



Issue 40  
Spring 2010

**FREE**  
Please  
take one



# SHAKES BEER

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

## Raise a glass to... Britain's National Drink

**National Cask Ale Week runs from March 29th to April 5th and pubs all over the country will be celebrating.**

Pubs, SIBA (Society of Independent Brewers), Breweries and CAMRA are working together to recruit new ale drinkers and convince established ale drinkers to try new brews. It's hoped that between us all we can do something to increase footfall into pubs

A branch member has worked out an 'ale trail' around Stratford, our largest town, and plenty of local pubs are joining in with events ranging from beer festivals & 'meet the brewer nights' through 'beer & food matching' to the launch of a totally new beer from Patriot Brewery.

*See pages 10 & 11 for details of some local events.*

Help  
us celebrate  
Britain's National Drink  
raise a glass to real ale  
and toast everything  
that's brilliant  
about beer!

## Drink Beer and win tickets to the 2010 Great British Beer Festival

CAMRA members are ideally placed to take friends and family to the pub and introduce them to cask ale. Encouraging this CAMRA is running a competition to reward 20 lucky members who do. If, like me, you are convinced that there is such a variety of tastes and styles of real ale that there really is one out there to suit every taste, it shouldn't be too onerous a task. Sometime during National Cask Ale Week simply buy a friend or family member their first taster of real ale, take a photo and write up their reaction in about 40 words. Send the details by email of where, when and what beer it was, together with the photograph and caption to **marketing @camra.org.uk** under the heading 'New drinkers'.

The winning entry will be published on the CAMRA website and if it's of good enough quality may well appear in the CAMRA newspaper 'What's Brewing'. CAMRA are rewarding twenty members who submit the best entries pairs of tickets to GBBF 2010.

See our website [www.shakespearecamra.org.uk](http://www.shakespearecamra.org.uk)



25





CAMPAIGN  
FOR  
REAL ALE



CAMPAIGN  
FOR  
REAL ALE

**Stratford-upon-Aven**



**FREE  
ENTRY**  
for CAMRA\*  
members

**Stratford Racecourse, Luddington Rd.  
[www.stratfordbeerfestival.org.uk](http://www.stratfordbeerfestival.org.uk)**

**Friday 18th and  
Saturday 19th June 2010**

**Opening Times: 2.00pm til 11.00pm Friday, 11.00am till 11.00pm Saturday**

**This year's  
theme is...  
EAST MEETS  
WEST**  
(Midlands that is!)

- **Over 50 real ales and ciders**
- **Food available all sessions**
- **Entertainment on Saturday**
- **Camping & caravan facilities on site**
- **Happy Session: 4.00 til 6.00 Friday**  
**(all beers & ciders £2.00 a pint!!)**

**There will be a mini bus shuttle service from Stratford Railway Station all day Saturday**

**Entry £2.00 - until 6.00pm :: £3.00 after 6.00pm**

**\*Free entry for CAMRA members (including if you join on site)**

# Pub News...

## Great Aine, Alcester

It looks like the sad days at **The Mother Huff Cap** might finally be drawing to a close. A private investor, has bought the property and sold the lease to an established management company within the pub industry, *Urban and Country Leisure*. They have apparently added the pub to their growing stable and are intending to spend up to £850k in refurbishment. Looks like we may have yet another cracking establishment near our foremost ale drinking town. We must wait and see whether an intended name change to **'The Greedy Pig'** survives the campaign by locals to retain the unique 300 year old 'Huff Cap' name. To see the sort of establishment you might expect you could visit **The Greedy Goose** at Moreton-in-Marsh or have a gander at their website [www.thegreedygoosemoreton.co.uk](http://www.thegreedygoosemoreton.co.uk)

## Cherington

John Hitchman new licensee at the **Cherington Arms**, hardly needs a welcome from us; he's had a big enough one from the locals. John took on the tenancy of this popular local on 1st February and celebrated his first night with music from Barney Porter and a pub packed with friends. Opening with Hooky Bitter, Cherington Ale and Morlands Original, (which sold

out in a day) John hopes to extend the range in due course to include Old Hooky and a changing guest beer. No stranger to the licensing trade and no stranger to the **Cherington Arms**, John was an award winning cellar manager here for about six years until about 2004 and worked as Assistant Manager at **The Halford Bridge** for a further three years.

Plans for the future include a facelift for the function room and its development into a restaurant area, starting with good traditional English pub food being developed in due course into something a bit special by Chef Josef. Music fans don't panic though; there will be no restaurant on Mondays and the quality music the pub is already renowned for will continue.



John Hitchman, happy in his work

## Offenham

It's sad to see the doors of **The Fish and Anchor** locked and the building empty. It seems the intended sale fell through and, for the time being at least, the pub has stopped trading. Hopefully this popular ale venue, which was going from strength to strength, won't be closed for long. Watch this space for developments.

## Welford

It was nice to see that **The Shakespeare** didn't stay closed for long. It reopened in mid November with a new landlord, Kerry Wynn. Kerry is rotating the two beers and has asked Enterprise Inns for permission to put on a third pump. He also intends to change the decor & furniture.

## Barton, Bidford-on-Avon

Could this be the shape of things to come for us armchair athletes. For those who want to do more than just watch but don't have the energy to compete, **The Cottage of Content** has the answer. Just drawing to a close as we go to print are their Wii Winter Olympics with everything from ski-jumping to slalom. We can't say you don't have to leave your chair but you can stand just in front of it with some first class cask ale.

*continued...*

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**[www.thegeorgeatbrailes.co.uk](http://www.thegeorgeatbrailes.co.uk)**



**MUSIC KNIGHTS - Is anybody interested in performing at The George, either open mike, folk session or Americana. Phone Dave 01608 685223**

## More Pub News...

### Loxley, Stratford

**The Fox** is heading for a new look with a refurb which includes decoration, carpets, and furniture. Landlord Gareth insists they're retaining the traditional pub style. How traditional I don't know as they're hosting a 1940's event on **8th May** to celebrate the 50th anniversary of VE day. (For those too young to remember, that's the unconditional surrender of Hitler's Nazi Germany and the end of the Third Reich).

