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**CAMPAIGN
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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)

So many pubs closed!



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Bristol Beer Festival and LocAle go down well

The 13th annual Bristol Beer Festival was held in Brunel's Old Station at Temple Meads Bristol on 19th and 20th March 2010. This event was a great success with tickets selling out in advance for all sessions. We have received very positive customer feedback from people telling us they thought it was the best festival yet.

Our new pint glasses, sponsored by Cheddar Ales this year and marked for third and half pint measures, proved very popular with customers and gave maximum flexibility as to how much of a particular beer, cider or perry they wanted to taste.

Not only did the festival start off with a huge range of beer, but when it closed at the end of the final session on Saturday night there was still a great range of 73 beers still on, so there was plenty of choice right up until the end.

This year the Bristol Beer Festival made a real feature of our locally brewed real ales by putting them all together on our new 'LocAle' bar. We also held a special 'LocAle of the Festival' competition. The judging of 27 'LocAle' beers was carried out by a panel of twelve tasters. In addition to seven trained members of the Bristol & District CAMRA tasting panel, we had guest judges which included people from the pub trade and local councillors Kevin Quartley (Conservative) and Sean Emmett (Liberal Democrat). Unfortunately the Labour candidate lost his deposit as he did not show up!

The top three scores were all achieved by dark beers. The winner was **Arbor Ales Old Knobbly** (4.5% ABV), a classic dark best bitter more akin to an 'old ale'. This impressed the judges with its complex taste, full rounded smoothness and satisfying long finish.

The runner-up was the ever-popular **Wickwar Station Porter** (6.1%). This previously won CAMRA Champion Winter Beer of Britain 2008.

Third place went to **Box Steam Funnell Blower** (4.5% ABV), formerly known as Vanilla Porter.



Richard Brooks presenting the LocAle of the Festival certificate to Namaya Reynolds, business partner of Jon and Meg at Arbor Ales and landlord of the Old Stillage. (photo by Tony Durbin)

It is interesting that, despite the mixed nature of the members of the judging panel, dark beers seemed to consistently out-score lighter beers. This may be because the palate of today's ale drinker is becoming more educated towards rich and satisfying dark beers. Or maybe the seasonal aspect played a part, with judges warming to the more hearty beers after the dismal winter we have experienced!

So our congratulations go to Arbor Ales and their Old Knobbly.

For the rest of the beers, our usual 'Beer of the Festival' customer vote was held and the results of this were **Cairngorm Trade Winds** the winner and **Boggarts Rum Porter** the runner-up.

Cider/perry of the festival, judged by a tasting panel, was first **Bollhayes Medium Dry**, second **Rich's Medium** and third **Rathays Old Goat 'Viberie'**.

Richard Brooks



Beer Festival Glasses and T-Shirts



ARE you missing a Bristol Beer Festival glass or two from your collection? Over the years the branch has built up a stock of glasses from our beer festival and we are now putting them on sale in the Seven Stars, Thomas Lane, Redcliffe, Bristol. The price is just 50p for a half-pint glass and £1 for the 2010 pint glasses.

The range of glasses available is from the following years (with sponsor logo as shown):

- 2004 Butcombe
- 2005 Bath Ales
- 2006 RCH
- 2007 Fuller's ESB
- 2008 Bristol Beer Factory
- 2009 Arbor Ales
- 2010 Cheddar Ales



We also have a few T-shirts left from the 2010 Bristol Beer Festival available at just £5 each. Please email camra@camrabristol.org.uk if interested and indicate what size you would like.

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Contact the editor, Steve Plumridge
Email steve.plumridge@bristol.ac.uk

Branch Pub of the Year 2010

The winner of the Bristol & District CAMRA branch Pub of the Year 2010 is the **Seven Stars** in Thomas Lane, Redcliffe and the runner-up is the **Portcullis** in Wellington Terrace, Clifton. The picture shows branch chairman Richard Brooks presenting the certificate to Paul Wratten of the Seven Stars (front right), supported by CAMRA branch members and pub regulars in the background.

Paul Wratten said he was properly chuffed that the Seven Stars had won and that he puts its popularity down to his range of eight guest real ales. And his pickled eggs! The Seven Stars was runner-up in the competition last year and when the previous licensees subsequently left people had feared that the pub might lose its real ale focus. However, Paul has clearly succeeded in taking the pub to beery new heights. Paul is so enthused with the success of real ale in the Seven Stars that he is planning to start holding a regional ale mini-festival (around 20 beers) on the first Monday to Wednesday of every month.

