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CAMPAIGN  
FOR  
REAL ALE

# PINTS WEST

Multi-award-winning magazine of the Bristol & District Branch of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale  
(incorporating the Bath & Borders Branch)

## The best stout in the land



# Supreme CAMRA Champion Winter Beer of Britain 2009

OAKHAM'S Attila from Cambridgeshire has recently been crowned the Supreme Champion Winter Beer of Britain 2009 by a panel of judges at the CAMRA National Winter Ales Festival in Manchester.

The 7.5% ABV barley wine is described by the brewer as having "fruity notes and an elderflower aroma, with the taste of ripe red berries and citrus fruit and a long bitter fruity finish."

Graham Donning, Festival Organiser, praised the winning beer for its accomplishment: "This is a spectacular beer with a great following, and a deserved winner. There are few barley wines remaining in this country, and Attila is a wonderful example for anyone who is yet to try this rare beer style."

Oakham's success came after 'Attila' won a gold medal in the Barley Wine category at the Dudley Winter Ales Festival back in November. Winning meant that the beer's place in the final was guaranteed.

John Bryan, Head Brewer of Oakham Brewery, was delighted at hearing the results: "It's a great start to what might turn out to be an otherwise gloomy year. We've already found success with this beer at another event in 2009, so to win this award as well is fantastic for us. Each batch takes around five or six months, and this award shows it's time well spent."

Also in the Overall Awards, Silver medal went to Elland Brewery's 1872 Porter, whilst the Bronze medal went to Sarah Hughes's Dark Ruby.

## Beer style descriptions taken from CAMRA's Dictionary of Beer:

**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 of 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.



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## The results in full

### Supreme Champion

**Gold:** Oakham, Attila (Cambridgeshire)

**Silver:** Elland Brewery, 1872 Porter (West Yorkshire)

**Bronze:** Sarah Hughes, Dark Ruby (West Midlands)

### Category winners

#### Old Ales & Strong Milds

**Gold:** Sarah Hughes, Dark Ruby (West Midlands)

**Silver:** Bryncelyn, Buddy Marvellous (Ystradgynlais)

**Bronze:** Theakston, Old Peculier (North Yorkshire)

**Bronze:** Orkney, Dark Island (Orkney)

#### Stouts

**Gold:** Bristol Beer Factory, Milk Stout (Bristol)

**Silver:** Beowulf, Dragon Smoke Stout (Staffordshire)

**Bronze:** Spire, Sgt. Pepper Stout (Chesterfield, Derbyshire)

#### Porters

**Gold:** Elland Brewery, 1872 Porter (West Yorkshire)

**Silver:** Fuller's, London Porter (London)

**Silver:** Townes, Pynot Porter (Derbyshire)

#### Barley Wines

**Gold:** Oakham, Attila (Cambridgeshire)

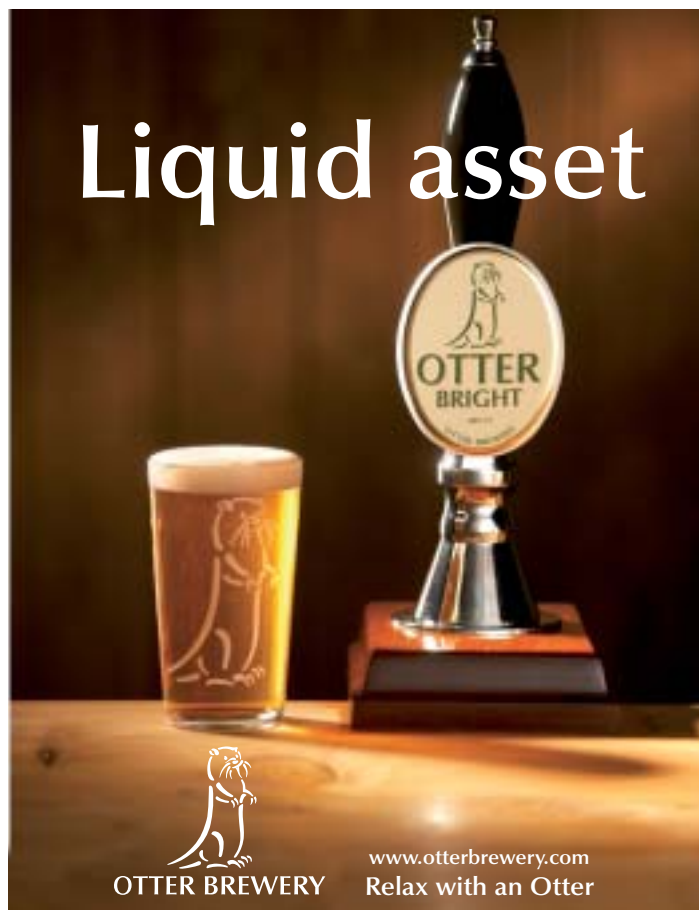
**Silver:** Hogs Back, A over T (Surrey)

**Bronze:** Otley, O8 (Mid Glamorgan)



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# Bristol Beer Factory Milk Stout

BRISTOL Beer Factory Milk Stout was awarded Gold in its category at the 2009 CAMRA National Winter Ales Festival in Manchester, so it is now officially the best stout in Britain!

Upon hearing the news Simon Bartlett (Bristol Beer Factory Production Director) said, "I knew it was good but I didn't know it was that bloody good. This is beyond our wildest dreams. We've always been very pleased with our Milk Stout and proud of all the awards it's won in the past but to become National Champion in only our 4th year is just fantastic."

Of course, winning a major award from CAMRA is nothing new for Milk Stout as it has previously been voted "Beer of the Festival" at both the 2006 and 2007 CAMRA Bristol Beer Festivals. Perhaps there is something in the local water, as over 70 years ago the Ashton Gate Brewery won a Prize Medal and Diploma with their Milk Stout brewed on the same site.

The Bristol Beer Factory are pleased to report that demand for their Milk Stout has increased since the award and they have shuffled the brewing programme around to make some more. The next brew will be available from the end of February, so call the brewery on 0117 902 6317 or Jemma on 07985 200588 to



Bristol Beer Factory Production Director Simon Bartlett (right) and brewer Chris Kay (left)

place an order. Supplies are limited due to the demand for the other Bristol Beer Factory ales at the moment and orders will be filled on a first-come-first-served basis, so get yours in quickly!

*Richard Brooks*

## Come to Eastbourne! for the CAMRA Members' Weekend and AGM

**Eastbourne Winter Garden  
17th - 19th April 2009**

PREPARATION is now well under way for the 2009 CAMRA Members' Weekend and AGM, which will be held at the Eastbourne Winter Garden, and will commence on Friday 17th April and end mid-afternoon on Sunday 19th April 2009.

The weekend is open to all CAMRA members, and is an opportunity for them to discuss future CAMRA policy and direction, as well as a chance to socialize with friends and other CAMRA members.

The weekend gives members the opportunity to:

- ◆ Review what has been happening at branch, regional and national level over the past year;
- ◆ Have a say in reviewing campaigning themes and forming policy;
- ◆ Hear guest speakers on issues related to beer, brewing and key campaigns;
- ◆ Meet up with CAMRA members from around the country, National Executive and HQ staff members;
- ◆ Discuss ideas regarding future CAMRA campaigns in workshops, policy discussion groups and seminars;
- ◆ Enjoy a few beers at the Members' Bar, as a members' beer festival is put on in conjunction with the AGM;
- ◆ Visit pubs in Eastbourne and the surround-



ing areas;

- ◆ Visit local breweries on organised trips.

At the time of writing, trips are still in the planning stage, but are proposed to include trips to several of the local breweries in the area including Harvey's Brewery in Lewes, Dark Star Brewery at Ansty, 1648 Brewery at East Hoathly, Whites Brewery at Bexhill and Beachy Head Brewery at East Dean. Pub crawls are also planned around Eastbourne (Town Centre and Old Town), and in Lewes and Hastings. Several pubs in Eastbourne are



planning to put on mini-beer festivals for the weekend.

It is now possible to pre-register to attend the Members' Weekend by going on-line to the CAMRA website [www.camra.org.uk](http://www.camra.org.uk) and following the link from the Members' Weekend pages. Further information about the weekend can also be found in *What's Brewing* and on-line, and there will be regular updates in the run up to the weekend.

All CAMRA members are welcome to attend, whether this is their first or fifteenth Members' Weekend, and it promises to be an enjoyable and informative few days. The Members' Weekend is just one of the benefits of joining CAMRA, so if you are not a member, why not join today by completing the form in this magazine, or by going on-line to [www.camra.org.uk](http://www.camra.org.uk) and clicking on 'Join Us'.

# Banker\$ Draft launched in association with charity

WICKWAR have launched a new beer called Bankers Draft to "help UK drinkers raise a smile in the face of recession."

Mike Flavin, operations director with the Wickwar Brewing Company, explained the thinking behind the credit crunch beer. "Everyone needs cheering up in these difficult times, so we've launched Bankers Draft – a totally reliable, full-bodied ale – that will help raise a smile in the face of the credit crunch," he said. "Like an old-fashioned bankers' draft, it's guaranteed to give 100 per cent satisfaction. We hope all adults, including bankers, will enjoy both the humour and the ale."

He went on to say, "We thought in these

times of doom and gloom, it would also be great to be able to give something to those that are less fortunate, by selling a reasonably-priced ale to help raise money for charity. That's why 2p from every pint is being donated to the Wooden Spoon charity, which helps underprivileged and physically and mentally disadvantaged children throughout the UK."

Bankers Draft is available on hand-pull at the brewery's flagship White Lion pub in the heart of Bristol's banking district. It is also available in bottled version and mini-casks, by visiting their shop at the brewery, or on-line from [www.wickwarbrewing.co.uk](http://www.wickwarbrewing.co.uk).



From left to right: LJS Trustee 'Billy Bones' Fairney, Pirate Pete, Wickwar's Ray Penny, Cap'n Barnacle and LJS Patron and Deputy Lord Mayor, Cllr Royston Griffey. Photo courtesy of Bristol News and Media.

## Wickwar and Long John Silver

ON a cold winter's day, various well-known local characters assembled in front of the *Kaskelot* to help celebrate the handing over of a massive £1,566.22 cheque from Wickwar Brewery to the Long John Silver Trust.

The cheque represented proceeds from Wickwar's Long John Silver (LJS) beer sales and will be used to help the Trust's aims of being inclusive and educational whilst helping to promote Bristol's literary and maritime past. Many, many thanks to Ray and his team.

The Trust was also delighted to hear that LJS had been selected as one of the offerings from Wickwar's wonderful stable of beers for national prominence in the coming years.

Yo - ho - ho and a bottle of LJS!

Mark Steeds



LEGEND has it that the hop plant came into England with the Reformation (1534), but it was being used by Bristol brewers in the reign of Henry VII (1457-1509), much to the discontent of the Common Council who issued the above edict in 1505, later employing the "ale conner" to detect infringements. He was so useful, that a few years after 1519 two "conners" were appointed with a yearly salary of £1.6s.8d. Nowadays CAMRA members queue to pay for the privilege! O Yea.

Extract taken from John Latimers 'Annals of Bristol' Volume 1.

Colin Postlethwaite




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# New Year Accolade for CAMRA Founder

**Michael Hardman, co-founder of CAMRA, has been awarded an MBE for his services to real ale and the brewing industry.**

Covering the best part of 37 years, Hardman's dedication to popularising Britain's national drink has been remarkable, and since the 1970's has sparked tens of thousands of consumers to speak out for quality and choice in their local pub.

As a member of the famed quartet (pictured) who devised the name 'Campaign for the Revitalisation of Ale' whilst on holiday in Ireland, Hardman expressed first-hand concern at the diminishing choice of beers in pubs at the time, as well as their lack of quality and range. Hardman soon became an early pioneer in speaking out against the effect big brewers were having on beer and pubs, launching successful campaigns to question the credibility of these national brands.

Hardman was also responsible for the creation of What's Brewing, a publication



Founders of CAMRA: Jim Makin (left), Michael Hardman, Bill Mellor and Graham Lees

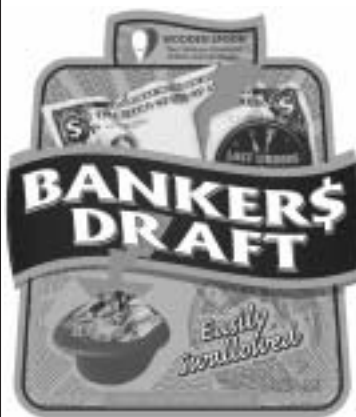
today read by over 95,000 people, and the now best-selling Good Beer Guide, currently in its 36th year.

Having trained as a journalist in regional newspapers, he soon found work in the national media, working on Fleet Street whilst helping to found the British Guild of Beer

Writers. Until recently he was the Media Relations Manager for the Society of Independent Brewers, and now runs a communications and publications consultancy in Reigate, Surrey.

CAMRA would like to congratulate Michael Hardman for his achievements.

## Malt, Hops, Yeast & Water!



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# Bristol CAMRA Pubs



## Bristol Pubs Group celebrates its first anniversary

**THE Bristol & District Pubs Campaigning Group** – or when that’s too much of a mouthful, the **Bristol Pubs Group** for short – was launched in February 2008 at the Albert in Bedminster to combat the fast increasing threats to pubs.

Pete Bridle, the chairman of the group, had taken the idea from a CAMRA national initiative to raise the profile on pub protection. He rounded up a band of members from many backgrounds including architects, businessmen, a brewer, publicans, a pub writer, a councillor, as well as pub enthusiasts – some CAMRA members and some not.

Pubs are disappearing at an alarming rate. Property developers, pub companies (pubcos), below-cost supermarket prices and rising utility bills are all putting great pressure on the pub trade. The Pubs Group’s aim is to resist the consequence of these issues and raise awareness of the plight of pubs.

As well as the serious business of the campaigning, we have quarterly social events where we can meet up and celebrate the best of the British pub.

We welcome new members to contact us through Bristol CAMRA.

(Articles by Mike Jackson)

## Bristol Pubs Group campaigning issues

APART from just encouraging people to use their local pub, not only for a social drink, but also for community gatherings, celebrations and pub quizzes, we are campaigning for many other pub-related issues.

Early in 2008 we contributed to the Old Market Conservation Area Character Appraisal where we highlighted the importance of Old Market pubs to the street scene and character of the area. We raised the profile of the Palace Hotel, the status of the Stag & Hounds to a “Landmark Building”, and the inclusion of the Printer’s Devil and the Stapleton Road Tavern in the Conservation Area.

We are also producing a *Regional Inventory of Historic Pub Interiors*. CAMRA’s *National Inventory of Historic Pub Interiors* contains around 265 pubs of national importance (the King’s Head in Victoria Street, Palace Hotel in Old Market and Queen’s Head at Willsbridge are on the National Inventory). To establish pub interiors of regional importance would give the pubs better protection and reinforce their importance in their local scene.

Our campaigning against restrictive covenants is very important. Pub companies cannot be allowed to sell their pubs off with the condition that they are not used as pubs again. It is anti-competitive and it robs the community of an amenity that has social importance.

## Bristol Pubs Group Surveys

DURING the first year of its existence, the Pubs Group conducted two important surveys that are affecting the pub trade.

On the first anniversary of the smoking ban we surveyed 40 pubs in our branch region to find out the affects of the ban on trade. This coincided with rising utility bills and the beginnings of the credit crunch so it was becoming a tough time for pubs.

Our findings revealed:

- 27% of licencees said there had been no change to trade since the smoking ban.
- Only 11% said trade had increased.
- 86% have provisions for smokers.
- 65% said their customer profile has not changed.
- 71% have taken positive steps to encourage trade as a result of the ban.

Secondly, we surveyed the price of cheap supermarket booze compared with that in pubs. Pubs have constraints that don’t allow them to sell alcoholic drinks at below cost price but supermarkets, because of their varied product range, can sell alcoholic drinks as a “loss leader”.

Supermarkets are selling premium strength lager and cider at under a pound a pint, whereas pubs can only offer similar strength products at around £2.80 or more a pint. This can be seen as irresponsible of the supermarkets that are thus allowing drinking of high-strength drinks in uncontrolled places such as in the park or ‘pre-loading’ before a night on the town. People that are ‘pre-loaded’ when they arrive in city-centre pubs are bringing the blame for their behavior to the pubs, when they may have only been in the pub for a quarter of their drinking time.



The Queen’s Head, Willsbridge

## Bristol Pubs Group Socials

THE Bristol Pubs Group took the decision that a good way to support pubs was to hold social evenings – in pubs! This has now become a quarterly event and details of up-and-coming socials can be found in Pints West.

The first one was in the pubs around Old Market. We were engaging in Old Market pubs campaigning at that time, in May 2008, so it was a topical choice. Starting at the Phoenix, Pete Bridle led the group to several pubs including the Volunteer and the Punch Bowl before ending up in the Barley Mow in The Dings.

In September Mark Steeds led us on an excellent tour of pubs on the “Treasure Island Trail”. Mark narrated Bristol’s link to real pirates and how the pubs played such an important role in their misdemeanours. Mark also told us of the abolition of the slave trade and how the Seven Stars in Thomas Lane, Redcliffe played a pivotal role in the movement that led to abolition. Classic pubs of the period such as the Llandogger Trow, Hole in the Wall and Naval Volunteer were included on the tour. An educational pub crawl, one might say!

