in live entertainment and quiz nights to amuse the customers. The beers, Bass as a regular and one changing guest will remain the same. We wish Laura and Benj the very best of

luck and trust their stay will be long and successful.

Shipston

A worrying sight for Jim Sargeant, our 'deep south correspondent' when he saw a 'For Sale' sign outside **The Black Horse**, Shipston and the pub closed in late October. Fortunately it stayed closed for just a week whilst temporary managers Debbie and Stuart moved in. Apparently our 'Yorkshire lasses', Victoria McFarlane and mum Sue who ran the pub since August 2008 left before Jim had a chance to say 'goodbye' so if they're reading this, 'thanks and goodbye' and wherever you are we wish you well.

Alcester

The Roebuck looked totally gutted when we drove past in October. Good news is this is for a total refit and with luck it should open as another real ale venue before Christmas. Keep em coming!

Bidford

A big branch welcome to Kevin and Lesley Haywood who took over **The Bulls Head** on 2nd September. Both Birmingham born and raised they moved to Bidford three years ago and are delighted to take on a pub they both enjoyed as customers. No

major changes planned, just a bit of decoration and some rearranging to take advantage of the open fireplace. The couple aim to keep the traditional pub atmosphere with plenty of pub teams, regular music sessions and a popular food trade, (which may extend to include Sunday lunches in the near future).

Kevin had no previous experience on the working side of the bar but he is passionate about his real ales, has joined the local CAMRA branch and hopes to stage a beer festival in the pub garden next year. There is a 10% discount to CAMRA members on food and a discount on real ale is under consideration.

Mid November saw an ale tasting

ceremony arranged by local 'Bellman', (Town Crier) Rory Duff, where Bidford ale taster Richard Aston and very special guest Frank Speirs gave the thumbs up to the

Bulls Head

beers. Aged 87 Frank was born in the pub when it was run by his father and worked there for a while when his brother Fred took over some 25 years ago. Certainly he's their longest serving regular and still enjoys a pint.



● Kevin and Lesley Haywood



More Pub News...

Locally Produced, Fresh, Seasonal Food with Fantastically Conditioned Ales and a Great Atmosphere

Debbie and the team will welcome you and ensure your stay is enjoyable whilst behind the scenes our four very talented chefs led by Sam take great pride in sourcing only the finest quality local produce and prepare all of our food freshly on the premises.

All our menus are available throughout our Bar and Restaurant areas as well as our Patio & Gardens. We regularly change our menu to ensure we use fresh seasonal produce and the specials boards change every few days.

The Original Golden Cross Faggots are Back!! People used to travel from far and wide for The Golden Cross Faggots. We have secured the original recipe and have brought them back, the only thing missing are the dolls to watch you eat them (for those that remember) DON'T MISS OUT!

Christmas Fayre Menu

December 1st - 24th



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12pm to 12am Friday & Saturday • 12pm to 10.30pm Sunday
Food 12pm to 2.30p & 5pm to 9pm Mon to Fri
12pm to 9pm Saturday and 12pm to 8pm Sunday

A change of licensee at The Golden Cross sees Debbie Honychurch take the reins

Debbie has worked at **The Golden Cross**, Ardens Grafton for over 5 years and managed it for the previous licensee for the last 3½. She is delighted now to have the opportunity to put her own mark on this popular Charles Wells local.

In her own words she looks forward to 'bringing it back to the village' and in 5 weeks, (at the time of talking), since taking over had already staged a number of local events raising over £1000 for charity. She is certainly injecting a local flavour with lots of interest in the Christmas Markets which will run every Sunday in December featuring local produce sold by the locals and photographs of local scenes by photographer Marge Garth Pritchard whose pictures will adorn the walls.

Debbie's not alone in her endeavours however: as well as giving plenty of credit to her kitchen and front of house teams, she says she's ably assisted on occasions by village born and bred boyfriend, local carpenter, Howard Benjamin.

Debbie's biggest boast however is the return of the '**Original Golden Cross Faggot**' which, apparently people used to travel many miles to sample. The pub has secured the original recipe and are now proud to bring them back to the menu. For those who remember, the only thing missing are the rather scary china dolls around the walls which used to watch you eat.

● Howard and Debbie



See our website www.shakespearecamra.org.uk



Pub News...

Evesham

It's great to see new manager Sean Rudd hit the ground running as he returned to the **Olde Swanne Inn** just in time for the Autumn beer festival. Sean previously worked here as Assistant Manager under both Joel Moniz and Dave Waddell before heading off for a stint in Worcester's **Postal Order** and has always had a hand in cellar work and beer quality.



Sean's had plenty of experience outside of the Wetherspoons chain; some Alcester members may remember him from **The Nelson** where he worked a couple of years ago and before that he worked for Greene King, (hardly surprising as he was born in Bury St Edmunds), where he was assistant manager in another Good Beer Guide pub in South Wales. A keen ale drinker himself Sean has been enjoying the light hoppy beers of summer but says his favourite tipple is Saddlers Mud City Stout. Obviously a man

of discerning taste then we wish him all the best in Evesham and expect great things.