Ned Clarke said he was delighted for the Portcullis to be recognised as runner-up Pub of the Year, and we hope to have a picture of Ned receiving his certificate at the Portcullis in the next edition of Pints West (the official presentation not yet having taken place as Pints West went to press).

We should also give an honourable mention to the Annexe Inn, Neville Road, Bishopston, Bristol as this came a very close third in the competition this year.



The branch Pub of the Year competition is run in two stages. Firstly, members get to vote for their favourite pub and this is turned into a short list of finalists. Volunteer judges from the branch then visit all of these pubs and compare them to each other, considering a variety of factors, such as the service and welcome, and not just the range or quality of the beer. The results of this judging stage are then collated to arrive at the winner, which is then submitted for inclusion in the regional Pub of the Year competition.

Richard Brooks (photo by Tony Durbin)

Bristol Beer Festival needs you!

We have around 4,000 people who come to the Bristol Beer Festival each year. As you're reading this you might be one of them. But have you ever thought about volunteering to help out? There are over 160 people who spare time to plan, organise and run the festival. Some of our volunteers commit many hours to the running of the festival, some come along for a few hours to help during set up, many come back year after year because they enjoy it so much.



It's all great fun at the Bristol Beer (and cider) Festival

help out at Bristol Beer Festival 2011, then get in touch with me (email featherstone.helen@googlemail.com or telephone 07890 779 182). Don't worry, you won't be committing to anything at this stage (we

appreciate that March 2011 is a long way off) but it would really help us to know if you are interested. If you'd like to be involved in planning the beer festival then also get in touch.

*Helen Featherstone
Photos R. Brooks*



You might want to consider volunteering if you enjoy Bristol Beer Festival for any of the following reasons:

- Being with people who share an interest in beer;
- Tasting a wide variety of well kept beers;
- Helping friends choose their next beer;
- Supporting CAMRA;
- Having fun.

These are all reasons why people help out at the Beer Festival. There are other perks too: discounted food, free trip to Great British Beer Festival or one other festival (this year we're off to Minehead Beer Festival), and you might also find yourself with a refreshing ale in your hand too.

There are lots of things to do as a volunteer at the Beer Festival. Before we let the punters in, the stillage, beers and banners all need putting up, programmes need to go into glasses, games and other stalls need setting up. During the festival, as well as pouring pints, the games and tombola stalls need enthusiastic people, glasses and tokens need giving out, while stewards keep an eye on things to make sure everyone is safe. Of course, it all has to come down too. This really is a case where many hands make light work (and you get a bacon butt!).

If you're a CAMRA member and haven't volunteered before, or it's a few years since you last volunteered, and you think you'd like to

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Branch socials report

WELCOME to this edition's report on the social activities of the Bristol & District branch of CAMRA.

Recent activities have included the 'Christmas Quiz', held over from our Christmas social event. This took place in mid February at the Portcullis in Clifton, and attracted a good crowd.

Various surveying and explorer trips have also taken place over the last quarter, focusing on pubs around suburban Bristol, such as the Windmill close to Windmill Hill station, as well as in the Weston-super-Mare area.

Our trip in March to Moor Brewery was an outstanding success, and is reported elsewhere in Pints West.

A couple of crawls to support CAMRA's National Cask Ale Week took place just before Easter, and these included a number of pubs well known for their choice, quality and variety of ales, including the Bridge in Passage Street, the Cornubia, Seven Stars and the Bank Tavern, whilst the second crawl featured visits to the Eldon House (pictured), Hope & Anchor, Bag O'Nails and the Three Tuns.

With our beer festival and other BADRAG events in support of Mild through May and beyond, there hasn't been much time to fit in many trips, but an early May 'social' to Priddy saw us visit all three pubs in the area, finishing off at the Hunter's Lodge.

We regularly run trips to breweries and pubs in and around the area, and all you need to do in order to participate is consult the diary page, choose the events you like the look of (or visit our website for the latest



news) and email me at badcamrasocials@blueyonder.co.uk. Don't leave it too late, as trips are often full! We look forward to seeing you on a trip soon. And if you know of a pub selling a good range of ales that you think we should visit, just drop us a line.

Lastly, our thanks to Moor Brewery for their hospitality. As the slogan goes 'Drink Moor Beer'!

