



**Issue 44
SPRING 2011**

FREE
Please
take one



SHAKESBEER

Newsletter of Shakespeare branch of CAMRA - Real ale in Shakespeare country & The Vale

On 16th March of this year CAMRA will celebrate its 40th Birthday

The amazing success of the campaign in supporting beer drinkers and pub-goers rights since 1971, will be royally celebrated when CAMRA launch a national promotion on this date. We hope you will join us in raising a glass of real ale to celebrate this landmark.

CAMRA was formed on 16th March 1971 by four founding members - Michael Hardman, Graham Lees, Jim Makin and Bill Mellor whilst visiting a pub on holiday in Ireland. The quartet had become deeply disillusioned with the domination of the market by a handful of national brewing companies, determined to push lower quality keg beer brands into the market, displacing smaller, local breweries and ales from the bars of pubs across the land.

It turned out they weren't alone in their anger at the rapidly reducing choice and quality available to drinkers across the UK - hundreds and then thousands joined the cause.

Forty years later and CAMRA now have more than 120,000 members who like you, love a good pint of beer in a great pub.

40 YEARS OF
CAMPAIGNING



Beer Festival up and running at Stratford Racecourse

The 5th annual Beer Festival to be held at Stratford's Luddington Road Racecourse will take place on 24th & 25th June. Once again, over 50 beers will be on offer, this year with a Celtic theme, and about 20 ciders and perries.

The Festival opens 2.00 pm Friday until 11.00pm and will run a discount session between 4.00pm and 6.00pm. Saturday opening is 11.00am to 11.00pm. A £10.00 entry package will include souvenir festival glass, programme and beer tokens. Food available all sessions and entertainment Saturday afternoon and evening. There is camping and caravanning available via the racecourse. **Full details on our website, www.stratfordbeerfestival.org.uk**

See our website www.shakespearecamra.org.uk



**BBC FOOD AND FARMING AWARDS
BEST DRINKS PRODUCER 2010**

WWW.WYEVALLEYBREWERY.CO.UK

Stoke Lacy, Herefordshire, HR7 4HG Tel: 01885 490505

Pub News...

Harvington

A not so new face at **The Coach and Horses** promises great things when this Punch Taverns pub joins their 'Finest Cask' scheme and has access to an exciting range of guest beers. *Greene King IPA* and *Adnams Broadside* were on when we visited. This is new manager Steve Salter's first venture into the pub trade but being Harvington born and bred, he should have no problem settling in. He wants the pub to be the centre of Harvington village life and already hosts darts, cribbage and two skittles teams. Steve, a chef for over 23 years in the Royal Navy, (rumour has it he worked on HMS Ark Royal), is keen also to provide good locally sourced, home cooked food at reasonable prices.



Steve Salter at The Coach and Horses

Some of you might know Steve from his other business, 'Teves Tasties' a family run delicatessen in Evesham, (next to the post office). Home made pickles and preserves are also on sale behind the bar.

Offenham

A new years new look for The Fish and Anchor as licensee Chris Sweet re-brands the pub, **De Montford Country Dining**. The new name is reflected in the décor and restaurant style opening hours of this riverside gem in Offenham. **Opening Times:**
Tues-Fri: 12:00-14:30; 18:00-21:30
Sat: 12:00-15:00; 19:00-22:00
Sun: 12:00-16:00.

Obviously Chris and the team hope primarily to welcome discerning diners but they cater also for anyone just out for a drink and a 'light bite' in their dog-friendly and real fired 'Cottage Bar'.

Whilst it's sad to see another traditional pub take the fine dining route at least Chris is keeping his excellent real ales. Three were on offer when we visited and I can vouch for the excellence of the *Dorothy Goodbody's Wholesome Stout*.

Alderminster

The Bell, a popular 18th Century coaching inn, were understandably delighted to be voted '**Gastro Pub of the Year**' and '**Alfresco Dining Pub of the Year**' at the prestigious Publican Food and Drink Awards 2010. On hearing of the award we visited and enjoyed an excellent rib-eye and an extremely palatable house beer, *Alscot Ale*, a 3.8% session ale brewed for the pub by Warwickshire Beer Co.

Hampton Lucy

Always innovative, **The Boars Head** are introducing a '**Privilege Pig Key Ring**'. Obtained by

spending £10 per person during 10 visits spread over 10 weeks this limited edition key ring will entitle the bearer to a 10% discount on food bills Monday to Thursday between 6.00 pm and 9.00 pm. The offer can be used from 1 April 2011 for a period of 12 months. Contact the pub for further details. They have also announced the dates of their annual beer festival which this year will be based on the theme of brewsters (see page 10). The dates to put in your diary are 29th April - 2nd May.

Honeybourne

Not only do **The Thatched Tavern** hold popular theme nights, but Friday night 9.30 - 10.30 is the place to be for Happy Hour when their draught beers such as *Abbot Ale* and *Wadsworth 6X* are just £2.20 a pint.

Evesham

After a drought of 6½ years real ale has returned to **The Railway**. Licensee Stewart Aitchison who has been there for about 7 years took the ale off because it wasn't selling but has decided to give it another go. So far so good apparently as *Charles Wells Bombadier* is selling well - if you want it to stay, get in there and drink it!

Congratulations to Matt Adams at **The Trumpet** who has just been awarded Cask Marque status for his range of Hook Norton beers. With increasing trade Matt is now opening lunchtimes Monday to Thursday and from 3.00pm to 11.00pm Friday to Saturday.

Roger and Sharon would love to welcome you to The Bulls Head. We have a fine selection of beers, lagers and real ales. We offer a good range of home cooked food. A new **Coffee Lounge** is now open from 9.00am every day, serving tea, latte, cappuccino, chocolate and espresso. Home made cakes are also on offer. We have a lovely beer garden and most weeks there are artists performing live.

The Bulls Head
High Street
Bidford-on-Avon
Tel: 01789 772242

NEW
COFFEE
LOUNGE OPEN



The White Lion @ Tredington



Mothers Day Sunday 3rd April MUMS EAT FOR FREE !!!