Alcester

Congratulations once again to Shaz and the irrepressible Dave at **The White Lion** who raised an impressive £377 for Breast Cancer Care at their **Pink Casino** night in October.

The pub continues to pull in the punters with regular events such as 'Sizzling Mondays', a weekly speciality sausage night, quizzes and community events. We also look forward to Dave's first offer of Burns Night entertainment on Friday 27th January when he promises that Poetry and Haggis will be plentiful.

The growing success might of course be due to the excellent ales and ciders on offer especially now that a third real ale pump has been fitted courtesy of Wadworth brewery. This means we should find at least two ales and a cider on

at any time. We also look forward to a 'Meet the Wadworth Brewer' night in the near future.

Stratford

Despite being arranged quite late in the day licensee Luke Murphy was delighted with the turnout when customers were invited to meet Hook Norton at **The Salmon Tail**, Stratford. Brewery reps Ian Sparrow and Serena Williams held court and answered questions armed with malts and hops used in Hook Norton beers as well as samples of the beers themselves. Flagship, Hooky Bitter and Hooky Dark were on offer and very nice they were too!



● Hook Norton Rep Serena Williams entertains Shakespeare CAMRA at The Salmon Tail

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Broom

It looks like one of the branch's best kept secrets is stepping up to the mark and entering the real ale fray. The beautiful 16th century **Broom Hall Inn** under the stewardship of licensee David Carvell has revamped the cellar and installed four handpulls. Three of the four will be dedicated to real ale, exactly which ales are still to be decided and will be based on customer preference, the fourth is dedicated to real cider and Thatchers *Cheddar Valley* is the first to be trialled. The family owned **Broom Hall Inn** is a little off the beaten track, set back from the road between Bidford and Wixford. It is popular with locals but does attract discerning diners from all over to enjoy its celebrated steak meals, log fires and friendly atmosphere. Now it can attract discerning drinkers too and as it's open from 10.00am to midnight everyday, there's plenty of time to enjoy the beers on offer.



CAMRA's Great British Pubs

A new publication described as 'the ultimate celebration of the nation's favourite pastime' and two of our local pubs make the grade.

Beer writer Adrian Tierney-Jones, details over 200 public houses in 23 categories that make up CAMRA's Great British Pubs, with listings and full-colour photography illustrating a host of excellent pubs from the seaside to the city and from the historic to the ultra-modern.

Our own Hooky gems **The Castle**, Edge Hill and **The George Hotel**, Lower Brailes have both made the coveted pages.

The Castle described in visual terms as 'a showstopper' is commended for its 'tranquil garden' and 'magnificent scenery'. The book also praises their 'Boozy Bullock' Pie, made with mild and the range of vegetarian food available.

The book attributes the success of

The George Hotel simply

as 'rooms, good food and beer' and reads, ...this is an inn in the

full sense of the word, offering good food and drink and sleeping time that the monks of the middle ages would have been proud of."

Of course there's an excellent range of Hook Norton beers in both pubs too!

There's plenty more information but to find it you should really buy the book, £14.99 from all good booksellers.



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Shakespeare's CAMRA Worcestershire pub of the year 2008-09

During December and January come along to our Christmas and Winter mini beer festival, with our two featured beers shown below, as well as other welcome guest ales.

Please call for Christmas Party menus.



Stroud Brewery Ding Dong - 4.5%

A dark, warming porter with rich liquorice, a hint of Christmas spice and easy enough to drink several pints!

<http://www.stroudbrewery.co.uk>



Stanway Brewery Lords - a - Leaping - 4.5%

A dark full bodied beer with a strong crystal malt character. Name derived from Stanway House and the traditional Christmas song.

<http://www.stanwaybrewery.co.uk>

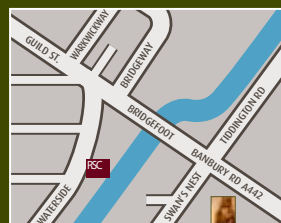
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Closing date for copy for the next issue of **Shakespeare's Beer** is **13th February 2012**

Pies, pies...

A real party atmosphere pervaded Evesham's Market Place and Abbey in September as the town celebrated its first **Pie and Ale Festival**. Councillor James Bulman, Mayor of Evesham started the celebrations when he opened the event in the morning and over a thousand people joined in the fun throughout the day visiting more than forty stalls and enjoying amongst other things ferret racing, traditional Punch and Judy and a

Circus Skills Workshop. Celebrity chef and celebrated 'Pie Man' Tom Bridge was on hand throughout the day and judged the main event, the pie making competition which had over fifty entries both amateur and professional. More importantly there was plenty of beer and cider available from Purity and Sadlers breweries to wash it all down. There were plenty of happy winners following the judging but the biggest I

think were the residents of Evesham who can hopefully look forward to a repeat event next year.



● The Mayor of Evesham, Cllr. James Bulman, Mayoress and 'Pie Man' Tom Bridges

A Party...