Kicking off 2009, Mike Jackson led the group on a trail around his home town of Frampton Cotterell on a wet January night. Two CAMRA Good Beer Guide pubs, the Rising Sun and the New Inn at Mayhill were visited along with two community pubs, the Live & Let Live and the Star.

The socials are very friendly and enlightening, giving people the chance to visit pubs they may not have normally gone to, and then there is the chance that you may develop an urge to talk like a pirate!

All are welcome, Pubs Group member or not, so come along to our next one in April.



# Campaigning Group

## Pub Campaigns in our first year

OUR first year kicked off with the continuation of the campaign, that some of us had already started, to prevent the Palace Hotel from becoming an estate agent's office (see the article elsewhere in this issue). The Palace is listed on CAMRA's National Inventory of Historic Pub Interiors, and so is our next concern, the Queen's Head at Willsbridge.

This Queen's Head was re-opened in May 2008 by an enthusiastic management team to the dismay of former locals and Pubs Group members shocked by the destruction of some of the original fixtures and fittings, some of them more than 100 years old. The Pubs Group demanded the fittings be re-instated and supported the case with photographic evidence of what had been lost. South Gloucestershire Council is now taking proceedings to ensure the pub is returned to its original condition. Whilst the case of the Queen's Head is an ongoing minefield – the pub has been closed since August – that of the Palace Hotel is a success story with its re-opening in December 2008.

The Pubs Group became aware of the closure, and subsequent off-loading by Wadworth, of the Barley Mow in The Dings, St. Philips. We



The Barley Mow



The Bell, Redcliffe



What used to be the Rose and Crown, Iron Acton



The Friendship, Knowle

were able to alert the trade of this opportunity and the Bristol Beer Factory quickly stepped in to make it into a real community local, nestling in the residential area between Temple Meads and Old Market.

We lost an appeal against the conversion of the Red Lion at Draycott into a residential home, where we claimed this free house had been run down in order to line it up for change of use. Change of use was granted but lessons were learned for future campaigns.

The Bell in Redcliffe was closed and offered for sale by its owner, Enterprise Inns. The condition of sale is with a restrictive covenant that prevents its use as a pub in future – a cynical, anti-competitive move where Enterprise are trying to tie up the immediate area to their own pubs, thus preventing competition from any other potential purchaser of the Bell. We continue to fight restrictive covenants on pubs and this matter is not yet resolved.

Currently we are opposing Tesco's plans for additional parking spaces at the Friendship in Knowle, which we believe would open the door for conversion of the pub, or the site, into a Tesco Metro or Express type of outlet. Knowle is ill-served by pubs and the loss of the Friendship would be a major blow as it is their last one.

## Bristol CAMRA Pubs Campaigning Group

# Scandal of the restrictive covenant Pub company could close your local for good!

WITH an unprecedented avalanche of pubs on the market, there is a worrying trend that has emerged, led by the big pub companies. Freeholds are being offered for sale – but with a catch; a covenant is put in place which means the building can never again be used as a pub!

**Enterprise Inns** have been the biggest culprit, often when they have another pub in the vicinity. As they own over 8,000 pubs with ever-increasing vacancies, this activity is becoming increasingly common.

Covenants are a loophole in the law; it is usually illegal to deliberately restrict free competition. Clearly, the pub company believes it can boost the trade and value at its remaining nearby pub.

Examples locally include the **Bell** in Redcliff and the **Red Cow** in Bedminster. Both historic buildings and once vibrant, now after centuries of use as pubs any future entrepreneur will be denied the

opportunity to restore their fortunes (as we have seen is possible at other pubs in both areas recently with the **Cornubia** and **Seven Stars** in Redcliff and several pubs in Bedminster).

The issue has become noticed in Parliament. MP Greg Mulholland submitted a Commons motion calling on the government to stop this activity. The member of the All-Party Parliamentary Beer Group said that the practice has resulted in a decline in local community pubs, saying:

“The practice of slapping restrictive covenants on a pub is a scandal and must be stopped.

“As well as being so clearly anti-competitive, this means that faceless pub companies are permanently closing people’s locals against their wishes simply to further their own commercial ends.”

We can only hope that the Government listens.

*Glen Dawkins*

## Palace Hotel re-opens

THE Palace Hotel, affectionately known as the Gin Palace, in Old Market re-opened as a pub in mid-December and is trading very well.

Gareth Taylor has experience of running pubs in the north of England and recognized a great opportunity to inject life back into the Palace. He has arranged the pub so that the elaborate corner bar room offers a lively atmosphere with TV screens displaying the audio-visual musical artists. A small stage is in place for the purpose of live entertainment evenings. It’s mostly standing room only with a few bar stools and arm chairs offering the only seating.

The rear snug is smartly fitted out with leather seating and a low level table. This is a very comfortable set-up for a leisurely drink and chat, or just to sit and glance at the newspaper.

The classic features of the pub have all been retained from when it was last a pub three and a half years ago. The brass columns are gleaming and the cornice is splendid in its gold livery. Complementing these is very smart decoration including grand curtain drapes and lush carpeting. The decoration has been sympathetically done in a way which is respectful of the building’s listed status.

The re-opening of the Palace has attracted various interest groups. As well as attracting the gay community, it is attracting traditional Palace users and seekers of classic Victorian pub design. Though the pub is gay-friendly, Gareth stresses that everyone is welcome. Although real ale is not available on handpump, Gareth was more than happy to support our recent Pubs Group meeting, held in the rear snug, with bottled ales.

Plans are afoot to open the basement as another bar. A room not publicly used for some considerable time, if ever, will give an additional dimension to the pub. Further discoveries about the building’s history and hidden features have been made, reinforcing its importance in Bristol’s history, as well as in its future.

The Palace had closed in the summer of 2005 and looked unlikely to ever open as a pub again as the new owner had alternative plans for it. Bristol CAMRA Pubs Campaigning Group fought a hard battle to reject plans for conversion into an office and then persuaded the owner that he should market it as a pub. This was a success thanks to the vision of its new tenant. Its magnificent interior is listed on CAMRA’s National Inventory of Heritage Pubs and as one of Bristol’s finest pubs; it deserves every chance of success. Its opening times are from 7pm Monday to Saturday and from 3pm on Sundays.

*Mike Jackson*





# Getting Angry in Cross

CROSS is a small village just off the A38, on the opposite side of the road to Axbridge. It is in an area popular with walkers, being close to the West Mendip Way and Crook Peak. It also gets mentions in local and national press as being the home of the comedian Frankie Howerd. Frankie would not be laughing at the state of affairs at his nearest pub – the White Hart.

The White Hart has been a focal part of the community in Cross for over 300 years. It is located on the old Bristol to Bridgwater coaching road and is mentioned in the records of the 1689 Monmouth Rebellion. It has retained lots of character and much of the interior is original. However, its future looks bleak. Residents and visitors to Cross are protesting against what appears to be a conscious attempt to run down the business and thereby justify closing it and converting it to a residential property. 300 years of history could end up being dumped in a skip.

The company that owns the freehold, Farlane Property Group, has been trying to sell the freehold for some time (NB: if your local is owned by anyone with "Property Group" in their name, you probably have cause to be afraid). A local property expert claims that the asking price is hugely inflated. At the same time, the current tenant has been trying to sell the lease – again, it is felt at a price way beyond the appropriate market rate. The Parish Council and local campaign group feel that this "over-pricing" tactic is part of an attempt to enable the owners to claim that the business is unviable. This might sound like a cynical view, but understandable given that in recent months the White Hart has stopped doing food and no longer opens during the day. It all feels like the pub is on a downward spiral with no apparent will to reverse the decline.

It is acknowledged that there is a second pub in Cross, with the New Inn less than 100 metres down the hill. However, locals point out that this has always been a very different type of pub serving a different clientele and Cross has sustained these two pubs successfully for many years. Less than two years ago, the White Hart had enough trade to keep four real ales in top-quality condition, earning it a place in the Good Beer Guide.

Two planning applications have been submitted to Sedgemoor



Doors firmly shut at the White Hart on a Friday lunchtime

District Council. The first is for change of use to two residential dwellings. The closure date for comments on this is 25 February (though that date may have gone by the time you read this). The planning number is 21/08/00019. There is a second application related to alterations to a listed building. The planning number is 21/08/00020. All ale lovers (and indeed anyone who feels that fine old country pubs are worth saving) are urged to write to Sedgemoor District Council protesting against this wilful act of vandalism against a community and its history.

There is also a petition on the Governments petitions website. The address for this is <http://petitions.number10.gov.uk/whitehart-cross/>.

Anyone wishing to offer their support and to get the latest news on the planning applications should contact Gordon Stevens at [lmgggs@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:lmgggs@tiscali.co.uk).

*Tim Nickolls*

## Friendship Protest

BRISTOL Pubs Group has joined forces with residents in Knowle in their latest campaign. A planning application by Tesco for additional car parking at the Friendship pub in Axbridge Road, Knowle has raised serious concerns by residents that Tesco are planning to convert the pub into a shop. Bristol Pubs Group has joined the campaign as it would result in the loss of yet another community pub in Knowle. Alongside the closure of the pub, there can be little doubt that many independent retailers will suffer and close down.

It is quite notable that, at the packed community meeting on a recent evening at the Redcatch Community centre, everyone who spoke was against the store. The fact that not one person spoke in favour of the store and all of its implications must mean something. A group of people at the meeting agreed to stage a protest at the Council House before the planning committee was sitting.

Alongside the loss of the pub, concerns were raised that there would be a serious increase in traffic levels and this would be from early morning to well into the night. Then there will be the large trucks delivering to the shop at who knows what hours – further impacting on the local environment. All this in an already busy area and right on top of two road junctions!

It is also well known that supermarkets are selling alcohol at prices that are ludicrously low. This is the source of many of the alcohol-related problems with younger drinkers buying discounted drinks from stores such as this with the resulted problems on the streets.

On a final note, readers may be interested to know that Tesco have



Protesting outside the Council House

been offered a retail unit in the nearby Broadwalk shopping centre. But no, they refuse this offer and instead choose to close a community pub.

*Pete Bridle & Helen Featherstone*

*Stop press: Prior to making a decision, the City Council Planning Committee have decided to organise a site visit to the Friendship car park to understand what the traffic implications of the proposed store might be.*

# Pubs in Peril: a few case studies

UNDER current planning legislation, unless a building is listed or is in a conservation area, you do not require permission to demolish it. Last year, the **Ship & Castle** in Ashton Vale, Bristol, was offered for sale by James A Baker with a restrictive covenant prohibiting its use as a pub. It was going to be sold in an auction at Bath Racecourse on 10 December, but was sold before the auction and promptly demolished. Although the new owners still have to apply for change of use, what they effectively have is a brown-field site.

Something similar happened down at Easton, a couple of miles north of Wells on the A371. In January 2001, the owner of the **Easton Inn** – the only pub in the village – submitted an application to Mendip Council to demolish it and build eight dwellings on the site. Among the objections received, one local resident said that, if the plan went ahead, ‘Easton would become yet another collection of houses on a busy road, instead of a village community’. Another said that, ‘if the local public house were to disappear then it would be the beginning of the end as far as village community is concerned’. The application was refused on the grounds that it would ‘involve a loss of community use’.

The residents formed a campaign group – Save Our Pub Here in Easton (SOPHIE) – and voiced a familiar litany of complaints about how the pub was being run down – ‘there had been arguments with

regulars (one had even been banned for wearing sandals), and opening hours had become erratic’.

Then, in January 2002, the owner applied for permission to demolish the inn. Forty-six objections were received, but the council said that permission was not required. And so he demolished it.

Other applications followed. In April 2005, with the Easton Inn reduced to a heap of rubble covered in Virginia creeper, he applied to build eight dwellings on the site. At the planning hearing, a local resident said that 90% of the village wanted to see a new pub built on the site. A parish councillor said



The Easton Inn in happier days

that the pub had always thrived and had been the hub of the village. The ward councillor said that the council ‘should not want unscrupulous businessmen to take away such a facility. He was amazed that the owner had been within his rights to demolish the pub and then be able to apply for planning permission as the owner of a brown-field site. He said that the Board should listen to the wishes of the people who have supported SOPHIE. He did not accept it would be unreasonable to ask the developer to contribute towards a pub within the village.’

The council solicitor, however, said that the owner ‘was able to demolish the pub without seeking any permission’, and that, once demolished, there were ‘no community facilities ... to protect’. She also said that ‘it would not be reasonable to ask the owner for an alternative building to replace a facility which was no longer there.’

The application was turned down but subsequently allowed on appeal. Such is the sorry tale of how a village lost its pub – or, to put it another way, how, because of a property developer’s greed, it stopped being a community and became ‘yet another collection of houses on a busy road’.



The White Hart, Batheaston

If a building is listed, of course, then demolishing it isn’t an option – but if you own a listed pub, you can close it down and try to force the local council to grant change of use by means of a somewhat complicated legal loophole. The owner of the **Chequers** at Box in Wiltshire was granted change of use in February 2008 – despite having been told it wouldn’t be granted – because he could prove that the property had ‘been used as a single dwelling for more than four years’. Hidden away in the Town and Country Planning Act is a paragraph which says that change of use has to be granted if it can be ‘demonstrated that a use, operation or activity in breach of a planning condition is lawful on the date of the application [because] the use of a building as a single dwelling house began more than four years ago’. So, if you’ve lived in the public part of a closed pub – illegally – for four years, you’ve established the right to go on doing so legally. Permission, therefore, had to be granted – although it could have been prevented by an enforcement order being served during that four-year period.

That’s what’s happened at Monkokehampton in West Devon. The **Olde Swan**, the only pub in the village, closed well over ten years ago, but locals are determined that the owner will not be granted change of use and that any attempt to extend living accommodation into what was the public area of the pub will be met with an enforcement order.

Something similar is happening at Northend, near Bath. The **Northend Inn**, the only pub in the village, closed in May last year and the owner applied for change of use to residential accommodation. A campaign group – SONET – was set up, a public meeting, attended by around 60 residents, was held in the village hall, and over 90 objections were received by Bath & North East Somerset (B&NES) planning



The Castle Inn





The Englishcombe Inn

department. The chairman of the parish council made a complaint echoed by many others, that 'we never knew when the pub was open. The landlords changed the opening hours a lot so it was hard to know when we could go in'. The application was turned down on the grounds that 'the proposed change of use represents the loss of a community facility and the property has not been effectively marketed as a public house'.

Currently the Northend Inn remains closed, so for the moment Northend's transformation from a community to a collection of houses has been put on hold, and locals are determined to do all they can to make sure that it eventually reopens.

Just down the road in Batheaston, meanwhile, an application has been submitted to convert the **White Hart**, a former coaching inn, closed for about three years, to four houses.

Over in Bath, two suburban community pubs are also the subject of planning applications. Both are being strongly resisted by local residents. Both pubs also happen to be very attractive and very large Bath stone buildings with lots of land attached.

The **Castle** at Bathwick was built about a century ago to serve the newly-built Forester estate. It's recently been acquired by Amek Investments (Commercial), which, as its name implies, isn't a pubco, although it has bought quite a few pubs, including the **Viaduct** at Monkton Combe and the **Mason's Arms** at Bradford on Avon. Having been granted change of use for these two on grounds of non-viability



The sign of the Castle, Bathwick

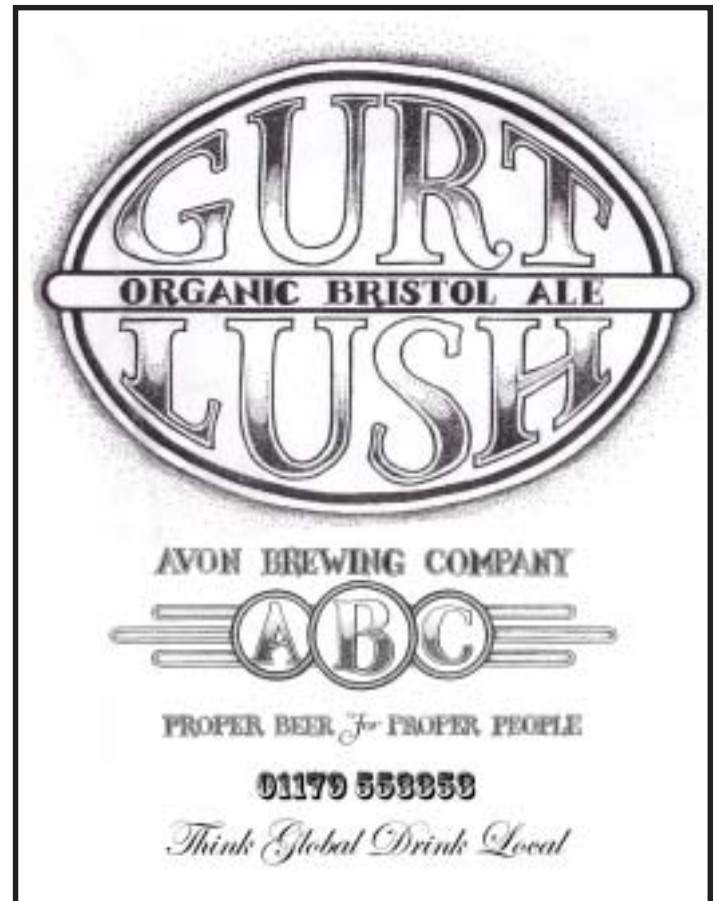
(i.e. they'd been run down), some work was done on both properties, but this now appears to have ground to a halt, and both sites are now eyesores. This seems set to be the fate of the Castle, unless councillors refuse change of use. A campaign to save the Castle has been launched, with over 50 objections being lodged.

