



Issue 46
Autumn 2011

FREE
Please
take one



Shakesbeer

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

Happy Birthday 30th Shakespeare CAMRA



Funny how memory fades with age - it took a fair bit of prompting before the founder members of Shakespeare CAMRA could remember much about the formation of the branch, originally called South Warwickshire and Evesham. A bit of digging however revealed that CAMRA HQ gave formal approval for establishment of the branch on 5th September 1981 and a meeting to officially establish it was held at The Bell, Shotton on 20th October 1981...which means the branch is 30 years old this year and that calls for a celebration!!

The original suggestion for the branch came from the Rev. David Capron, now Rector of Alcester, who recalls installing Alan Whitbread as Chairman and Bob MacVie as Secretary and Branch Contact. In February 1982 a CAMRA report began with the words, 'Shakespeare Branch formed', suggesting that the new name was adopted quite early on. The boundary at the time was the Stratford District Council area and stretched all the way to Southam and up to Studley & Henley.

A reduction in the area was subsequently negotiated, giving away the eastern part, Studley and Henley in Arden to stronger branches and enabling us to take over east Worcestershire, where members already had some input.

For a few memories and significant events in the branches history take a look at page 6.

Our founding fathers:
Bob MacVie, Rev. David Capron
and Alan Whitbread

Picture by John Ross



See our website www.shakespearecamra.org.uk

WYE'S WORDS No. 47



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Pub News...

Shotton, Stratford

In plenty of time to prepare for our 30th birthday celebrations we are delighted to welcome licensees Colin and Shirley Simpson to **The Bell**. This Yorkshire born couple have many years experience in the pub trade having most recently run an eight ale pub in Teddington, London and another Greene King pub in Cheltenham. Colin is a real ale fan and hopes to take full advantage of the Greene King beers available: IPA, Abbott Ale and London's Glory were on offer when we visited and all in fine fettle.

Notwithstanding the beers **The Bell** has plenty to brag about. First licensed in 1728 it's just a few minutes walk from Anne Hathaway's cottage, so gets plenty of visiting trade: more significantly it hosted the first ever meeting of Shakespeare CAMRA. Colin and Shirley however are determined to keep it the focal point of the village, serving good pub food and real ales and hopefully a Sunday quiz night in due course. We wish them the very best of luck and will see them on 20th October for our 30th Birthday celebration.

Evesham

After working at **The Olde Red Horse** for over eight years and having bought the lease in 2007 matriarch licensee Alwyn Sullivan is finally taking a bit of a back seat in this town centre classic. Although keeping her hand in with occasional shifts on bar and kitchen Alwyn has handed the managerial reins to her niece Tracy and partner Shane Bodle. Shane is a local man, born in Badsey and needs no introduction as he previously worked at the pub for some five years as assistant manager. He has



● Shane and Tracy

returned after a two year absence and is determined to keep this Good Beer Guide regular up to scratch. He has already re-established the pub's lapsed Cask Marque status, has signed up to SIBA, (Society of Independent Brewers), in order to access good local ales and is regularly offering past champion beers through Punch's 'Finest Cask' scheme. There are always three beers on offer, currently Bass and Brew XI are regulars with a constantly changing guest plus Thatchers Cheddar Valley cider. According to Shane and Tracy it's too early for major changes and they just want to maintain consistent high standards in the kitchen and cellar. They're both enjoying the experience and I'm happy to say, the locals are too.

Wickhamford

A bit of a belated welcome to Frank and Sharon Grundy who are the new, permanent managers of **The Sandys Arms**. Both have plenty of experience in the pub trade having started waiting tables and doing bar work at the age of 17. Frank, now 60 (ish), had a bit of a break pursuing a successful career as a butcher before returning

to pub management in 1999. They're both determined to keep a proper community pub, catering for all ages and offering value for money. They're well on their way with some very reasonably priced cobs and meals and currently, all beers and lagers at £2.50 a pint. Current ales on offer are Bass, permanent and either Reverend James or Old Speckled Hen which alternate. Darts, dominoes and pool teams keep the locals happy and there's live music on offer every 2nd and last Friday of the month.



● Frank and Sharon

Oxhill

That Pam and Yvonne from **The Peacock** are at it again. Posh frocks at the ready they're off to The Hilton, Park Lane on 8th September, having romped home as The Best Freehouse in East and West Midlands in the **Publicans' Morning Advertiser's Great British Pub Awards**. The prestigious awards ceremony will announce national winners in a number of categories - good luck **The Peacock**.

Pub News...

Evesham

The middle of June saw Evesham and the surrounding area teeming with gloriously colourful Morris sides from all over the country. Licensee Matt Adams at **The Trumpet** took full advantage of the occasion as thirsty dancers flocked to his mini beer and cider festival and made the pub an unofficial meeting place in the town. A good welcome, specially prepared lunches and an invitation to sing and play in the pub throughout the weekend triggered promises from many sides to return next year. Keep it up Matt.

More good news for Evesham pub goers - I think. Information that both **The Crown**, Waterside and **The Talbot**, Port Street, both closed for some time have now been sold. There's no signs of life and we're not yet sure what the



● **The Trumpet**

plans are for either property but we'll find out and keep you informed.

Stratford

The Salmon Tail was closed for a total of five months, two of which were spent on an extensive refurbishment, before opening its door again, very much improved, in early July. Partners Luke Murphy and Steve and Sara Bazell,



● **Luke at The Salmon Tail**

want to run a real community pub with a good real ale and basic food offering both of which will evolve according to demand, together with pub teams and community events. Darts and pool leagues start in September and new players are welcome.

Luke previously worked for the local Meet, Eat, Drink group in Stratford working in both **The Squirrel** and **The Old Tramway** for a while and Running **The Masons Arms**, Long Marston. He's a real ale fan and is determined to add to the two ales on at present, Hobgoblin and Hooky Bitter.

Although doing good business in the evening the pub is still a little quiet through the day. It's open all day from 11.00 am so locals, take advantage or lose it again.

Stratford

A very pleasant surprise for one of our members when he popped into the **Arden Hotel**, Waterside. Amongst all the elegance and sophistication, a

very fine pint of Purity UBU can be had by residents and visitors against the backdrop of the River Avon. General manager Jason Adams welcomes passing drinks trade into the Brasserie Bar. He says the local ale is very popular and will generally have one of the Purity range available.