Tim Proudman, Social Secretary

The Moor the Merrier

A glorious spring morning in March saw a group of 25 members of Bristol & District CAMRA set off from Bristol to visit the Moor brewery in Somerset. Moor Beer Company was started in 1996 by Arthur Frampton using a five-barrel plant on a former dairy farm at Ashcott, with beers designed to reflect the local heritage of the Somerset levels and moors. Backed by the famous slogan "Drink Moor Beer", the beers gained in popularity and won several awards. Their rich, dark and full-bodied old ale, Old Freddy Walker (7.3% ABV), was judged to be CAMRA's Champion Winter Beer of Britain back in 2004.

Subsequently, the brewery became a victim of its own success and temporarily contracted out brewing. In late 2007, an American brewer, Justin Hawke, joined the brewery and he took it over in 2008. The brewery was expanded to a ten-barrel plant and moved to Pitney in south Somerset. Justin has gone on to revitalize the brewery: some of the original recipes have been discarded; others have been overhauled, updated and improved; and new beers have been added to the range. He brings with him a passion for real ale and the local area, as well as a desire to combine the wonders of real ale with the aggressively flavoured beers of his native California. His range of strongly flavoured beers of exceptional character, together with a fastidious approach to cleanliness and quality, has resulted in steady growth of his reputation and numerous awards, such that Moor Beer is now regarded as one of the top breweries in the UK.

We received a warm welcome from Justin on our arrival and two of the beers from his core range were available for us to sample, representing the "old" and the "new", which were Merlin's Magic (4.3%) and Revival (3.8%). The former, his take on a classic best bitter but with increased flavour, is from the original range and the best-seller. It is an amber, fruity beer, full of malty flavour with a bitter finish. The latter, an immensely hoppy and refreshing pale ale, was originally brewed to celebrate the revival of the brewery. It is brewed with spicy American hops and drinks well above its strength. Whilst we enjoyed his beers, Justin waxed lyrical on his brewing background in America and Europe together with the innovative approach he has taken to turning round the fortunes of Moor Beer, which resulted in a very informative and entertaining talk.

In addition to Revival, Merlin's Magic and Old Freddy Walker, the regular beers also include Peat Porter (4.5%), Somerland Gold (5%), Hoppiness (6.5%) and JJJ IPA (9%), with the latter two being hop monsters with an American twist. In addition to the core range, Justin brews a range of seasonal specials. These are designed to reflect the changing moods of the seasons, some including local ingredients and others with

those from half way round the world. Amongst them are Milly's Mild (3.9%), Southern Star (4%), Northern Star (4.1%), Winter Blend (4.4%), Ported Peat Porter (4.7%) and Grockle Grog (8%). Worthy of particular mention are Southern Star and Northern Star; the former being an ultra pale ale brewed with an immensely powerful hop from New Zealand, which is available in such limited quantities that one was brew was possible last year; the latter being another ultra pale ale brewed for the first time this year using a relatively new and powerful American hop. Whilst most of the beer is cask-conditioned and sold primarily in pubs, it is also hand-bottled in small batches. These are bottle-conditioned with live yeast for extra flavour. To match the big flavours of the beers, they are provided in 660ml bottles.

Not only has Justin transformed the beer range, he has also overhauled the point-of-sale material to align it with the big and exciting beers. The new branding is both classic and modern. The concept came from a church hymn board, with interchangeable numbers. The centre of the imagery provides the canvas to convey the message, with coloured text used to depict the various beers, but the frame remains the same throughout; thus the overall Moor Beer image remains bold, strong and consistent. The labels for the bottles are die-cut to ensure the Moor Beer image stands out. The pump clips take the hymn board idea a stage further, as they are laser-etched wooden boards with a card insert which can easily be changed. Although they are expensive to produce, they are really striking and stand out from the crowd.

Always keen to experiment, Justin has produced a stunning barrel-aged old ale, Fusion (8%), which is the fusion of young and old, grain and fruit, tradition and innovation. This was blended from a brew of Old Freddy Walker matured in oak barrels previously used to age cider brandy and sherry. The resulting beer was then bottle-conditioned with wort from a fresh brew of Old Freddy Walker. This is a drink of huge depth and complexity; full, malty and with bitterness superbly balanced by deep caramel and spiced apple flavours. The 2009 vintage of Fusion is a limited release of 700 bottles, which is a must for the beer connoisseur. As well as experimenting with barrel-ageing, Justin is also trying to promote methods of dispense of craft beer which are virtually unheard of in the UK but in widespread use in Europe and America.