One Free Meal
When Booking a Table for 4 or More
 (Includes 1 FREE 3-Course meal
 when at least three 2-Course meals are purchased)

- Folk Music Sessions every 2nd & 4th Sunday of the Month
- Delicious Home Cooked Food using Locally Sourced Produce
- Mouthwatering Sunday Lunches
- Children and Dog Friendly
- Disabled Access (To Both the Garden and Pub)
- Traditional Real Ales
- Large Beer Garden



Tel 01608 661522

whitelion.tredington@btconnect.com

Good Beer, Good Food, Good Service, & Good Value



More Pub News...

Honeybourne

A completely new look for **The Gate**, a spacious roadside pub which re-opened in early December following total refurbishment.



Lisa with barman Ian Stroud

New licensee Lisa Weston needs no introduction to the villagers who packed the pub until the early hours on New Years Eve. For others however, Lisa is a Stratford girl involved in pubs and catering for the past 10 years and who, with her new free of tie lease, has great plans for The Gate. The choice of three real ales on offer at the time of our visit, *Greene King IPA*, *Wye Valley Bitter* and *Old Speckled Hen* are open to suggestions from discerning customers. Traditional reasonably priced pub food is also on offer with a three course 'pensioner special' at £7.95 available Monday to Friday. Keen to be at the heart of the Honeybourne community Lisa plans to stage events on the field adjacent to the pub: car boot sales, a Cub Scout jamboree and most importantly beer festivals are all in the offing. The local Cubs already make use of the pub's function room and any

other community groups are welcome to make contact on 01386 839518 if they wish to take advantage of the facilities. We belatedly welcome Lisa to the neighbourhood and wish her the very best

Studley

The annual branch outing to **The Little Lark** to partake of those famous Santa Pies, (an entire and delicious Christmas dinner baked in a pie), was thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended. Branch Sec. John Ross still holds the record of 14 pies eaten between 1st-24th December when they're available.

Ilmington

We hate to rain on anybody's parade but a Sunday Times quote (December 2010), regarding **The Howard Arms**, and the pub's own website, suggest that it is in *The Good Beer Guide* and in fact it isn't. Without doubt the Howard is a first class hostelry with numerous accolades for food and accommodation and many

a five star rating on *'Trip Advisor'*, which I trust implicitly. It's a number of years however since it appeared in the GBG. The situation will be rectified by Manager Quentin Creese who took on the pub on 7th January, (he previously managed it in 2009 but has worked elsewhere in the meantime). Quentin was keen to point out that the current two beer offering, supplemented by an occasional guest, would soon increase to three permanent beers. When we spoke, *Old Hooky* and *Wye Valley Bitter* were permanently available with *'Haggis Hunter'* a Burns Night themed beer as guest.

The branch wish Quentin all the best and hope the pub's quest for GBG continues

Broadway

Good news for CAMRA members. Andrew Scott, licensee of **The Crown and Trumpet** will honour your Wetherspoons vouchers. *Goffs Joustier* is the latest addition to the excellent range of local beers available there.



Santa Pies

More Pub News...

Bretforton

Potential disaster was averted by quick thinking Ashley, barmaid at **The Fleece**, who raised the alarm when she saw flames roaring from the pub chimney and part of the roof on fire. Ashley spotted the blaze about 6.30 pm on her way to work and called the fire brigade. Contrary to popular belief, it wasn't the excessive number of candles on licensee Nigel's birthday cake, (celebrated the same day), but some over enthusiastic customers feeding the fire in the 'dugout' bar which caused the blaze. Fire tenders doused the roof and chimney, which burned for over an hour, whilst business continued more or less as normal. Many readers will remember the Fleece fire of February 2004 which closed the pub for over a year. Cheers Ashley, we hope Nigel bought you a drink!!!

Alcester

Sunday 27th March, from 4pm sees the annual Cheese Festival, at **The White Lion**. Over 25 Cheeses are available to try, together with speciality breads. Ales to compliment cheeses are currently being sourced. As much as you can eat for £5 per person, tickets are on sale from 1st March. Currently available only at The White Lion, Cannon Royall, "*Lions Roar*", (4.3%), a new beer described as 'a lovely quaffing ale, leaving a fruity aftertaste.'

Stratford and Evesham

We're looking forward to the Spring Festival at **The Golden Bee** and **The Olde Swanne**, Wetherspoons pubs. From **23rd March 'til 10th April** up to 50 different

beers including new, seasonal and speciality beers will be on offer at the Stratford and Evesham venues.

More importantly, licensee Tammy at **The Golden Bee**, is inviting CAMRA members to a festival launch night on the **23rd March** to include meet the brewer, Brad from Lymstone brewery, Stoke On Trent. There are nibbles and beer tasters on offer as well as beer/food matching and a mini quiz with prizes.

Stratford

The One Elm is celebrating, and rightly so having been listed as a finalist in the prestigious **Publican Awards 2011** as '*Community Pub of the Year*'. To be placed in the best six in the country is praise indeed but we have to wait until the awards ceremony on 6th April to see the eventual winner.

The Fox at Loxley

Branch Pub of the Season Winter 2011

Shakespeare CAMRA, together with friends and family of licensee Gareth Slater turned out on a miserable Saturday afternoon to celebrate The Fox pub's achievement in being voted branch Pub of the Season for winter 2010.

Gareth, who together with partner Sue, has recently joined CAMRA, (this had no bearing on the accolade), was absolutely delighted with the award, presented by branch Vice Chairman John Ross. The fact that a pub consistently sells good quality real ale is not in itself enough to gain this sort of recognition although it is a prerequisite of the award. A pub must be judged to offer something extra by way of promoting the CAMRA cause or offering a little extra to it's local community. The Fox does all this and more. Gareth and partner Sue regularly sponsor community events at the pub, have four excellent beers and *Black Rat* cider on offer, were recently granted Casque Marque status and have introduced a 10 pence per pint discount for CAMRA members. Congratulations from the branch and thank you for your hard work.