Over on the other side of town, the **Englishcombe Inn** has been bought by a company which wants to turn it into a care home. Like the Castle, the Englishcombe was built specifically to provide a community facility for the surrounding buildings at the time of their construction. When it opened in 1934 it was described by the *Bath Chronicle* as having been 'erected in conformity with the recommendations of the Licensing Committee ... Neither pains nor money [have] been spared to make the inn attractive. The bars are light and airy, roomy and handsomely furnished, and upstairs, with a separate entrance, is an attractive tea room. The building as a whole is in Bath stone and constructed on very pleasing lines, and with a spacious forecourt. Gardens and tennis courts are amenities which will be embarked upon in the near future.'

Numerous letters of objection have been sent to the council by local residents, stressing, like those objecting to the closure of the Castle, that this is a community pub – a meeting place for all age groups. A petition, with over 80 signatures, has also been delivered to the council protesting at the plans.

As neither of these proposed changes of use would 'a facility of equivalent or greater benefit to the community', they appear to be contrary to policy CR7 of B&NES Local Plan. B&NES has also recently signed up to the Sustainable Communities Act which is aimed at 'promoting thriving, sustainable communities'. A spokesman for B&NES welcomed the act, saying that it 'empowers local communities to raise issues and get their voices heard. It works on the principle that local people know best what is needed for their area.' The level of opposition to the proposal to convert the Englishcombe Inn into a care home and the Castle Inn into houses indicates what the local people in these areas want. They want to protect their communities, and the facilities that make them communities rather than a conglomeration of houses. It is to be hoped that their council representatives heed their concerns as they did over the Northend Inn.

Andrew Swift



# BADRAG – Stout and Mild!

BADRAG, the Bristol & District Rare Ales Group, is delighted that another award for a rare ale has come to one of our local breweries, justifying our efforts to introduce rare styles of ale to local bars. Bristol Beer Factory has won Champion Stout of Britain with their Bristol Milk Stout at the CAMRA Winter Ales Festival. Congratulations to Simon Bartlett and his team at the Bristol Beer Factory.

Simon said, "When you enter a competition like this you always have a dream of getting an award and actually winning Champion Stout of Britain is beyond any dream – at the moment I can't quite believe it. I much prefer this current brew as the lactose (a sugar that is found most notably in milk) is not as overpowering. I cannot put this down to any single reason, as in the past 12 months we have changed a number of things in the brewery to improve the beers all round. People do ask, 'Have you changed the recipe?' – the answer is always no.

"Recipes don't change, but they may have to be adjusted to suit the current malt or hop harvests. We are also continually striving to improve our beers and this may involve processes of improving the water treatment, improving yeast growth, improving finings additions, etc – the list is endless."

Simon assured BADRAG that Bristol Beer Factory Exhibition, their other rare style of beer, had an assured future also. "The recipe came straight from Smiles and has not changed – in fact I think we are brewing it better than the original due to the improvements we are making."

During the spring each year, BADRAG encourages licensees to stock mild ales and low-gravity or light bitters.

CAMRA defines light bitters as any bitter with an ABV of 3.4% or lower, or an original gravity (OG) of 1034 or lower. By light bitters, we generally mean low gravity or low strength, but they do also tend to be lighter in colour than stronger bitters. Originally these beers were most prevalent in the West Country where they were colloquially known as boys' bitters.

Recent years have seen a reduction in the number of traditional West Country light bitters, most notably the tragic demise of Palmer's Bridport Bitter, although St Austell IPA, Arkell's 2B and Severn Vale Session still fly the flag.

Mild is a beer which has tastes and textures all its own. Basically it is a beer that is less hopped and bitter than what we call bitter. The darkness of dark milds, such as Wickwar Penny Black, comes from the use of darker malts and/or roasted barley which are used to compensate for the loss of hop character. Chocolate, fruity, nutty and burnt are all tastes to be found in the complexity of milds. However, not all milds are dark. Yorkshire-brewed Timothy Taylor's Golden

Best is one of the best examples of a light-coloured mild, as is Banks's Original, the name changed from Mild to try to give it a more modern image. In Scotland, 60/- ale is similar to mild (Belhaven's being a good example).

Milds today tend to have an ABV in the 3% to 3.5% range, with of course some notable exceptions. In fact, a lot of the microbreweries that try their hand at mild are bringing the alcohol content back up somewhat! Sarah Hughes Dark Ruby is a well-known strong mild of 6% ABV. Our local Arbor Ales brewery is launching a strong mild at 5.2% this spring, to complement their seasonal 3.6% Mild West launched last year.

For more information about beer styles check out the web at [www.camra.org.uk](http://www.camra.org.uk), following the Campaigns then Beer Style Campaigning links.

Laurie Gibney

**WARNING**  
From the Management of the  
**HOPE & ANCHOR**  
Exceptional Public House  
**SPILL BEER**  
**DON'T**

GRANDAD was *always*  
a bit of a practical joker.

So I should have known better when he took me down his local. Especially when he blindfolded me. Hand on elbow he steered me to a chair and sat me down. "*Here, sup on this,*" he ordered, holding a glass to my lips. "*What is it Grandad?*" I CHUNTERED, apprehensively. "*Never you mind,*" was the stern reply. "*Just get it down you.*" I sipped, timidly, then again, bravely.

Then again, with NARY a care in the world. It was smooth, hoppy and dry. "*It's delicious!*" I exclaimed, ripping the blindfold from my eyes to reveal my Grandad's laughing face. "*Theakstons Mild,*" he chortled. "*I can tell it with my eyes closed. Now you can too.*" "*But, even my dad says Theakstons Mild is only for pensioners,*" I protested. "*Aye, your father's just not old enough to appreciate it,*" said Grandad, his eyes twinkling merrily.

"*But I reckoned his son would be.*"



PECULIERLY  
FINE COMPANY



# BADRAG

## Mild Events

MAY is National Mild Month and BADRAG, the Bristol and District Rare Ales Group of CAMRA, is organising various events in which you are welcome to join. Provisional details are shown below.

It is worth checking our web sites [www.camrabristol.org.uk](http://www.camrabristol.org.uk) and [www.badrag.co.uk](http://www.badrag.co.uk) for up-to-the-minute details before setting out.

### ● Thursday 16 April 2009

**Pre-Mild Month Wickwar Brewery Tour** – hopefully to see Penny Black Mild being brewed and taste it. Coach at 18.45 from Bristol. Prior booking essential (see web sites).

### ● Saturday 2nd May

**Clifton Mild Ales Trail** – from noon at the Portcullis, Wellington Terrace, Clifton (BS8 4LE), possibly visiting the Lansdown, Victoria, Vittoria, Berkeley, Eldon House and Hope & Anchor.

### ● Saturday 9th May

**National Mild Day Launch followed by a Bristol Harbourside & City Centre Mild Ales Trail** – 11am from the Orchard Inn, Spike Island (BS1 6XT), possibly visiting the Nova Scotia, Adam & Eve, Bag O'Nails, White Lion, Bank and Commercial Rooms.

### ● Thursday 14th May

**Tutored Mild Tasting** – 8pm at the Commercial Rooms (BS1 1HT).

### ● Saturday 16th May

**Kingsdown and Temple Meads Mild Ales Trail** – noon from the Robin Hood, St Michael's Hill (BS2 8DX), then possibly visiting the Green Man, Hillgrove Porter Stores, Colston Yard, Zero Degrees, Seven Stars, Cornubia and Knights Templar.

### ● Thursday 20th May

**"Searching for Mild in the Desert!"** – from 8pm, a mild ale trail starting from the Raglan, Weston-super-Mare (BS23 2DX) and a few other pubs including possibly the White Lion and Off The Rails.

### ● Saturday 23rd May (plus Fri 22nd and/or Sun 24th optional)

**Nottingham Mild Ales Trail** – probably using rail travel and, if staying, using the Central Travelodge near Nottingham Station. Further details will be posted on the web sites above. Expressions of interest would be appreciated to BADRAG@camrabristol.org.uk.

### ● Saturday 30th May

**South Glos and North East Bristol Mild Ales Trail** – using public transport, starting at noon with lunch at the New Inn, Mayshill (BS36 2NT). To book a seat on the Mild Ale Trail tables, phone (01454) 773 161 or email [dallyinns@aol.com](mailto:dallyinns@aol.com). Possibly visiting the Rising Sun at Frampton Cottrell, Cross Hands at Winterbourne Down, Staple Hill Oak, Cross Hands and Van Dyke Tavern at Fishponds, Miners Arms and Duke of York at St Werburghs and the Chelsea at Easton.

### ● Thursday 11 Jun 2009

**Mild Month Wake** – Cornubia, Temple Street, Bristol (BS1 6AB), 8pm.

BADRAG holds gatherings at various hostelrys every second Thursday of each month.

All trails are expected to start as indicated above and end early in the evening, and they will allow extra time for a bite to eat once or twice during the trail.

If you are a licensee or patron of any of the pubs covered by the trails or even a pub which is en route and might be included, please let BADRAG know what plans you have for stocking mild during the Mild Month of May and particularly on the days your pub is scheduled for a visit. Preferably email any information to BADRAG@camrabristol.org or telephone Laurie Gibney, the BADRAG co-ordinator, on 01275 798479.

Laurie Gibney



## DAWKINS TAVERNS

[www.dawkins-taverns.co.uk](http://www.dawkins-taverns.co.uk)

### Spring Real Ale Events

**Irish Beer Fest** at The Hillgrove 17th-22nd March

**National Cask Ale Week** events at all pubs 6th-13th April

**St George's Beer Festival** at The Victoria 23rd-27th April

**Mild Month Festival Trail** at all pubs throughout May

**May Beer Fest** at The Portcullis 30th April-4th May

### The Hillgrove

Dove St, Bristol BS2 8LT 9248234 BRISTOL CAMRA PUB OF THE YEAR 2007  
Open Mon-Thu 4-12; Fri 4-1am; Sat 2-1am; Sun 2-12 Quiz Sun 9pm Food til 9pm (except Mon)

### The Victoria

Southleigh Rd, Clifton, Bristol BS8 2BH 0117 9745675 GBG LISTED  
Open Mon-Fri 4pm-11pm; Sat 12-11; Sun 12-10.30pm Quiz Tuesday 8.30pm

### The Portcullis

Wellington Terrace, Clifton Village, Bristol BS8 4LE 0117 9085536  
Mon-Thu 4.30-11; Fri 12-4.30-11; Sat 12-11; Sun 12-10.30 Quiz Thu 9pm Food daily except Mon

### The Miner's Arms

Mina Rd, St Werburghs, Bristol BS2 9YQ 0117 9079874 GBG LISTED  
Open Mon-Wed 4-11; Thu & Fri 4-12; Sat 2-12; Sun 12-11 Quiz Thursdays 9pm

### The Green Man

Alfred Place, Kingsdown, Bristol BS2 8HD 9304824 NEW 'ORGANIC' PUB!  
Open Mon-Sat 5pm-11pm; Sun 12-10.30pm Quiz Wed 8.30pm Food Wed-Sun

# 2008 – the year of pub closures, the £3 pint and relative stability for local real ale!

## A look back at the last year in the local brewing and pub scene

THERE can be no doubt that 2008, at least the second half of it, was a very tough year for almost everybody, with pubs and breweries amongst the hardest hit. The combination of the economic crash, tax rises and residual effects of the smoking ban made this a hard sector to be in.

We constantly read stories of pub closures and see plenty of evidence as we drive around – parts of South Bristol seem to have very few pubs still trading. On a recent trip to the West Midlands I was shocked to pass 10 consecutive boarded-up pubs in a single area. However it is noticeable that very few of these closures relate to pubs known to specialise in real ale and other quality products. Indeed the great majority are pubs owned by the giant pubcos who have spent the last 10 years buying up every pub they can then screwing their licensees into the ground with prohibitive rents, restrictions on what they can sell, and uncompetitive prices for their chosen products which have to be purchased from them. The Government then wades in with tax rises, whilst supermarkets offer cheap booze. The result for those pubs has been sub-standard products at inflated prices and bankrupt licensees. The collapse in property prices now means that the pubs are of no interest to the pubcos and they are unable to find any more unsuspecting people to sink their life savings into the business. The end result is closed-up pubs. Because the pubcos are fully aware that a local entrepreneur could buy the pub and, without the restrictions above, make a success of it, their response is to put the closed pubs up for sale under “restrictive covenant” which means that they can no longer be used as pubs. The fact that this is legally possible is nothing short of a disgrace!

So how did our local brewers and real ale friendly pubs do in 2008? Rather well, all things considered. I am hard pushed to think of many closed pubs in our area that were allowed to stock a decent range of real ales. Of course trading conditions are tough but it seems that there are still plenty of us happy to frequent pubs that stand out for their quality products (food, drink or both) and it is these that will survive the recession.

On the brewing front we lost one and gained one in 2008 – sadly **Keynsham Brewery** closed for good and the kit was sold to someone in the Cheltenham area. **Great Western Brewery** at Hambrook brewed for the first time and seems to be doing very well.

**Arbor Ales** relocated from the Old Tavern in Stapleton (which at the time of writing I believe is sadly closed) to an industrial unit in Kingswood and the beers have really started to impress greatly. It was a year of steady consolidation for both **Butcombe** and **Bath Ales** after several years of rapid expansion. **RCH, Cotswold Spring** and **Wickwar** carried on producing their high quality beers and fighting for space on bar counters nationwide. **Cheddar Ales** relaunched their brands and continue to find new outlets, particularly down in Somerset – they also brewed *Totty Pot Porter* and *Goat's Leap IPA* as seasonal beers and are planning *Mild Cheddar* for May 2009, initially for three months. **Bristol Beer Factory** brought great cheer by reopening the long closed **Barley Mow** in the Dings near Temple Meads, thus totally bucking the pub closure trend! Like the **Grain Barge** it features their full range of tasty beers, on a rotating basis, three or four at a time. News has just arrived that their excellent *Milk Stout* has won “Champion Stout of Britain” and that they have promised to make it more widely available. **Zerodegrees** continues to attract large crowds to drink its excellent continental-style beers. Many of the beers have been tweaked to improve them further, and new outlets have opened in Reading and Cardiff. Finally we are aware of the small **Avon Brewing Company** based in Lawrence Hill producing an organic beer called “Gurt Lush” but getting to try this elusive beer seems tricky and I am yet to manage it! (*It has often featured at the Green Man, the organic Dawkins pub located in High Kingsdown, and also the nearby Robin Hood. Ed.*)



One of my roles in the Bristol branch of CAMRA is to co-ordinate the local entries for the Good Beer Guide, CAMRA's national flagship publication. I am pleased to report that competition for places is hotter than ever despite all the gloom-and-doom pub news. It seems that we have more pubs than ever offering a good selection of well-kept beers. We had 10 new entries in the 2009 guide as listed in the last Pints West, and there are more new nominations for 2010. Given that we have only 63 slots to cover South Gloucester-

shire, Bristol and North Somerset we are certain to have more potential entries than we can submit and some of the pubs will be very unlucky. Competition is hottest in the Gloucestershire and Bristol section where last year we had 39 entries and 10 reserves. All of these pubs are still trading and a number of very notable new pubs have come to our notice. These include the **Bank** in John Street which has been through many guises including several closed periods. It is now thriving and majoring on real ale – Ed the landlord delights in seeking out beers unusual for the area and is not afraid to sell some of the stronger varieties so rarely seen and at very attractive prices too. Perhaps the best recent example was Moor JJJ IPA at under £3 despite being 9% ABV! Another excellent new venture is the **Portcullis** in Clifton, close to the Suspension Bridge, which joined the Dawkins chain in late 2007 and has impressed with its ever-changing range and frequent beer festival events. Dawkins also rescued the Bell in Alfred Place, Kingsdown from closure and relaunched it as the **Green Man**, an all-organic pub serving three or four beers, and also managed to recruit Paul and Dee from the Hare on the Hill to take over the **Victoria** in Southleigh Road, Clifton. The **Lansdown** in Clifton now has an impressive range of independent beers in varying strength and styles. Out in Thornbury, **Barrels** in St Mary Street has been making great efforts to promote its range of beers, and good reports have been received on the **Cambridge** in Redland (Fuller's), the **Live and Let Live** in Frampton Cotterell (Bath Ales) and the **Lamb** in Iron Acton (free). Down in Somerset another pub that was closed for a while, the **Red Lion** in Bishop Sutton, has come back to life and seems to be in good hands serving four real ales.

I would go as far as to say that high quality real ale has never been more readily available in this area and that the better brewers and pubs can still thrive despite all the obstacles that they face. There were seemingly far fewer changes of ownership or licensee in the pubs mentioned or Good Beer Guide pubs last year too. I would urge those that care about real beer and real pubs to continue to support them during this damned recession to make sure that they will still be there when better times return. All we need now is for the pubcos to be forced to make their unwanted pubs available at sensible prices as free-of-tie pubs to individuals!