Located in the heart of the historic town, directly opposite the world-renowned RSC Theatres, the hotel underwent a multi-million pound refurbishment before opening again in July 2010.

Bidford

Welcome to Garry Darby the general manager of the **New Saxon** which opened at the end of June. Garry is looking forward to the challenge of his fourth pub having previously run successful operations in Bromsgrove, Redditch and Leominster. This may prove a little different as the Saxon is offering breakfasts as well as lunches and bar snacks between 9.00am and 4.00pm and is open from 9.00 am until 11.00 pm through the week and until 12.00 midnight on Friday and Saturday.



● **Garry at The New Saxon**



More Pub News...



● Josh, Mark and Jackie at The White Lion

Plenty of entertainment on offer too with large screen televisions showing sporting events, a quiz on Tuesday nights and weekend music and karaoke. Although a freehouse they are for the time being staying with Wadsworth beers with 6X and Henry's on offer when we visited.

Ettington

The villagers of Ettington have waited with bated breath over the last few months after hearing that **The White**

Horse was going to re-open. It seems their hopes were realised as a totally new look pub opened its door on 15th July. The 16th century village inn has opened up smaller bars and what was previously residents access to B&B, to create a comfortable and spacious bar and eating area. The large garden incorporates two patio areas, one covered.

The lease is owned by Jackie and Mark Hensher who also own **The Shakespeare**, Welford, but the couple are staying at arms length, helping when needed. The hands on management is left to local man, Nick Mascell ably assisted by Josh, son of Mark and Jackie and Chef Phil Arnott who amongst his accolades recently worked at the AA Rosseted **Charrington Manor Hotel**, Chipping Campden. Phil prides himself on

making most of the menu himself and obtaining quality produce locally. The promised 7 real ales might be a while coming but the three on offer when we visited, Wye Valley HPA, Hooky Bitter and Old Hooky were in fine fettle. Nick says the 7 lines are there and more ales and possibly a real cider will be added as demand increases. All concerned are proud to have given the village a 'proper pub' back and it appears the village appreciate it as the place has been constantly busy since opening.

Whichford

To meet increasing demand **The Norman Knight** has requisitioned its cider and perry pumps to facilitate six real ales, three of their own and three guests, at any one time. Cider drinkers don't panic. Real cider and perry is still available but is now served straight from the pin.

Calling all pubs and breweries...

You can advertise in these pages and reach beer drinkers in Shakespeare Country and well beyond

Quarter
Page
£50.00
£150.00
for 4 issues

Half
Page
£80.00
£240.00
for 4 issues

Full
Page
£125.00
£375.00
for 4 issues

Distributed FREE to all local CAMRA members and delivered by members to real ale pubs and clubs throughout the branch area local festivals and neighbouring branches

Contact "Shakesbeer" at shakesbeer@shakespearecamra.org.uk or tel. **01386 761313**



Shakespeare Branch celebrates 30 years...



For a number of years only a few members attended meetings but Alan and Bob continued to manage the branch, encouraging others to become active. A bit of memorabilia from 1983 shows plenty of social activity and positive signs of organisation.

Our founders were still in their respective chairs together with a few familiar names. Andrew Scott, licensee of **The Crown and Trumpet**, Broadway, was very keen in the early days and organised a number of brewery trips. Vaughan Hully who joined the branch in 1991 recalls annual trips to a local-ish breweries, such as Banks in '92, Morrells '93 and Stanway '94 but these ceased after an infamous trip to Uley in '95 in a coach that only just managed to climb the hills on the Fosseyway at walking pace: the party should have got to the brewery about 7.30pm but were two hours late! On the return journey Vaughan was dropped off in Bidford at 3.45 am with the coach still to go to Alcester and Stratford! It was after Vaughan became an active member that the branch properly started

campaigning. A CAMRA member since 1976 he was a founder member of the Bury St Edmunds & West Suffolk branch



and spent 15 years on the committees of various branches before transferring from Redditch & Bromsgrove to Shakespeare

shortly before their 10th anniversary. As Pubs Officer and Secretary and putting in a significant amount of time and effort, Vaughan produced **Shakesbeer** no.1 as a single sheet, quarterly newsletter in December 98 and continued until 2007. (The newsletter in its current form started at no.33 in Summer 2008). Vaughan also established the original branch website in October 99 with a basic pubs directory and guide, brewery listings, pubs news and events guide. 1999 also saw the start of our Pub of the Year award, with the **Queen's Head** at Iron Cross (then home of Fat God's Brewery) being our first winner. It's great to see so many long established branch members still active. Without doubt the branch owes a huge vote of thanks to our founders and those who played such prominent roles in the development of Shakespeare CAMRA and we cordially invite all branch members and friends to join us in celebrating them on our 30th birthday from 8.00 pm on 20th October at **The Bell, Shottonery**.

If you can't be there then wherever you are, perhaps you will raise a glass and toast Shakespeare CAMRA's 30th birthday and wish us well for the next 30 years.

The Horseshoe Inn Shipston-on-Stour

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Shakespeare CAMRA logo competition - open to all

We are embarrassingly aware of preconceptions that CAMRA is made up of 'old men with beards and beer-bellies who wear bobble hats, anoraks, woolly jumpers, shorts and sandals' and we know this isn't (always) the case.

To counter these suppositions and to coincide with our 30th birthday, Shakespeare CAMRA are after a 'new look' to bring us kicking and screaming into the 21st century.

We invite all readers, members or not, to design us an original branch logo to take us through the next thirty years or so.

Ideally, we're after something recognisable at 2cm square, effective in colour and black and white and appropriate for use on the front of this Shakesbeer newsletter, our website, branch shirts and other publicity material.

Entries to the address below must be received by 20th October and will be judged on suitability, creativity and originality. The winner will receive a free copy of the 2012 Good Beer Guide and an expenses paid invitation to our birthday celebrations on 20th October.

Entries by email to
shakesbeer@Shakespearecamra.org.uk
or by post to
Shakespeare Logo Competition
c/o 21 Monks Walk, Evesham, WR11 4SL



our current logo
affectionately known
as "Nigel"

Holly Bush, Alcester - Branch Pub of the

The fact that she's now won the award on five separate occasions didn't diminish the delight of landlady Teej Deffley when she was presented with the certificate announcing the **Holly Bush** as Shakespeare CAMRA's **Branch Pub of the Year**.