Closing date for copy for the next issue of **SHAKESPEARE** will be 15th May 2011



French Chef Jean Pierre and
award winning landlady Sara Gireme
welcome you to

The Plough Inn, Stretton-on-Fosse near Moreton-in-Marsh



Tel: 01608 661053



- Traditional 17th Century Inn
- Large menu
- Meals & snacks every session
- Inglenook Fireplace
- Sunday Spit Roast in the bar in Winter and Spring
- Four Real Ales
- Real Cider on draught

Closed Sunday evening

Voted
Morning Advertiser
Best Freehouse
in the Midlands
2010



WARWICKSHIRE PUB OF THE YEAR 2008



Under
NEW
Management



Shakespeare CAMRA
PUB OF THE SEASON
Winter 2010

A superb look new menu caters for all tastes

4 Cask Marqued Ales kept in premium condition and specially chosen to suit our freshly prepared food. Currently on offer we have Wadsworth 6x, Black Sheep, Old Hooky and Wye Valley Best

Loxley, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire CV35 9JS

Telephone: 01789 840991

Opening Hours: Monday to Thursday 12.00-3.00pm & 6.30pm-11.30pm
Friday, Saturday & Sunday - Open all day

Now also serving
Traditional
**Full English
Breakfast**
Saturdays
8.30 - 11.00am

THE FOX INN LOXLEY





Lunch served
Mon - Sat
12.00 noon - 2.30pm
Dinner Mon - Sat
5.30pm - 9.00pm

Open

**ALL DAY
EVERY DAY**

Traditional Sunday
Lunch
12 noon till 8.00pm



**Sunday 3rd April
Mothers Day
Lunches**
from 12.00 till 8.00pm

**May Bank
Holiday Beer
Festival**

Starts Thursday 26th
Live Music - Sunday 29th
Family Fun Day -
Monday 30th

The Peacock Oxhill

Award winning country dining pub

Delicious, imaginative, locally sourced food,
freshly cooked to your order in a warm and
cosy atmosphere.

Daily changing blackboard, fresh fish
delivered daily from Brixham and Cornwall.

We are dog, child and horse friendly.

The Peacock is nestled in the sleepy village
of Oxhill, midway between Stratford and
Banbury. It has been tastefully modernised but
still maintains its olde worlde charm, with oak
beams, flagstone floors and roaring log fire.

**Main Street, Oxhill,
Warks. CV35 0QU**

Telephone: 01295 688060

QUIZ NIGHT - first Sunday of every month from 8.00pm (in aid of Air Ambulance)

**Situated in the heart of the
famous Vale of Evesham...**



*Open 11.00am til 11.00pm everyday for
traditional cask ales, real ciders and fine food*

The Round of Gras

Bretforten Road, Badsey, Evesham

Tel: 01386 830206

www.roundofgras.co.uk



**CARVERY
SPECIAL**

Midweek £5.00

Tuesday, Wednesday
& Thursday lunch and
Wednesday evening

Sunday £7.50

12.00 - 3.00 &
5.30 - 8.00

More Pub News...

Shipston-on-Stour

Our last issue neglected to pay tribute to licensee Mark Wardle and his team at **The White Bear** for their efforts to invigorate and revitalise this town centre gem. The interior improvements include decoration, heating and new windows and well as some structural work making the lounge open plan and modernising the loos. A separate, (totally separate), sports bar has opened in the car park where major sporting events can be enjoyed without disturbing drinkers and diners in the main building and the pub now boasts nine en-suite letting rooms. Mark paid tribute to partner Nicky Cooper and General Manager Andy Dunsford without whom this major operation couldn't function. The backbone of any pub has to be it's

regulars and they didn't come any more regular than The White Bear's most loyal customer, Mick Siddens who graced the bar for over 40 years. Mick cut the ribbon when the pub re-opened following last summer's refurbishment at which time he explained that he had been drinking legally in pubs for 71 years, since he had turned 18 in 1939.

"I don't think I've missed a day," said Mick. "Working, singing, talking, laughing and enjoying the company of a pub. But I never thought I'd be asked to open one."

Sadly he has since passed away. According to friend and drinking partner David Christmas, "Mick was not able to walk to the Bear in the deep snow and freezing cold of December and died after a short illness, perhaps brought on by the shock of being unable to get to the pub for the

first time in more than 70 years - despite the efforts of his good friend Aussie Paul and bar manager, Andy, who ensured that draught beer in a bottle was delivered to him every day."

There are a dozen brass plaques on the settles in the Bear, commemorating regular customers (and their dogs) who are no longer drinking with us. Mick will now join his older brother (who is especially noted as the last person out and first person in, on the Millennium).

The following tribute was written by one of Mick's friends, also one of our most active members and a regular contributor to these pages, Jim Sargeant.

Jim's sentiments are shared by us all and our sympathies go out to all of Mick's family and friends.

Farewell Mr Mick

You could always rely on meeting Mick Siddens early evening in the public bar of **The White Bear** in Shipston on Stour. Whilst supping his beer (from a half pint glass with a handle) he would tell you about his day; which village he had walked to, what pictures or cartoons he had drawn or perhaps details of a model cannon he had been turning on a lathe at his Shipston home. Mick had a string of monologues he would recite and he was word perfect with all the verses of the Bladon Races. Alas Mr Mick died aged 89 just before Christmas. At his funeral a full gathering of friends battled their way through snow and ice to Oakley Wood crematorium where a humanist service



Oldest regular Mick Siddens (pictured front) with Mark Wardle, Nikki Cooper and manager Andy Dunsford

took place. At the end of the service during which friends were encouraged to speak of their memories of Mick, two well known local folk musicians, Nigel

and Donald, played Mick's favourite song. Everyone joined in singing 'Oh me lads, you should have seen us gannin...'. A wake was held at The White Bear.

More Pub News...

Hampton Lucy

Our promotion of women drinkers and brewers in previous issues will be put to the test over the Royal Wedding, Bank Holiday Weekend, when **The Boars Head** stage their **Brewsters Beer Festival**. Beers all devotedly prepared by women brewers will be on offer from Friday April 29th to Sunday May 2nd and I can't think of a better way to spend a bank holiday weekend.