An excellent turnout at The Bell paid tribute to our three founder members and a number of others particularly instrumental in the development of Shakespeare CAMRA.

Three Ales from the Greene King stable gave us a range of tastes and strengths and a very fine buffet laid-on by licensees Shirley and Colin Simpson kept us well contented. Plenty of memorabilia was brought along by the ancients and we were delighted to hear what it was like in their day. One of the highlights of the night were cakes decorated with the branch logos and a large 'photo-cake' picturing our founders all baked and organised by Katie Williams our membership Secretary. Interestingly, it didn't go unnoticed that having ceremoniously cut the cake our founders all ate their own heads.



● Left to right Rev. David Capron, Mike McVie, Vaughan Hully, Alan Whitbread, Bob McVie and Andrew Scott

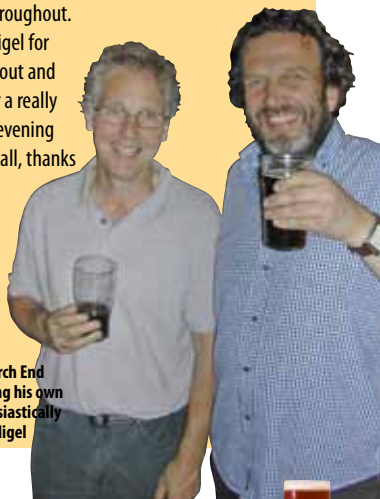
...and more Pies

It was certainly a month for pies as they featured as an added attraction at a 'Meet the Brewer' evening at **The Fleece**, Bretforton in early October. The £5.00 deal included a pie, chips and peas supper and a pint of beer or cider before we were introduced to Stuart Elliott, brewer from Church End Brewery, near Nuneaton, Warwickshire.

Stuart gave us samples of five different beers from the Church End Range whilst showing us and talking through the various hops and malts which gave the beers their distinctive flavours and body. It was fascinating to be able to see and taste the difference additional hops or darker malts would make and Stuart kept the rapt attention of the assembled company throughout.

Thanks to Nigel for sorting this out and to Stuart for a really interesting evening but most of all, thanks for finally answering the age old question, 'Who ate all the Pies?'

● Stuart, Church End Brewer enjoying his own product enthusiastically supported by Nigel



Brewery News

Wye Valley

October saw Wye Valley Chairman Peter Amor eating a home made Dorothy Goodbody's Wholesome Stout Chocolate Cake as he celebrated 25 years as landlord of The Barrels, Hereford. Sounds great but I'm afraid it was a one off baked by one of his regulars.

Another 'one off' - a chance to try the last remaining bottles of 'Wye Not' (4.5%abv) a malty flavoured bottle conditioned ale made for the Sainsbury's beer challenge. The beer made the final 8 from over 120 entries but didn't win and therefore won't be regularly available. The remaining stocks are on sale via the Wye Valley Shop at the brewery or via their website www.wyevalleybrewery.co.uk/shop. With winter approaching we can look forward to some exciting monthly specials; Through December,

Christmas Whiskers, (4.5%abv), described as copper coloured, full bodied with a spicy blackcurrant finish. The new year brings us *Dorothy Goodbody's Ruby Ale*, (4.7%), roasted malt, balanced by a little sweetness and a hoppy finish. Finally, to match the gold of the daffodils and celebrate St David's Day, *Cwrw Dewi Sant*, (4.4%) will be available throughout February. It's a smooth and creamy premium bitter, burnished gold in colour and luckily we don't have to pronounce it, just point and drink.



Purity

Purity continues to support local events and their beers are popping up all over the area and not just in pubs. They featured strongly at Inkberrow festival in September, were well received at Evesham Pie and Ale Festival and were paired with a variety of cheeses at Stratford Food Festival.

Further afield there was more cause for celebration as all three Purity beers won accolades from SIBA at their Midlands Beer Competition, part of the Robin Hood Beer Festival at Nottingham Castle on 13th October.

Pure Gold was awarded Gold in the Standard Bitters section and now goes through to compete at the National Beer Competition in February. *Mad Goose* won Silver in the Best Bitters section and *UBU*, bronze in the Premium Bitters. Sixty four breweries entered the competition and about 40 to 50 ales from each category competed for these coveted awards. Accolades indeed to the quality and consistency of Purity beers.

North Cotswold Brewery Ltd.

Lots going on at Ditchford Farm with the newly formed North Cotswold Brewery Ltd. The first new face was Max B, (B for brewdog), a handsome and characterful beer swilling Boxer dog. Next, Tim McCord who entered into partnership with brewer Jon Pilling from the end of October. The new listed company are looking forward to updating branding on both cask and bottled beers and to even greater

involvement in pubs and events around the area.

Over recent weeks North Cotswold were major sponsors of **The West End** beer festival in Stratford at which the *Autumn Ale* (4.0%) was well appreciated. As Autumn stocks run down however we look forward to some exciting winter brews like their own Christmas pudding of a beer, *Blitzen* (6.0%), *Winter Solstice* (4.5%) which should be available until the end of February and of course, not for the faint hearted, *Monarch IPA* (10%).