### Evesham

After just a short closure **The Trumpet** is now open and trading again under the care of experienced temporary manager, Banbury man, Hughie Mcmanus. At the time of our visit a fine pint of Tribute was on offer as well as the Hooky beers.

### Abbotts Salford

Fans of fine food at **The Vineyard** won't have to travel too far for the same quality. Owner/Chef Terry Leary is on his way to become head chef at **The Wheatsheaf**, Badsey. On 1st March Terry's partner Richard Armstrong takes over. I'm sure the quality will remain as will the ales on offer, Wadsworth 6X and Green King IPA. Hopefully the August Cider Fest will still go ahead

### Oxhill

**The Peacock** is flying high again. Following all their successes last year they are now shortlisted for The Publicans 'Newcomer of the Year' award.. Ever the philosopher, landlady Yvonne said, 'Win or not it's a good excuse for a day off and another posh frock'.

We won't know the results until 21st April so fingers crossed, but even to make the shortlist is a worthy accolade

### Iron Cross

We're not quite sure what's happening to **The Queens Head**. This past ale haven, once home of Fat God's brewery is all locked up. Let's hope it's not another one shut for good.

### Evesham

It's nice to see real ale on again at **The Angel Vaults**. After a bit of an absence a very fine pint of London Pride is now on offer.



# The Bull's Head, Bidford

**A big belated welcome to Roger and Sharon Smith who took over The Bulls Head at Bidford, a hostelry Roger first drank in 32 years ago, at the end of November.**

Family reasons dragged the couple back to their home area, (Roger was born in Honeybourne and Sharon in Bretforton), about 12 months ago after 30 years in the Algarve and they were delighted when the pub became available. This lively town centre pub currently serves three excellent ales, Adnams, Bombadier and Brew XI on my visit, although Roger has plans for two more pumps and looks forward to rotating guest ales. They've

already brightened up the place with a spot of redecoration and plan to go further, installing a couple of Chesterfield sofas and coffee tables in the front bar and concentrating on 'basket meals' for their discerning drinkers. Regular music nights, pub games and meetings for clubs and societies will hopefully keep the pub traditional so any support for the existing three darts teams, dominoes, cribbage and Thursday

night poker would be welcomed. In addition to the regular meetings of the existing cricket club, they also hope to host Golf and Motorcycle clubs. It seems that there's always something happening at The Bulls Head, long may it continue and best of luck to Roger and Sharon.



Roger and Sharon would love to welcome you to The Bulls Head for a fine selection of beers, lagers and real ales. Also on offer is home cooked food served lunchtimes.

Keep your eyes open for our 'Special Events'

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Bidford-on-Avon  
Tel: 01789 772242**



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Should be  
Hallmarked



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from a Real Brewery  
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[www.hooky.co.uk](http://www.hooky.co.uk)



# “Waes hael” to all our readers

**For those of you not fluent in 12th century anglo saxon, the phrase ‘waes hael’ means ‘good health’ and at the time would prompt the reply ‘drinc hail’ or, ‘I’ll drink to that!’, (poetic licence here).**

The well known song, ‘Here we come a wassailing..’, relates to an old English tradition around Christmas when the peasants would wassail the Lord of the Manor offering ‘love and joy’ in exchange for gifts of food and drink. Since the drink was generally brewed for Christmas and the New Year it was usual for the ‘wassail’ concoction to be served in the form of a sweet, spiced punch. In cider-producing areas wassailing also refers to drinking (and singing)

the health of the fruit trees in the hopes that they would thrive and produce a good autumn harvest. I was happy to witness the old tradition, alive and kicking at **The Fleece**, Bretforton on the old twelfth night, 17th January. The purpose of the wassail is to begin the process of waking the fruit trees from their winter slumber, to scare away evil spirits and to feed the spirit of the tree. To that end, following an abundance of entertainment from at least three

Morris groups, a large crowd, many carrying lanterns or flaming torches, braved the damp weather and formed a circle around the largest apple tree. It was an eerie scene lit by torches and wood fires as, armed with toast and Nigel’s own ‘wassail’, a sweet,

spiced and delicious plum jerkum, we proceeded to serenade the tree with traditional song.

The serenity of the moment was then shattered by frantic shouting and banging on pots and pans from the entire gathering, to scare away evil spirits. Finally we hung pieces of toast, (which I think should have been soaked in cider or jerkum, but we drank it instead), in the branches for the robins, who represent the ‘good spirits’ of the tree.

The entertainment continued well into the night and the ciders continued to flow. I like to think I’ve done my bit to ensure it will continue to do so next year. Thanks to Pebworth and Alvechurch Morris dancers, to ‘Aelfgythe’ ladies Morris and to the various other dancers, lute players, pipers, fiddlers and revellers who made the night. Particular thanks of course to licensee Nigel Smith who, as well as playing his part, keeps such good beer and cider.



*(In 1752 Britain moved from the Julian calendar to the Gregorian calendar. To make the shift, 11 days were removed from September that year, on the King’s orders. Some people - especially those in country areas - were very unhappy about this and stuck to the old calendar. Thus Old Christmas falls 12 days after December 25 and Old Twelfth Night falls on January 17. The wassailing of fruit trees is one of the last customs in which country folk still like to stick to the old ways).*







Visit our website:

[www.theboarsheadhamptonlucy4food.co.uk](http://www.theboarsheadhamptonlucy4food.co.uk)

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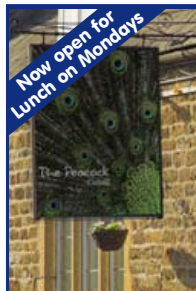
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Traditional Sunday  
Lunch  
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Sunday Lunch 12.00 to 4.00pm

Dinner Tuesday to Thursday 7.00pm til 9.00pm

Friday and Saturday 7.00pm till 9.30pm

## What's on for National Cask Ale Week

**The Norman Knight, Whichford** will be having a bit of a beer fest, having at least eight guest beers in and with four on tap at any one time. They will of course be having the Patriot Brewery *Missile* on as well one of their three new brews. To make things a little bit more exciting there will be a number of specials on the menu which will be various dishes cooked in various beers. We've a feeling this is going to be popular so make sure you book if you want food (telephone 01608 684621).