Teej was full of smiles in May this year when Chairman Lloyd Evans made the presentation in a bar packed with pub regulars and grateful CAMRA members. Teej has been at the **Holly Bush** for nearly 12 years in total, buying it outright and running it single handed for the past 8. Under her management the pub has since had the cellar refitted, refurbished lavatories, function room and gardens. The pub stages two annual beer festivals, regular music nights and hosts meetings of community groups. Charity events support Cancer Research, Air Ambulance, Lifeboats, and many others. She has also

grown the food offering from basic pub lunches to a full a la carte menu as well as sandwiches and snacks. Undoubtedly Teej works phenomenally hard to effectively run the Holly Bush but she did acknowledge the enormous contribution of manager Ed Mutton who has been with her for the last eighteen months plus and on different occasions before that. Whether alone or with assistance Teej keeps winning. Following the presentation she said, "I'm delighted and overwhelmed and this makes it all worthwhile. I've got a great team here and this gives proper

recognition to the work they and I put in". On the pub trade in general she said, "I know it's been a struggle for pubs over the past few years not helped by negative press about binge drinking and bad behaviour. This doesn't apply to beer drinkers and I'm grateful to have experienced more and younger real ale drinkers". Hardly surprising Teej, with four regular real ales on offer and up to four different guest ales at any time, all in excellent condition. On behalf of the branch and I hope, your regulars, thank you for your hard work, it's well worthwhile. It's reflected in the **Holly Bush**, everything a good pub should be, great food, great garden, good staff, and of course great beer.

The Holly Bush

bar • restaurant • conferences • functions

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Food served Monday to Saturday
Lunch 12.00 to 2.30pm • Sunday Lunch 12.00 to 4.00pm
Dinner Tuesday to Thursday 7.00pm till 9.00pm
Friday and Saturday 7.00pm till 9.30pm





So how do we choose CAMRA Pub of the Year?

Unfortunately selecting a pub to be the best in the branch, county, region or country is far from an exact science. Any selection is open to subjective judgements by individual CAMRA members although we do try to apply a tried and tested formula.

- **Beer** quality is probably the most important factor. Not necessarily a wide range, although that's nice and may be taken into account. A couple of ales in tip-top condition is infinitely preferable to half a dozen or more of variable quality. For this reason the fact that a pub may be tied to a brewery or pubco should not necessarily count against it.
- **Atmosphere** is important. Is the pub actually a pleasant place to be in terms of style and décor. Has the most been made of the building itself and the available space. The clientele mix also adds to the atmosphere with

a welcome for a range of age and social groups. A PotY should be inclusive not exclusive, even to CAMRA members.

• **Sympathy with CAMRA aims and values.** Are real ales being positively promoted and is any attempt being made to rouse interest in our campaigns and concerns?

• **Service and Value.** Service should be prompt, friendly and efficient. No one should have to ask for a top-up to get a full measure and customers should feel that they're getting reasonable value for their visit; not just value for money but an overall pleasurable 'pub experience'.

It can be very rewarding, trying to judge a pub. Definitely not easy and probably not totally consistent amongst the judges. It's not always easy to put a finger on why a pub seems so good but sometimes the whole thing just comes together and works.



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Email: nigel@thefleeceinn.co.uk www.thefleeceinn.co.uk

Check out the website for forthcoming events



Support your Pub

CAMRA and the Sunday Mirror newspaper are working together in a nation wide campaign to save British Pubs and the Mirror is calling on David Cameron to honour his election promise that the Government would 'be pub friendly' and take urgent action needed to protect a treasured national institution. In 2008/9 about 6 pubs a day were closing.

I'm sure all pub goers were deeply disappointed when, in the Budget in March, the Government put beer prices up by another 7.2% - **or 10p on a pint** - taking the typical duty and VAT bill on a pub pint of a standard bitter to 90p. In the run up to the last election, all parties pledged support for the declining British Pub and both Conservatives and Liberal Democrats were particularly keen to promote and protect them. Last June 275 MPs signed up to CAMRA sponsored Early Day Motion urging the Government to implement a package of policies to help secure the future of viable and well-run community pubs. Unfortunately for our struggling community pubs the option to absorb beer duty increases the way our supermarkets are able to do just isn't there. Big stores can continue selling alcohol at rock bottom prices whilst the hikes mean continual price rises for pub goers.† The difference in prices between pubs and supermarkets continues to widen, which will encourage drinkers to stay at home rather than enjoy a pint with friends in their local. The campaign will highlight the damage being done to Britain's pub industry as a result of pub companies squeezing landlords for high rent and beer prices, the sale of cheap (often below cost) alcohol in supermarkets, and adverse planning laws which allow pub

demolition without planning permission. The Mirror has already featured the campaign in numerous editions and pages, and is intending to continue to cover the issues facing pubs in the coming

Last June 275 MPs signed up to CAMRA sponsored Early Day Motion urging the Government to implement a package of policies to help secure the future of viable and well-run community pubs...

weeks. To raise further awareness, 5000 stickers displaying the campaign's logo have been printed, and are being issued to pubs to display and give to regulars. Copies of the window stickers have been

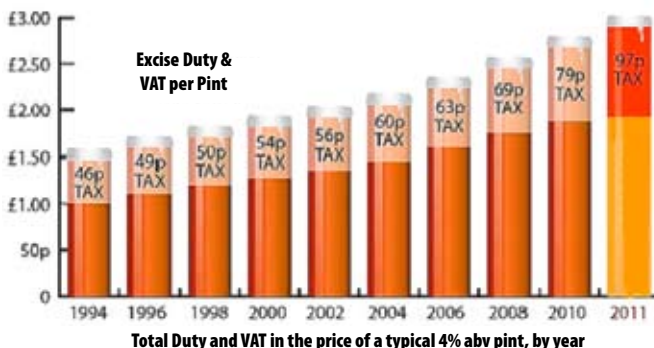


sent to CAMRA branches with a request to distribute them to local pubs.