Vince Murray



# Me and my (ex)local The Coronation

IT was whilst selling Bristol Beer Festival tickets to enthusiastic CAMRA members in the Old Fish Market that conversation turned to favourite locals. For over five years we lived two minutes away from the Coronation, a Hop Back pub. Found on Dean Lane in Southville, this pub was like a home from home for us. Great beer, friendly people and lively conversation meant that a visit to the Coronation was always a delight. In 2006 we moved away from the area and found ourselves only visiting occasionally.

It was a damp Sunday afternoon and on days like this the Coronation is at its best. We decided that a trip down memory lane was in order. There were small groups of people supping the delicious Hop Back brews. We had a Crop Circle (for old times' sake), a Dark Knight and a Taiphoo. Crop Circle was always our beer of choice: light, very hoppy and quaffable. The Dark Knight is a tasty darker, malty brew from Hop Back's sister brewery, Downton, while the Taiphoo is an interesting beer flavoured with lemongrass.

We were pleased to find that little had changed. Sundays in the Coronation are a haven: warmth, good cheer and a chance to linger over the Sunday papers. We saw familiar faces chatting and laughing, the beer was on top form (as ever), you can buy a pizza in the evening, take home four pints of your favourite ale, and we were comforted to see that the clock was still five minutes fast. The Coronation is a pub that is genuinely at the heart of its community: everyone is made to feel welcome, it plays host to events during local festivals and celebrations and it has a cracking pub quiz every Monday evening. Make the effort to visit the Coronation, it's everything a good pub should be.

*Helen Featherstone*



The Coronation Hotel, Dean Lane, in days gone by

## CAMRA socials

THE local Bistol & District CAMRA branch has been busy over the last few months, with a number of evening 'explorer trips' by coach and minibus, seeking out those difficult to reach pubs, often located in the countryside around Bristol. Although it's a social occasion, it's also important as it enables us to visit actual and potential Good Beer Guide entries and, with the selection meeting for the 2010 Guide not far away, it's a busy time to ensure the best pubs are put forward for consideration.

Recent trips have seen us visit the East Mendips, including well known but remote pubs such as the **Hunters Lodge** near Priddy, with its timeless traditional feel, and the **Wookey Hole Inn** at Wookey, with its unusual range of real ales and Belgian beers. We also visited the Weston-super-Mare area and couldn't resist dropping in at the ever-great **Off The Rails** by the station. Our coach just made it back to Bristol before the snow came down!

We've also undertaken a few walking trips around parts of Bristol, including the Bedminster and Windmill Hill area, and what turned out to be a particularly popular saunter around Kingsdown, starting at the wonderful **Highbury Vaults** and taking in the **Hillgrove Porter Stores** where there were some exceptional beers including the ultra-strong **Skullsplitter** from Orkney! This trip finished up at what I call the '**Butcombe**' **Bell** towards Stokes Croft, with top quality Butcome ale on tap. (The pub's nickname originated to differentiate it from the other Bell in Kingsdown, the Dawkins Taverns' organic pub which was recently renamed the **Green Man**.)

Only one brewery has been visited this year to date, this being **Blindman's Brewery** at Leighton near Frome. Despite arriving a little late to due roadworks, Paul kindly arranged for two barrels of beer for us to enjoy as he detailed the brewery's history and their future plans, which seem most interesting. Being small enables them to run off special brews either as 'one-offs' or as regular beers brewed to a particular pub's taste.

We then travelled the short journey to the **Lamb** in Frome, where nearly the full range of Blindman's beer was on sale. We were well fed with hot pies in the upstairs room – very tasty indeed. We thank Paul and his colleagues for their hospitality, and urge you to try a Blindman's beer the next time you see one.

A full list of socials appears elsewhere, but can I please stress that all trips should be booked in advance to avoid disappointment.

Lastly, a request: for some of our smaller trips, a large bus can prove a little expensive. Does anyone reading this know of or can recommend a local minibus operator – say 10 to 15 seats with driver – for occasional evening explorer trips? If so, please get in touch with me, Tim, by email to [badcamrasocials@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:badcamrasocials@blueyonder.co.uk).

*Tim Proudman*



**THE CORONATION**  
18 Dean Lane, Southville, Bristol  
Tel: 0117 940 9044

*Lorna and her team warmly welcome you to come along and enjoy the great range of Hop Back beers, monthly specials and guest ales and to drink in the great atmosphere!*

Polypins and minipins available for all beers

**Opening hours:**  
Mon-Fri 3pm - 11pm  
Sat 12 noon - 11pm  
Sun 12 noon - 10.30pm



REFRESHINGLY HOPPY BEERS

# Bristol Beer Festival update

THE twelfth annual Bristol Beer Festival is at the Brunel Passenger Shed, Temple Meads, Bristol, on Friday 20th March and Saturday 21st March 2009 and features approximately 120 real ales and 40 ciders & perries.

Tickets went on sale to CAMRA members on Sunday 8th February at the Old Fish Market, Baldwin Street, Bristol from 11am until 2pm. There was a simultaneous session at Off The Rails at Weston-super-Mare train station.

First in the queue at the Old Fish Market were (pictured below) Miss Kelly Hewitt and two gentlemen called Michael Hill – the elder and younger versions! They had arrived early at 9:40am to ensure they got their beer festival tickets (excluding, of course, the younger Mr Hill).



First come first served

The organisation of the sales session worked smoothly on the day thanks to the efforts put in by CAMRA volunteers and once the queue had started moving members were able to get their tickets fairly quickly.

Around 60 people joined CAMRA on the day, many of them motivated by the chance to buy their beer festival tickets before the



Signing up for CAMRA life membership



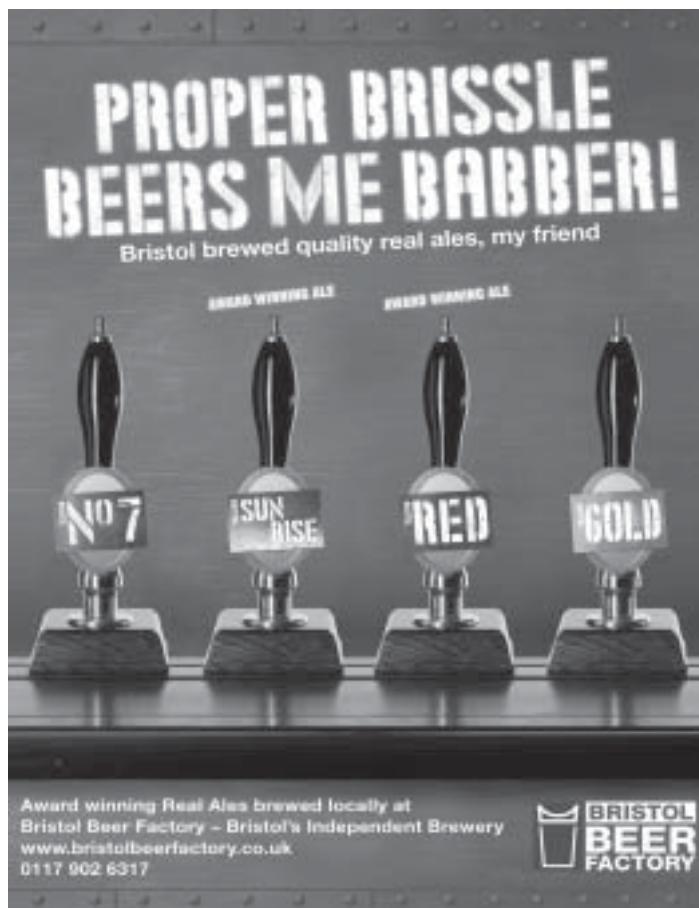
Eager for tickets at the Commercial Rooms

public sales session two weeks later.

These new joiners included Bruce Morrison who impressed us by deciding to become a CAMRA life member and paying in cash on the spot. Pictured below is branch activist Pete Tanner (left) receiving the membership payment from Bruce Morrison (right).

The second ticket sales session at the Commercial Rooms in Bristol and again at Off The Rails in Weston-super-Mare on Sunday 22nd February was also very popular with Weston completely selling out of tickets and there being a very large queue well before we were due to start selling at the Commercial Rooms. They bought everything except a few of the Friday lunchtime tickets.

*Richard Brooks*





# Butcombe news

BUTCOMBE pubs are planning to be involved in the National Cask Ale Week celebration which takes place from 6<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> of April. This event is a partnership between CAMRA, Cask Marque, Independent Family Brewers of Britain and the Why Handpull group of real ale brewers.

## Malt Shovel

Eight en-suite bedrooms, comprising six double, one twin and one family, are due to be opened at the beginning of March at the Malt Shovel, Cannington, Butcombe's lovely traditional 300-year-old inn.

## Queen's Arms

Beer is now being served from hand pumps at the Queen's Arms in Bleadon, as it was felt that the cooling jackets for the gravity-fed beer were not functioning properly. The pub now has Casque Mark accreditation.

## Woolpack

Rose Cunningham and Steve Beasley, managers of the Woolpack in Worle, have made it through to the final eight of the "Managed Pub of the Year" award, from the British Institute of Innkeepers.

## Charity Walk

Butcombe are again participating in an Arthritis Research Campaign-sponsored Mendip Walk, to take place on Good Friday, the 10<sup>th</sup> of April. The **Queen Victoria** in Priddy and the **Ring o'Bells** in Compton Martin will be the start and finish points for the walk which is over nine miles of flat or slightly downhill terrain.

Mulled wine will be served at the Queen Victoria to fortify the walkers at the beginning and a supper will be waiting at the Ring o'Bells to reward them at the completion of their labours. A coach will transport the walkers from the Ring o'Bells to the Queen Vic for the start of the walk enabling walkers to linger over their meal at the end if they wish.

It is hoped that the event will repeat the success of last year. Anyone wishing to get fit and enjoy some wonderful scenery can receive further details from Suzie Ladbrooke on 01934 713906 or email [s.ladbrooke@arc.org.uk](mailto:s.ladbrooke@arc.org.uk).

Margaret Evett



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# Seven Stars Plaque



THE quest to enable a humble backstreet Bristol boozer take its proper place in world history is getting ever closer. With the Seven Stars plaque appeal going great guns, a massive £1,800 has been raised so far.

For those who don't know, the great abolitionist Thomas Clarkson used the Seven Stars in Thomas Lane, as his base whilst investigating the horrors of the slave trade way back in 1787.

He received help from the Seven Stars landlord Thompson who risked his livelihood (and possibly his life) by escorting Clarkson around some of Bristol's shadier hostelrys to expose some of the evil practices of those engaged in the trade.

The plaque, a massive 1000mm wide and 650mm high, is being designed and sculpted by local artist and historian Mike Baker, and as you can see in the photo, will feature Clarkson and key episodes from the Seven Stars' history.

Bristol Radical History Group is leading the fundraising by selling pamphlets about Clarkson and the Seven Stars and by holding various fund-raising events around the city and also in the Seven Stars.

The most recent event was by local band "Who's Afraid" which raised a creditable £190, with the band generously donating their fee – yet another cracking Seven Stars night.

In total a further £1,400 is needed to make the plaque a reality and if anyone can help by purchasing a pamphlet or by making a donation at the pub, that would be fantastic.

At the end of the day, this campaign will prove the huge role public houses have played in our history, and how vital it is that they survive.

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# Watering Holes in the Desert

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## Bath Winter Ales Tour

THERE was a respectable turn out for the annual Weston-super-Mare sub-branch seasonal ales tour of Bath, especially as a number of the party, including the author, were similarly engaged on a Christmas beer tour on home turf only two nights previous.

In that previous event, we took in several Weston pubs, namely the **Raglan, Regency, Royal Hotel, White Hart** and **Off The Rails**, where many a pint of winter and Christmas beers were merrily quaffed, including offerings from RCH, Cheddar Ales and Dark Star – finishing with a hearty punch of the

heavyweight and magnificent RCH Santa Fé.

Back to Bath and the group assembled in the characterful **Star Inn** at the top end of the city where I am reliably informed that the tipple of the moment was the wonderful Twelfth Night from Abbey Ales.

At this point my good lady and I were otherwise engaged, as we had arrived a bit earlier and popped off to see a film at the Odeon, first stopping off at the neighbouring Wetherspoon's pub, the **King of Wessex**. Here we took up the pint-and-pie offer and I

am happy to report that they do include the guest ales for this deal and not just the ones mentioned in the menu, thus resulting in my having an enjoyable pint of Jennings Red Breast while Shelly had an equally pleasant Festivity from Bath Ales.

We met up with the others in the very festively festooned **Bell** in Walcot Street where the order of the day (disguised behind a Butcombe beer clip but advertised via a large sign hanging on the door) was Figgy Pudding from Box Steam Brewery, lusciously dark and fruity as its name suggests.

Next it was off to the **Old Green Tree** where there were several beers to choose from (but whose names now escape me, although I do believe one was Abbey Ales Twelfth Night). Some confusion then descended upon us as our next destination, the **Volunteer Riflemen Arms**, had been swamped by over-zealous rugby fans who were baiting each other in drinking games and being generally raucous – but it was, after all, the last Friday before Christmas and no one was expecting a pipe and slippers kind of an evening. We regrouped at the highly acclaimed **Raven** where we somehow managed to secure a large table in the upstairs seating area. Here we all partook of Hogback's Elf & Hoppiness, which we fondly renamed Elf & Safety due to its relatively (in winter ale circles) low ABV of 3.9%. The group proceeded to identify an array of flavours including nutmeg, coriander, cumin and ginger and we unanimously agreed, after Andy's insightful declaration, that the combined flavours resulted in a distinct aroma of sausages (much to Bev's disdain!).

The last stop before heading off for the train was the smallest pub in Bath, the **Coeur de Lion**, where there was another good selection of beers, although if the truth be known my notes were starting to become somewhat illegible so apologies for once again not having all the info on beer names, breweries, etc to hand (I did not set out that night with a view to writing an article!).

We alighted from the train dangerously close to **Off the Rails** and, as we knew from a couple of nights earlier that RCH Santa Fé was on tap, one for the road was had and farewells exchanged. I, like many of you, will be looking forward to some sunshine and longer evenings as spring approaches – but one of the highlights of the year, as I am sure most of you will agree, is the arrival of the winter ales and Christmas beers and the warm glow they create in all that drink them to help pass the darker months away.

Ray Hamilton



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# A Round with Robin

A GREAT deal has been talked about the rejuvenation of the *Moor* brewery, with Justin Hawke taking over the helm now at Pitney in Somerset. Most notable has been the variations on the theme of *Old Freddy Walker* (7.5% ABV), which was the favourite beer of many real ale drinkers at the Lions Weston-super-Mare Festival last year. At the Somerset beer festival at Minehead last year, we had *Old Freddy Walker in Brandy* that is now branded, as at **Royal Artillery Arms** at Highbridge and Bradford on Avon RFC beer festival, as *Brandied Freddy Walker* (8%), and very rich and warming it is too. Only a couple of years ago I had Old Freddy Walker masquerading as *Freddy in Port*, but now Moor have as a regular ale *Ported Peat Porter* (4.7%) (sometimes misprinted as Pete Porter), as well as the standard *Peat Porter* (4.5%).

Whilst on the subject of the Bradford on Avon RFC beer festival at Winsley on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2009, although there were only 14 beers, the selection was just right, with my favourite beers being *Three Castles Olde Ale* (6.3%), and *Thornbridge Jaipur* (5.9%). This also seems a good time to mention the organic beer festival at the **Royal Oak**, Twerton in December, where the 25 listed beers were supplemented by *Art Brew Dark Brut* (5.2%) and *Wye Valley Wholesome Stout* (4.6%). Here though it was difficult to decide on a favourite beer, but the best beers were from the *Marble* (Manchester) and *Spectrum* (Norwich) breweries.

Returning to the Lions Weston-super-Mare festival last year, there was a deal of confusion amongst fellow members of CAMRA as to the *Millstone True Grit* (5%), as many had made the mistake of writing it down as from the *Milestone* (Newark) brewery. Now I have nothing but praise for Milestone; as I write we've just finished *Milestone Lionheart* (4.3%), something like a mild, in the **White Hart** in Weston-super-Mare, which has just been replaced with the *Milestone IPA* (4.8%), with a dry malty finish, but it ain't *Millstone*. *True Grit* comes from Mossley on the western edge of the Peak District, and is a most hoppy and citrus strong ale, especially welcome on a hot summer's day. The other most talked about beer at that festival, just a day before the pier pavilion burnt down, was the *Derventio Venus*, another 5% beer. This is a brewery I know next to nothing about save that it is in Derbyshire, and that all their beers are named with a Romanic theme. I wonder if their seasonal ale "*Et Tu Brutus?*" (4.5%) is brewed on the Ides of March.

The next Lions Weston-super-Mare Festival is to be on the 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> July, and like as last year there's free admission for CAMRA members, though if you go during the day a small fee is payable to the helicopter festival of which it forms a part (further details on [www.lionsofweston.org.uk/WestonBeerFestival.htm](http://www.lionsofweston.org.uk/WestonBeerFestival.htm)).



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Enjoying the Christmas ales in the Seven Stars

The other day when drinking *Abbey Salvation* (4.8%) beer in the **Coeur de Lion** in Bath, I ran into Alan "Bad News" Morgan who gave me *good news* about another all-year regular beer to complement *Bellringer*. This will be a malty beer, and will probably be named *Heritage* or *Bath Heritage*. Also recently brewed is a new *Winter Warmer*.