**The White Lion, Tredington**, are celebrating with a mini-beer fest. At least five ales will be available between 2nd and 6th April

**The Boars Head, Hampton Lucy** is changing its opening times to all day every day to give you a chance to taste at least 6 real ales and enjoy the start of their speciality barbeque and firepit meal season. They will also be running

the 'Firkin Good Boarfest' beer festival from 9th to 11th April. Check website, [www.theboarsheadhamptonlucy4food.co.uk](http://www.theboarsheadhamptonlucy4food.co.uk) for more information.

**The Fox at Loxley** are hosting a 'Black Sheep Night' on 31st March. Brian Smith, National Sales Director will wax lyrical on the history of the brewery and beers, followed by a quiz, prizes and of course plenty of samples. For more information contact the pub 01789 840991.

**The Crown and Trumpet, Broadway** are hosting a Meet the Brewer Night from 8.00 til 10.00 on 31st March when Alex Pennycook, craft brewer from *Stanway* brewery, will give a talk, answer questions and most importantly demonstrate his beers

**The Peacock, Oxhill** are hosting a week of 'Beer Matching' selecting the best of their ales to compliment

whatever meal you choose.

**The Holly Bush, Alcester**, are celebrating with special beers, try before you buy, special promotions and free merchandise from suppliers. Food made with cask ale will be on the menu all week and there will be a meet the brewer evening on 31st March, when both Purity and Slaughterhouse Breweries will be represented. (For more details contact The Hollybush on 01789 762482

**The Bell, Salford Priors** are presenting beer themed menus with ales used in cooking and food and ale matching. Double reward points will be offered on their loyalty card and a free raffle entry with every cask beer purchased. prizes include pints and gallons of beer, brewery memorabilia and spaces onto a brewery trip among others.



# In search of a good pint or three?

## Here is a suggested Ale Trail around some of our favourite Stratford hostleries for you to try during National Cask Ale Week

Starting at the train station **(1)** turn left and head into town along Alcester Road and Greenhill Street. On the right hand side is the **Old Thatch Tavern (2)**, our first stop. This is the only building in the town centre with a thatched roof and it also boasts a heart-warming log fire in the winter. It is included in this year's *CAMRA Good Beer Guide* with ales from Purity and Wye Valley on offer.

Leaving the Old Thatch, turn right and head down Rother Street. Turn left into Chestnut Walk and take the third right into Bull Street. Amongst the terraced houses lies **The West End (3)**. This large, comfortable pub is the town's only outlet for Uley's Pig's Ear - a strong and distinctive bitter. London Pride and Timothy Taylor Landlord are also available.

Turn right out of the West End and at the end of the road go straight over onto

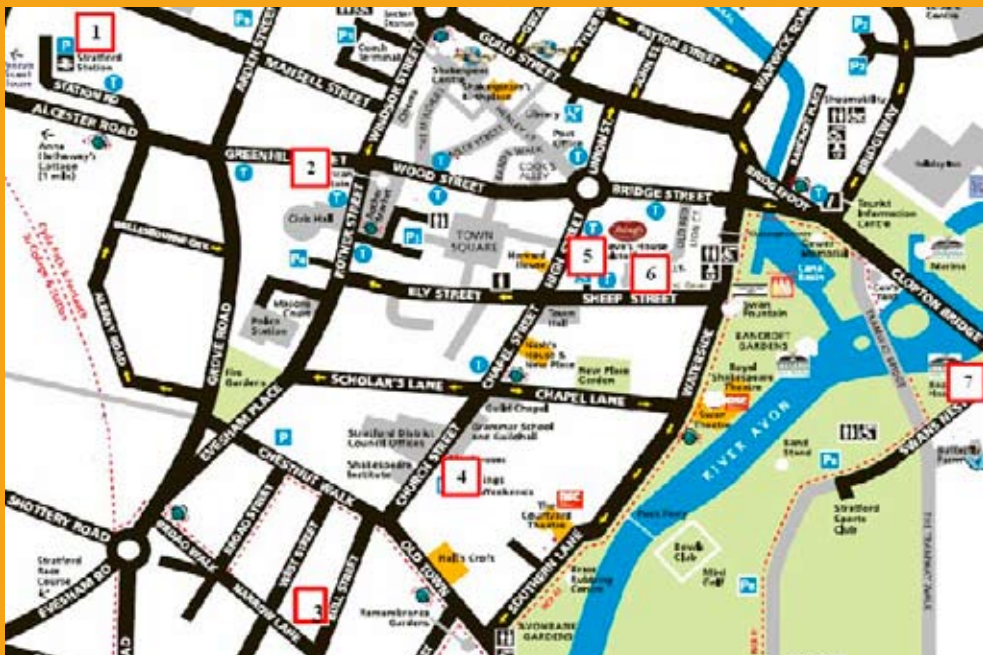
Church Street. On the right hand side is **The Windmill (4)**. This Greene King pub stocks Purity Ales and sells Flower's Original (originally brewed in the town). Those of you interested in the history of the town should seek out the board detailing the former landlords and landladies of this establishment.

Our next stop is **The Garrick (5)**, another must for history buffs! Turn right out of the Windmill and walk down Church Road. The Garrick is on High Street just after Ely Street. Fans of Greene King should be very happy in this two-room pub which claims to be the town's oldest tavern.

Out of the Garrick, head straight over the road and go down Sheep Street. On the left hand side is **The Golden Bee (6)**. Greene King Abbot Ale, IPA and Marston's Pedigree are the regular ales here but there is always a constantly changing selection of guest

ales from around the country. Those visiting on a Friday or Saturday night may enjoy a bit of people watching here!

Finally, we head to our last stop. Turn left out of the Golden Bee and go through Bancroft Gardens. Cross the footbridge over the river and at the road, turn left onto Swan's Nest Lane. At the junction with the main road you will find the Swan's Nest Hotel. This is home to **The Bear Freehouse (7)**. A fairly recent addition to the town, it serves an excellent range of seven well priced ales. Ales from Hook Norton, Warwickshire Brewing Company, Wye Valley and Everards are usually available. Good quality pub fare is always available and friendly, knowledgeable staff are happy to offer advice if you are struggling with the choice of beer!