At the end of our brewery visit, most of us took the opportunity to purchase some of Justin's bottle-conditioned beers, with Fusion being a popular choice. After our visit, we had the opportunity to sample Revival and Peat Porter at the nearby Devonshire Arms in Long Sutton, and rather fine they were too.

Drink Moor Beer – you know it makes sense!

Dave Graham

The plight of pubs in south east Bristol

(a personal view)

It has been a concern of mine for while now that so many public houses are closing down in the south east Bristol area. Not that many areas have escaped from closures in recent times. I am originally from north Devon and know the value of village pubs and the sad state where they have closed leaving the locals with no place to gather other than village halls.

Now Bristol is no village but one area that concerns me most is the Wells Road (A37) out of Bristol and its adjacent areas. I live in Knowle West and it has been barren of pubs now for several years, for a variety of reasons. Anyone living here mainly has to go to Bedminster for a social night drinking.

It came to my attention recently that the *Happy Landings* on the corner of Hengrove Lane on the Wells Road has a 'to let' sign up. It has been closed for over six months. There have been rumours of it becoming a Chinese restaurant. It got me thinking that this will mean that, for a large distance, there will be no pubs within walking distance in the vicinity.



The not so Happy Landings

Starting from the Three Lamps junction (Wells Road), on the right Totterdown is well served by public houses with the *Shakespeare*, *Oxford*, *New Found Out* and *Star & Dove*. On the main road close by there is the *Bush* and then the *George*. On reaching Broadwalk at the top of the hill the situation is a bit grim. The *Talbot* which had closed is now a steak restaurant. Off to the right was the *Friendship* in Knowle, which recently shut down and is to become a Tesco car park. The only other pub I know of in this area is the *Knowle Hotel* which is about 400 yards left, off the main road.

The *Red Lion* which was on the hill a bit further out is now flats and then the next place is the *Happy Landings* mentioned above. The closest pub to that was the *Glass Cutter* in Hengrove Lane, which is now flats. Going further up the Wells Road there used to be the *Little Thatch*, though not really a pub I believe, before getting to the *Yeoman* at the junction which turns right to Whitchurch village. Beyond that is the *Maes Knoll* (formerly *Black Lion*) before turning left to Stockwood. This is a large suburban area which fortunately still has the *Man in Space*, *Concorde* and *Harvesters* pubs.

In the Whitchurch village area there is the *Cartwheel* (next to Asda). The *Court Farm Tavern*, formerly the *Baccy Jar*, was closed for a while but is now a pub with the emphasis on food. The only other here is the *Shield and Dagger* which is in East Dundry Road on the edge of the area.

These are the only pubs in a large populated area before going back down towards Hartcliffe which fortunately still has four pubs of varying quality, the *Fulford Hotel*, the *Hartcliffe Inn*, the *Red Hart* and the *Harrier*. The *Fighting Cocks*, which became the *Happy Cocks* (to lose the "fighting" connotation?), closed down a while back following a fire. In Hengrove Park there is the *Wessex Flyer*, which is the newest addition and a modern family-friendly pub.

It seems a real shame that there are so few traditional public houses in some of these communities.

The main Bath Road out of Bristol is also suffering with lack of

public houses. Once again starting from the Three Lamps junction (Bath A4) on the right you have the *Thunderbolt*, which is also a good music venue. The *Three Lamps* pub was next door but closed down many years ago. Other than the *Black Castle* and the *Sandringham*, which are both within five or six minutes' walk of the Bath Road close to the junction with St Phillips Causeway, you have to go all the way to Brislington and the *King's Arms* down the bottom of the hill on the left. Opposite this, the *Holly Bush* has now been replaced by flats. There is also the *Pilgrim* on Hollywood Road which is left at the *King's Arms*.

The *White Hart* a little further along the A4 on the right looks likely to become a local community theatre. From here on out on the A4 there is not another public house until Keynsham, so not much on a busy main road from the Three Lamps junction.

Obviously many people go into Bedminster or the city centre for a night out, but often a quiet drink with friends locally would be far more convenient as well as keeping up a sense of community. Do we really all want to end up going to each others' houses for a can or bottle? It must be said that often, in the right hands, failing pubs can be turned around and become successful community locals once again. Unfortunately, as things stand, there are inadequate planning laws to protect them from redevelopment.