Great real ales at your local!



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Brewery News

Patriot Brewery

Patriot have ensured their continuing success by having the brewery 'blessed' by a visiting Morris group from Cheshire - even if the blessing doesn't work it seems they drank enough to keep the brewery afloat for the foreseeable future.

All the beers appear to be selling well with *Pug I.P.A.* (5.6%), *Kiwi* (4.1%) and *Morris Brew*, (a delightfully hoppy 3.8%) now entrenched as regular brews. *Morris Brew* in particular is winning accolades having won 'Beer of the Festival' at Littleworth recently and before that, runner-up at both North Oxford and Hook Norton festivals. It was also one of the first to run out at our own.



Bird's Brewery

Look out for Bird's latest offering, '*Dark Matter*' a slightly sweet ruby ale which they say is just right for long, dark winter nights. The **Bird's Brewery** range of beers is now available to buy in 5 litre Mini-Kegs in addition to the traditional 500ml bottle direct from the brewery in Bromsgrove (01527 889870). Director Steve Hammond said, "Our move into Mini-kegs is a bit like *deja vu* for people of a certain age who remember the good old Party Sevens, beloved of student parties! Fortunately, these Mini-kegs do not also re-decorate the ceiling when opened, having a handy pouring spout and pressure release mechanism which keeps the beer in good condition for up to a week after opening!" The brewery will also be selling 3 bottle Gift Packs which make an excellent present for the beer lovers in your family

Cannon Royall

According to Cannon Royall they are, 'tickling over nicely' with steady sales of their regular beers. New brews introduced include '*Grapeshot*' (4.3%abv), a citrusy light ale with grapefruit overtones which has proved popular with lager drinkers; '*OPA*' (Omersley Pale Ale) (4.4%abv), a straw coloured session ale with a subtle sweetness which is outselling the IPA and may take over; '*Royall Canadian*' (3.7% abv), a dark sweet beer which went down very well and should reappear - (good, because I heard good things about it but missed it first time round). One in the pipeline, (or fermenting tank), at the moment is '*Milwards Musket Ale*' (4.6% abv), a seasonal mild.

Despite having the **Hartlebury Club** as a testing ground for new beers the brewery are also on the lookout for a pub, preferably within 12 miles of the brewery. Keep your eyes open for suitable sites - I'm sure there'll be a pint or two in it for you if you find them one.

Hook Norton

Ovation seems to be the default position at Hook Norton as yet again they have cause to celebrate - this time it's the *Double Stout* which has been judged as Europe's Best Dry Stout in the World Beer Awards. Following a gold award for *Hooky Gold* at SIBA's Midlands Region Beer Competition 2011, this makes 13 major awards in national and international competitions this year. December also sees the return of the glorious *Twelve Days* (5.5% abv) officially described as, 'a strong dark brown beer, offering a dominantly malty palate with nutty overtones, giving way to a lyrical sweetness that speaks for its strength'. I agree with the recent comments of brewery rep. Serena Williams, 'It's Christmas in a bottle'.

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Apple and Ale at The Fleece

Good weather, a great range of ciders and beers, good food, good entertainment, good company and a really good turnout to The Fleece Apple and Ale Weekend made the tremendous amount of work involved in staging the weekend well worthwhile for landlord Nigel Smith.

Nigel was last seen by me in the early hours of Sunday morning smiling broadly as he rid the pub of stragglers still enjoying the pleasures of his pub and company - smiling partly I think because he'd enjoyed the day and partly because he'd thoroughly enjoyed the ciders and beers on offer too.

Despite the 20 beers on offer, (my own outstanding favourite of which was the Three Tuns, Old Scrooge at 6.5%), the idea of the weekend was to celebrate cider and raise awareness of the plight of English apples and orchards. A display



of English apples, some very rare, was accompanied by an open invitation to taste them and part of the food offering consisted of a cheese board with as much bread and apple as you could manage.

A full day of entertainment included visiting musicians and Morris dancing by Shakespeare and Peabworth Morris, the highlight though, in keeping with the theme of the weekend, was an apple play by the Shakespeare Mummers and an almost tuneful rendition of 'Juice-Alem' as written by Vaughan Hully and featured in Shakesbeer 46. Highly entertaining

● Mummers Nigel 'Granny' Smith in all his glory and Vaughan Hully, another of 'Juice Alem'



though it was, especially when Nigel appeared as 'Granny Smith', the play contained the same important message about the demise of the English apple, so loved for its use in making cider, the disappearing apple varieties and the encroachment of European, standard sized, shaped and tasting alternatives.

A Brummie Thanks to our Festival Helpers



A contingent of Shakespeare CAMRA and guests who worked at Stratford Beer Festival 2011 were treated to a bout of unaccustomed opulence as they boarded a 43 seater coach to Birmingham Beer Festival.