# The Bear at The Swan's Nest Hotel

## Branch Pub of the Season - Winter 2009



**There was an amazing turnout at The Bear on Tuesday night when we went to present the Pub of the Season award.**

I'd like to think that it was packed to the gunnels for our benefit but I've a feeling that Manchester United on the big screen television may have had something to do with it. Whatever their main reason for being there, the crowd were fully appreciative of the pub and it's well deserved award and enthusiastically showed their appreciation when we switched the telly off for the presentation. The fact that such a large crowd could be attracted on a Tuesday evening for any reason is in itself evidence of the fact that, in an era of recession and closing pubs, The Bear has got something very right. After opening less than eighteen

months ago, the vision of partners Robert Beecham and John Whitehead, The Bear has become something of a phenomenon. It isn't just the range of 7 real ales in excellent condition, the comfort and convenience of the hotel facilities or the very reasonable pricing: I believe it's the attitude of everyone connected with the place, from Simon (Regional Manager), through Neil (General Manager), Graham (Bar Manager), Nina and Laura the Bar Supervisors to the bar staff themselves.

All have an interest in what they're selling and can tell you a bit about what you're drinking and where it's come from. Congratulations and thank you to all at The Bear, an establishment I can see earning greater accolades in the future.



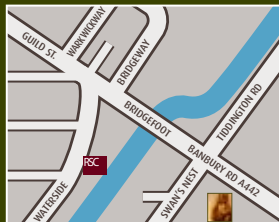
**Graham Hunter and Simon Barnes accept the award from Branch Chairman Bob Kirby**



## The Bear

### Free House & Kitchen

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*Do you enjoy a  
good pint of beer?*

The Fox at Loxley loves the traditional hand pulls, serving a range of quality beer such as 6X, Black Sheep and Wye Valley Brewery's Golden Ale. These beers, along with our local Hooky, smooth Guinness and refreshing cider including Black Rat Scrumpy give so much choice.

Loxley  
Stratford-upon-Avon  
Warwickshire CV35 9JS  
T: 01789 840991

Opening Hours:  
Monday to Saturday  
12.00-3.00 & 6.30-11.30  
Sunday 12.00-4.00



The Fox is not a Gastro Pub but a traditional ale pub which specialises in fresh fish from all over the world and offers a range of more traditional British dishes such as fresh **Haddock and Chips**, **Gammon steaks** and **organic Oxfordshire Pork**, our dishes are cooked to order by one of our three chefs, while you sit relax and enjoy a tranquil relaxing atmosphere and your pint of beer or wine.

**The Fox is one of the few remaining independent pubs where a smile is always on the menu.**

**The Fox - Smiles Better! Drop in for a pint!**

## Timothy Taylor visits Stratford

**A little off the beaten track and tucked away in a row of terraced cottages on the edge of the town centre, The West End probably doesn't get its fair share of Stratford's tourist trade.**

All credit then to licensees Roger and Helen Hatch for rewarding their locals and a good contingent of CAMRA members with another beer promotion night. Timothy Taylor's classic beer, Landlord (4.3% ABV), is a permanent feature of **The West End** bar but was joined by their Best Bitter (4.0% ABV) and deliciously dark and mellow Ram Tam (4.3% ABV) neither of which are often seen locally. Our thanks go to Alex Pegler, sales director for the midlands and south-west who managed to prise the beers away from Keighley together

with a good selection of promotional polo shirts, T shirts and bottles for a charity raffle. Over £60 was raised on behalf of Shakespeare Hospice. Most people seemed to come away with a prize and even those that didn't were treated to free samples of the three TT beers on offer. For those desiring education Alex manned an information stand loaded with samples of the malts and hops used by the brewery and was happy to share his extensive knowledge of TT products and processes with anyone who wished it.



**A few of the winners at The West End**

Thoroughly enjoyed by all who braved the miserable January weather, our thanks again to Roger, Helen and the staff and to Alex for a cracking night out. Available at all times are Fullers London Pride and Uley brewery's Pig Ear as well as TT Landlord and an extensive menu which includes the pub's speciality Timothy Taylor Landlord Beer Sausages with Ale Gravy & Mash, so the pub is well worth a visit.

Check it out on their website at  
**[www.thewestendstratford.co.uk](http://www.thewestendstratford.co.uk)**



# Brewery News

New business practices at **Cannon Royall** are proving successful as are the new beers the brewery are launching. The Christmas special, Marley's Ghost was very well received with reports from one pub that a firkin sold out in just 80 minutes, (unfortunately, if you missed it you'll have to wait until next year to give it a go). New brew IPA (4.6% ABV) continues to prove popular and they have high hopes for one in the pipeline; a 'rosewood' coloured beer 4.2% abv and described by the brewer as having 'malty undertones with a light hoppy finish' should be available by the end of February. No confirmation on the name yet but sources suggest that 'Drakes Drum' is a front runner.

Raising the profile of the brewery, they were the main sponsor of The Redditch Winter Ales Festival and raising production, a new hot liquor tank, with twice the capacity of the old one was installed in February making brew days much easier.



Patriot have now started brewing weekly and are brewing in earnest with four beers now in their stable. Both Missile and Longbow will be available at The Norman Knight on rotation with Longbow, a good malty session beer, being launched ready for cask ale week. It is a 4.2% amber ale using four UK produced ingredients in the Mash Tun and four UK produced hops, keeping to the Patriot ethos. We eagerly await style details of the other new beers, Nelson (4.0% abv) and Bulldog (4.5% abv). Licensees take note, the brewery is now able to produce enough to start supplying to local real ale pubs and would welcome all enquiries from people wishing to sell their beers

January saw the fleeting return to pubs of Hook Norton's craft brewed **Double Stout**, a beer which MD James Clarke says has a modern and fashionable taste and flavour despite its recipe being a hundred years old. *Double Stout* recently won gold in the prestigious International Beer Challenge, making it one of the best beers in the world but sadly is only available in pubs until the end of February, (while it is available in bottles all year round, we enjoyed it on draught whilst we could).

We look forward now to March's offering of *First Light* (4.3% ABV), a very pale, light brew with a complex hop aroma and April's *303AD* (4.0% ABV) dry and crisp with a hint of citrus- brewed to celebrate the death of England's St George.