We all know what is happening with the rising costs of drinks and the loss-leader supermarket price offers. This – allied with the woefully inadequate planning laws and an apparent lack of policy at Bristol City Council currently regarding community pubs – is leaving large swaths of our city without community pubs.

Something must change urgently to stop the rot!

Keith Shapland



Pubs closed or under threat in the south Bristol area

No longer a community pub

Antelope - Stockwood - demolished - 2004?
Enterprise Inn - Bedminster - demolished - 2007
Fox - Windmill Hill - converted to flats - 2009
Glasscutter - Hengrove - converted to flats - 2005?
Happy Cocks - Hengrove - demolished (after fire) - 2006?
Hollybush - Brislington - demolished - post-2000?
Mendip Gate Inn - Bishopsworth - closed 2001, demolished 2003 for flats
Red Cow - Bedminster - demolished - 2009
Three Lamps - Bath Road - closed post-1999? - now flats
Red Lion - Totterdown - demolished for three houses - 2000
Ship & Castle - Ashton Vale - demolished (one wall standing?) - 2009
Wedlocks - Bedminster - demolished - 2009?
Talbot - Knowle - closed post-2000? - now a steakhouse
Venture Inn - Knowle West - demolished - post-2000? - now flats
Woods - Bishopsworth - demolished - 2010
Gatcombe House - Hartcliffe - demolished 2005? - now flats and dental surgery

Permission to convert granted

Friendship - Knowle - 2009
General Elliott - Bedminster - 2010
Park House - Bedminster - 2010
Plough Inn - Bedminster Down - 2006 (converted to flats?)
White Hart - Brislington - 2010

Under threat?

Golden Cockerel - Highridge - 2010 - closed, sold with potential for redevelopment and recent fire 2010
Happy Landings - Hengrove - 2010 - closed 6 months - 'Pub To Let' sign now up

Compiled by Les Cooper

Update on Kingsdown

AFTER a short closure for refurbishment, Micawber's Ale House on St Michael's Hill in has re-opened under its original name, the Colston Arms. Three real ales are usually available – Bath Gem, Butcombe Bitter and Whychwood Hobgoblin.

Further up the Hill in High Kingsdown, the Kings Arm's is boarded up and looking very sad. With plenty of pubs in the area, its future as a pub must be in doubt.

Pete Tanner



Boarded up and looking very sad – the King's Arms



The Colston Arms



Pub News

- The **Plough** at Wrinton reopened officially in May after being closed during the winter for a major extension and refurbishment. Beers on sale include Butcombe Bitter and Young's Bitter.
- The **Good Intent** at Broomhill has been closed for a while for a major overhaul but is expected to reopen in time for the summer.
- **River City** (formerly the Albion) on Cumberland Road in Bristol, which reopened in July 2009 after years of closure, closed again in April 2010, only to reopen in May selling Courage Best and Thatcher's Traditional at competitive prices. The intention is to add more beers as trade picks up.
- The **Stoke Inn** in Chew Stoke reopened under new ownership recently.
- Three pubs in a row are closed in St. George: the **Admiral Rodney**, the **Bell** in Bell Hill Road and the **Prince Albert**.
- The **White Hart** in Brislington is closed. A planning application to convert it into a dance school was turned down in April.
- The **Penpole Inn** in Lawrence Weston is closed.
- Over in Pill, the **King's Head** and the **Railway** are both reported closed (the latter for some time now) but expected to reopen.
- The **Standard of England** in Greystoke Avenue was reported to be boarded up at the end of April 2010, as was the **Gainsborough** in Gainsborough Square, Lockleaze.
- Better news for the **New Battleaxes** at Wraxall, which is to reopen as a pub in the summer. The new owners have successful pubs in Bradford-on-Avon and Frome already.
- Rumour has it that the owner of the Three Tuns in Hotwells has also acquired the **Plume of Feathers** in Hotwells and that it could reopen in June after many months of closure.
- The **Queen Adelaide** at Blagdon is closed and builders are in. A local resident thought it will reopen; can a reader enlighten us?

Norman Spalding

New licensees at the Cornubia

The Cornubia in Redcliffe is now in capable new hands. Phil and Jackie took over the reins of this popular pub, close to the fire station, earlier this year and are certainly making an impression.

By all accounts both the range and quality of the beer at the Cornubia is of a very high standard. This is perhaps not surprising considering their pedigree. Amongst their previous pubs they can count the Crown & Thistle in Gravesend, Kent, which won the national CAMRA Pub of the Year award back in 2003.