For those interested in the 'happy couple', the weekend kicks off early on Friday with a 'pre-wedding breakfast' followed by a right 'Royal Buffet' between 12.00 and 6.00 pm.

More importantly at least sixteen beers will be on offer from **Waen, Brewsters, Brown Cow, Mallinsons, Wests, Isle of Skye, Montys, and Blue Bell** breweries.

Saturday sees a blind tasting with prizes. On Sunday, Sue Hayward from Waen Brewery in Penstrowed, Powys, will be on hand for 'meet the Brewster' sessions. We hope to see Sue's rich and hoppy *Blackberry Stout* (3.8% abv) and very popular *Landmark* (5.5% abv), both of which won SIBA awards in Wales and West of England. With the kitchen closed Sunday evening landlady Sue Maindonald won't let her guests go hungry and is having some fine Indian cuisine shipped in. This will need to be pre-ordered so keep an eye on her website.

On Monday the pub hosts barbeque (12.00 'til 6.00 pm) and entertainment, (4.00 'til 8.00 pm).

Have a look at The Boars Head website, www.theboarsheadhamptonlucy4food.co.uk, for more details.

Sue and husband John from Waen Brewery



Brewery News

Greene King

I've nothing against *Greene King IPA*, it's a very acceptable award winning beer, but it does seem to be everywhere, (their own marketing dept. boasts that it's the fastest selling cask ale in the country), and it's nice to have a choice. Hats off to them however, for their innovative 'Revolution' dispense system. Basically they have fitted a sliding sparkler onto the spout of the swan neck dispenser, giving the customer a choice, at the flick of a switch, as to how they'd like their beer served. With the sparkler on the beer is dispensed northern style - with a large, tight head and a smoother mouth feel, or southern style, no sparkler, giving a crisper hoppier finish and looser head. (As discussed in 'Sparklers and Swan Necks' issue 42).

Silhill

Introducing a new and up and coming boutique cask brewery. Family run and based in Solihull, Silhill supply a number of pubs in the Stratford area. Currently they offer two casks - the '4.0 per cent' (A pale ale with a light and refreshing full hopped taste) and the '3.7 per cent', (a full flavoured, light amber session ale). Look out for the beer and further information in future Shakesbeers.



Closing date for copy for the next issue of ~~SHAKESBEER~~ will be 15th May 2011



THE NORMAN KNIGHT

Whichford, Shipston - on - Stour,
Warwickshire Tel: 01608 684621

incorporating



The micro brewery in the Cotswolds,
able to supply you with quality real ales.

01608 684866

sales@thepatriotbrewery.co.uk

www.thepatriotbrewery.co.uk

"The Pub on the Village Green"

Winner of CAMRA pub of the Season 2010.



Fantastic new extensive menu available lunchtimes
and evening featuring locally sourced homemade cooking
in a friendly and traditional cotswold country pub.



Fantastic Christmas Party Menu available
taking bookings now - please contact us for details.



Every Sunday we offer a traditional carvery
with at least two roasts.



We also have our own microbrewery
(The Patriot Brewery) situated on site.



Don't be fooled by a hint of
sweetness...this Bear's got attitude...

Hunny Bear

3.8% ABV

Award Winning Uphampton Ales from

Cannon Royall Brewery Ltd.

Uphampton Lane, Ombersley, Nr. Droitwich,
Worcs. WR9 0JW

Telephone: 01905 621161



Brewery News



It can never be said that Purity doesn't grasp every opportunity for promotion and publicity so were delighted when Oz Clark and Hugh Dennis gate crashed a 'Beer Beauty' event hosted by the brewery, to gain female insight into what makes the perfect pub for their series, 'Oz and Hugh raise the bar'. Any of you who saw the programme on 2nd January on BBC2, will know just how successful they were.

The event proved to be an excellent boost for a series of tasting events promoted by journalist and presenter Marverine Cole, dubbed 'The Beer Beauty'. Purity have now joined forces with Marverine and Malmaison, Birmingham to present 'femAIE', their next tasting event which will take place at Malmaison on 29th March. We previously reported Purity's

support of the Moseley folk festival in Issue 42 (Autumn 2010) and are pleased to say their efforts have been acknowledged. MD Paul Halsey was presented with a SIBA certificate of commendation for 'Best Sponsorship' for their outstanding festival bar.



A first for Wye valley as it scooped the first ever Best Drinks Producer award at 'the Oscars' of the food world BBC Food and Farming Awards 2010 at the NEC. Wye Valley Brewery was recognised as best from all types of drink producers across the country.

The Brewery rounded 2010 off in style collecting 4 medals at the 2010 CAMRA West Midlands Beer of the year awards.

DG's *Golden Ale*, *Wholesome Stout* and *Wye Valley Bitter* all came away with Bronze medals in their categories and DG's *Country Ale* scored a Silver for Bottled Beer of

the Year.

The Monthly Cask Specials are going well, March celebrates CAMRA's 40th anniversary with *Campaign Ale* (5.0% ABV), a classic IPA: April gives us *DG's Natural Blonde Lager* (4.2%ABV) and May a full bodied mild, *DG's May Queen* (3.5%ABV).



Triple celebrations as *Hooky Bitter*, *Double Stout* and *Hooky Dark* were all crowned among the world's best beers at The Brewing Industry International Awards (BIIA) in February. *Hooky Bitter* triumphed with gold in the category for bottles ales. *Double Stout* won silver in the category for dark ale and *Hooky Dark* picked up a bronze in the cask ale category.

We look forward to the monthly specials, *First Light* (4.3%) in March, *303AD* (4.0% ABV) in April and the superb *Special Dark Mild* (4.6%ABV) in May.