Hook Norton has taken the trend of 'beer matching',



with food that is, seriously and have added an award for the pub in its estate that best matches one of its beers and a food dish to the forthcoming 'Hook Awards'. The winner is decided but despite my best efforts won't be announced until April. Amongst the 10 finalists in the competition are three pubs in our branch area:

**The Gate Inn, Brailes** who offered Venison pie, boiled potatoes, sprouts and broccoli matched with *Hooky Gold*; **The Castle, Edgehill** offering poacher's pie matched with *Hooky Dark*; and **The George, Brailes** with slow roasted fillet steak matched with *Twelve Days*.





# Award Winning Uphampton Ales from Cannon Royall...



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[www.thepatriotbrewery.co.uk](http://www.thepatriotbrewery.co.uk)

# Brewery News



**Purity** rounded off a cracking 2009 by building new offices at the Sernal Farm site and moving into them in mid December. The offices boast a new reception area and meeting rooms as well as a brewery shop in which all Purity beers, imports and merchandise can be bought.

The brewery has been phenomenally successful since its first brew of *UBU* in 2005 and is now selling Purity beers in over 400 pubs. Accolades in the last year alone include Gold and Silver medals respectively in the SIBA National Beer Competition, for *Mad Goose* and *Pure Gold* whilst *UBU* was Highly Commended in the Worlds Best Golden Ale category of the World Beer Awards 2009. Most recently *Pure Gold* was voted Champion Bitter in CAMRA's West Midlands beer awards and will now compete for national awards at The Great British Beer Festival 2010.



2010 will be the 25th year of brewing for Stoke Lacy based Wye Valley Brewery, and they plan to celebrate by brewing even more excellent beer. Popular cask beer, HPA, will be launched in bottle format. Numerous other events are planned including the release of a special Limited Edition bottled beer in March and a race night at Hereford Racecourse in August where customers and staff will celebrate the brewery's 25th anniversary in style with real music and real ale! Also, the brewery's Herefordshire barley project will be realised and the first all Herefordshire beer will be produced, using local hops and local barley.



Festival goers were treated to a rare *Smoked Maple Porter* at Tewksbury Beer Festival seasoned in an oak whisky vat, it certainly packed a punch. Those followers of Jon Pilling's interesting beer styles have the opportunity of a much closer insight. Jon intends to start Brewing Courses at his Moreton-in-Marsh site.

A couple of new ales in the pipeline: the first, *Breakfast Stout* (5% abv) is a dark oatmeal stout, very rich and smooth with a creamy head; the second, *Cappuccino Stout* (5% abv), dark rich and creamy with a hint of coffee. Hopefully we should see these locally in the weeks ahead. In the meantime, North Cotswold's *Hung Drawn n' Porter* continues to receive accolades.

Having received a bronze medal in our own West Midlands Beer of the Year competition (porters), it also found recognition in the SIBA regional competition being voted the best in the Porters, Strong Milds, Old Ales & Stouts division for Wales and the West. Judging for the national title took place in early February but the results aren't announced until after we go to press. Good luck Jon.



**A victim of the recession, The Kempsey based Blue Bear Brewery, set up in November 2005 lost its fight for survival and went into liquidation on 12th November 2010. Until recently the brewery had the capacity to produce up to 40 barrels a day and its flagship beers, White Bear and Wanderlust appeared to be doing well. Sad news indeed.**

## More sad news...

Daniel Batham, creator of probably the finest beer in the world, (my opinion), Batham's Bitter, died, aged 82, at his home in Bridgnorth Road on 21st January. Daniel, known to publicans and brewers as Arthur, is credited with putting the Batham's name firmly 'on the map' in 1951, when he came up with the recipe for regulars of **The Swan**, Chadesley Corbett, who were demanding a paler alternative to the company's Black Country Mild.

I will raise a glass to his memory and of course it will be Batham's.



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THE FINEST  
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GREAT ALES  
SUCH AS



BRITAIN'S NO.1 SUPPORTER OF MICROBREWERIES



**THE OLD SWANNE INNE**  
66 HIGH STREET, EVESHAM TEL: 01386 442650

**wetherspoon**

Subject to local licensing restrictions and availability at participating free houses.



# 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. As well as a selection of other guest ales.

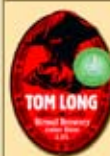
Just off the Cotswolds Way providing accommodation for weekend and midweek breaks with monthly Thursday **Jazz and Blues** Evenings.

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 Spring the Crown and Trumpet Inn is proud to present our two featured beers shown below as well as other welcome guest ales.



**Stroud Brewery**  
**Tom Long - 3.8%**

This beer won the overall champion for the West of England and Wales in 2008. It is an amber coloured bitter with a spicy citrus aroma.

<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>

01386 853202 - [info@cotswoldholidays.co.uk](mailto:info@cotswoldholidays.co.uk) - <http://www.cotswoldholidays.co.uk>



See our website [www.shakespearecamra.org.uk](http://www.shakespearecamra.org.uk)





# Asparagus in The Vale

**English asparagus is purported to be the best in the world and many consider that the best of the best comes from the sandy well drained soil of the Vale of Evesham.**

Asparagus was first cultivated in Greece about 2500 years ago and has been grown in England since the sixteenth century, initially centred in the fields of Battersea, then a small village outside of London, when it was popularly called 'sparrow grass'. With the growing urbanisation of London in the nineteenth century, new asparagus fields were established around The Vale of Evesham, today considered to be its home. It is a member of the lily family which includes onion, leeks and garlic and under ideal conditions a spear can grow 10" in a 24 hour period. The growing season is short, beginning in April and running through to June. Locally, April 23 is significant

not only as the celebration of St George as the English Patron Saint, but also heralds the start of the British Asparagus Festival in the Vale. During the festival there are many asparagus related activities, such as



The Great Asparagus Run and guided 'Asparabus' tours. Of course, many local pubs feature asparagus heavily on their menus, none more so than **The Round of Gras**, Badsey. Originally called the Royal Oak, the pub's name was changed in 1967 to reflect the importance of asparagus to the area and is believed to be the only pub in the world named after this delicacy. Just down the road at Bretforton an auction is held annually at **The Fleece**, this year on 30th May where the finest local spears or "buds of 'gras" are carefully tied with willow strips into traditional bundles and auctioned off. The Fleece is also hosting a fun day on 31st May with an asparagus farmers market, rural fayre, displays, tastings and cookery demonstrations and an Asparagus Roadshow with Henry Sandon.