SP



Phil and Jackie of the Cornubia pose with chairman Richard Brooks (centre) during Cask Ale Week

Phoenix and Rummer to reopen?

News has reached Bristol CAMRA Pubs Group of the Phoenix and the Rummer, two pubs owned by Bristol City Council. The Phoenix, we understand, may reopen soon and “there is interest in the Rummer and talks are progressing.” Should they reopen, it will be great news indeed.

The Phoenix was very much a locals’ pubs in past years, basic but friendly and at the heart of the local community. Situated at the end of a listed terrace, it’s located next to the main Bristol shopping centre (Cabot Circus). The area has lost several pubs in recent years – some were lost as a result of the Cabot Circus development and others such as the Seven Ways and the Sportsman have been lost through attrition.

The City Council were offering the lease on the Phoenix but are now happy to sell the freehold. There have been interested parties looking to reopen the pub in recent months and, hopefully, we might see the Phoenix operational again very soon. Surely if it is run as a decent free house it must have a positive future given its location.

The Rummer has even more history. Situated in a very prominent position on High Street abutting St Nicholas Market, the Rummer (not the bar with an entrance in All Saints Lane that is open for business) is Bristol’s most venerable pub.

The Rummer had the city’s first licence, dated 1241, when it traded as the Greene Lattis, and it is sited in the oldest part of the city, in the High Street, just yards from the crossroads that once formed the heart of Bristol for over a thousand years. With extensive cellars dating back to Anglo-Saxon times, the inn has played a full part in many of Bristol’s most historic events, hosting royal visitors such as Elizabeth I, Charles I and II, William III and even Cromwell during the Republic.

Politicians such as Edmund Burke made speeches from its balcony and others sparked rioting around the time of the Parliamentary Reform Bill when the pub lost its shutters, door frames and even part of the coach office. This had been created when the Rummer became the country’s first coaching inn when it took part in the mail coach revolution that ultimately went around the world. Poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge published his first magazine *The Watchman* from here and other major episodes of Bristol’s literary and sporting life were witnessed within.

The twentieth century wasn’t very kind to the Rummer; its Medieval



The Phoenix

façade was bricked over and for many years of its recent past the High Street elevation has been boarded up and ‘improved’ with banal graffiti. The pub had a post-war renaissance under the Berni Brothers banner, when they used it as one of their many flagship Bristol inns, but since that time the building has been down on its luck. Now is the time to give the inn another renaissance, using it as a cornerstone for a revival of this whole area of Bristol which surely deserves another chance given its history and location.

Fingers crossed, then, that both pubs will reopen very soon!

Peter Bridle and Mark Steeds
Bristol CAMRA Pubs Group



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CAMRA calling – in Thornbury!

During the early months of this year there has been a surge in membership of CAMRA in the area to the north of Bristol locally recognised as the Severn Vale. The members there, though, felt a bit remote from the main membership of the Bristol & District branch and set in train a request for a sub-branch to cover this area, so that their enthusiasm and energies could be directed to a more local area, avoiding the need for travelling long distances to meetings and events.

The sub-branch comprises roughly the area bounded by Thornbury in the north, Severn Beach in the south, the River Severn in the west and the M5 in the east.

The Bristol & District branch agreed to this request and, at a meeting in Thornbury, Neil Halsall was elected chair and Dave Cox the secretary of this new sub-branch. The first proper meeting of the new Severn Vale sub-branch was held on 19th May at the Anchor in Thornbury. Further meetings have been arranged for 16th June at the Plough in Pilning and 21st July at the Fox, Easter Compton, both starting at 8 o'clock. Both members and visitors will be welcome.

Already there are plans being made for social events including brewery visits.



CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE

Stood in the middle at the back is the new chair of the Severn Vale sub-branch of CAMRA, Neil Halsall, and stood with his arms crossed on the left is Dave Cox, the new secretary.

The picture was taken outside the Anchor Inn, Thornbury, where their first meeting was held.

Bristol & District branch exceeds 2,000 members!

It only seems like yesterday (well, 2002) that the branch was very excited to have reached 1,000 members, which itself only took us a bit over 30 years to achieve. Following a further boost to recruitment at the Bristol Beer Festival in March 2010, we are pleased to announce that the membership of the Bristol & District branch has succeeded in doubling in well under a decade and now stands at around 2,100.