With too many passengers for our normal minibuses the luxury transport complete with bathroom facilities was ideally suited for the expenses paid thank you trip laid on by the festival committee. This was Birmingham's second year at the Second City Suite, an excellent location in the Chinatown area, and the ample space allowed for over 250 beers and ciders, food, entertainment and assorted goodies. With the festival starting on Thursday

and us travelling on Saturday, it was hardly surprising that many beers started to run out. My own beer of the festival Three Tuns, Old Scrooge (6.5%abv), ran out mid-afternoon but, to be honest, I and our contingent of about 25 were definitely partly responsible. Thanks to Birmingham CAMRA for an excellent festival, to Stratford Beer Festival for sponsoring the trip and to Dudley's Coaches for getting me home happy.

Logo Competition - it's a fix!*

In the last issue of Shakesbeer we asked readers and branch members to suggest a new logo for Shakespeare CAMRA, now celebrating it's 30th birthday.

A total of 25 separate entries were received all of which were examined and voted upon by over 20 members at the branch meeting last October. After much deliberation, which included an option to retain poor old 'Nigel', the current logo, the meeting selected 'a glass poor Yorik', as pictured.

No-one but their own designers knew who had submitted which entries, (honest!), and the shock of the meeting came when, after the voting, I revealed it was actually my own design which had been chosen. Whilst very happy to be selected and thanks for the Good Beer Guide prize, I should say I would have

been equally happy to keep Nigel. The branch would like to thank everyone who submitted entries most of which are shown below - many submitted multiple entries in a similar vein in which case only a sample one is shown.



...and the winner, '...a glass poor Yorik'

This will now be professionalised, digitalised coloured and beautified before gracing the cover of Shakesbeer

*not really





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In search of cider in Broadway

From mid-September into chilly December, Broadway becomes something of a second home to our small team of East Midlands cider and perry makers.

Almost every weekend we're up to our eyeballs in cider apples and perry pears in a beautiful old orchard on the outskirts of the village. Harvesting these old trees by hand is a back-breaking and exhausting job, with the pressing, just as hard a task, to look forward to when we return to Northamptonshire laden with fruit. Time spent in old orchards like these however is always a pleasure, and the resulting cider and perry from last years harvest helps ease the aches and pains. Hard graft like this often leads to a bit of a thirst and over the years we've become quite well acquainted with the hostleries of Broadway. On one of our final weekend

very much a tourist and food driven pub, but tucked away at the rear is a cosy snug, warmed in the winter by a cheerful wood burning stove, just the place for resting weary limbs on a cold Autumnal day. Hogans Draught is on offer, very good for a keg cider, but it's a 'real' pint we're after so the beery delights of *Hook Norton Old Hooky* and *Sharps Doom Bar* have to suffice. Sitting around on comfy sofas usually leads to stiff legs, so to loosen up we walk down to **The Swan**, popular with visitors to the village and a great place to watch the world go by from the patio out front in fine weather. Suffolk cyder from *Aspalls* is the offering here, again a decent enough



Real Cider but there's plenty of local ale on offer as a more than adequate consolation. *Wickwar Cotswold Way*, and *Camelot*, a dry, roasty brown ale from Goff's were our choice, with *Jouster* also coming highly recommended by a friendly local. Our final port of call in Broadway, the excellent **Crown & Trumpet** and finally a Real Cider. Local ales, a thoroughly traditional interior, and a bustling sun-trap patio at the front make this our favourite pub in the village. Add to this one of the largest collection of Morris Dancers you're likely to find anywhere in the world and we have the excuse for many a shortened harvesting session. Real draught cider from *Gwatkin* of Herefordshire completes the picture, with *Cotswold Spring Codrington* *Codger* and *Stanway Wizards Brew* for beer drinkers.

With the harvest now over for another year and our mission finally accomplished, it's time for the 'taxi' to collect the team and head home with our van full of Yarlington Mill cider apples. We'll miss our regular trips to this beautiful part of the Cotswolds. Pretty soon it will be spring though, and with it comes blossom time in the orchard, an excellent time to reacquaint ourselves with the pubs of Broadway.

Mark Shirley (CAMRA East Midlands Regional Cider Co-ordinator)



harvests in the orchard this year we decided it was time to kick back a little and really explore the pubs, with a refreshing pint of Real Cider our ultimate goal. Our usual first stop after a hard days picking is the **Horse & Hound**, a former West Country Breweries Inn at the top of the High Street, (note the lovely 'Best in the West' ceramic plaque on the frontage). Like most of the pubs in Broadway this is

drink but not 'real' by CAMRA's definition, so **Purity UBU** and *Brains SA Gold* were the honourable stand-ins during a very busy Sunday lunchtime session. Next, it's across the road to the **Jockey Club Bar**, tucked away at the front of the Broadway Hotel. Cheltenham Gold Cup week seems to be the theme here, the walls adorned with photos and enclosure passes from previous years at the event. No



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Shakespeare CAMRA invade N

The Purple Moose Brewery was first conceived in the late summer of 1995, a name devised by Lawrence Washington to adorn the bottle labels for his new hobby of home-brewing. Although the 5 gallon operation was based in his house in Cheltenham, the brewery name had been thought up during a weekend carrying out voluntary work on the Ffestiniog Railway in North Wales. (from www.purplemoose.co.uk).