More details can be found on the festival website

[www.britishasparagusfestival.org](http://www.britishasparagusfestival.org)

**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**

Bretforton Road, Badsey, Evesham

Tel: 01386 830206

[www.roundofgras.co.uk](http://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



# West Midlands Beer of the Year

The **Bartons Arms, Birmingham**, hosted the awards presentation for West Midlands Beer of the Year 2009 on Monday 28th December.

CAMRA Brewery Liaison Officers, (BLOs) submit entries in different beer styles for consideration by CAMRA Members at Branch Meetings and beers from each category are submitted for 'blind judging' throughout the year at festivals in the West Midlands Region.

Judges, who range from brewery managers through CAMRA members and festival customers, are not informed of the identity of any beers until the judging is concluded.

The overall West Midlands Beer of the Year competition was hosted by Dudley Winter Ales Festival in November and the overall winners were:

**GOLD - Beowulf's 'Finns Hall Porter'**

**SILVER - Beowulf's 'Dark Raven'**

**BRONZE - Hobson's 'Old Henry'**



## Results for individual categories...

| Mild (Judged at Stratford Festival) | Golden Ale (Bromsgrove)                   | Old Ale/Strong Mild (Potteries)     |
|-------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Church End Gravediggers          | 1. Salopian Shropshire Gold               | 1. Beowulf Dark Raven               |
| 2. Cannon Royall Fruiterers         | 2. Holden's Golden Grow                   | 2. Sarah Hughes Dark Ruby Mild      |
| 3. Hobsons Mild                     | 3. Ludlow Gold                            | 3. Highgate Old Ale                 |
| Bitter (Walsall)                    | Speciality Beers (Burton)                 | Barley Wine Strong Old Ale (Dudley) |
| 1. Purity Pure Gold                 | 1. Titanic Iceburg                        | 1. Holden's Old Ale                 |
| 2. Holden's Black Country Bitter    | 2. Enville Ale                            | 2. Titanic Wreckage                 |
| 3. Kinver Sunarise                  | 3. Enville White                          | 3. Kinver Over the Edge             |
| Best Bitter (Wolverhampton)         | Porter (Coventry Beer Festival)           | Real Ale in a Bottle (Tamworth)     |
| 1. Kinver Edge                      | 1. Beowulf Finns Hall Porter              | 1. Coors White Shield               |
| 2. Hobsons Town Crier               | 2. Blythe Johnsons                        | 2. Sarah Hughes Dark Ruby Mild      |
| 3. Wye Valley HPA                   | 3. North Cotswold Hung, Draw 'N' Portered | 3. Wye Valley Butty Bach            |
| Strong Bitter (Worcester)           | Stout (Birmingham)                        |                                     |
| 1. Hobsons Old Henry                | 1. Titanic Stout                          |                                     |
| 2. Burton Bridge Stairway to Heaven | 2. Old Cottage Stout                      |                                     |
| 3. Weatheroak Keystone Hops         | 3. Beowulf Dragon Smoke Stout             |                                     |

**Congratulations to breweries within our own branch area:**

**Purity Brewery** for winning the Bitter category and **North Cotswold Brewery** for their bronze in the Porters.



# Winter Ales

It's nice when winter finally draws to a close and we see the countryside bursting with new life. Sad though that the rich, dark ales we enjoy so much in the warm glow of winter fires are also tucked away for a year. Not always so however, for this years Supreme Champion Winter Beer of Britain, **Elland Brewery's 1872 Porter** is brewed and available all year round. It was a case of, 'if at first you don't succeed...', for this amazing beer which won Silver in the porter category in 1988, Gold in 2009 and runner-up to the Supreme Champion and has now received fully the recognition it deserves. Described in the Good Beer Guide as, 'creamy, full-flavoured porter, with rich liquorice flavours with a hint of chocolate from roast malt, and a soft but satisfying aftertaste of bittersweet roast and malt'. In typical Yorkshire understatement, Head Brewer, Dave Saunders, commented, 'It's absolutely brilliant'.



## What they're judging... Winter beer styles

**Porter** - A dark, slightly sweetish but hoppy ale made with roasted barley; the successor of 'entire' and predecessor of stout. Porter originated in London around 1730, and by the end of the 18th century was probably the most popular beer in England.

**Stout** - One of the classic types of ale, a successor in fashion to 'porter'. Usually a very dark, heavy, well-hopped bitter ale, with a dry palate, thick creamy head and a good grainy taste.

**Old Ale** - Now virtually synonymous with 'winter ale'. Most 'old ales' are produced and sold for a limited time in the year, usually between November and the end of February. Usually a rich, dark, high-gravity draught ale of considerable body.

**Barley Wine** - A strong, rich and sweetish ale, usually over 1060 OG, dark in colour, with high condition and a high hop rate.

## Results...



### Old Ales and Strong Milds category

**Gold** - Breconshire, Ramblers Ruin (Brecon, Powys)

**Silver** - Leeds, Midnight Bell (Leeds, West Yorkshire)

**Bronze** - Beartown, Black Bear (Congleton, Cheshire)

### Porters category

**Gold** - Elland, 1872 Porter (Elland, West Yorkshire)

**Silver** - Sulwath, Black Galloway (Castle Douglas, Dumfries & Galloway)

**Bronze** - RCH, Old Slug Porter (Weston-Super-Mare, Somerset)

### Stouts category

**Gold** - Acorn, Gorlovka Imperial Stout (Barnsley, South Yorkshire)

**Silver** - Beowulf, Dragon Smoke Stout (Brownhills, Staffordshire)

**Bronze** - Wapping, Stout (Liverpool, Merseyside)

### Barley Wines category

**Gold** - Robinsons, Old Tom (Stockport, Cheshire)

**Silver** - Kinver, Over the Edge (Kinver, Staffordshire)

**Bronze** - Otley, O8 (Pontypridd, Mid Glamorgan)

### OVERALL RESULT

**Gold** - Elland, 1872 Porter (Elland, West Yorkshire)

**Silver** - Breconshire, Ramblers Ruin (Brecon, Powys)

**Bronze** - Acorn, Gorlovka Imperial Stout (Barnsley, South Yorkshire)



# A bit about S.I.B.A. and the Ludlow Spring Food Festival



**You might well have seen a S.I.B.A. plaque outside your local pub, especially if it's a freehouse which takes pride in its ales. What's it all about though?**