Doubtless this in part reflects national campaigning and the wider awareness and promotion of CAMRA and real ale. However, it also reflects the local success of branch activities such as the Bristol Beer Festival and our very own *Pints West* newsletter. Then there are the many pub survey trips and brewery visits and of course our Pubs and BADRAG sub-groups. There is even a thriving sub-branch in Weston-super-Mare and the beginnings of another in Thornbury.

No one should kid themselves that the need to campaign is over, but quality real ale is plainly now very popular and we have many excellent pubs and breweries in our branch area as testament to this. Members are always welcome to get involved in branch activities and we encourage them to take part in the meetings and events listed in the diary pages of *Pints West* and *What's Brewing* and on our website www.camrabristol.org.uk.

Richard Brooks, Branch Chairman

Thornbury Pubs

Book review – *Thornbury Pubs* by George Ford. Amberley Publishing. £12.99.

I was aware of the launch of this book some weeks before it became available and I waited with anticipation to get my copy. Though I am not from, nor have I ever lived in Thornbury, I spent a lot of time in the 1980's and '90's drinking there with a crowd of friends and more latterly with my wife who is a "Thornbury girl".

Back in those days there were nine pubs trading in Thornbury and I am pleased to say that the same ones still trade today. The pubs hold many memories for me so as soon as I obtained my book I jumped straight into the present-day pubs section. There is a lot of history contained in nine pubs in an old market town and at first I thought there were gaps in the time period that they have served. However, I became more forgiving as it emerges that pubs such as the Swan date from the late 1400's and the Anchor from the late 1600's so to capture detailed chronological accounts for these two pubs alone could fill two books in their own right. There are some fascinating facts around the current pubs such as the naming of the Plough, the explanation for the evolved sprawling arrangement of the Knot of Rope and the on-going controversy around the windows of the Royal George. Who knows about the connection of the Full Moon in Stokes Croft to Thornbury's pubs and town? Well it's all recorded in this book.

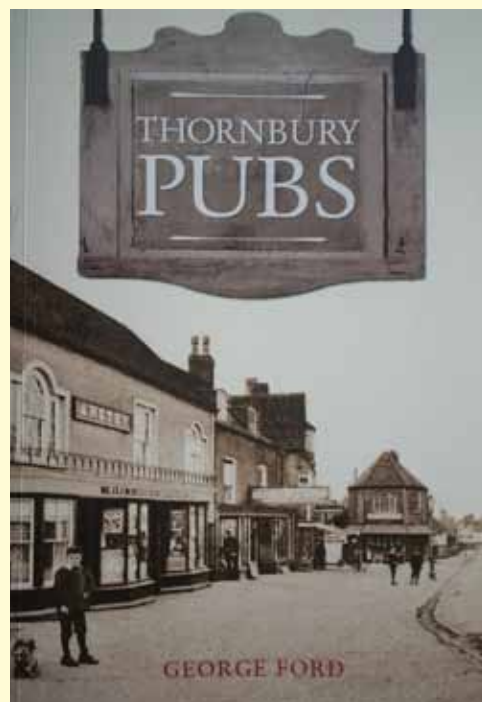
I then returned to the beginning of the book and read the sections on brewing, legislation and licensing, local social and industrial history and the Temperance movement. The changes in the breweries' supply of beer during the second world war was completely unknown to me and represents an intriguing deviation from one's expectation. Further, the mention of breweries such as Arnold, Perrett, Cheltenham, Ashton Gate and Daniel Sykes whets the nostalgic appetite.

Sections three and four are about bygone pubs and other outlets. With nine lost pubs in the high street alone plus a further known seven

in close proximity, Thornbury certainly has a strong history of pub culture. And then there are a further half a dozen of unknown location. When one considers the small population of the town in pre-war years the number of pubs trading at any one time is an exciting prospect. It is interesting to note that most of the bygone pubs were in buildings that still exist in other uses today. Then follows an historic description of off-sales establishments and beerhouses, and several appendices of supporting information.

I soon warmed to this book and thoroughly enjoyed reading it and I could easily relate to it with my (limited) knowledge of the town. But the content would appeal to anybody with an interest in pubs, social history, breweries or licensing trends.