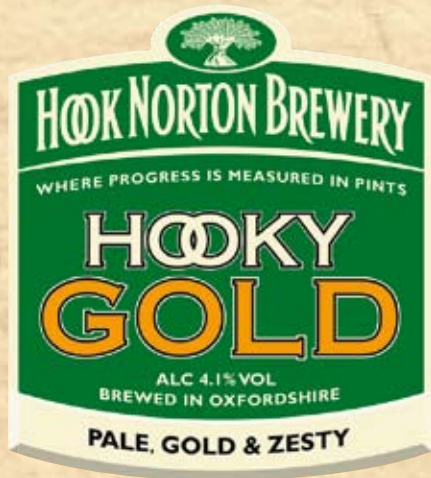
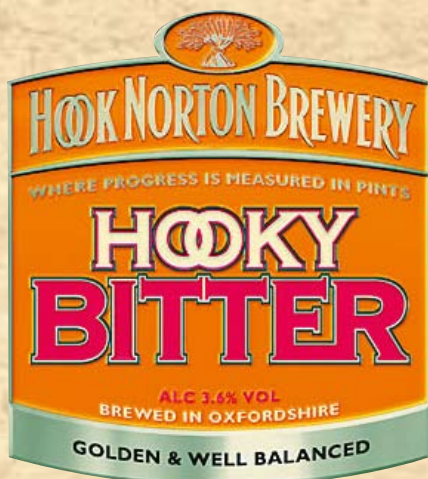
CAMRA's Head of Policy and Public Affairs, Jonathan Mail said today: *'The campaign by CAMRA and the Mirror will increase national awareness of the plight faced by community pubs. Pubs are the cornerstone of many local communities and provide economic and social benefits. I encourage all CAMRA members and pub goers to get behind the campaign and help to save a British institution.'*

The latest public house survey, (by Jones Lang LaSalle Hotels) has cast further light on the problems facing the UK pub sector, with 45% of licensees reporting a fall in sales in the last year and 25 pubs closing every week.

Total Price Pint
(Real Ale, CAMRA prices Survey)



Great real ales at your local!



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Brewery News

Patriot



As well as their four regular beers licensee/brewer Tim Young and enthusiastic helper John Romer are continuing to produce new and exciting tastes and are brewing virtually to capacity. Well received earlier in the year was 'BLOATER'S BEST' 3.5%, an amber beer named after local songster, Fat Boy Bloater. Both are now regular performers at the **Norman Knight**. Their latest success, 'Kiwi', named after Andrea the Knight's chef and packed with New Zealand hops, is going down a storm. Another favourite, 'Morris Brew' made with Citra hops, supposedly brewed for the Stratford Beer Festival, managed to come a close second to the beer of the festival at North Oxford's Festival two weeks earlier than our own. It was well appreciated anyway and sold out pretty quickly at Stratford too. As predicted, pub dog Winston a black pug didn't take long to feature on pump clips - first as 'Sir Winston' a light bitter at 3.8% and most recently as 'Pug IPA' a complex beer brewed with 7 different hop varieties and at 5.6% abv, not for the faint hearted.

Purity



For the second year running the Birmingham Comedy Festival, which takes place across Birmingham from Friday 7 to Sunday 16 October will be sponsored by Purity brewery. Along with the dozens of events featuring big names and up-and-coming acts there will be beer tasting sessions

throughout the festival. Even selected venues which do not usually stock Purity beers will be taking part by installing taps or stocking bottles of ales and offering free tasters to festival goers.

North Cotswold

All going well at North Cotswold according to our new liaison officer, Pete Godfrey. Pete's intro to the brewery came by way of an early morning start when brewer Jon Pilling guided him through the brewing process of the seasonal favourite, *Summer Solstice* (4.5% ABV) using German and Czech hops and an American yeast with rice.

A firkin of *Cappuccino Stout* sold out at Stratford Beer Festival recently and Jon supplied 72 gallons of Hung Drawn and Portered to the Great British Beer Festival which, when I saw it, was going well. For fans of this delicious porter, it's on at **The West End**, Stratford and will be available at Harbury Beer Festival on 2nd & 3rd Sept.

September also sees North Cotswold featuring at The Morton Show on 3rd and the Somerset CAMRA Real Ale Festival at Minehead on 11th & 12th

Wye Valley



The marketing bods at Wye Valley have embarked on a new advertising

campaign which will picture drinkers in their ads, (any volunteers?), emphasising their friendly, family image. We welcome the advertising but the beer really sells itself especially the exciting seasonal specials coming soon. September sees the return of *Silver Lining* 4.2% a full bodied, nut brown ale created last year for their 25th anniversary. In October, the glorious Dorothy Goodbody presents *Penthouse Ale* 4.6%, using a 'husk free' Penthouse Barley to give a smoother malt taste and in November the second outing of 'OT' 3.9%, a pale gold beer brewed with golden oats for hints of sweetness

Birds



A warm welcome to new Shakesbeer advertisers, the increasingly popular Birds Brewery who operate out of Bromsgrove. The six barrel micro-brewery started operations in 2009 and are gradually expanding their area of distribution. *Firebird* 4.8% and *Black Widow Stout* 4.5% went down a storm at Stratford Beer Festival, as did sales rep, IT manager and general dogsbody Karl Knibbs who worked his socks off on the Sunday of the 'take-down' - thanks Karl. Still a little sporadic in our branch Birds beers do make the occasional appearance at the **Holly Bush** and **The Fleece**.

Keep your eyes peeled for their latest offering whose name no-one seems to remember, (groan), *Amnesia* 4.5% of course.



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AMNESIA

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undertone combining with a
mixture of hops to provide a
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More...Brewery News

Carlsberg UK

Tetley bitter, once pride of Leeds has lost some of its flavour for Yorkshire folk as it's now brewed by Marstons in Wolverhampton. Carlsberg UK decision that the Tetley brewery should cease brewing and close its doors on Friday 17th June brings to a close an historic journey lasting 189 years.

Hook Norton



It's nice to see Hook Norton maintaining its winning touch as the brewery picked up yet another accolade, this time from the prestigious British Bottlers' Institute Awards where they picked up a Gold in the beers up to 3.9% category with Hooky Bitter, its second major award of

the year.

With Summer about done it's nice to see the return of the Autumn classic, Copper Ale (4.8%), (launched earlier this year as a bottled ale). This premium beer is described as 'dry and slightly spicy with hints of citrus' and should be available until December when the legendary 'Twelve Days' hits the pumps. In the meantime another classic, the sweet and fruity 'Flagship' (5.3%), will be available in November.