As readers of this column know, a hard core of Weston sub-branch like to visit the winter ale festivals at Exeter (January) and Tewkesbury (February). We often meet Stuart and others from Bristol there, and there is always a mind-blowing selection of classic beers. As I have a place to stay in Crediton near Exeter, I took the opportunity to go on both Friday and Saturday this year (I *must* write a small guide to the best pubs in Crediton in an edition of Pints West). The beer has been for a few years available in third-pint measures, and this meant I could sample about half the beers on offer over the two days. I ran out of superlatives on my tasting notes, but should record that *Red Rock Christmas Cheer* (5.2%) narrowly beat *Allendale Tar Bar'l Stout* (4.5%) and *High House Farm Ferocious Fred* (4.8%) into my heart's desire! The festival judges awarded the first prize to *RCH Steam Sale* (4.5%). At Tewkesbury on the second day of the festival, Saturday, my favourite beer was *Penzance Liberty* (5%), closely followed by *Red Squirrel London Porter* (5%) and *Coastal Erosion* (8%).

Both the **JDW Commercial Rooms** and **Seven Stars** in Bristol had Christmas beer festivals with *Titanic Stuff It* (4.4%) my favourite at the former, and at the **Seven Stars** the *Olley O Ho Ho* (5%) just beat *Hambleton's Festive Folly* (4%) as top beer. Glen Dawkins celebrated the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Rabbie Burns by having 40 Scottish ales across his five pubs. I sampled some at the **Hillgrove** and the **Green Man**.

The **Regency** pub in Weston-super-Mare had *Robinson's Mr Scrooge Humbug Bitter* (4.4%), which was declared by visitors and locals to be the best guest ale there for a long time. If only more pubs would have a guest or winter ale on. The **White Hart** had the wicked *Archers Marley's Ghost* (7%), one of the best beers from that brewery, amongst the ever changing variety of beers from near and far, including *Dark Star Espresso* and *Festival Ale*. The **Raglan** too has had some great seasonal beers this winter, with an added option of quality bottled beers; here I had the *Hobson's Old Henry* (4%) limited edition, and the usual excellent live music on Sunday early evenings and Friday nights by the real fire is a treat not to be missed, especially on cold nights. The seasonal *RCH Santa Fé* (7.3%) has been more widely available this year and I have sampled it at the **Commercial Rooms**, the **Royal Artillery Arms** at Highbridge, **Off The Rails** and the **Dragon Inn** (as recently as February). The **Red Admiral** continues to have the cheapest real ale in Weston, excluding special JDW offers, whilst I had my first sighting of a beer in Weston at £3.60 a pint in January!

As I hope to attend the Leicester, Bristol, and the Tuckers Maltings festivals coming up in the spring, I should have more to amuse and inform you with in the next edition of Pints West.

Robin E Wild

# Bath & Borders Branch - pub and brewery news

## Castle Inn, Forester Avenue, Bath

Following a short period of closure during the autumn this attractive tucked-away pub re-opened under new managers in November 2008. The pub was visited by the branch on Tuesday 13 January. Sharp's Doom Bar was on and found to be good. Since then we have learned that planning permission is being sought by owner Amek Investment for conversion to residential use.

## Englishcombe Inn, 157 Englishcombe Lane, Bath

This large two-bar pub overlooking the Oldfield Park area of Bath closed towards the end of 2008. Its future is uncertain but it is believed that planning permission is being sought by Cedar Care for conversion into a care home.

## Jubilee, 91 Whiteway Road, Bath

This large modern-style pub on the south-western edge of the city also closed towards the end of 2008. Its future is uncertain.

## Foresters Arms, Goose Street, Beckington

New landlords Cathy and Dave Axford took over at this tucked away gem of a pub around the end of November 2008. The Foresters is operated by Abbey Ales. During a branch visit on 2 December the beers, Bellringer, Twelfth Night and Dorset Jurassic were found all to be very good. The pub also serves Thatcher's Heritage cider.

## Barge, 17 Frome Road, Bradford-on-Avon

Closed on Friday 12 December. Former landlord Stuart is returning to Australia in February. We understand that the pub's owners, Torquay Pub Group, is selling off six of its eighteen pubs and may be aiming for a single bid for all six. Stuart believes that the Barge will not be closed for long.

## Beehive, 263 Frome Road, Bradford-on-Avon

It has been reported that the owners of Box Steam Brewery and the

Cross Guns at Avoncliff and the Inn at Freshford have shown an interest in this recently closed pub. Nothing more is known at the time of writing.

## Canal Tavern, 49 Frome Road, Bradford-on-Avon

This Wadworth's owned pub is to close for refurbishment. This will be the second make-over that this pleasant canal-side pub has had in recent years.

## Bell, Buckland Dinham, near Frome

Investigators into the paranormal took part in a dusk-to-dawn vigil of this roadside popular village local over the night of Friday 14 November in aid of charity. The landlords believe that at least three ghosts haunt the historic pub. They include a fifteen-year-old girl called Emily who paces the pub searching for her dead baby, a man sitting at table 10 sipping whisky and a little boy who has been seen many times by customers on table 12. There are also unidentified nocturnal bumps and bangs, a bolted door that repeatedly opens itself and something that lights the candles in the night.

## Bow House Brewery, Chitterne, near Warminster

A new micro-brewery has started up in this isolated village. We believe that Chitterne is actually in Salisbury's branch area but not all that far away from the boundary with Bath & Borders. The equipment is ex-Westbury Ales and the brew length is very modest. Beers are still in development and have been available as guests in pubs in villages around that area such as Shrewton and Steeple Langford.

## Cross Keys, Lye's Green, Corsley

Following on from a recent sequence of short-term managers new landlords Lynn and Vic Taylor, who have moved up from a town pub in Southampton, have taken over at this pub. Their main aim is to restore the reputation of the pub as a village local. They have introduced home-cooked food at reasonable prices and a new relaxation area with games such as the unusual *Ring this Pull*. This, which I have never come across before, involves swinging a piece of string until it lands on a hook.

## Hungerford Arms, Farleigh Hungerford

This roadside pub near the ruins of Farleigh Castle closed suddenly on Wednesday 19 November. A message was left on the answer-phone thanking all the customers who had supported the pub over the past three and a half years.

## Faulkland Inn, Faulkland, near Radstock

This pub closed in late October or early November. The future of this village-centre pub is as yet unknown.

## Angel, 1 King Street, Frome

This once popular town-centre pub remains closed. It served its last pint in around June 2008 and its future remains uncertain.

## Cross Keys, Blatchbridge, Frome

This pub closed around October following the sudden, and we believe unannounced, departure of the landlord. The future of this pub, situated on the south-west edge of the town, is unknown.

## Farmers Arms, Spring Gardens, Frome

This picturesquely situated pub, on the northern edge of town, closed in the early summer of 2008 but subsequently re-opened under a new landlord in around the late summer. It has, however, closed again. Its future remains uncertain.

## Royal Oak, Oakfield Road, The Broadway, Frome

Landlord Brendan Carley, who had been at this attractive out-of-town pub for two years, quit on 26 November. He is quoted in the Somerset Standard as saying in his 33 years as a publican he had never known trade to be so bad. The pub had been running at a substantial loss. It is understood that a relief landlord has taken over.



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## Wheat Sheeves, 23 Bath Street, Frome

The landlords of this town-centre pub have decided, after just one year, not to renew their tenancy and in the autumn of 2008 left the pub.

## Tollgate Inn, Ham Green, Holt

The landlords of this pub, situated on the edge of Holt, are concerned about the plummeting effect on trade of protracted nearby roadworks. Landlady Alison Ward-Baptiste has had to lay off two of her staff since work began on an eight-week project to install a mini-roundabout on 5 January. The discovery of a gas main, which is disrupting highway drainage, may cause the works to be delayed.

## Bell Inn, Leigh-on-Mendip

A change of landlords took place at this Wadworth's owned pub around the end of November 2008. The new landlords had previously been at the Cross Keys at Corsley and, before that, the Cross Keys at Rode when it first re-opened, and earlier still, the Fleur de Lys at Norton St Philip.

## Red Lion, Melksham

This seventeenth century pub on the northern edge of the town, which closed earlier in 2008, has been granted planning permission to be converted into an old people's home. Richard Putley, who has led a campaign by the local branch of CAMRA to oppose the conversion, said that the change-of-use application to turn the Red Lion pub into a day care centre was approved because not enough of the local populace wrote to object to the proposal. In fact nearly fifty letters and a petition of more than a hundred signatures were put forward in protest at the plans but clearly this was not sufficient to sway the council's planning committee into even considering whether the pub should be saved.

## Ship, Oldford, Frome

This long-neglected roadside pub, which closed in around mid-2008, was refurbished and re-opened mid-December 2008. Sadly, however, the pub closed again in January 2009.

## Cross Keys, 20 High Street, Rode

The former landlord of the presently closed Faulkland Inn has taken over at the pub.

## Somerset Arms, High Street, Semington

This long-time Hall & Woodhouse pub seems to have changed hands at some point in the last year. On a visit by a branch member on 9 December the beer range was found to consist of two Brains beers and Old Speckled Hen.

## Bell, Standerwick, on A36, near Frome

This roadside pub with large car park is still up for sale. A relief manager has run the Bell since June 2008.

## King's Arms, Stratton-on-the-Fosse, near Radstock

This village pub seems to have closed recently. Its future is uncertain.

## White Post, Stratton-on-the-Fosse, near Radstock

The quite young landlord, who has been at the pub for around a year, is trying out some interesting guest ales. Beers from Blindman's and Timothy Taylor have been seen here.

## Woolpack Inn, High Street, Sutton Veny

This pub has been closed for some time for refurbishment. New landlords Tim and Abbie Smith, who have purchased the lease, are anticipating that the Woolpack will re-open around the beginning of April.

## Crown Hotel, 12 Timbrell Street, Trowbridge

This pub, slightly out of the town centre, is under new management. Bill Tawdry and Carol Doble took over in around November 2008. Breakfast is now available from seven to eleven each weekday morning. The pub does also offer bed & breakfast accommodation. It has a good-sized garden with smoking area. Mr Tawdry intends to introduce a carvery in the old mill at the back of the building. The Crown also serves guest ales.

## Ship, Frome Road, Trowbridge

Reported closed in around early January 2009. Future uncertain.

## Stallards, Wingfield Road, Trowbridge

An article in the *Wiltshire Times Online* states that this Grade II-listed pub, which dates back to 1790, has been bought by Four County Inns through London-based property company Paramount Investments for the reduced price of £170,000. The Stallards closed in late 2007. It is now being refurbished should re-open in the spring of 2009. The chain, which was established in 1994, has ten pubs across Hampshire, Wiltshire, Somerset and Gloucestershire. Four County Inns director Edward Toomer said: "The Stallards is a traditional building which retains all of its original features. We think it is the ideal place for a quality real ale pub." Features include a mahogany back bar and carved wooden flowers. The Stallards also has a beer garden out back where smoking can be permitted.

## White Swan, 6 Church Street, Trowbridge

This historic pub closed in early January. Former landlord Peewee Hunt has taken over a live music bar just two doors away. Meanwhile it is unclear what the future holds for White Swan. Local historian Michael Marshman believes that the pub dates back to 1692. It is likely that it took the name Swan in the eighteenth century. By the late nineteenth century the pub had become known as the White Swan and, as such, was sold to Ushers in 1888.

## Prince Leopold, Upton Lovell

The bar at this tucked-away historic inn has been recently revamped. Named Route 36, after the nearby A36, the new American-style bar was launched in December 2008.

## Sun Inn, Whatley, near Frome

This attractive, if somewhat off-the-beaten-track, village pub remains closed. Once popular with diners, the Sun closed in around the early summer of 2008. Meanwhile its future remains uncertain.

## Horse & Groom, 18 Alfred Street, Westbury

This Good Beer Guide-listed pub closed suddenly on Friday 21 November. We now understand that the pub's former manager is bankrupt and that the premises are to be sold. Chaz Hobden has managed to retain the rights to the Westbury Ales names.

## Ludlow Arms, Market Place, Westbury

An article in the local press states that this popular town-centre pub was put up for auction on Tuesday 19 November but failed to sell.

*Steve Hunt*

# Bath & Borders diary

- **Thursday 5th March**, 8:30 pm. A social at the White Horse in Twerton. An enthusiastic landlord makes this well worth a visit.
- **Tuesday 10th March**, 8:30 pm. A social at the Cross Keys in Rode. An old favourite that has recently changed management.
- **Saturday 14th March**. The Bath & Borders branch country Pub of the Year judging crawl. Travelling by minibus we will be visiting some of very best country pubs.
- **Thursday 19th March**, 8:30 pm. A mini-crawl of Norton St Philip starting at the Fleur De Lys, then across the road to the George. If time on to Tuckers Grave near Faulkland.
- **Tuesday 24th March**, 8:30 pm. A social at the Longs Arms in Steeple Ashton. A lovely pub in a beautiful village.
- **Tuesday 31st March**, 8:30 pm. The branch meeting at the Coeur de Lion in Bath. They have a brand new meeting room they have offered us.

## Bath & Borders Contacts

Branch socials contact: Denis Rahilly - 01225 791399 or 07711 004501, email [denis.rahilly@talktalk.net](mailto:denis.rahilly@talktalk.net).

Branch contact for all non-social matters: James Honey - 01225 8686481.

# Go on punk, make my day .... with an IPA

I HAVE written previously in *Pints West* about the resurgence of "extreme" beers, either in terms of high hopping and/or alcoholic content.

One such example from the Moor brewery in Somerset is *JJJ IPA* (9% ABV), which was launched in December 2007; this is an American-style triple IPA brewed with an obscene amount of hops. It has rapidly become a cult beer amongst discerning real ale drinkers. More recently, Moor launched *Hoppiness* (6.5%) in December 2008; which I like to think of as a "session" version of *JJJ IPA*! They have also produced versions of *Old Freddy Walker* (7.3%) with the addition of port and, more recently, brandy. Thornbridge brewery in Derbyshire, whose motto is "never ordinary", brew several such beers: the multi-award-winning *Jaipur IPA* (5.9%), *Halcyon IPA* (7.7%) and *Saint Petersburg (Imperial Russian Stout)* (7.7%).

Anyway, imagine my delight when I stumbled across two more "extreme" beers at CAMRA's National Winter Ales Festival in Manchester in January. These came from the relatively new BrewDog brewery in Fraseburgh (on Scotland's north east coast). They were *Punk IPA* (6%) and *Paradox* (10%). The brewers at BrewDog, one of which started at the Thornbridge brewery, pride themselves on making high-quality premium beers that are in no way commercial or mainstream. They do not merely aspire to the proclaimed heady heights of conformity through neutrality and blandness. They see themselves as a beacon of non-conformity in an increasingly monotone corporate desert and are proud to be an intrepid David in a desperate ocean of insipid Goliaths.

*Punk IPA* is described as a post-modern classic pale ale. It is not a lowest-common-denominator beer. They don't even care if you don't like it. They are doubtful that you have the taste or sophistication to appreciate the depth, character and quality of this premium craft-brewed beer. They go on to say that you probably don't even care that this rebellious little beer contains no preservatives or additives and uses only

the finest, fresh natural ingredients. In fact they suggest you just go back to drinking mass-marketed, bland, cheaply-made, watered-down lager and close the door behind you. You may not be too surprised to hear that one of BrewDog's promises is to promote their beers in a way which makes people smile!

As far as the taste of *Punk IPA* is concerned, they say it is "a beer of inherent contradictions. This heavyweight of the beer world is strikingly delicate with a white gold appearance. The light, fruity aroma dominates the initial confrontation; lychee, kiwi and passionfruit all prevail, with subtle nuances of cherry and strawberry. However, don't be fooled by this smooth medium-bodied ale. As it trickles down your throat, this wolf in sheep's clothing begins to grow teeth. The bite comes as the bitterness builds and endures, no matter how hard the malty sweetness of the alcohol tries to tame this ferocious beast. This is an exciting beer that will captivate with a whole-body drinking experience."

If these fine words have tempted you take on the challenge put down by BrewDog, then look out for *Punk IPA* at beer festivals or pubs who like to go the extra mile in terms of sourcing exotic beers. Alternatively, if you are feeling lucky, you might well find it in bottled form on the shelves of the supermarket in the Eastville area of Bristol whose motto is "every little helps".

*Paradox* is an imperial stout aged in whisky casks. With this beer, BrewDog say they set out to unite two of Scotland's proudest heritages with a product which combines all that is good about Scotland's whisky-producing history and their contemporary take on a traditional Scottish style of stout. This beer is matured in the casks that once housed some of the most prestigious whiskies which are available today. The distinct flavour of these whiskies is, they say, beautifully infused into the beer, giving a unique and unrivalled experience for lovers of both beer and whisky.

BrewDog also produce *Hardcore IPA* (9%) which, to date, I have only sampled in bottled form by ordering it from their highly entertaining website ([www.brewdog.com](http://www.brewdog.com)). This is described as an explicit imperial ale. Marris Otter grains provide a robustly delicate toffee malt canvas for the ensuing epic. Aggressive hopping ensures that your mouth is left feeling punished and puckering for more.