Fans of *Shagweaver* (4.5% ABV) will be delighted to see it at Wetherspoons from April - June as it has made their national list. Amongst other beers they will be showing off their Coffee Stout at the Bath Coffee Festival in May and will feature also this summer at both Cheltenham and Bath Food and Drink Festivals

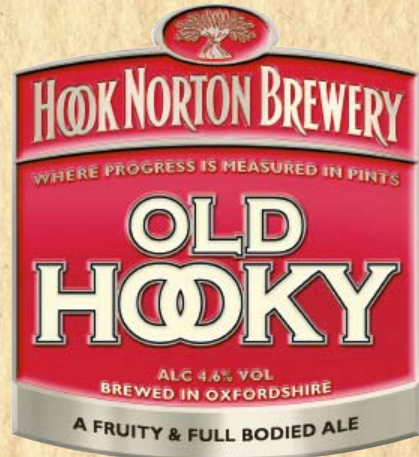
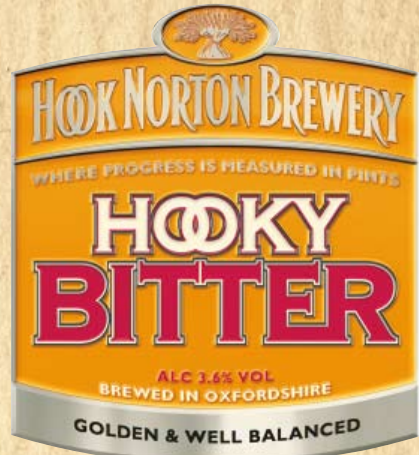
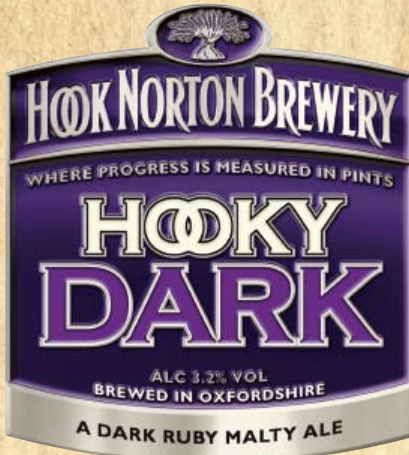
The newly introduced monthly 'one off' brew is proving extremely popular. *February Filly* went well; March sees, *Ol Gusti*, *Maid in Heaven* for the wedding month of April and *A Fistful of Hops* (sister brew to *The Beer With No Name*) in May. With June's offering, *For a Few Hops More*, we definitely see a spaghetti western theme developing.

A new beer to join the family is *Hunny Bear* (3.8% ABV) - a smooth, session beer with a hint of sweetness to balance the bitter hops.

The brewery is now significantly involved with the management of **The Hartlebury Club** where five real ales, (3 or 4 from Cannon Royall) are on offer and 1 or 2 guests from local micros such as *Weatheroak*, *Bewdley* and *Hobsons*.



Great real ales at your local!



Visit www.hooky.co.uk to find your
nearest Hook Norton pub



Wassail? Whassat?

I like to think that I am a woman of the times. I use a laptop, I have a smart phone, I am no stranger to modernity. So how come that on two bitterly cold and dark winter nights in January I found myself willingly taking part in the ancient ritual of wassailing cider orchards?

Wassailing comes from the Anglo-Saxon *waes haeil* - to be healthy. It is an old custom whereby people drink to the health of apple trees in order to encourage a good crop in the season to come. Although not all wassails are the same there is a loose procedure that tends to be followed.

It starts with a procession to the orchard. Everyone carries lanterns and makes a noise, banging drums, blowing whistles and generally making a right racket to wake up the trees from their winter slumber and frighten off evil spirits. Once in the orchard the

most venerable tree is encircled and a wassailing song is sung. The master of ceremonies, sometimes known as the Butler, proposes a toast to the tree and pours some cider on the roots, symbolising the circle of life. Toast dipped in cider is hung in the tree to attract good spirits before the final round of noise again and then the serious drinking begins.

The first Wassail I went to was at **The Fleece, Bretforton**. A large and enthusiastic crowd turned out despite the cold to join with Pebworth Morris and Aelfgythe Womens Border Morris

Toast in the tree at Bretforton



in the celebrations. Landlord Nigel was delighted with the turnout pronouncing it "the best so far" and the evening as "excellent" and I really can't argue with him there.

The second was a more intimate event at the home of branch members John Ross and Sue Fraser in Alcester. A smaller but no less enthusiastic group processed as above but upon returning to the warmth of the house we passed around the wassail bowl of mulled cider. As it passed from person to person the Butler Alan Whitbread presented our hosts with a tray on which were some yew branches to represent long life, some nuts symbolising fertility and a lighted candle for love. There followed the traditional drinking and eating. So what was it that attracted me? Was it the mystical connection to our pagan past? Being part of an ancient link with our ancestors and the turning of the seasons? The belief that singing around a tree will promote a good harvest? Or is the key really that in the depths of a cold and bitter winter there is nothing more fun than making an uninhibited noise, hanging a piece of toast in a tree and drinking cider in the company of good friends. I'll be back next year.

Liz Kirby



Sue gets life, love and fertility from the Butler

THE CROWN AND TRUMPET INN

CHURCH STREET - BROADWAY - WORCESTERSHIRE - WR12 7AE



Situated just behind the village green of Broadway a traditional 17th century Cotswold Inn. We have four seasonally brewed beers from the local Stanway Brewery. Including a selection of other guest local ales.

Just off the Cotswolds Way providing accommodation for weekend and midweek breaks with monthly Thursday **Jazz and Blues** Evenings. Serving Lunch and Dinners all through the week using locally produced ingredients to make seasonally cooked home made dishes



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

For Summer 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

Olde English Rose - 4.0%

Straw like in colour this excellent ale depicts every aspect of summer. With an initial dryness on the pallet and a hoppy finish, this brew is bursting with flavour.

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



Stroud Brewery

Tom Long - 3.8%

Silver at SIBA National Beer Competition, Champion Bitters (up to 4.0%) Amber session beer with spicy citrus aroma. Good body for low ABV.

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



Stanway Brewery

Morris-A-Leaping - 4.0%

An amber beer with a fine balance of malt and hops. Named after the numerous Morris Rings that like to frequent our Inn. Brewed especially for the the Crown and Trumpet.