Cannon Royall



Investing in the fabric of the brewery a new floor is being laid in the 'mash tun room' and the management are on the lookout for a new executive suite, or 'portacabin' as they are more

customarily known.

If you want to try Cannon Royall ales and a few favourites both local and further afield, a Real Ale Harvest Festival, including 20 beers, 5 ciders and perries and a charity auction of local produce is being held at **Hartlebury Club** from 23rd - 25th September.

• Sadly we join with our Worcester CAMRA neighbours in mourning the untimely death in June, of **Len Irving**, Branch Secretary and invaluable contributor to the Worcester Beer Festival over many years. In Len's memory and to celebrate his years of support, a new beer from Cannon Royall was launched at Worcester Beer Festival and went down a treat. 'Irving Beerlin', a 4%, easy drinking, session ale is still available locally so keep your eyes open and perhaps raise a glass to the memory of a dear colleague.

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Your local award winning Brewery

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Voted
**Morning Advertiser
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WARWICKSHIRE PUB OF THE YEAR 2008



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Function Room for
Weddings, Parties and
Business

Open

Monday to Thursday

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5.30pm - 11.00pm

Friday 11.30am - 11.00pm

Sunday 12.00 - 10.30pm

No food Mondays and Tuesdays
and Sunday evenings

The Wheatsheaf Inn

High Street, Old Badsey, near Evesham, Worcs. WR11 7EJ. Tel. 01386 830380

Festival Fans drink us dry at Stratford!

Festival fans had a lovely time at Stratford as they drank the festival dry over two days. Ciders and Perrys ran out, were replenished and ran out again with a couple of hours to go and despite a couple of bonus casks from **Hook Norton** and **Sharps Breweries**, beer just about made it to the end of Saturday night.



CAMRA volunteers, caterers, entertainers and racecourse employees create a tremendous atmosphere for all concerned - so thank you to them.

A special vote of thanks goes to our founding CAMRA member the Reverend Rector David Capron from Alcester who performed the opening ceremony before joining festival organiser, Julian Stobinski, in presenting a cheque for £600 to our regular charity, Shakespeare Hospice. Thanks also to our many sponsors and advertisers who help keep costs down. We try to acknowledge them all in the festival programme but due to an oversight omitted to mention **Salopian, Church End, Burton Bridge and Marstons** breweries, all of whom donated or discounted beers. A special thanks to our major sponsors, Wye Valley Brewery who supplied the volunteers shirts, sponsored the main bar, assisted with cooling and donated beer.

● Festival Organiser Julian Stobinski and our founder Rev. David Capron present £600 to Alex McDowell of Shakespeare Hospice



● Just a few of the many volunteers

A bit of rain on Friday evening did little to dampen the enthusiasm of beer and cider drinkers and wonderful sunshine for most of the festival brought beer lovers flocking to Stratford Racecourse. The Stratford Touring Park at the racecourse was full to bursting with caravans and campers and the long trek from Stratford Railway Station for those who didn't stay over was very much alleviated on Saturday as a minibus from Responsive Accessible Transport Ltd, sponsored by **The Bear Freehouse at The Swan's Nest Hotel**, met most of the trains and visited the town centre ferrying customers to us. The festival also hosted the final of the West Midlands 'Strong Bitter' competition where six finalists vied for the title and a

place in CAMRA's national competition. It was a close run thing as the honours went to **Salopian, Golden Thread** very closely followed by **Kinver, Half Centurion**. Golden Thread was also the first beer to sell out. As always we invited festival goers to vote for their favourite beer-the winner this year was an offering from one of our celtic guests, **Ian's Pale Ale** from **Purple Moose Brewery**, Porthmadog, North Wales. I'm sure we'll enjoy a trip there to say, 'thank you', in due course. It was immensely gratifying to see familiar faces from previous festivals returning to us and from talking to them it's not just the beer that keeps them coming back. The friendly staff,



Pub of the Season Summer 2011 - The White Lion, Alcester

A great night in Alcester as Dave and Sharon Lloyd welcomed locals and CAMRA members to **The White Lion** on 16th August. The occasion . . . Much to their delight and some surprise, the pub was voted branch **Pub of the Season for Summer 2011**.

As we've said in the past, although good beer is a prerequisite, a pub doesn't need to be a 'real ale Mecca' to receive this accolade. The fact that a licensee has made a real effort to promote real ale and/or CAMRA aims and values, we feel, warrants our recognition and support. Dave introduced real ale some 16 months ago installing a single handpull and has since increased this to two ales and a third pump carrying real cider.

The presentation of a CAMRA certificate by branch Vice Chairman John Ross and a short speech celebrating Dave's decision to sell real ale earned the tongue in cheek response, "I didn't decide, I was bullied into it". If this was the case, then good for the bullies. The ales and cider are selling well and have encouraged new customers to such an extent that Dave



is now considering a beer festival. It does go to show that demand can be created, it just needs someone with the drive and personality to see it through. Cheers to The White Lion, a great community local and long may it thrive.



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**"Shakespeare CAMRA Warwickshire
Pub of the Year 2010"**

Shakesbeer hits those Black Country pubs...again!

June saw a dozen Shakespeare CAMRA stalwarts once again take on the best of the Black Country pubs, as always the hardest decision being where to leave out.

An early start gave us a chance to pick up around the area and still get to our first choice, **The Waggon and Horses**, Oldbury for opening time. Although small and friendly with a reasonable range of beers, (my best being *Salopian Oracle*), I don't think this will make our list for future trips. Elsewhere it would be a jewel but amongst the choice of

into the pleasures of the day still to come.

Just a couple of miles down the road we visited the **Fountain**, Lower Gornal. As always, a huge choice of well kept beers, (my beer of choice, *Riverhead March Haigh*), and probably some of the best value home cooked lunches in the area. An exhausting uphill walk from there is



● After a hard day at the office...

Bumblehole

and, I think one or two others.

Next, **The Vine**, Brierley Hill (or **Bull and Bladder** as locals call it), never fails to please. With only *Bathams Mild* and *Bitter* on offer it remains my idea of paradise and no Black Country tour would be complete without it.

The Windsor Castle, Lye, isn't in the Good Beer Guide but, as Sadlers Ales brewery tap and with the ever popular *Mud City Stout* on offer, it was well worth a visit.