If, like me, you are a fan of "extreme" beers, you will no doubt look out for the excellent beers produced by BrewDog, Moor and Thornbridge. You may well find some of them available at our local CAMRA beer festival in Bristol next month. If you do see them then, don't delay, as these cult beers tend to be rather popular.

*Dave Graham*

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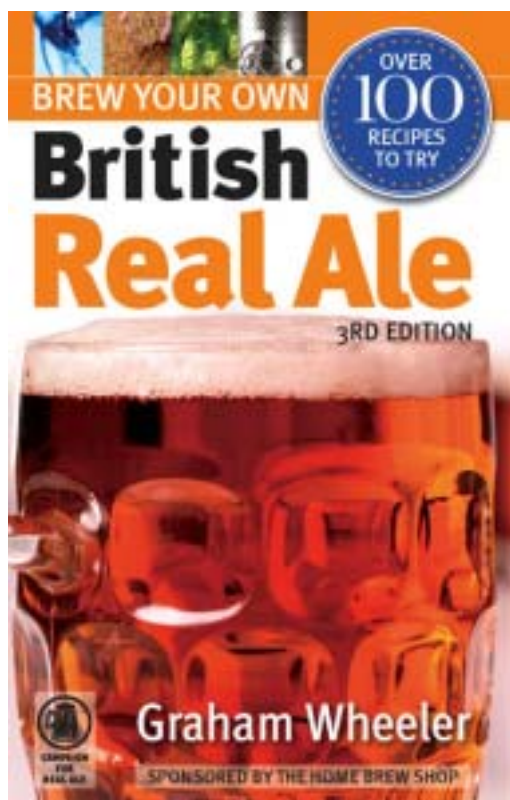
# CAMRA offers up a recipe for success

CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale, is offering consumers the chance to recreate some of Britain's best-loved beers and learn the historic art of brewing with *Brew Your Own British Real Ale*, a new CAMRA publication by Graham Wheeler.

Heralding the recent success of craft brewing in the UK, Wheeler's self-proclaimed 'recipe book' is a simple step-by-step guide to producing great beer, breaking down technical jargon to simplify the brewing experience for the reader.

*Brew Your Own British Real Ale* is a perennial favourite among real ale aficionados, and thanks in part to recent television documentaries such as Neil Morrissey's 'Risky Business', which have increased public interest in brewing real ale, there has never been a better time for a novice to learn their malt extract from their full mash.

Simon Hall, Managing Editor, CAMRA Books, said: "With more small brewers in operation across the UK than at any other time since the Second World War, *Brew Your Own British Real Ale* is a fantastic insight into this thriving industry. Since the previous edition of the



book there have been wholesale changes in the brewing field and this book seeks to address some of these recent developments."

For ease of use, the book begins with a handful of basic brewing methods before targeting the staple ingredients of hops, yeast and water. Instructions are bullet-pointed and numbered, with the text divided up by simple diagrams. The actual recipes feature near the end of the text, with a vast array of brew types ranging from CAMRA Champion beers past and present, to a few unusual selections for avid home-brewers to emulate.

Mr Hall continued: "Home-brewing is very much a hobby, and an enjoyable one at that. But who's to say with the right attitude and commitment this book can't turn a hobby into a profession? Britain has over 650 brewers in operation at the moment, and there is always room in the market for innovation and variety."

*Brew Your Own British Real Ale* can be bought directly from the CAMRA website at [www.camra.org.uk](http://www.camra.org.uk), as well from all good book stores. The book is priced at £12.99 for CAMRA members and £14.99 for non-members.

## Wear Pints West



YOU can now wear Pints West! T-shirts, polo shirts, sweat shirts and fleeces are now available to order with an embroidered Pints West logo on the left breast. All are available in navy, black, bottle green, grey, red, dark royal, purple and burgundy, and in sizes S, M, L, XL and XXL. All except the fleeces are also available in jade, sky blue, gold and white.

Prices are:	T-shirt	£11.50 each
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Postage & packing is £3 for a single item, plus £1 for each additional garment ordered.

Make cheques payable to "Bristol & District CAMRA", and post your order to **19 Willada Close, Bedminster, Bristol BS3 5NG.**

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# Pub & Brewery News

## The Vittoria

LES and Carol Clayton took over the Vittoria on Whiteladies Road, Clifton Down, in early December. They had previously spent a few years running Wickwar's White Lion in the centre of Bristol up until September 2007. They then moved down to Bradford Leigh to run the Plough, a pub that Wickwar had just acquired. A few months ago Wickwar gave up that pub and Les & Carol moved up to Liverpool from whence they originated. Now they are back in Bristol where they hope to stay.

The Vittoria is a Scottish & Newcastle lease. Currently they are serving three real ales: Courage Best, Wells Bombadier and a changing guest from the S&N list, such as Caledonian 80, Deuchars IPA, Websters Yorkshire Bitter, and Theakston's Black Bull and Old Peculier. For May they have promised us some Theakston's Mild. Before long they hope to be able to use S&N's Cellarman's Reserve portfolio which gives a choice from 12 to 15 different cask ales from across the country each month.

Though the bar has six hand pumps on it, at the moment they are employing just three of these. As customer demand grows, as they are sure it will, more of these will be brought into operation to provide a greater range of beers. They are even hopeful that they might get permission for one pump to be completely free for them to use for any beer of their choice from any supplier, so they can support the local breweries perhaps.

The pub opens from 12 to 11 Mondays to Thursdays, 12 to 12 Fridays and Saturdays, and 12 to 6 Sundays. Food, in the form of home-made sandwiches and/or proper chips, is available Monday to Saturday lunchtimes (12

to 3). This may extend in future, perhaps including the introduction of Sunday lunches. The wine list has been revamped and there are plans to introduce an extensive whisky selection.

Les and Carol have been very busy smartening the place up since they arrived. It has been redorated inside, and they've reinstated a real coal fire which was previously covered up. The juke box has gone, and the walls are now adorned with pictures recording scenes of old Bristol. The exterior of the pub will be repainted in April, and there will be new outdoor furniture and canopies like the old-fashioned shop front ones.

This is a proper traditional pub, a contrast to the many trendy bars that dominate that part of Whiteladies Road.

SP

## Phoenix trade moves to a Volunteer helper

THE Phoenix in St. Jude's closed on New Year's Day. The well-known community pub that served great Bass on gravity had ran to the end of its lease.

But a great double act emerged when the former Phoenix leaseholder negotiated trading his Bass at the nearby Volunteer in New Street. The Volunteer, a community pub that sells great cider, has accommodated the Bass and former Phoenix customers.

So next time you are in need of refreshment after slogging through the shops of Cabot Circus look no further than the Volunteer. Bass or real cider in a proper pub is just what you need.

In the meantime, let's hope the Phoenix reopens again before too long.

Mike Jackson

## Bag O'Nails festival

THE Bag O'Nails in Hotwells will be host to another of its popular twice-yearly beer festivals from Thursday 23rd to Sunday 26th April. The theme is to be "new beers and breweries", and there will be around 40 to choose from over the period.

The pub is always well worth a visit at any time for its interesting and changing range of beers. It is generally well known for having beers from breweries all across the country, but January and February saw beers from the south-west featuring prominently, with welcome offerings from the likes of Goffs, Festival, Cotswold Spring, Cotleigh, Arbor Ales, Great Western Brewing and others.

The Bag is always pretty good value, with beers generally priced at £2.65 or £2.70, but as an added bonus they've now introduced "happy time" on Sundays when, between 1 o'clock and 3 o'clock, all real ales are just £2.20 a pint. And if you're unfamiliar with the beers available, small samples of each are placed by each hand pump so you can tell exactly what colour a beer is before buying. A nice touch.

Comfortable seating has been increased in the Bag by installing cushions on the front window sill – very welcome during the pub's more crowded moments.

Something else new at the Bag are quiz nights on Wednesdays from 9pm. It's £1 to take part and there are cash prizes and free food.

SP

## The Bloomfield Inn

CHANGES are taking place at the Bloomfield Inn, located in Bloomfield Road, Arncliffe Vale. Steve Hayes, the new licensee, has been in place for several months now and is gaining attention for the quality of his ales.

The three existing hand pumps in the comfortable lounge have been supplemented by another two, and the aim is to have three regular beers and two guest beers from the Enterprise list. The regular beers at the time of writing are Sharp's Doom Bar, Gales HSB (nowadays brewed by Fuller's) and Courage Best. Currently the pub opens at 3pm daily.

Phil Cummings

## The Great Western Brewing Company

GREAT Western Brewery are adding another beer to their so far excellent range – a 5.2% porter called Edwin's Ruby Porter.

For those who didn't know, the Rising Sun at Frampton Cotterell is the official brewery tap for the brewery, and always has two of their beers on. It's normally Maiden Voyage plus a seasonal ale. Hours have been extended to all day opening as well – 11.30am to 11.30pm Monday to Thursday, 11.30am to midnight Friday and Saturday, noon to 11pm Sunday – so there's now even more time for imbibing their beers.

Richard Walters

## The Vittoria

*"The real pub on Whiteladies"*

*It's great to be back in Bristol, catching up with friends and old customers as well as making new friends and new customers.*

*We offer three cask ales and hope to extend this to six as demand rises.*

*For those of you who enjoy Malt Whisky there is a fine selection to take your fancy.*

*The infamous "Chunky Sandwich Lunch Menu" has been resurrected, there's the healthy ones and cholesterol fuelled heart stoppers - the choice is yours.*

*We have attempted to achieve a comfortable traditional pub environment, a welcoming open fire, WiFi, a scheduled redecoration of the exterior which will include new furnishings and canopies should enhance your visit to the 'Vittoria'.*

*We look forward too seeing you soon.*

*Les & Carol Clayton*

**20% Discount off our Lunch Menu on production of CAMRA & NUS Cards**

*Tel: 0117 330 9414*



## The Lansdown

THE Lansdown in Clifton has greatly impressed with its beer range of late. There are six hand pumps on the bar, one given over to cider and the other five to real ales.

A typical range of beers seen recently has been Otter Bitter (3.6%), St Austell Tribute (4.2%), Exmoor Gold (4.5%), Bath Ales Festivity (5%) and Severn Vale Severn Sins (5.2%). This particular line-up comprises five beers from five different brewers, two being dark, two being copper-coloured and one being golden. It also represents not only a good range of styles but also a good range of strengths. There is also an emphasis on local and South-West breweries, which the landlord is keen to support.

There have been one or two changes in the beers on offer subsequently, but it remains a very well considered range.

SP

## The Cornubia

THE Cornubia in central Bristol has increased its weekend opening hours.

This Hidden Brewery pub, tucked away in Temple Street opposite the fire station, now opens all day Saturday and Sunday.

SP

## Dawkins trails & festivals

THE five pubs which make up the small estate of Dawkins Taverns – the Hillgrove, Victoria, Portcullis, Miner's Arms and Green Man – are all taking part in another 'Mild Trail' this year with 30 milds across the pubs, and a reward of a printed mild tankard for customers who manage to get round all five and get ten stamps during May.

In addition, there will be an Irish beer festival at the Hillgrove 17th to 22nd March, a St George's beer festival at the Victoria 23rd to 27th April and a May beer festival at the Portcullis 30th April to 4th May.

SP

## The Coach and Horses

THE Coach and Horses in Clifton, tucked away off Blackboy Hill close to the Downs, is under new management.

Piers Barrow took on the Enterprise tenancy back in September with his business partner, Tony Vile. They have spent the last few months decorating and tidying up this traditional pub to get it into its current condition, whilst trading at the same time.

Before they arrived, beer sales had been poor: it was certainly not recognised as a good outlet for real ales. Since taking over, they have been determined to turn that situation around.

They started with three 'core' real ales and, following what they describe as a fantastic response, with real ales now being amongst their top sellers, have increased that to six.

The 'core' brands are Butcombe Bitter, Courage Best and Bass, each selling for £2.70 a pint. The three changing guest beers sell for £2.80 and have included Butcombe Gold, Bath Ales Gem and Barnstormer, Wadworth 6X, Timothy Taylor Landlord and Ringwood Fortyniner, which Piers says "flew out".

The pub actually has eight hand pumps on the bar and the range of beers on offer will increase in future if interest and sales increase. They even have tentative plans to hold a beer festival sometime in the summer, perhaps in conjunction with neighbouring pubs, such as the Port of Call.

The Coach and Horses opens from 12 to 11 Monday to Friday, 3 to 11 Saturday and 12 to 10.30 Sunday. Food, in the form of snacks and bigger meals, is available weekday lunchtimes from 12 to 2, and from 12 to 3 Sunday (when roasts are added to the menu), plus evenings from 6 to 9 Monday to Saturday.

SP

## Bristol Beer Factory

FOLLOWING the success of their Milk Stout in the Champion Winter Beers of Britain competition, the Bristol Beer Factory are now looking into brewing another different dark beer which they may launch around the end of April. There is even a possibility of this being an Oatmeal Stout, but for now we'll have to wait and see.

The brewery are also planning to bring out a couple of specials in the coming months. The first is to celebrate the Avon New Cuts birthday. The Cut (which enabled Bristol to have floating harbour) is 200 years old this year and the Friends of the Avon New Cut (FrANC) have asked BBF to brew a special for the occasion. 'Cut Blaster' (a lot of blasting had to be carried out to create the Cut so we are told) will be a golden, hoppy, beautiful summer ale and will be available at the beginning of May. There will also be many activities in and around the pubs close to 'The Cut'.

The Bristol Beer Factory are also nearing their 500th brew and will be brewing a special to celebrate. This is rumoured to have the fantastically innovative name of '500'! Due to their other production demands it is likely to come out around the end of April and any further details are a closely-kept secret (or they don't know them yet).

The Barley Mow (Bristol Beer Factory's pub in St Philips) now has live music on a Thursday evening, so you can enjoy some fantastic ales, a real fire, live music and still chat (a little).

And to quote Simon Bartlett, Bristol Beer Factory Production Director, "Happy drinking and many thanks to all CAMRA members who have supported our Milk Stout so that it became Champion Stout of Britain 2009."

Richard Brooks

# Blindman's brew one-off beer for Old Green Tree charity night

IF you're in Bath on the evening of Wednesday 11 March, there's the chance to grab a free pint and bowl of chilli or curry at the Old Green Tree.

It's all in the name of charity – a specially-brewed beer will be donated by Blindman's and the food will be donated by Bartlett's, the butcher's next to the pub, and cooked on the premises. Everyone's asked to make a donation – minimum £2 – to support Tiarna Elmer, who used to work for Bath Ales, and is going on an eight-week trip to Uganda with

'Hope for Children', a charity which works with street children, orphans and slum-dwelling children. She needs to raise £2,500 and Tim and the staff at the Old Green Tree hope that the evening, which will also feature live entertainment, will help to raise that total.

So if you want to sample a one-off brew from Blindman's, enjoy some excellent food and music in one of Bath's top pubs, turn up at the Old Green Tree in Green Street any time after 7pm (although the pub will be open all day from 11am) on Wednesday 11 March.

Andrew Swift



# Inn and around Portishead

## The Windmill Inn, Nore Road

The Windmill is preparing to hold its 7th Easter Holiday Beer Festival. One of their managers, Liam, has, as usual, been entrusted with organising the festival and choosing the beers and Liam and the other bar managers – Pix and Liz – will oversee the festival. Nine real ales will be on tap at any one time on the four days from Friday, 10<sup>th</sup> through to Easter Monday, 13<sup>th</sup> April. The aim will be to get through up to 30 real ales over the long weekend.

Liam will concentrate on local independent breweries but will include old favourites from further away including Timothy Taylor's Landlord. The beers are expected to range from around 4% ABV right up to 7%.

Just to remind you that this large pub has a good-sized car park and is open throughout the day with food available between 12 noon and

9.30 in the evening (until 10pm on the Saturday). There is an interesting new menu and full meals or sandwiches and snacks can be ordered at any time until quarter of an hour before food finishes.

There is no entry cost or tickets for this festival. Just turn up and drink. There are plenty of tables and seating and there is no reservation system for the tables.

If you're lucky, you may even go away with one of the highly prized commemorative glasses.

*Neil Ravenscroft*

## CAMRA chairs Parliament meeting

***CAMRA chairs successful public meeting in the Houses of Parliament to discuss the Sustainable Communities Act 2007.***

MIKE Benner, CAMRA's Chief Executive recently chaired a public meeting in the Houses of Parliament to discuss the Sustainable Communities Act 2007. Guest speakers including Oliver Letwin MP and Julia Goldsworthy MP were joined by 200 members of the public, with a further 150 people outside the Grand Committee Room in Westminster Hall.

Mr Benner said: "The meeting was a huge success and the enthusiasm for this revolutionary Act of Parliament was clear. The Act draws a line in the sand, replacing top-down consultation with bottom-up governance through co-operation and reaching agreement. For the first time the Government must assist local authorities in developing sustainable communities and 'open the books' so local people can see how centrally allocated funds are spent in their area. Local people know best what their communities need and now they will be empowered through this Act."

Mr Benner asked attendees to act as ambassadors for the Act in their own communities to get as many people as possible switched on to the benefits this new process could bring to our society.

CAMRA, which has been involved in the Sustainable Communities Act campaign since its early days, is confident that the Act will benefit local pubs and small breweries.