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



Stroud Brewery

Summer Breeze - 4.2%

A crisp summer beer with rye malt and zesty hop character.

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

01386 853202 - info@cotswoldholidays.co.uk - <http://www.cotswoldholidays.co.uk>

Warwickshire
County Pub
of the Year 2010



Opening times:

Monday to Thursday

11.30am-3.00 & 5.00pm-10.30

11.30am-11.30pm Friday & Saturday

and 12.00pm-10.00pm Sunday

Contact Sue or Angela on

01789 840533

Visit our website:

www.theboarsheadhamptonlucy4food.co.uk

THE BOARS HEAD

HAMPTON LUCY

featured in *The Good Beer Guide 2011*

An ever changing range of up to **6 Cask Ales**

Home Cooked Food

Good Quality, Good Value and Locally Sourced, served everyday in Pleasant Surroundings

Extensive Wine List - chosen to complement your food or simply enjoy with friends

Take Away service available

Functions and Private Dining catered for in house or at a venue of your choice

WiFi available

"Shakespeare CAMRA Warwickshire Pub of the Year 2010"

See our website www.shakespearecamra.org.uk



15

Going down the pub?

A worryingly common response to the above question is a simple “why”?

The trend of pub closures continues and despite a reassuring growth in real ale sales, the ‘traditional pub’ is becoming more of a rarity. What then, in these times of sports bars and wine bars, of ‘gastro-pubs’ and vertical drinking establishments is a traditional pub? I suppose, being of a certain age, what I really mean is ‘old fashioned’.

Whilst there will always be a place for all of the above, (they do after all keep the ale flowing), I hanker for the time when you simply swapped your own front room and cosy fireside for the one in the pub. Conversation where the ills of the world could be explored and put right by experts in every field or where last night's football or our latest comprehensive thrashing of the Aussies could be celebrated, was the order of the day. I've no problem with a little background music, even the dreaded

telly if it's tucked away somewhere and at a volume you can talk above. These are the places which are becoming a rarity and if you have one locally or know and use one, you should cherish and savour it. Their loss isn't something you can blame the landlord for (although the ‘pubcos’ certainly have sins to answer for). There are lots of reasons for going down the pub and with the easy availability of cheap supermarket booze and home entertainment systems, licensees have to find you a good one.

This is the start of a series extolling the virtues and amenities of the great British pub and hopefully answering the response of “why”? I would welcome any contributions from our readers telling us why you go, what's on offer and what would make you go more often. It's a good opportunity to give your own local and landlord (or lady), a bit of a plug. Firstly I'm going to have a brief look at Pub games.

Before food and music took up much of the available space, pub games were an integral part of most pubs. A vast variety, many found only in particular



The Horseshoe Inn

Shipston-on-Stour

A real pub with real ales, real food and friendly banter

Open all day every day • Food served lunchtime and Evening (not Sunday evening)

Telephone 01608 662190 • www.horseshoeshipston.com

A photograph of The Horseshoe Inn, a traditional English pub with a half-timbered facade. The building has a sign that reads 'The Horseshoe Inn'. In the foreground, there are wooden benches and a small table. A green starburst graphic with the text 'The Craic is back!' is overlaid on the image.

A circular award badge from the 'Good Beer Guide 2011'. It features a star and the text 'Good Beer Guide 2011' and 'Here in it'.

localities, would attract participants and spectators, giving the pub a life and atmosphere unlike anywhere else in the world.

Although much less common than they were, pub games still survive. A survey in 2006 found that darts boards were still in use at more than half the pubs in Britain.

A 'Save Our Skittles' campaign, launched in 2008, sought to preserve the 2,500 alleys offering an ancient, wooden version of ten-pin bowling. In our own Shakespeare branch area the alleys in use have halved from ten to just five over the past few years and of those in use only four sport teams in the local league. (Pubs with useable alleys are **The Coach and Horses**, Harvington, **The Masons Arms**, Long Marston, **The Ivy**, North Littleton, **The Masons Arms**, Pebworth and **The Navigation**, Wootton Wawen, should you wish to take advantage). A much smaller version is table skittles or 'Devil amongst the Tailors', where the skittles, arranged in a nine inch square, are struck with a wooden ball

suspended above the table on a chain. This can be seen locally in **The Crown and Trumpet**, Broadway. This is also the venue for allegedly one of the oldest of all pub games, Ring the Bull the aim of which is to swing a metal ring which is dangled from the ceiling on a rope, onto a metal hook on the wall.

Shoveha'penny, where players attempt to "shove" or push an old fashioned halfpenny up the board scoring points was once very popular in pubs. Seldom

...dart boards are
still in use at more
than half the pubs
in Britain...

seen or played now the opportunity is there at **The Fleece**, Bretforton. Indoor quoits, predominantly played in mid and south Wales, and in England, along its border with Wales, has quite a tradition in the Vale of Evesham and can still be found, as at **The Red Lion**, Ilmington. Aunt Sally is still played in many a pub garden particularly around Oxford and although fewer participants than there once were there are competitive leagues in this area too. (The game can be found at **The Cherington Arms**, Cherington, **The Red Lion**, Little Compton, **The**



Ring the Bull

George at Brailles, **The Black Horse** and **Coach and Horses** at Shipston, **The Castle**, Edge Hill and **The Norman Knight**, Whichford).

The point is that games like marbles, (yes, still played: the British and World Marbles Championships have been held at Tinsley Green, West Sussex, every year since 1932), quoits (popular in Wales and Gloucestershire), bat 'n' trap, (west country), shove ha'penny and many others, survive in pubs and only in pubs. An enormous and important part of our heritage is disappearing as pubs close down. As well as preserving our history games are great for encouraging repeat trade, attracting new customers and creating an exciting and friendly atmosphere in the pub.

Friendly competition breeds friendships and binds our communities together: just one of many good reasons to go down the pub.



Aunt Sally

I'd Schooner Have a Pint

In January the Department of Business announced that during the next Parliamentary session it plans to legalise the serving of beers and ciders in two-thirds of a pint measures, the 'schooner'.