Our tour finished, as they generally do, at **The Waggon and Horses**, Halesowen. Some members suggested this should be our first stop rather than our last but faced with an arsenal of pumps, (at least 14 ales on offer), first class bar food at down

to earth prices and jolly good company, the danger would be never wanting to leave.

● Sad, but time to go home



● Outside the Bull and Bladder

amazing Black Country pubs to visit it ranked just a good average. Our next stop was the never to be missed County Pub of the Year for the fourth year in a row, **Beacon Hotel**, Sedgley where I think the entire bus indulged in the never to be missed *Sarah Hughes Ruby Mild*. Busy as always we found ourselves chatting to very friendly locals and other visiting CAMRA groups, all of us settling with mellow contentment

The Black Bear, not on our itinerary but which, according to a couple of locals was well worth a visit. It was, and the *Kelham Island Easy Rider* made it worth the climb but, if we visit again we'll take the bus!

Our next scheduled stop was Ma Pardoes, the ever popular **Old Swan**, Netherton. From a wide choice of their own brews, hence excellent value for money, I sampled, an exceptional

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

For Autumn the Crown and Trumpet Inn is proud to present our four featured beers shown below as well as other welcome guest local ales.



Cotswold Spring Brewery

Gloucestershire's Glory - 4.1%

A golden beer with a distinctive citrus hop nose, mouth-filling malt and fruit, and a deep dry finish.

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



Stroud Brewery

Jack O'Lantern - 4.2%

A dark bitter with a hint of smokiness to ease into the lengthening nights.

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



Stanway Brewery

Wizard Brew - 4.0%

An amber beer with a fine balance of malt and hops. Brewed especially for the Crown and Trumpet Inn.

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



Stroud Brewery

Tom Long - 3.8%

Silver at SIBA National Beer Competition. A full bodied amber beer but with a low alcoholic content, named after a famous Highwayman from Stroud.

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

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A Fresh Look at Beer in Brum

For many years Birmingham has had a generally poor reputation, but along with the regeneration which has breathed new life into the city centre, there has also been a resurgence in real ale, as a recent trip there revealed. We visited some great pubs and drank some wonderful beers and for anyone wishing to do the same, here is a suggested short crawl.

For thirsty drinkers arriving by train at Snow Hill Station the first port of call must be Good Beer Guide (GBG) listed the **Old Contemptibles** on Edmund Street next to the station. Renovated sympathetically by the Nicholson's chain, this is a Victorian pub named after an insult thrown at British soldiers by Kaiser Wilhelm during World War I. Guest beers come from a seasonally changing portfolio, although be cautious about calling in on a Sunday when the range is very much reduced.

Further along Edmund Street at the junction with Church Street is **Pub du Vin**. Formerly the Eye Hospital building this is the cellar bar of a swish hotel also GBG listed but closed when we visited on a Sunday.

Just around the corner overlooking the cathedral is **The Old Joint Stock** on Colmore Row. A GBG listed Fullers pub with guest ales this is surely worth a trip for the interior alone. Formerly Lloyds

Bank it has an impressive high domed ceiling above the central island bar with chandeliers and carved heads that look down upon the drinkers. Unusually, the venue doubles as a theatre.

Taking the back door of The Old Joint Stock will bring you to the back of **The Wellington** on Bennetts Hill. A GBG regular and Birmingham CAMRA Pub of The Year for 3 of the past 4 years, this is a fine establishment with 16 hand pumps 3 changing ciders and an excellent reputation. So rapid is the turnover of beers here that they are updated on a computer and the changes are relayed to a large tv monitor above the bar.

Beers from the Black Country brewery feature at all times alongside interesting guests, which usually include more than one dark beer. This is a must visit for any real ale fan in town. They do not do food but you are welcome to take your own and use the cutlery available.

If you can drag yourself away from The



● The Old Joint Stock

Wellington, walk downhill towards New Street and you will come to **The Briar Rose**, a Wetherspoons outlet with an art deco theme. This Wetherspoons also does accommodation.

Just off New Street in Lower Temple Street is another Nicholson's Pub, **The Shakespeare**. Smaller than the Old Contemptibles this still has a good range of beers on offer and all in good condition.

The Anchor on Bradford Street is a bit of a walk but is worth the effort. In the same family for 37 years, it is in the Irish Quarter not far from Digbeth Coach Station and can be reached by walking through the Bull Ring. This unspoilt Victorian corner pub boasts original stained glass windows and many small rooms. An unpretentious freehouse offering a superb range of guests it has been a GBG regular for years and to my mind is the jewel in Birmingham's crown.

These are just a few of our favourites and Birmingham has many more on offer. The local branch of CAMRA has suggested pub crawls on its website for those wishing to explore further. So don't dismiss Birmingham as a beer desert, it may have been once, but happily those days have gone.

● Old Contemptibles



Shakespeare CAMRA venture 'Over the Edge'

Kinver village lies in the far south west of Staffordshire, at the end of a narrow finger of land surrounded by the counties of Shropshire, Worcestershire and West Midlands. Famous for it's National Trust owned 'Rock Houses' carved from sandstone in Kinver-Edge the village has another claim to fame - Kinver Brewery.



● A visit to the brewery

Good for 'Kinver Dave' Kelly, wife Carol and partner Ian Davies first for their excellent beers, *Kinver Half Centurion* won silver in the Strong Bitter category at GBBF champion Beer of Britain, and then for being superb hosts when Shakespeare CAMRA visited in August. The tour of Kinver brewery was delayed slightly as Dave woke up at Worcester Beer Festival on the morning of our visit. Safe in the knowledge that our party would happily while away an hour or two at Kinver's **Plough and Harrow**,

a Bathams pub or the Black Country Ales, **Cross Inn** which just happened to have a beer and cider festival running, we were more than happy



● Our hosts... Ian, Carol and Dave

to wait.

We actually met Dave as we were leaving the Plough and Harrow and he led the way to his cosy 5 barrel plant, tucked away behind the High Street on a small industrial estate. Ian, (who apparently does most of the work), talked us through their philosophy and the history of the brewery whilst feeding us copious amounts of *The Noble 600* and a delicious buffet laid on by Carol. This

put us in fine fettle to visit the **Kinver Constitutional Club**, CAMRA National Club of the Year 2011, where we weren't too disappointed to find only 15 of a possible 18 beers on offer. Rather late in the day we set off for our final stop, **Hartlebury Club** which has recently been acquired by Cannon Royal Brewery. A range of 5 beers from Cannon Royal and Weatheroak were more than enough to keep us occupied for a relatively short visit, having overstayed at every other point in the trip. Our regular driver, Stuart, has unfortunately left Responsive Accessible Transport Ltd. so won't be with us in future. Our thanks this trip must go to Lynette, a lady of infinite patience and of course, all our hosts through the day.