Mr Benner added: "The Act defines pubs as local services and we are pushing for agreement on proposals to protect community pubs from closure through an end to restrictive covenants, often put on pubs to prevent them trading as pubs after they are sold. We are also seeking to address changes to planning law to require full planning permission before a local service such as a pub is changed to a non-community use or demolished, as well as a more favourable rating system for small local services."

The Local Works Steering Group, of which CAMRA is a member, is organising more public meetings across the country throughout 2009.

Mr Benner concluded: "The key task right now is to encourage councils to sign up to the process, as there is no statutory duty upon them to do so. People need to write to their councillors, council leaders and MP to get their support."


Locally, Bristol City and Bath & North East Somerset have already resolved to use the Sustainable Communities Act.



Liam behind the bar at the Windmill Inn

### The Windmill Inn

PORTISHEAD



6 Real Ales in excellent condition including:  
 Courage Best, Bass, Butcombe Gold,  
 Butcombe Bitter and 2 other guest ales.

The Windmill Inn is situated next to the  
 Portishead Approach Golf Course on Nore Road.

To contact us please ring 01275 843677.



# Do we still love thee, Pill?

ON the bus route from Portishead to Bristol and only half an hour from Bristol centre on the bus, Pill is well worth a bit of a recce. It's very much a village, full of history and character and years ago full of pubs, although six remain in and around Pill.

On a cold Saturday evening in January, I dragged my pal, Stuart, out to Pill for a walking pub crawl. Now, Stuey is a bit of a Larry Lightweight like me so we had to drink half pints in some of the pubs. We started at the far end (or Bristol end) of Pill in the neighbouring but linked village of **Ham Green** and the **Anchor Inn**. This is a large pub with a lot of tables set for eating but also two bar areas. Three real ales were available – Bass, Courage Best and Bath Ales Gem. We sampled the Gem and found it to be a lovely fresh pint. We were told the Anchor is run by Debbie and Martin who also have the Rudleigh. It looks like both concentrate on providing food all day but have to be complimented on giving a good variety of beers and presenting a Gem as well as we received it.

Down the hill now to **Pill** proper. At the bottom of the hill is the **Kings Head**. This has two bars, one with a pool table, and with a skittle alley out the back. Two real ales, Courage Best and Butcombe Bitter, were on but we went for Cheddar Valley cider. I met for a bit of a chat with Emma who has just taken over this Punch tenancy having had a previous stint as manager here. Emma mentioned the pub has a loyal set of customers, is known for its games and fields two teams for pool, skittles and darts.

Now we had a short walk towards the River Avon and Bank Place where we found the **Star Inn**. The Star impressed us. It's a free house and landlord, Steve, plainly knows what he is doing. The pub was busy, friendly and lively with a good atmosphere. Steve has been here now for three and a half years and hosts a good village local. His regular real ale, Butcombe Bitter, was available at a keen £2.30 (take note pubcos). There is a second real ale which when we visited was Brunel IPA from Butcombe. We both tried the IPA and agreed it was first class. The Star is comfortably and well furnished with a split-level layout. Not a foody pub by any means, Steve caters for his customers with Saturday breakfasts and Sunday lunches. A great place.

Onwards to the **Duke of Cornwall**, Pump Square, with its views over the river towards Shirehampton. As we approached, music hit our ears and we knew this would be a different experience. Here we found where the younger people of Pill seem to congregate. Inside is a good-sized bar with ample seating. In the far corner was a darker area from where the sounds were emanating and from where younger customers emerged. I have to say I enjoyed the "vibes" although I didn't recognise any of them. Anyway, Courage Best was on for us real ale types and wasn't bad at all. Sky Sports screens added to our entertainment as did the attractive clothing of the local young ladies. Fearing that the excitement might get too much, we moved on.

From the Duke, we moved inland again via a series of steps and lanes which had the feel of a fishing village towards the Lodway, then Priory Road and **Easton in Gordano**. After a decent walk, we came to the **Kings Arms**. Here, we crossed the road and walked up Church Road to the main Bristol Road, i.e. the A369, where we found the **Rudleigh**. Run by the same couple as the Anchor, this also seems to be a food pub in the main but it did offer Gem and Sharp's Doom Bar. I tried the latter and it was fine. It's difficult to judge the place. It seemed quiet but we were past 10 o'clock by now. Anyhow, Stuey liked the look of the menu and was salivating over the idea of liver and onions and faggots and peas.

Finally, back down Church Road and the **Kings Arms**. As we approached, I realised it was now after 11pm and was pleased to learn it had extended hours. We both tried Exmoor Ales Fox which we heard was the third guest ale that week. We could have had good old Courage Best. I went on to chat to landlord and landlady, Ian and Caroline, who explained it is an Enterprise inn. I found out it has a good following for draught real ciders and offers the likes of Thatcher's Traditional and Cheddar Valley which I will return to another day with my proper cider hat on (there are also four ciders in bottles). Ian is keen to welcome real ale drinkers and is thinking of organising a beer festival to push this side. Traditional pub food is available and the pub has long hours – 9.30 in the morning till 11.30 in the evening on weekdays and 10.30am till 12.30am weekends. Smokers are well catered for with plenty of patio space with sturdy umbrellas. Having two bars, comfy furniture, good beers and ciders and a friendly atmosphere, this appears a well run pub worth a few return trips.



The Kings Arms, Pill

By now, the 11.54 bus was due at the bus stop to take us back to Portishead. What can we conclude? Six decent pubs, two of which are real crackers in my estimation. All serve real ale and everything we drank was good. Pill has a genuine friendly village feel and the pubs rely mainly on locals but will welcome visitors. By now we had enjoyed a steady walk of about two miles in all and sampled pubs I'll definitely return to.

## And what about Abbots Leigh?

A couple of miles closer to Bristol and on the same bus route is the historic village of Abbots Leigh famed as a hiding place of the future Charles II after the Battle of Worcester. If you are feeling energetic, you could start here and add it to your Pill pub crawl walk – there is a pathway for a couple of miles all the way to the Anchor, Ham Green. Abbots Leigh has its own village pub, the **George Inn**.

Richard and Wendy Carr run the George and offer four real ales in the form of Otter Ale, Courage Best, Sharp's Doom Bar and Bath Ales Gem. In addition, cloudy Addlestones cider has just been added to their armoury. On Monday through to Thursday, the pub is open 12 till 3 and then 5 till 11. Friday through to Sunday it is open all day long. Food can be ordered 12 to 2.30 and then 6 till 9 every day except Sunday. On Sunday, you can get food between 12 and 4. You can contact the pub on 01275 372467. This strikes me as a good pub offering above average food and an impressive choice of real ales.

*Neil Ravenscroft*



The George Inn, Abbots Leigh

## Readers' Letters

Readers are welcome to send letters to Pints West Editor,

Steve Plumridge,  
Garden Flat, 6 Royal York Villas,  
Clifton, Bristol BS8 4JR

[steve.plumridge@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:steve.plumridge@bristol.ac.uk)

### A Swindonian in Bristol (again)

I spied my account of our September afternoon out in the letters page of the last Pints West magazine – thanks for putting it in!

I don't know if you're interested but I've attached another write up of our latest afternoon drinky in Bristol on 5th December. It's pretty much in the same vein as before but after the success of our last outing we decided to turn this into a kind of Christmas oriented affair and invite more people. There were a couple of new pubs for us and loads of splendid seasonal ales available which was great.

Cheers,  
Darren Bond....

A few months on and time for the trusted seasonal excuse to be aired. Another afternoon ale extravaganza was planned this time under the guise of it being a Christmas Do. It started in pretty much the same way with a belly full of fry-up and then a train just after one into Temple Meads.

It was to be a slightly different running order this time, forgoing Ye Shakespeare as the meeting place last time out and opting for the quieter surroundings (well the inside at least) of the *Cornubia* tucked away in Temple Street. We caught the end of the lunchtime drinkers who, unfortunately for them, had to go back to work. The place thinned out nicely giving the seven of us room to relax and enjoy a couple of pints of their finest offerings. For me it was two from the Hidden brewery to start the day, namely a Quest followed by Old Sarum. The head was lacking on the amber coloured Quest although this didn't distract from the thick, smooth palate, which made for a very nice all round beer and starter for the day. I found Old Sarum to be a very dense and dark ruby coloured beer with a bitter almost liquorice taste. Quite a drying aftertaste too and, although only 4.1%, arguably a bit too heavy as the second of the day.

Following these it was on to the *Seven Stars* in Thomas Lane where we met with a few others. Once again their selection didn't disappoint with something for everyone (even a previously unheard of draught cider for the apple head among us) and was it really only £2 a pint?!? The atmosphere was quite boisterous and wasn't really fitting for the time of day but with Christmas spirit clearly in the air it wasn't a problem. Here it was to be an Ottery Dark-O and Sharp's Cornish

Coaster. Once again the Dark-O was probably a bit much for only the third of the day (I need more practice at this), a dark stout with a bitter almost smoked coffee flavour, not dissimilar to Hop Back's Entire. The Coaster made a refreshing respite with a slight sweetness and so very easy to drink.

A short walk across the bridge to Baldwin Street for a dark, smooth pint of Fuller's London Porter in the *Old Fish Market*. Clearly a quality beer. The *Commercial Rooms* on Corn Street beckoned next and provided us with a great selection of ales, including at least five Christmas specials. A few others and I opted for the enticingly named *Raucous Reindeer* from the Oakham brewery. Thankfully this 4.0%er didn't disappoint with a full body complementing the seasonally subtle fruity and spicy flavours. After quaffing the Reindeers, the tiny surroundings of the *White Lion*, Colston Avenue was next on our agenda. Being a Wickwar pub it only seemed proper to sample the brewery's offerings – many opted for Bob whereas I went for an Autumnale. So nice was the dark ruby coloured, slightly stronger 4.6% ale that another was accommodated soon after. A new pub for many of us, enhanced by the unique access requirements to the gents' toilet.

Once again my notes appear to be trailing off (well they were sometime previously if I'm being honest) but with the pub crawl mood and Christmas joviality fully ensconced within everyone we headed to what I believe to be the *Bunch of Grapes*, where a relatively run of the mill Sharp's Doom Bar was the order of the day. Then seemingly out of nowhere home time beckoned once again. After saying adieu to my remaining compatriots (some had already called it a day!) the walk back to the station left some time to kill and so an attempt at a pint of Butcombe in the *Reckless Engineer* ensued. Then quick as a flash the 19:30 was on time and dutifully carried me on my merry way home...



### Georges Archives

Dear Sir,

I am writing to ask you a favour!

Whilst reading the latest edition of Pints West (in the Coronation, Dean Lane) I was delighted to come across, in the Georges Archive feature, a photograph of the Morning Star, Trenchard Street. I have searched for a photograph of this pub but have never been able to find one.

The reason for my interest is that my late



father, Frederick Watts, was born and raised in this pub. His father, James Watts, was the landlord there from 1909 until his death there in 1938. My father, the youngest of seven children, was born in 1920 and his father was very protective of his youngest child and wouldn't allow him in the bar during opening times. In fact the first time he went in the bar was on the day his father died!

Many years ago I had relatives that ran the Garricks Head in Broad Quay and the Apple Tree in Bedminster – no wonder then that I like beer – it must be in my genes!

Would it be possible for you to give me a copy of the photograph? I would be very grateful if you could as part of my family history.

Many thanks,  
Yours sincerely,  
Lynne Telfer,  
Bedminster.

*A copy of the photo duly dispatched. Ed.*

### An appeal

I very much enjoy reading the articles by Mark Steeds on local pub history in Pints West and wondered if he or any of your readers could help me find out more about two Bristol men, William Chilton and Charles Southwell, who were founding members of the atheist movement in the mid-late 1800s.

A friend of mine (and very keen beer buff) in Boulder Colorado is doing some research on them and is keen to find a picture of one or both – the sort of thing that may exist on the wall of a local pub – pubs must have been vital as venues for 'preaching' their message! They distributed a penny newspaper called the 'Oracle of Reason' from 1841 to 1843.

Any help gratefully received.

Thanks and best wishes,

Simon Hiscock,

email: [Simon.Hiscock@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:Simon.Hiscock@bristol.ac.uk).

*Anyone able to help can email Simon directly or write care of the editor.*



# News from Bath Ales

IN these times when all you hear and read about is 'doom and gloom' (good name for a beer, by the way) it's great to learn that Bath Ales have got some positive news to share with us: Head Brewer Gerry Condell's been at it again and produced another cracking beer to complement the range of Bath Ales "gems": **Golden Hare**.

It began as a special 'one off' for the mighty Whetherspoon but it proved so successful that three extra brews were demanded; as a result it has sneaked into the brewing calendar for the next couple of months for our pleasure and enjoyment.

In the tasting notes, Golden Hare is described as an inviting beer that is in a league of its own: crisp, light, flavoursome, smooth yet dry and wonderfully fresh and zesty. Look out for it on draught in the Bath Ales pubs (go to [www.bathales.com](http://www.bathales.com) for more details) and other establishments serving their ales.

The **Wellington** pub on the top of Gloucester Road has been undergoing some major reconstruction and everyone will be glad when it's all over; not long to go now! In the meantime it's business as usual. Early march has been earmarked for the opening. Meanwhile the former management team from the Wellie, Lloyd & Alex, have created a great buzz at the **Live and Let Live** in Frampton Cotterell. According to Bath Ales it is "the happening pub in the North Bristol suburbs." Pay them a visit and judge for yourself.

The bottling plant continues to thrive and Bath Ales continue to assist breweries nationwide with their bottling ambitions. For their own ales, they have been able to source a new bottle with green credentials, so drinking them is helping to save our planet too!

Meanwhile, as we head into spring and hopefully a great summer of sunshine and fun ... if you're organising an event, a festival or a



Craig Lewis, one of the Bath Ales originals

gathering of any sort, you could consider getting in touch with Bath Ales. They can supply a fully functioning bar operation complete with staff, or simply set up a fully self-contained bar and supply stock. Moreover, Bath Ales is able to provide a complete catering service, ranging from a one-course dip and buffet to a fully serviced multi-course operation, complete with marquees and designed for all events, inside or outside. Large or small, give Bath Ales a call, on 0117 9474797.

For those of you who have met Craig Lewis, one of the Bath Ales originals and a great brewer and now head of the bottling plant, sadly he is not enjoying the best of health currently. Hopefully speaking for everyone who has ever met him, let's wish him a speedy and full recovery from some major surgery. He is currently up at the Royal Marsden Hospital, West London. Best wishes to him and his family.



The **Bridge Inn** in Passage Street, a short stroll from Castle Park in central Bristol, is to be the subject of a 'management buy-out'. The pocket-sized pub will continue to have links with Bath Ales, though, by selling a couple of their beers on a permanent basis, but there are plans to increase the number of hand pumps on the bar to four from the current three. This will make it possible to have two rorating guests to complement the two Bath Ales beers.

The **Eldon House** near the Triangle in Clifton has finally had planning permission granted for alterations. Although some of the pub has Grade II listed status, it currently has a small extension on the side which is not part of the listing, and this is the subject of most of the plans.

Work is due to start around the middle of March. It will incorporate the old cellar, part of the current extension, into the pub, bringing the toilets into the building and into the 21st century! The project should take ten to twelve weeks, looking to finish around the end of May. It is hoped that the pub can stay open for most of the period, but a certain amount of closure, perhaps for a week or so, may be inevitable.

Your hosts Alec and Pauline will do their utmost to keep disruption to a minimum and will continue to offer three great real ales (two Bath Ales and a guest) and food (hot meals when possible, maybe rolls when not) when they can. In the end it should all have been worth the trouble.

SP



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**GOLDEN HARE** is a very rewarding beer. Bursting with flavour and brimming with condition, it's a crisp and flavoursome golden ale. It's smooth yet dry, wonderfully fresh, delightfully zesty - and available on draught right now!

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# Abbey takes on the Assembly

ALAN Morgan, managing director of Abbey Ales in Bath, is adding a fourth pub to his small but fast-growing estate, joining the Star Inn and the Coeur de Lion in Bath and the Foresters Arms at Beckington, just south of the city.

The Assembly on Alfred Street, just off Lansdown Road, takes its name from the nearby Assembly Rooms, one of the top spots on Bath's heritage trail. Although the building is old – built by John Wood the Younger in the 1780s – this classic town pub hasn't actually been a pub for that long. It opened as a wine merchants in the 1930s, and after the Second World War became the Wine Vaults Public House. In the 1960s a 'Teenagers' Tavern' opened in the cellar, featuring 'guitar music and a large selection of drinks and snacks'. It was renamed the Assembly Inn in 1969. Alan plans to revamp the pub, serving top-quality real ale and good home-cooked food. Bellringer, Abbey Ales flagship brew, will, of course, feature prominently, as will a new regular beer from the brewery – Heritage, a dark, malty brew with an ABV of 3.8%.

In the last two or three years, the top end of Bath has seen several traditional pubs either close (the Black Horse) or turn into gastropubs (the Chequers and the Marlborough Tavern). Although the Old Farmhouse – a Wadworth's pub – is still open, and the Star – Abbey Ales' first pub – isn't that far down the hill, the Assembly is something of an oasis in a real-ale desert. With its takeover by Abbey Ales, it looks set to take its rightful place as one of the pubs anyone visiting Bath for the beer will have to seek out.