This news created quite a stir in the press who saw it as an unwelcome attack on the nation's iconic pint. Three years ago the pint saw off the last threat from Brussels by winning an unlimited opt-out from metric measures and there is no denying that we have a strong and abiding affection for the measure. After all, we have been drinking pints for over 300 years since the 1698 Act of Parliament which declared that ale and beer should only be served in pints, full quarts (two pints) or multiples thereof. 'Fancy a pint?' remains common parlance for "would you like to come to the pub with me and have a drink?" The pub industry had been lobbying for the two-thirds pint and said its introduction would help make pubs

more attractive to women. The British Beer and Pub Association said, 'The two thirds pint will give greater flexibility over how beer is served. This is particularly important when it comes to getting more women to choose beer, as many avoid the traditional pint glass.' The current regulations allow for sales of draught beer only in pints, halves and one third of a pint. These smaller measures do have a following, especially as 'tasters', even if they are not universally available. (Wetherspoons generally offer three 1/3 tasters during their beer festivals). Whether or not the schooner is introduced, and we should bear in mind that the last Government announced the same plan but ran out



of parliamentary time before they could ratify it, I cannot agree that it will herald the demise of the pint. It is too much embedded in our rich heritage to be so easily cast aside.

Let G K Chesterton have the last word...
**"St George he was for England
And before he killed the dragon
He drank a pint of English ale,
Out of an English flagon."**

Give Pubs a Chance - Beer tax since 2008 has risen by 26.1%

"We contend that for a nation to try to tax itself into prosperity is like a man standing in a bucket and trying to lift himself up by the handle."

Winston Churchill

Latest figures from the British Beer and Pub Association (BBPA) show that beer sales fell 3.9% in 2010. In particular pub sales were hit badly, dropping 7.5%.

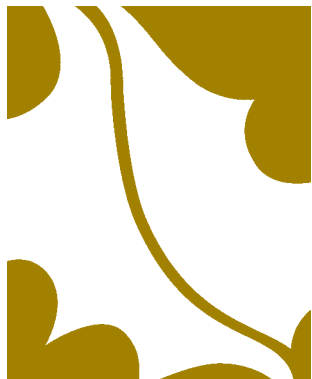


Government tax revenue also fell, down £257m from 2009 figures, despite excise

duties rising. Pub sales, according to the BBPA, have dropped 20.2% in the last three years. The BBPA has issued a plea to Government to pursue more pub-friendly tax policies.

At the last count 114804 concerned beer drinkers have signed up to 'Axe The Tax', part of the 'I'm backing the Pub' campaign supporting and promoting the British pub.





thehollybush

bar • restaurant • conferences • functions

37 Henley Street, Alcester, Warks B49 5QX

t: 01789 762482 f: 01789 766411

email: thehollybushpub@btconnect.com

8 Real Ales on continuously including Doom Bar,
Black Sheep, Uley Bitter, Purity Gold & Purity
Mad Goose or UBU with guests

Delicious Traditional & Contemporary Food

Beautiful Gardens

Functions, Private Dinner Parties, Conferences

Live Music on Friday & Saturday nights

Summer Beer Festival and Entertainment 17th - 19th June

Open 7 days a week 12 noon till late

Food served Monday to Saturday

Lunch 12.00 to 2.30pm

Sunday Lunch 12.00 to 4.00pm

Dinner Tuesday to Thursday 7.00pm til 9.00pm

Friday and Saturday 7.00pm till 9.30pm



Traditional 17th Century
Inn offering Home
Cooked Meals,
Real Ales and
Traditional Pub Games

En-Suite
Accommodation and
Function Room for
Weddings, Parties and
Business

Open

Monday to Thursday

11.30am - 3.00pm

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





The Fleece Inn

Bretforton WR11 7JE

*The quintessential English Pub - owned by
The National Trust - run with love of tradition*

Local Regular & Guest Cask Ales & Cider

*Mediaeval Thatched Barn available to hire for
Functions and Events*

*Each second Wednesday of the month 8.00pm -
Open Acoustic Session*

*Every Thursday from around 8.45pm -
Folk Night - everyone is welcome*

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

Check out the website for forthcoming events

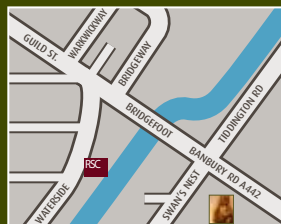
Shakespeare CAMRA Worcestershire Pub of the Year 2009



The Bear

Free House & Kitchen

- ✓ Now 7 real ales
- ✓ 28 wines by the glass
- ✓ premium draught lagers
- ✓ fabulous pub food
- ✓ Sunday roast



Telephone: 01789 265 540

Swan's Nest, CV37 7LT

5 minutes walk from the RSC



Minstrels meet over a pint of English Ale

Regular readers of my articles on ale songs will be aware of my penchant for traditional songs. I like to think that songs, having been sung for generations, often by known characters, are part of our social history. Prior to the 20th century they were handed down from father to son (or mother to daughter), with the tune and the words sometimes changing over time. But that does not mean there are no songs written in more recent years. In fact, the song I have chosen for today's article was written by **Harvey Andrews**, I believe in the late 1980s. Not only is it a cracking song with a rousing chorus, it has the feel of a traditional song!

Harvey Andrews was born on 7 May 1943 in Stechford, Birmingham and while at college was turned on to American folk. He began singing at a folk club owned by the Ian Campbell Folk Group in 1964 and appeared on an EP with folk revivalist Martin Carthy in 1965. Andrews was a teacher in the late 1960s but in 1970 he released *'Places & Faces'*, his debut solo LP. An appearance at the Cambridge Folk Festival that same year raised expectation for a follow-up, *'Writer of Songs'*, doing well when it appeared in 1972. He spent the following year touring with the art rock band Focus and also completed his third album.

Andrews appeared on the BBC TV series *'The Camera and the Song'* in 1975 and collaborated with guitarist Graham Cooper for the album *'Fantasies From a Corner Seat'*. He formed his own 'Beeswax' label

in 1982 and so far has produced no less than 17 successful albums singing his own songs, many of which have been recorded by other artists. *'English Ale'* was performed by the late, great Johnny Collins in a very distinctive performance on his 1993 album, *'Pedlar of Songs'*.