While Stocks Last...

CAMRA's flagship publication **The Good Beer Guide** hits the shelves on 15th September. The guide is completely independent, there are no entry fees for listings, and every pub is checked many times a year by discerning local CAMRA members.

From country inns to urban style bars and backstreet boozers, all selected and reviewed by over 125,000 CAMRA members, this is your definitive guide to finding the perfect pint.



Now in its 39th year, the Good Beer Guide is fully revised and updated, with details of more than 4,500 pubs across the country serving the best real ale.

Available at all good bookshops at £15.99 for CAMRA members via the branch or CAMRA website at a substantial discount.

The new **Good Beer Guide 2012 Mobile App** will also be available for purchase & download from the Apple AppStore & the AndroidTM Market on 15th September 2011. This indispensable service costs just £5 (or £4.99 for the iPhone/iPad/ iPod Touch version).

Good Beer Guide Mobile allows users to search by postcode, place name or London tube stations - or it can even locate your current position using GPS. Search results contain full information and descriptions for local pubs and include tasting notes for their regular beers. Interactive maps help you navigate to your destination.

Our Minstrel looks at a popular hymn through Cider coloured spectacles

Autumn is the time of the apple harvest and of cider festivals. Also, October is the time of the Apple Day Festivities at Mary Arden's Farm, the Shakespeare Trust property in Wilmcote.

For a good few years Shakespeare Morris Men have danced at the celebration and Shakespeare Mummers, which I have Captained for over 20 years, have performed a play about the demise of the English apple so loved for its use in making cider.

In order to have an appropriate song at the end of the Apple Day Play, in 1997 Vaughan Hully, then erstwhile Secretary of Shakespeare CAMRA, who is also a mummer, decided to write one! It is called "*Juice-Alem*" and is based on the 1804 poem by William Blake, which was put to music by Sir Hubert Parry (1848-1918) in 1916. Vaughan managed to keep unchanged no less than 50 of the original words and with 55 new ones, it still has a real ring of the original!

William Blake (1757-1827) was largely unrecognised during his lifetime, but is now considered a seminal figure in the history of both the poetry and visual arts of the Romantic Age.

Sir Charles Hubert Hastings Parry was an English composer, teacher and historian of music. He was director of the Royal College of Music from 1895 until his death and was professor of music at the University of Oxford between 1900 & 1908.

If you would like to hear "*Juice-Alem*" sung, the Shakespeare Mummers will be performing the Apple Day Play and then singing it at 3pm (time tbc) on Sun 2 Oct at the Apple Day Festivities at Mary Arden's Farm and at 3pm (time tbc) on Sat 22 Oct at the Apple & Ale Festival at **The Fleece** at Bretforton. I hope we'll see you there.

● **Vaughan - the Mummer**

...and in more typical pose



Alan Whitbread
Folk Singer & Concertina Player
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www.alanwhitbread.co.uk

JUICE-ALEM

And did those teeth in ancient times
Crunch upon England's apples green?
And was the Bramley apple pie
On England's dining tables seen?
And did the cider pure and strong
Pour forth in pints, and quarts and gills?
And did the apple bring good health
To folks in dark satanic mills?

Bring me my Cox of burning gold;
Bring me my Worcester, firm and sweet.
Bring me my Pippins, new or old;
Bring me some English fruit to eat.
I will not eat that tasteless pomme,
Nor shall a French fruit soil my hand,
Till English apples rule again
In England's green and pleasant land.

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

Every Thursday at The Fleece Inn at Bretforton
(a National Trust Inn) WR11 7JE.



Champion Beers of Britain

A year of local selection, regional heats and tasting panels led to the final judging of CAMRA's beers of the year at the Great British Beer Festival in August and it's great to see a few midlands beers amongst the winners.

Overall champion was Oscar Wilde from Mighty Oak Brewery in Essex. This 3.7% mild is described as roasty dark, with suggestions of forest fruits and dark chocolate and is another boost for Milds and lower strength beers. Not since 2004 (Kelham Island, Pale Rider), has a beer over 4.0% ABV won this supreme accolade.



All the results...

Overall winners

Champion Beer of Britain

Mighty Oak, Oscar Wilde (3.7% ABV)

Second - Marble, *Chocolate* (5.5% ABV)

Third - Salopian, *Shropshire Gold* (3.8% ABV)

Mild category

Gold - Mighty Oak, *Oscar Wilde* (3.7% ABV)

Silver - Rudgate, *Ruby Mild* (4.4% ABV)

Bronze - Coastal, *Merry Maidens* (4% ABV)

Bitter category

Gold - Salopian, *Shropshire Gold* (3.8% ABV)

Silver - Teignworthy, *Reel Ale* (4% ABV)

Joint Bronze - Triple fff, *Alton's Pride* (3.8% ABV)

Joint Bronze - Potton, *Shannon IPA* (3.6% ABV)

Best Bitter category

Gold - Houston, *Peter's Well* (4.2% ABV)

Silver - Country Life, *Golden Pig* (4.7% ABV)

Joint Bronze - Castle Rock, *Preservation* (4.4% ABV)

Joint Bronze - Bollington, *Best Bitter* (4.2% ABV)

Joint Bronze - Blythe, *Staffie* (4.4% ABV)

Golden Ale category

Gold - Cumbrian Legendary Ales, *Loweswater Gold* (4.3% ABV)

Silver - Salamander, *Golden Salamander* (4.5% ABV)

Bronze - Holden's, *Golden Glow* (4.4% ABV)

Strong Bitter category

Gold - Moles, *Mole Catcher* (5% ABV)

Silver - Kinver, *Half Centurion* (5% ABV)

Bronze - Adnams Broadside (4.7% ABV)

Speciality Beer category

Gold - Oakleaf, *I Can't Believe It's Not Bitter* (4.9% ABV)

Silver - Amber, *Chocolate Orange Stout* (4% ABV)

Bronze - Orkney, *Atlas Wayfarer* (4.4% ABV)

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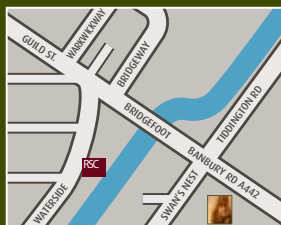
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Up the Apples (and Pears)!