Sixteen years later the Purple Moose is a cultural icon, readily recognised throughout the UK beer drinking community and Lawrence's hobby has developed into a 10 barrel (and growing) micro brewery in the historic town of Porthmadog, close to the mountains of Snowdonia.

Certainly the festival visitors at Stratford last year appreciated the Purple Moose beers on offer as *Ian's Pale Ale* (4.1%), a one off brew, won beer of the festival and *Dark Side of the Moose* (4.6%) came in third place. More than enough reason then for a group of us to head off to Wales to say thank you to Lawrence, (and try some more of his beer).

A long way to travel in a day, we decided to break our journey initially for a superb lunch at the GBG listed **The Talbot Country Inn**, Ruyton XI Towns in Shropshire. Four excellent ales were on offer and a spicy Moroccan

Sausage dish worth writing home about. Our next stop, an overnighter, was just outside Llangollen at **The Abbey Grange Hotel**. Needless to say the Abbey Grange has its own craft brewery also, (www.llangollenbrewery.com).



com) and we were delighted to find all three Llangollen brewery beers on offer. My favourite as always was the darkest and strongest, *Welsh Black* (5.5%) but *Llangollen Bitter* (4.2%) and *Grange no.1* (3.2%) were both full of flavour and much appreciated. Well fed and well rested we continued our journey and met the afore

mentioned Lawrence Washington, brewer and brewery founder at the **Purple Moose Brewery** in a small industrial unit close to the town centre. First and foremost Lawrence (bless him) had a firkin of his award winning *Snowdonia Ale* (3.6%) tapped and ready for us to dip into as we fancied. A tour of the surprisingly spacious 10 barrel brewery and an introduction to the favoured malts and hops followed. It appears that such is the success of Purple Moose that they are brewing twice a day to meet demand and have plans for expansion in the near future. A visit to the brewery shop gave us the opportunity of tasting a couple more beers, *Myrica Gale* (4.1%) a surprisingly light winter ale made from Bog Myrtle,



North Wales...



(lovingly gathered from the Welsh hills by Lawrence and co.), and a deliciously dark *Merry X-Moose* (4.4%) were scrumptious enough for a few of us to purchase bottles for later consumption. Well watered and royally entertained we finally got around to the purpose of the trip - a thank you to Lawrence and presentation of our Beer of the Festival certificate. Graciously accepted by Lawrence I still think it will look rather lost amongst a host of other awards on display in the brewery.



The Royal Sportsman Hotel

A trip into Porthmadog and lunch at **Spooners Bar** a GBG regular and frequent local CAMRA Pub of the Year gave us another chance to sample *Snowdonia Ale*, another Purple Moose brew, *Madog* (3.7%) and another four ales on top. Here we bid our final thanks and farewell to Lawrence and of course embarked on a further exploration of the delights of Portmadog's drinking establishments. Some of our group were staying overnight at **The Royal Sportsman Hotel**, a rather swish establishment which again offered *Snowdonia Ale* and yet another Purple Moose, *Glaslyn Ale* (4.2%), the GBG listed **Station Inn** gave us... wait for it, *Snowdonia* plus *London Pride* and last and I'm afraid least, the GBG **Ship Inn** which, although it promised a range of six real ales had run out of the three most interesting leaving a choice of three nationally available options, (anywhere else we'd have been pleased to have the choice!). I'm happy to say we never had a disappointing beer

all weekend and would recommend this friendly harbour town to anyone planning a trip away.

We owe a huge vote of thanks to Lawrence and all the licensees who hosted us over the weekend.



Cottage of Content lives up to it name...

Branch Pub of the Season - Autumn 2011

A pub doesn't need to run a huge selection of beers or fancy restaurant to be good. Some, like The Cottage of Content at Barton, simply excel at being great, down to earth locals where you can be guaranteed a decent pint and good home made food at a reasonable price.

The delightful riverside setting, the flagstone floors, beams and real fires go a long way towards making you feel at home here. The pub's real beauty however, lies in the fact that, over the years, resisting change for its own sake, it has quietly gone about the business of providing the local community and visitors a social hub where relaxation and conversation take precedence. Licensee Gemma Hyatt, who runs the pub with manager James Ashton-Wickett, was delighted to accept our Pub of the Season Award

from Branch Chairman Lloyd Evans in front of branch members and locals.

The Cottage of Content regularly stages events raising money for charity, runs a quiz night, has a dartboard, dominoes and other pub games and every second Tuesday, is an outlet for traditional acoustic music. It offers two real ales, generally Hobgoblin and Black Sheep and a good menu with senior citizen specials and 'meal deals'.



Taking full advantage of the superb setting, a field behind the pub, complete with electric hook-ups, lavatories and showers, is used for camping and caravans.