*Andrew Swift*







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# Much in Little in Bath



WHEN space is at a premium in Bath's smallest pub, who better to take up the role of manageress than local lass Marie Edwards ... all 4 feet 10 and half inches of her!

For Marie is the new mine host at the famous Coeur de Lion on Northumberland Place in the city centre. The hostelry, operated by Abbey Ales, Bath's own brewery, is also now benefiting from relocating the kitchen, which has allowed more room for diners but still retaining its 'smallest pub' title.

Building work was carried out by builder Kevin Donohue whilst working around the pub's opening hours, ensuring no discomfort to customers, who are a cosmopolitan mix of regulars, locals and tourists.

A new menu from pub chef Jon Ingall – launched in January – has also helped to speed up service for all. Food is now served daily from midday to 6pm, with Sunday roasts available from midday to 4.00.

Commented Abbey Ales managing director, Alan Morgan; "Marie was head and shoulders above all the other applicants at the interview and I am hoping she will take the pub to new heights!"



ABBEY Ales of Bath have launched a dark, malty seasonal **Winter Warmer** brewed to 5% ABV. It is a new brew and if successful they will issue it again under the old name of **Cardinal Sin**. They are also launching a new beer, possibly at the Bristol Festival – a 3.8% dark, malty bitter to be called **Heritage**. It will be a regular brew and they will sell it alongside **Bellringer**.

# What became of Keynsham Brewery?



## Firing on all cylinders

MANY will remember with fondness the great beers that came out of Keynsham until fairly recently, Stockwood Stout being one that particularly stood out. But in the end, brewer John Firth felt unable to carry on and, sadly, the brewery closed.

Keynsham brewery may no longer be with us, but its brewing equipment lives on and is going to be used to produce a new range of fine ales in Gloucestershire. Back in July 2008, Keynsham's brewing equipment was purchased lock, stock and firkin by an investor who was looking to establish a microbrewery in Cheltenham.

Since this time the old Keynsham Brewery kit has been extensively renovated and is in the process of being installed at Prescott Ales' new 3,200 sq ft brewery in the centre of Cheltenham. The "Brewing Designs" ten-barrel plant is a beautiful bit of kit that just needed some tender loving care.

All the vessels are wooden clad with supporting brass straps. The 14ft kettle with its 4.5ft wide copper dome now forms an attractive show piece for the new brewery. Prescott Ales hopes to open for brewery tours where interested ale lovers can visit the site and see the process in action from their viewing platform in the new premises.

The new owners will commence brewing in early March 2009 with a core range of ales that have been named after the prestigious Prescott Hill Climb circuit, just outside Cheltenham.

The Prescott Hill Climb circuit is run by the Bugatti Owners' Club, where each year, if you're lucky, you can see such gems as the Bugatti Veyron racing up this 1127 yard tight and twisty track nestled into the Gloucestershire countryside. For details visit [www.bugatti.co.uk](http://www.bugatti.co.uk).

The Prescott beers will be aptly named: Hill Climb, 3.8% ABV, Track Record, 4.4% ABV and Grand Prix, which will be a racy 5.2% ABV.

Brewer Graham Meader has been busy refining Prescott's recipes under the watchful eye of Steve Wellington, head brewer at the Bass Museum brewery in Burton-Upon-Trent.

If you want to contact Prescott Ales for more information you can email them at [info@prescottales.co.uk](mailto:info@prescottales.co.uk).

Abbey Ales presents...

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# Dudley Delights

I'M sure many readers have favourite beer festivals that they visit each year. Top of my list for some years has been Dudley CAMRA Winter Ales Festival, which takes place every November. Not only does it give me a chance to catch up with friends and family, but the beer list is of a kind which I find particularly interesting, featuring many strong winter ales, both light and dark in colour.

2008's beer list included 23 beers of 6% ABV and over out of a total of 70. A range of bottled continental beers, mostly from Bavaria, also feature. The festival gives some timely hints for choosing the beer list at our own Bristol CAMRA Beer Festival, which is selected early in the New Year. So joined by Vince Murray, we set out by train on a grey Thursday morning for Birmingham.

I have written several times in these pages on the subject of visits to Birmingham and Black Country pubs. Well, on this occasion Vince was keen to visit some of the more out of the way CAMRA Good Beer Guide entries, so upon arrival we headed to Snow Hill station and caught the Metro service out to the Jewellery Quarter.

This area is well named, and after wandering past many interesting looking jewellers we found ourselves at the *Lord Clifden*, recently refurbished at what appears to be considerable expense and appealing to the more aspirational drinkers in the area. Three beers were on and Vince particularly enjoyed the Oldershaw Newton's Drop. Pausing briefly to visit the eclectic garden, we caught a bus out to Hockley to our next port of call, the splendid traditional boozer which is the *Black Eagle*. Here we enjoyed excellent pub grub, washed down in my case with Ansells Mild, sadly no longer brewed locally. It was noted that two pints in our second pub of the day cost £1.10 less than our first round!

Now we headed to the Black Country, disembarking our train at Rowley Regis to visit Blackheath. After a slightly convoluted journey we arrived at the *Waterfall*, now for some years in the hands of the local Holden's brewery. Not having been here for some years I was surprised to see the pub looking unaltered from its days as a free house. Next, we took the short walk across to Gorsty Hill to visit the somewhat eccentric *Bell & Bear*, an adapted old cottage set back and below the level of the road, opposite what was in past times the huge British Steel complex of Coombes Wood. Sadly the stuffed bear which used to greet customers is no more. A rather odd beer range featured two red beers. Time was pressing on and the skies were ominously dark so we took a bus up the hill and by a happy fluke got out next to the *Britannia*, a standard Wetherspoon pub but with above standard beer range and quality. We enjoyed Harviestoun Thistle Do and a beer from Mordue here. Dashing through the rain we reached Blackheath's fourth and final Good Beer Guide pub, the *Malt Shovel* in the High Street. What a

joy! A small unpretentious local, set around an L-shaped bar, where we supped the magnificent Envile Ginger, one of the beers of our trip, and fed money into the digital juke box. Why oh why have so many pubs taken them out?

Suffering somewhat in the heavy rain, we found a bus to Dudley and headed to the *Lamp Tavern*, a Bathams pub which does accommodation (reduced prices for CAMRA members) and is less than ten minutes' walk from Dudley Concert Hall, our evening's venue. Pausing to check in and to await the arrival of an old friend, Paul Connolly, we headed to the festival, where we were joined by my brother Andy and his wife Gail. I won't bore you with what we drank at the festival, but one beer has to be mentioned, the outstanding Kinver Over The Edge, a pale beer at 7.6% which was voted West Midlands strong beer of the year at the festival, a decision we all agreed with! Our evening closed with a swift half at Wetherspoon's *Full Moon* (I was pleased and surprised to have Bath Ales Golden Hare here) before we arrived back at the Lamp and managed to persuade the barman we were residents and deserved a beer!

Having breakfast, Vince and I received a shock as Paul announced he would be emigrating to New Zealand in the New Year! A great fella, and one who achieved legendary status as the only man out of a group of six of us to have a pint in every pub on a previous four-day drinking odyssey in Norwich, Glasgow and Edinburgh, he will be sorely missed! After saying goodbye to Paul we met up with Andy and Gail, who had very kindly agreed to be our chauffeur for the next few hours. We had heard good things of the *Queens Head* at Wordsley, so it was a major disappointment to arrive and find the doors firmly shut, especially galling as we could glimpse three Envile pump clips through the window, including Gothic, a wonderful 5.2% dark beer and one of Vince's all time favourites. So after a fine pint of Bathams at the neighbouring *New Inn* we headed to the excellent *Robin Hood* at Amblecote, where we lunched and enjoyed the Envile Ginger again.

It was a depressing sight to drive past so many closed pubs – at one time heading through Pensnett we passed ten consecutive pubs which were shut. It brought home to us that whilst we are continuing to suffer pub closures in Bristol, there are other areas of the country which are being hit far harder. Moving onto Lye we visited the *Windsor Castle*, home of Sadlers brewery. A trio of fantastic beers were tried, the Mud City Stout at 6.6%; Mellow Yellow, Sadlers take on honey flavoured ale; and the pale Stumbling Badger. We had time for one more pub before our train to Birmingham. This was the *Shovel*, no more than two hundred yards from the Windsor Castle. After a false start (in the week the pub is closed lunchtime and opens at five) we were delighted by a fantastic range of thirteen beers including Envile White and, finally, a chance to drink the Gothic! Recently refurbished, smart and tidy but traditional, with five extra handpulls installed, this is a must-visit



The Shovel Inn (photo by Andy Cummings)

pub. They also do Sunday lunch for £4.95!

Arriving back in Brum as the offices kicked out, we popped into the refurbished *Old Contemptibles* next to Snow Hill station, which was doing a roaring trade. The Morrissey Fox Blonde Ale was sampled here and was tasty stuff, though we would like to see proof that they do brew it themselves! We were hoping to get a pint at one of the many beer stalls at the excellent Traditional German Market which is a feature in Brum during November and December, but with the whole area absolutely packed we resorted to a swift pint at an old favourite, the *Wellington* on Bennett's Hill, which was also very busy.

So a fantastic a hectic two days came to an end. Look out for many of the beers mentioned at this year's Bristol CAMRA Beer Festival!

Phil Cummings

## Beer marinade washes away cancer risk

SCIENTISTS have found that using beer as a marinade makes your red meat much healthier, according to *The Daily Telegraph*.

According to a report in *New Scientist* magazine, a simple marinade of beer dramatically reduces the cancer-causing properties of a fried or barbecued steak.

It's well known that the high temperatures of a barbecue cause the sugars and amino acids in meat to be converted into compounds called heterocyclic amines (HA), which can be carcinogenic.

Researchers from the University of Porto in Portugal marinated steak in beer and in red wine. They found the levels of two types of HA were up to 90 per cent lower compared with unmarinated steak. Beer marinade achieved this in four hours, while wine needed six hours for the same result.

Tasters also preferred the beer-marinated steak.

Norman Spalding



# Time to check out the Kellaway

THE Kellaway has been a pub for much longer than its oldest customers can remember. It was part of the Georges Brewery estate, later to become Courage's. Situated very close to Horfield Common, the Kellaway has gone through many changes in recent years in both style and management.

The really good news is that now, at last, the pub is undergoing a revitalisation. The Kellaway is working hard to serve its local community and its reputation is spreading.

During 2008, the pub was acquired by Nigel and Jane. They are just coming to the end of a refurbishment to both the snug and the lounge bars. This has allowed them to open up the two traditional fire places on both sides of the pub. How many pubs do you know in the Bristol area that have two real fires? In the colder months these give everyone who comes in a warm and atmospheric place to drink the ales. The welcome from the staff is equally as cheery.



The Kellaway comprises two rooms. On the left side is the small bar. This is intimate and a great place to have a drink and a chat. The lounge area on the other side of the bar has plenty of seating and is lighter and more spacious. This room also features a pool table and you can also access the large garden area from this bar. The pictures that adorn the walls are of interest. There are several taken in the early years of the last century of the local Horfield area.

It is understood that the Kellaway is the highest pub in Bristol with an uninterrupted view through to the city of Bath – provided you are on top of the children's play equipment! The garden is completely enclosed and should be safe for families. As it's a south-facing garden, it's a real sun trap and makes for a really relaxing place to spend an afternoon or



evening with friends and family in the spring and summer months.

The selection of ales available at the time of writing is Arbor Ales Brigstow, Wye Valley HPA, Felinfoel Double Dragon, Exmoor Gold, Shepherd Neame Spitfire, Cheddar Ales Potholer and Cotleigh 25. Other beers also feature from time to time such as ales from the Box Steam brewery. One of the ales is promoted as "ale of the week" for £2.40 – albeit our Government want to stop you enjoying such price promotions. This excellent beer range certainly seems to be getting more and more visitors to this great local.



The kitchen is open from Wednesday to Saturday, lunchtime 12.00 to 2.30 and evenings 6.00 to 9.00, and on Sundays the pub does excellent roast lunches from 12.00 to 4.00 (price £6.99). The menu is wide-ranging including steaks, pie of the day, fish and a range of vegetarian options. Sandwiches and jacket potatoes are also served at lunchtime.

Wednesday is quiz night. This is proving to be increasingly popular and there is a 'Curry in a Hurry' available for £3.99 (veggie option always available) with the quiz starting at 8.00.

So, make your way to the Kellaway soon. You will find a good drop of ale and a right good Brisle welcome.

*Pete Bridle*

*The Kellaway, 140 Kellaway Avenue, Horfield, Bristol, BS6 7YQ.  
Opening times: 12 noon – 11pm (closes 10.30pm Sunday).  
Tel: (0117) 924 5368.*

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**Further information** on all aspects of CAMRA can be had from Ray Holmes on 0117 - 9605357 (home).

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# Diary

**Diary of the Bristol & District branch of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale.** (For more information on local events attend our branch meetings, check the diary section on our web site at [www.camrabristol.org.uk](http://www.camrabristol.org.uk), or email [badcamrasocials@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:badcamrasocials@blueyonder.co.uk))

March 5th – Cross City Explorer Trip TBC

● **Sunday March 8th** – GBG Selection meeting, downstairs at the Grain Barge, 1pm start. Please be prompt.

● **Wednesday March 11th** – Committee meeting, Cornubia, 8pm.

● **Thursday March 12th** – BADRG gathering, Portcullis, Wellington Terrace, Clifton, 8pm.

● **Friday & Saturday March 20th & 21st** – Bristol Beer Festival.

● **Wed March 25th** – Branch meeting, Commercial Rooms 8pm

● **Thurs March 26th** – Pubs Group meeting, Cornubia.



● **Wednesday April 8th** – Committee meeting, possibly at the Cornubia.

● **Thursday April 9th** – BADRG gathering, Robin Hood's Retreat, 8pm.

● **Thursday April 16th** – Visit to Wickwar Brewery. Departs from Cornubia 6.45pm.

● **Wednesday April 22nd** – Branch meeting, upstairs at Horts, central Bristol, 8pm.

● **Tuesday April 28th** – Zero Degrees brewery visit.



● **Saturday May 2nd** – Clifton Mild Ale Trail (see page 13).

● **Saturday May 9th** – National Mild Day launch and Harbourside & City Centre Mild Ale Trail (see page 13).

● **Tuesday May 12th** – visit to the Great Western Brewery, details to be confirmed.

● **Wednesday May 13th** – Committee meeting, Cornubia, 8pm.

● **Thursday May 14th** – Tutored Mild Tasting, Commercial Rooms (see page 13).

● **Saturday May 16th** – Kingsdown & Temple Meads Mild Ale Trail (see page 13).

● **Wednesday May 20th** – WSM Mild Crawl (see page 13).

● **Saturday May 23rd** – Nottingham Mild Ale Trail (see page 13).

● **Wednesday May 27th** – Branch meeting, Commercial Rooms, 8pm.

● **Thursday May 28th** – Pubs Group meeting, venue to be confirmed.

● **Saturday May 30th** – Glos & NE Somerset Mild Ale Trail (see page 13).

Please note that there may be changes and alterations to the above list, so for more information, please check with Tim at [badcamrasocials@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:badcamrasocials@blueyonder.co.uk).

# Weston diary

○ **Wednesday 18 March** – Beer & Skittles at The White Hart, Palmer Row.

○ **Wednesday 15 April** – Off The Rails 8.30pm onwards.

○ **Wednesday 20 May** – Mild Month Crawl. Starting at The Raglan 8.00pm.

○ **Wednesday 17 June** – Taunton Crawl. Depart Weston approx 6.30pm.

**Non-members welcome at the above events.**

## Weston contact

Tim Nickolls: 01934 644925 (evenings) or email [tim.nickolls@virgin.net](mailto:tim.nickolls@virgin.net)



# Bath & Borders

See **page 21** for forthcoming events of the Bath & Borders branch.

## Bath & Borders contacts

Branch socials contact: Denis Rahilly - 01225 791399 or 07711 004501, email [denis.rahilly@talktalk.net](mailto:denis.rahilly@talktalk.net).

Branch contact for all non-social matters: James Honey - 01225 8686481.

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○ Views expressed in Pints West are those of the individual authors and not necessarily supported by CAMRA  
○ Inclusion of an advertisement does not imply endorsement by CAMRA



CAMRA LocAle promotes pubs stocking locally brewed real ale and builds on a growing consumer demand for quality local produce and an increased awareness of 'green' issues.

This is your chance to support the local economy, reduce carbon footprint and try the many quality beers that are being produced locally but are too seldom seen in local pubs.

You can do your bit for the environment and reducing road congestion and pollution by drinking locally brewed real ale where you see the LocAle logo.

If you have a pub or club, call a local brewery and order some LocAle! The telephone numbers for our local breweries that are supporting the LocAle campaign are:

<b>Abbey Ales</b>	01225 444437
<b>Arbor Ales</b>	0117 9570899
<b>Bath Ales</b>	0117 9474797
<b>Bristol Beer Factory</b>	0117 9026317
<b>Butcombe Brewery</b>	01934 863963
<b>Cotswold Spring Brewery</b>	01454 323088
<b>Great Western Brewing Company</b>	0117 9572842
<b>Matthews Brewing Company</b>	01761 472242
<b>RCH Brewery</b>	01934 834447
<b>Wickwar Brewing Company</b>	01454 294168

*Richard Brooks*



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