The **Society of Independent Brewers** was founded in 1980 under the title The Small Independent Brewers Association to represent the interests of the growing numbers of independent brewing companies in the UK most of which didn't get a look-in at 80% of the UK pubs because they were owned by the large breweries. (The name changed in 1995 but not the acronym). On 26th January 1980, a group of around 20 brewers met in a pub in Swindon and decided to set

up their own association to promote the interests of smaller brewers and to help them to bring their beers to market. Members are required to adhere to the society's code of practice and by-laws which aim to ensure that the beer produced is of high quality. Now, celebrating their 30th anniversary, S.I.B.A.'s membership numbers about 450. There's a great opportunity to meet SIBA brewers at the **Ludlow Food Spring Festival** where they are offering Beer, Bangers & Bread!

They will be celebrating in the Festival Pub in the grounds of the historic Ludlow Castle, with 150 different ales, from independent brewers throughout Wales, the West and the Marches.

Also ciders and fruit wines will be available

Now in its second year, the festival is going from strength to strength, playing host to the SIBA Wales & West Beer Competition 2010 with a variety of classes being judged, followed by an opportunity for the public to taste award winning beers in a relaxed atmosphere.

**For information on opening times and ticket prices visit [www.springevent.org.uk](http://www.springevent.org.uk).**



**Ludlow Food Spring Festival**

**8th-9th May**  
Ludlow Castle, Shropshire

Incorporating  
**SIBA Beer Festival**  
over 150 real ales alongside Ciders and Perrys  
**Beer, Bangers, Bread & Classic Cars**  
[www.thespringevent.co.uk](http://www.thespringevent.co.uk)

**Open: Friday MEET THE BREWER from 5pm to 9pm**  
**Saturday, 10am - 8pm Sunday, 10am - 5pm**  
**Tickets from £2 - so book online NOW**



See our website [www.shakespearecamra.org.uk](http://www.shakespearecamra.org.uk)





# The White Lion @ Tredington



**Join Us Again This Year For  
THE WHITE LION BEER FESTIVAL**

**Easter Bank Holiday 2<sup>nd</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> April**

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whitelion.tredington@btconnect.com

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

## Up with the lark if you're up for a lark at Larkstoke

**A chance to celebrate May Day with entertainment, a pint of Hooky and an excellent breakfast if you're up early enough.**

The May 1st falls on a Saturday this year and presents an excellent opportunity to see the Ilmington Morris Men welcome the sunrise with bells, sticks and fiddles, at 5.33am on top of Lark Stoke Hill, near Ilmington, next to the radio masts. Those making the effort will be rewarded with some of the best views across the Evesham Valley to the Malvern Hills from this highest point in Warwickshire. On a clear day you can see Warwick Castle

in the north and many more landmarks

If the programme follows that of last year, (as broadcast live by local BBC Radio CWR), then about 6am a convoy of Morris, supporters and the radio car will drive the couple of miles down into Ilmington to see the stalwart Morris side perform at a further four places in the village. Then about 8 o'clock, following a final performance outside the Red Lion (pictured) it's all inside



for one of Percy's great breakfasts (booking advised: tel. 01608 682366) and some Hooky.

**The picture is taken from the 'Hooky Pubs by Bus' guide now in print and on sale at Shipston Post Office and Hook Norton Visitor Centre for just £3.50.**



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**Closing date for copy for the next issue of SHIPSTON POST will be 17th May 2010**

# CAMRA is not just about beer

**For over 30 years CAMRA was concerned about the diminishing number of outlets for cider; real cider that is – the traditional drink which is produced naturally from apples and is neither carbonated nor pasteurised.**

A boost in the last 5 years or so, generated by the likes of Magners and other cold, fizzy keg products, has spawned a welcome, new interest in real cider and it's nice to see it appearing in more pubs throughout the branch.

Warwickshire's only commercial cider producer, local man Allen Hogan, is taking full advantage of the resurgence and is taking his Alcester based business from strength to strength. Celebrating the 5th birthday of **Hogan's Cider Ltd.** in August 2010, Allen has grown from a stall at the local farmers market to an around-the-clock business venture. Supplying his ciders

to a wide range of pubs, restaurants and farm shops, a number of major supermarkets and in 2009 exporting for distribution across America.

Allen prides himself on his use of locally produced, natural products; all of his ciders and perry are fermented from 100% fresh pressed English fruit from the counties of Worcestershire, Herefordshire Gloucestershire and Warwickshire. Notwithstanding his numerous cider and perry awards, Allen knew he'd 'arrived' in November when he was invited to take his draught and bottled beverages to Birmingham's Frankfurt Christmas Market and Craft Fair, the largest Christmas market in the country. As well as his normal products, 5000 litres of hot spiced mulled cider were on offer to the millions of visitors and went down a treat.

Although Allens kegs and bottles are widely available, outside of festivals

his 'rough ciders' are more difficult to find. You can however find it at **The Horseshoe in Shipston** under the name of "*Warwickshire Wobblor*" (5.5% abv) or further afield under the name, "*Bennett's Hill Blend*" at **The Wellington, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham**. Although the business is based at Haselor, near Alcester, the actual process of cider making now takes place at Castlemorton, Worcestershire.



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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

See our website [www.shakespearecamra.org.uk](http://www.shakespearecamra.org.uk)



# Our wandering minstrel says he'll be sober tomorrow

In my series of articles about drinking songs, this time I give the song 'The Flowing Bowl', which is anonymous, traditional and nearly 200 years old.

Slightly different versions of it were published as a broadside ballads by several publishers in the 19c but the earliest listed on the website of the Bodleian Library, Oxford, is by T Birt of Seven Dials, London, in 1828.

Broadside ballads were popular songs, sold for a penny or halfpenny in the streets of towns and villages around Britain between the 16c and early 20c. These songs were performed in taverns, homes, or fairs, ie wherever a group of people gathered to discuss the day's events or to tell tales of heroes and villains. As one of the cheapest forms of print available, the broadside ballads are also an

important source material for the history of printing and literacy. They were often lavishly illustrated with woodcuts, providing a visual treat for the reader and offering a source for the study of popular art in Britain.