There are lots of good reasons why we should celebrate 'a proper pub' and that's why Shakespeare CAMRA have voted it the Pub of the Season for Autumn 2012.

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Mike 'Postman' Hyde on tour in Scotland



What I did on my hols...

I thought it would be of interest to include accounts from our readers of interesting places and pubs they visited outside the branch area. It could also act as a guide to anyone going to the same towns etc. This is the first, from our own 'Postman' Mike. I should say that having seen the pictures I know Mike did a lot more than visit pubs and drink in this beautiful country, but he obviously did a lot of that too.

In October I holidayed in Scotland. My first point of call after a journey of over 500 miles was at the **Cairn Hotel**, Carrbridge for a pint of *Black Isle Porter* (4.6%) before settling in for a couple of nights at the **Cairngorm Hotel**, Aviemore. After the journey I needed to stretch my legs so had a stroll to **The Old Bridge Inn** where I was delighted to find the local Cairngorm brewery offerings of *Black Gold* (4.4%) and *The Stag* (4.2%) and a Caledonian beer. Back at my hotel along with Stag and Black Gold was *Harviestoun Bitter & Twisted* (3.8%).

Leaving the car behind next day, I took the train to Inverness then the bus to Clachnaharry and the **Clachnaharry Inn**. There I found a splendid array of beers on offer including some from the Inveralmond and The Isle of Skye Breweries, but all too soon it was time to catch the bus back to Inverness in order to explore the city centre. In the shadow of Inverness castle is the appropriately named **Castle Tavern**. Here were 5 interesting beers including *Three Sisters* (4.2%) from the Atlas Brewery. I also tried the local Wetherspoons, the **Kings**

Highway but was disappointed with the choice available and was soon on my way to the next and best of the lot, **Blackfriars**. This is a terrific pub with a great choice of top quality ales. I tried *Orkney Dragonhead Stout* (4.8%), *Atlas Mimbus* (5%), *Orkney Corncrake* (4.1%) and *Highland's Scapa Special* (4.2%). All were in superb condition and it was with some reluctance that I tore myself away to catch the train back to Aviemore. Fortified by a mighty breakfast next morning I drove the 70 miles to Ullapool. First stop was the **Ferryboat Inn** for a swift Caledonian 80/- before booking in at the **Morefield Motel**. Beers on offer here were from the Orkney and Cairngorm breweries and I was also interested to find a Scottish cider from Thirsty Cross. Apparently the only real cider produced in Scotland.



● A rare sight south of the border

Next day I took a drive to the lovely town of Gairloch and sampled three halves of the beers on at the **Old Inn** before returning to Ullapool and the **Argyll Hotel** where I tried my first beer from the An Teallach brewery, *Sail Mhum* (4.4%)

The following morning heralded the start of the Ullapool Beer Festival which showcases the best of Scottish micro



● Blackfriars Highland Pub
"...the best of the lot"

brewers. There was a fine selection of beers available and all in excellent condition, a very enjoyable couple of days.

Leaving Ullapool I headed to Fortrose and **The Anderson**. This had beers from Harviestoun, Yates and Coniston Breweries, but I resisted these to return to Inverness to revisit the **Castle Tavern** and of course **Blackfriars**. This time even the **Kings Highway** had some decent beers available, but I had an evening appointment back at the **Anderson** in Fortrose with the Highland and Western Isles branch of CAMRA. These fine fellows were having a beer tasting event which included a beer from the USA, *Rogue Dead Gun Ale* (6.2%). I had a great night and it was a fitting finale to my wonderful holiday. Scotland is a lovely country, has some great beers and I'll be back next year.

Our Minstrel Brings us in Good Ale... and Hot Tea!

Regular readers of these articles and those who hear me sing will know that I'm quite partial to old songs. Today I give you one from c1460, when Britain was in turmoil in the midst of the Wars of the Roses and it was a struggle to decide if the succession should keep to the male line or could pass through females - a bit like the recent change to our Laws of Succession, but less peaceful!

It is a wassail song entitled "Bring Us In Good Ale", I found in a 1965 reprint edition of 'Popular Music of the Olden Time' by Williams Chappell, 1855.



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

Bring Us In Good Ale

Bring us in no brown bread,
for that is made of bran,
Nor bring us in no white bread,
for therein is no grain,

*Cho:
Bring us in good ale, good ale,
and bring us in good ale,
For our blessed Lady's sake,
bring us in good ale.*

Bring us in no beef,
for there is many bones,
But bring us in good ale,
for that goeth down at once.

Bring us in no bacon,
for that is passing fat,
But bring us in good ale,
and give us enough of that.

Bring us in no mutton,
for that is passing lean,
Nor bring us in no tripes,
for they be seldom clean.

Bring us in no eggs,
for there are many shells,
But bring us in good ale,
and give us nothing else.

Bring us in no butter,
for therein are many hairs,
Nor bring us in no pig's flesh
for that will make us bears.

Bring us in no puddings,
for therein is all God's good,
Nor bring us in no venison,
that is not for our blood.