In addition to writing and singing his own songs, he collaborated on a successful musical depicting life growing up in Birmingham in the forties and fifties, *'Go Play Up Your Own End'*. The musical has played at the Birmingham Repertory Theatre, the Birmingham Hippodrome and

the Alexandra Theatre, thus setting a record of having been staged at every one of the second city's major theatres. In 2007 he published a musical memoir *'Gold Star to the Ozarks'* and he continues to write and perform. For more information see www.harveyandrews.com

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** at Welford-on-Avon (near the Maypole) CV37 8PX;
Every Thursdays at **The Fleece Inn** at Bretforton, WR11 7JE.



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

English Ale

When the summer sun is shining England's finest hour is seen,
When the ripening barley's waving, yellow in its frame of green,
When the bird-song welcomes evening, when the sky is turning pale

Fill your glass and toast their glory with a taste of English ale.

English ale, O English ale, how we love our English ale.

Fill your glass and toast their glory with a taste of English ale.

When the autumn leaves are golden, when the evening air is chill,
When the swallows leave us for a place where there is summer still
Just remember their returning, like the tides they never fail.

When the winter brings the snowstorm, when Jack Frost is lord of all
When the winds howl at your window, and the nights too quickly fall
There's a log fire warmly burning, on the hill or in the dale

When the spring begins to quicken, when new scents are on the air,
When the sleepers stir and waken, when the land again is fair
Then the old men talk of childhood, old men tell such wondrous tales

Shakespeare Branch Diary and Beer Festival Round up



Meetings and Social

March

16th, 8.00pm Branch meeting Edge Hill Meet Castle, on to Peacock, Tysoe then Peacock Oxhill

18th, 8.00pm Butchers Arms, Mickleton Skittles challenge v's Nth Coitswold

23rd, 8.00pm Golden Bee, Stratford. Meet the brewer and beer tasting at launch of Spring Festival.

April

20th 8.00pm, Branch Meeting The Stag, Wellesbourne then to Black Horse, Morton Morrell

CAMRA AGM and Members' Weekend in Sheffield, 15 to 17 April 2011

May

14th Wychwood Brewery Tour

18th, 7.00pm, Branch Meeting & Alcester 'Ale Tasting' starts at Turks Head and finishes about 9.00pm at White Lion

Shakespeare CAMRA AGM

24th May, 8.00pm at Holly Bush, Alcester

June

15th, 7.30pm, Meet Old Tramway, Stratford for pre-festival publicity tour

Beer Festivals

March

17th-19th Burton Town Hall, CAMRA Beer Fest., (100 beers and ciders)

April

22nd-23rd Trumpet PH, Evesham, St Georges Day Beer Fest. & entertainment

29th-2nd May Boars Head, Hampton Lucy, 'Brewsters' beer fest.

29th-2nd May Long Itchington CAMRA (6 pubs)

May

5th-7th Banbury TA Centre, CAMRA beer Fest. (90 Beers + ciders)

20th-21st Shirley, Camp Hill RFC (Round Table Beer Fest. approx 30 beers)

26th-30th Peacock PH, Oxhill, Bank Holiday w/e Beer Fest (Family Fun day Mon. 30th)

June

24th 25th Stratford Racecourse, CAMRA Beer & Cider Festival, camping available

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 the 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**

CAMRA Branch contacts

- **Chair** - Lloyd Evans
chair@shakespearecamra.org.uk
- **Vice Chair** - John Ross
- **Secretary** - John Ross
secretary@shakespearecamra.org.uk
- **Treasurer** - Julian Stobinski
treasurer@shakespearecamra.org.uk
- **Membership** - Katie Williams
membership@shakespearecamra.org.uk
- **Social Secretary** - Bob Kirby
socials@shakespearecamra.org.uk
- **Young members Coordinator** - Simon Williams
BYMC@shakespearecamra.org.uk
- **Branch Contact** - Keith Barker
Contact@shakespearecamra.org.uk
- **Pubs Officer** - Pete Godfrey
Pubs@shakespearecamra.org.uk
- **Campaigns Officer** - Vacant
- **Newsletter** - Bob Kirby
Shakesbeer@shakespearecamra.org.uk

**The Editor reserves the right to amend or shorten contributions for publication.
Copyright © Shakespeare CAMRA 2011.**

Disclaimer: The views expressed in this publication are those of individual contributors, and are not necessarily the views of the Shakespeare Branch or The Campaign for Real Ale Ltd. Shakespeare CAMRA accepts no liability in relation to the accuracy of articles or advertisements, readers must rely on their own enquiries. It should also be noted that acceptance of an advertisement in this publication should not be deemed an endorsement of quality by Shakespeare CAMRA

A Campaign

of Two Halves



Join CAMRA Today

Complete the Direct Debit form and you will receive 15 months membership for the price of 12 and a fantastic discount on your membership subscription.

Alternatively you can send a cheque payable to CAMRA Ltd with your completed form, visit www.camra.org.uk/joinus or call 01727 867201. All forms should be addressed to Membership Department, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, AL1 4LW.

Your Details

Title _____ Surname _____
Forename(s) _____
Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy) _____
Address _____
_____ Postcode _____
Email address _____
Tel No(s) _____

Direct Debit Non DD

Single Membership £20 ☐ £22 ☐
(UK & EU)

Joint Membership £25 ☐ £27 ☐
(Partner at the same address)

For Young Member and concessionary rates please visit www.camra.org.uk or call **01727 867201**.

I wish to join the Campaign for Real Ale, and agree to abide by the Memorandum and Articles of Association

I enclose a cheque for _____

Signed _____ Date _____

Applications will be processed within 21 days

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

AWARD WINNING CRAFT ALES ON THE HOUSE



DOWNLOAD OUR NEWSLETTER AT
WWW.PURITYBREWING.COM
TO SEE HOW YOU CAN
WIN SOME BEER!