CAMRA is one of the worlds most successful consumer groups and has made a huge difference to beer and pub culture over the last 40 years. Not a lot of people know though, that in the mid-seventies the organisation also opted to fight to preserve and promote real cider and perry.

A small but dedicated band worked and drank for about 10 years and in 1986 the **APPLE** committee was set up - the **Apple and Pear Produce Liaison Executive**. One of the first things APPLE did was to define what CAMRA would accept as real cider and perry: that is 'Cider which has been produced and stored in the traditional way and is 'living' in the container from which it is dispensed'. This definition now goes on to protest extraneous gas, concentrates and other additives. (It was altered slightly a few years back, and in light of the recent trend of producers adding bits of other fruit etc. and is about to undergo another review). APPLE insists it is not trying to influence what producers choose to make or do with their ciders once made. Merely that they support and promote only those ciders and perries which fit the definition. This generally includes what is offered by organisers at CAMRA beer and cider festivals.

At the last AGM of Shakespeare CAMRA Branch we were very pleased to appoint our first ever branch cider coordinator. John Ross, our Vice Chairman and small scale cider producer, is a well know face throughout this and neighbouring branches and will be responsible for the promotion of real cider in pubs within the branch area, (he's already responsible for most of what's drunk). Part of John's role relates to the easy identification and promotion of pubs which regularly have real cider on offer. If

a pub has at least one real cider available throughout the year then a window sticker supplied by APPLE should be prominently displayed. Almost a thousand of these stickers have been supplied nationally and every CAMRA region has at least one. If you are aware of a pub near you that fits the criteria but doesn't have a sticker - please let us know.

For cider lovers and anyone wanting a great day out:

The first **Great British Cider, Beer and Food Festival** is being held on 24th - 25th September this year at Brogdale, Kent, (home of the National Fruit Collections). Producers will showcase

food and drink from around Kent and the UK. Over 100 different ciders on offer plus advice re trees and apple varieties for budding cider makers. There will be plenty to entertain at the festival for all ages so if you want a break from sampling all the

food and drink on offer then there will be guided and self guided orchard tours, tractor trailer rides, miniature railway rides, cookery demonstrations and gardening talks, fruit variety identification and much more.

For more information take a look at:

www.ukcider.co.uk/blog/festivals/cider-festival-at-brogdale.html



Shakespeare Branch Diary and Beer Festival Round up



Local Beer Festivals

September

2nd-3rd HoW CAMRA, Harbury, Village Hall, CV33 9JE
www.camrahaw.org.uk

9th -10th Bellbroughton Recreation Centre DY9 9JT
www.bellbroughtonbeerfestival.co.uk

17th Evesham Pie and Ale Festival, Market Square and Abbey Park, WR11 4RW

17th Inkberrow Festival of Fun, Sands Road playing fields, WR7 4HF
www.inkberrow.org.uk/events

23rd-24th The Weighbridge, Alvechurch B48 7SQ www.the-weighbridge.co.uk

23rd-25th Hartlebury Club, DY11 7JT

30th-1st Oct. Studley Cricket Club, B80 7BG

October

14th -15th Wythall Community Club B47 6LZ www.wythallbeerfestival.co.uk

15th 'Goat and Trousers' - Rowney Green Village Hall B48 7QP

23rd-24th North Cotswolds CAMRA - Moreton in Marsh Cricket Club GL56 9QA
(Camping available on site.) www.northcotswoldcamra.org.uk/Festival4

22nd-23rd Apple and Ale Festival, The Fleece, Bretforton, about 40 ales and ciders www.thefleeceinn.co.uk

27th-29th Birmingham CAMRA, Second City Suite B5 6LT
www.birminghambeerfestival.co.uk

November

24th-26th Dudley CAMRA Winter Ales Fayre, Concert Hall, Dudley
www.dudleycamra.org.uk/#/beer-festival/4546147491

Meetings and Socials

September

13th - 8.00pm Branch Meeting, George Hotel, Shipston then onto Horseshoe Inn and then Plough Inn, Stretton-on-Fosse

October

11th - 8.00pm Branch Meeting, West End, Stratford then on to The Bear (Swan's Nest)

29th Festival Volunteers Trip to Birmingham Beer Festival

November

4th-5th To Be Confirmed - Beer of the Festival visit to Purple Moose Brewery, Porthmadog

8th - 8.00pm Branch Meeting, Olde Swanne, Evesham, then to Old Red Horse and Trumpet

December

13th - 8.00pm meet Holly Bush for Alcester Christmas Pub Crawl

16th To be arranged - Branch Xmas Meal

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

Subscribe to Shakesbeer

If you are a CAMRA member in the Shakespeare branch, you should receive a copy of Shakesbeer through the post (one per household). If you prefer, a PDF copy can be sent to you by email - just let Shakesbeer know. If you live outside the area or are not a CAMRA member but would like to subscribe and receive copies through the post, then please send a cheque made out to "Shakespeare CAMRA" for £5 for four issues, published quarterly, to:

**Shakesbeer, 21 Monks Walk,
Bridge St, Evesham, WR11 4SL**

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**The Editor reserves the right to amend or shorten contributions for publication.
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Partner's Details (if Joint Membership)

Title _____ Surname _____
Forename(s) _____
Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy) _____

12/10

Campaigning for Pub Goers & Beer Drinkers

Enjoying Real Ale & Pubs

Join CAMRA today – www.camra.org.uk/joinus



Instruction to your Bank or Building Society to pay by Direct Debit

Please fill in the whole form using a ball point pen and send to:
Campaign for Real Ale Ltd, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, Herts AL1 4LW



This Guarantee should be detached and retained by the payer.

The Direct Debit Guarantee

- This Guarantee is offered by all banks and building societies that accept instructions to pay by Direct Debits.
- If there are any changes to the amount, date or frequency of your Direct Debit The Campaign for Real Ale Ltd will notify you 10 working days in advance of your account being debited or as otherwise agreed. If you request The Campaign for Real Ale Ltd to collect a payment, confirmation of the amount and date will be given to you at the time of the request.
- 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

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