Bring us in no capon's flesh,
for that is often dear,
Nor bring us in no duck's flesh,
or they slobber in the mere [mire].

Bring Us In Hot Tea

Bring us in no rum,
for tha's a drink for sailors,
But bring us in hot tea,
for that will never fail us.

*Cho:
So bring us in hot tea, hot tea
and bring us in hot tea
That's what the blessed ladies make,
so bring us in hot tea.*

Bring us in no cider,
for that will send us reeling,
But bring us in hot tea,
Earl Grey, Ceylon or Darjeeling.

Bring us in no white wine,
for that don't cure no hot thirst,
But bring us in hot tea,
and be sure to warm the pot first.

Bring us in no snaps,
for they are made with brandy,
But bring us in hot tea
and a strainer would be handy.

Bring us in no gin,
for that was mother's ruin,
But bring us in hot tea
and put a lump or two in.

Bring us in no home brew,
we're not inclined to risk it,
But bring us in hot tea,
oh, and all right, just one biscuit.

We'll drink no beer at Christmas,
the good book tells the tale,
So bring us in hot tea,
for the angels said, "No ale".

Another version which is a bit more up to date is the 1986 song from the Kipper Family, entitled "Bring Us In Hot Tea". The Kipper Family were 'Truncheons' in that they come from St Just near Trunch in Norfolk. They were famous for the phrase "We are the boys who are Norfolk and good!" Well, a good tune is worth using more than once.

The Kipper Family was a two-man parody folk group played by Chris Sugden (as Sid Kipper) and Dick Nudds (as his father Henry).

If you want to hear (and join in with!) such traditional songs being sung try the following places:-

2nd Tuesday at The Cottage of Content at Barton (over the river from Bidford) B50 4NP;

2nd Sunday at The Shakespeare Inn at Welford-on-Avon (near the maypole) CV37 8PX;

4th Sunday at The Mary Arden Inn at Wilmcote (opposite the Shakespeare property) CV37 9XJ

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Shakespeare Branch Diary and Beer Festival Round up



Meetings and Socials

December

13th, 8.00pm Branch meeting, Holly Bush followed by Alcester Christmas Pub Crawl

16th, 7.30pm - Branch Xmas Meal, Blue Boar PH, Binton.

January 2012

10th, 8.00pm, The Four Alls, Welford Branch meeting then on to The Bell and The Shakespeare Inn, Welford

17th, 8.00pm, The Fleece, Bretforton, Beer Festival meeting

February

14th, 8.00pm, St Edwins Club, (BBC club), 117 High Street, Evesham, then on to Olde Red Horse.

21st, 8.00pm, Beer Festival Meeting (location to be confirmed)

March

13th, 8.00pm, Branch Meeting, The Castle, Edge Hill then to Rose and Crown, Ratley and (if time) to George Hotel, Brailes

20th, 8.00pm, Beer Festival Meeting (location to be confirmed)

April

10th, 8.00pm, Branch Meeting, The Gate, Honeybourne then to The Thatched Tavern

Beer Festivals

December

10th - Haddenham (Aylesbury) Winterfest 2011

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December

18th - 21st National Winter Ales Festival, Manchester

www.alefestival.org.uk/winterales

February

2nd - 4th Tewksbury CAMRA Winter Ale Festival

www.tewksburycamra.org.uk

3rd - 4th Redditch (CAMRA) Winter Ale Festival

33 ales plus cider and perry
www.redditchwaf.org.uk

Keep an eye on the branch website for updates to the diary and what's on at www.shakespearecamra.org.uk

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The Editor reserves the right to amend or shorten contributions for publication.

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- If an error is made in the payment of your Direct Debit by The Campaign for Real Ale Ltd or your bank or building society you are entitled to a full and immediate refund of the amount paid from your bank or building society.
 - If you receive a refund you are not entitled to, you must pay it back when The Campaign for Real Ale Ltd asks you to
- You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by simply contacting your bank or building society. Written confirmation may be required. Please also notify us.

Name and full postal address of your Bank or Building Society Service User Number

To the Manager Bank or Building Society

Address

Postcode

Name(s) of Account Holder

Branch Sort Code

Bank or Building Society Account Number

Reference

9 2 6 1 2 9

FOR CAMRA OFFICIAL USE ONLY

This is not part of the instruction to your Bank or Building Society

Membership Number

Name

Postcode

Instructions to your Bank or Building Society

Please pay Campaign For Real Ale Limited Direct Debits from the account detailed on this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with Campaign For Real Ale Limited and, if so will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.

Signature(s)

Date



MAD GOOSE

The splendour of the goose is charmingly picturesque upon first glimpse, it draws you in. However, the goose is vivacious in character. You may experience a bite so treat it with respect...and never run from it.

Fascinatingly effervescent, the citrusy hops do not detract from the creamy finish.

Mad Goose is a 4.2% Light Copper Pale Ale brewed with Maris Otter Malt, Caragold and Wheat Malt with Hallertau bittering hops and Cascade and Willamette aroma hops.



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