Tens of thousands of ballad broadsides are held in libraries in Great Britain, with the largest collection being at the Bodleian Library, Oxford. But the variety and quantity of these single-sheet songs has often posed problems for researchers. Many of their distinctive features, such as varying titles applied to the same text, make them difficult to find in normal library catalogues. Also, very few

have an author and some even lack the year of publication. And now to the

song, which is rousing and nearly all chorus. The last two verses are modern additions, of which there are many more! Of course, the chorus lines are shown in italics and, after the first verse, they have been omitted to save space.



**Alan Whitbread**  
**Ale Taster for the Alcester Court**  
**Leet, Folk Singer & Concertina**  
**Player**

## The Flowing Bowl..

Three jolly coachmen Saturday  
in a Bristol tavern

*Three jolly coachmen Saturday  
in a Bristol tavern*

And they decided

*And they decided*

And they decided

*To have another flagon*

*Come landlord fill the flowing bowl,  
until it doth run over*

*Come landlord fill the flowing bowl,  
until it doth run over*

*For tonight we'll merry merry be*

*For tonight we'll merry merry be*

*For tonight we'll merry merry be*

*Tomorrow, we'll be sober*

Here's to the man drinks water pure  
and goes to bed quite sober (x2)

Falls as the leaves do fall (x3)

He'll drop off in October

*Come landlord fill...*

Here's to the man who drinks dark  
ale

and goes to bed quite mellow (x2)

Lives as he ought to live (x3)

He'll die a jolly good fellow

*Come landlord fill...*

Here's to the girl who steals a kiss  
and runs to tell her mother (x2)

She's a foolish, foolish thing (x3)

She'll never get another

*Come landlord fill...*

Here's to the girl who steals a kiss  
and comes back for another (x2)

She's a boon to all mankind (x3)

She'll very soon be a mother

*Come landlord fill...*

Come into the garden Maud  
and don't be so particular (x2)

And if the grass is very, very wet (x3)

We'll do it perpendicular

*Come landlord fill...*

The landlord built his chimney high  
and then he built it higher (x2)

All to stop the cat next door (x3)

From pissing on his fire

*Come landlord fill...*

If you want to hear (and join in with!) such traditional songs being sung, try the following places:-  
**Every 2nd Tuesday at The Cottage of Content at Barton (over the river from Bidford) B50 4NP;**  
**Every Thursday at The Fleece Inn at Bretforton WR11 7JE.**



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



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- Four Real Ales
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Closed Sunday evening

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Morning Advertiser  
**Best Freehouse**  
in the Midlands  
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**WARWICKSHIRE PUB OF THE YEAR 2008**



## The Fleece Inn

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The National Trust - run with love of tradition*

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Open Acoustic Session*

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

For further details contact Nigel or Jenny on 01386 831173  
Email: [nigel@thefleeceinn.co.uk](mailto:nigel@thefleeceinn.co.uk) [www.thefleeceinn.co.uk](http://www.thefleeceinn.co.uk)

Check out the website for forthcoming events

**Shakespeare CAMRA Worcestershire Pub of the Year 2009**





# Shakespeare Branch Diary & Beer Festival Round up

## Meetings and Branch Events

### March 2010

**10th** Branch meeting Ettington, meet 8.30pm **The Chequers Country Inn**, then on to **White Horse** and finish at **The Hounds Hill**

### April 2010

**14th** 8.30 pm Branch meeting Salford Priors, meet at **The Bell**, then on to Bidford, **Bull and Frog**

### May 2010

**12th May, 8.00 p.m.**  
**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
The Bear at The Swan's Nest Hotel,  
Stratford-upon Avon

**29th** Stratford pre-festival pub crawl.  
Meet 7.30 pm **The Old Tramway** to blitz the town with flyers and posters.

### June 2010

To be arranged;  
all meetings will be festival related

**Keep an eye on the branch website for updates to the diary and what's on at**  
**[www.shakespearecamra.org.uk](http://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 the Chairman 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**

## Local Festivals

### March 2010

**5th-6th Coventry Beer Festival**, Coventry RFC, Butts Park Arena, 90 beers, ciders & perries

### 13th Harbury Winter Ales Festival

Harbury Village Hall. 30 real ales based on the LocAle theme

### April

**9th-11th 'The Firkin Good Boarfest'**,  
The Boars Head, Hampton Lucy

### May

### 8th-9th Ludlow Spring Food Fair

Incorporating **SIBA Beer Festival** with over 150 beers-(trip being arranged; contact Bob Kirby as below or telephone 01386 7612313)

### 29th-May 1st Stourbridge Beer Festival

Stourbridge Town Hall, Market Street

### June

**18th-19th**  
**STRATFORD-UPON-AVON**  
**BEER & CIDER FESTIVAL**

**18th-20th Holly Bush Beer Festival, Alcester**

## CAMRA Branch contacts

- **Chair - Bob Kirby**  
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- **Treasurer - Bob Mansfield**  
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**The Editor reserves the right to amend or shorten contributions for publication.**

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£27

☐

For Young Member and concessionary rates please visit [www.camra.org.uk](http://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

0709



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

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

Name and full postal address of your Bank or Building Society

To the Manager Bank or Building Society

Address

Postcode

Name(s) of Account Holder (s)

Bank or Building Society Account Number

Branch Sort Code

Reference Number

Originator's Identification Number

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 CAMRA 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 CAMRA and, if so will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.

Signature(s)

Date



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 take part in the Direct Debit Scheme. The efficiency and security of the Scheme is monitored and protected by your own Bank or Building Society.
- If the amounts to be paid or the payment dates change CAMRA will notify you 10 working days in advance of your account being debited or as otherwise agreed.
- If an error is made by CAMRA or your Bank or Building Society you are guaranteed a full and immediate refund from your branch of the amount paid.
- You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by writing to your Bank or Building Society. Please also send a copy of your letter to us.

detached and retained by the payer

Banks and Building Societies may not accept Direct Debit Instructions for some types of account.

# Champion Bitter

*of West Midlands '09*



Campaign for Real Ale



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*...dedicated to making a difference*