Mike Jackson



Prize Crossword

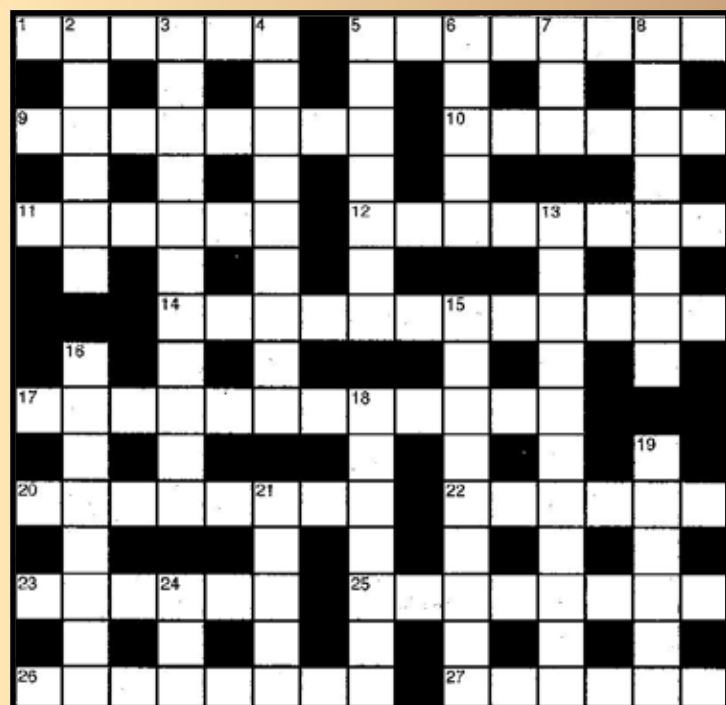
ACROSS

1. Signs of intelligence at the brewery (6)
5. Brunette's headline feature at Bath Ales by the sound of it (4,4)
9. Pickled egg served in the pub, or, conversely, an alternative eatery (5,3)
10. Local ale drinkers' wicked newspaper? (6)
11. Phone for Yetman's fruity beer (6)
12. Bartrams 'Little Green Man' can be beastly (8)
14. I deal a plain 'E' blend for a classic beer style (5,4,3)
17. Large brandies and rum served up at Wimbledon? (5, 7)
20. Brewer's Valhalla found in pony country (8)
22. Appropriate beer for the spice girl (6)
23. A first Conservative PM is served with pub food (6)
25. Cunning plan for a true gin I mix (8)
26. Gran's pig upsets the brewing process (8)
27. 3 down's experience in the gents' toilet

DOWN

2. What a badly-managed pub or a very successful beer festival might do (3,3)
3. A frequent user of toilets, perhaps in Europe (11)
4. Replacement looked after the bar where the geometric lines met (9)
5. Some bender on Davenport. Not in this rare car (7)
6. A bit of a hero binge drinker was a thievin' hoodie! (5)
7. Homer Simpson's carrier for Duff beer. Doh! Spilt it! (3)
8. Crashed Lada. Beer upset. Quite understandable (8)
13. Drunken senile aunts are not needed (11)
15. Predator likely to be seen later at Ascot Ales (9)
16. One's final drink is placed overhead (8)
18. Getting the barmaid's bra off could result in her ruination! (7)
19. Exude first lager brewed to be very special (2,4)
21. Accused's cast-iron excuse for a brief libation at the first inn (5)
24. Spoil pedigree brewers by removing more than half the body (3)

Crossword set by Pete Taberner



Win a copy of 'Thornbury Pubs'

The first correct crossword selected at random after the end of July wins a copy of the book **Thornbury Pubs** by George Fords, worth £12.99. Send your entries to the editor, address inside the back page, before then.

News from Bath Ales

Rare Hare, that most elusive of Bath Ales brews, sold out in record time this year. It was available in cask as usual (and for the first time also in bottle) and according to Karin Ashwell of Bath Ales it seems to have gone down a storm: "As the comments from people who sampled it at the Bristol Beer Festival and in the pubs were so favourable, it is very likely that we'll brew it again next year."

Bath Ales are running a number of promotions in their pubs at the moment. Things on offer include what they term a "Hare Cut" promotion. This runs from 5pm to 7pm Mondays to Fridays at the **Hare on the Hill** in Kingsdown, the **Live and Let Live** in Frampton Cotterell and the **Swan** in Swineford, and is described as "a special offer that will benefit your bank balance, not your barnet." At the **Hope Pole** in Bath the offer is four small plates for £10 and a free pint or glass of wine on your next visit on Monday to Friday lunchtimes. Also in Bath, the **Salamander** is offering two courses for £10 Sunday to Thursday, 6.30pm to 9pm. Back in Bristol, the **Wellington** on Gloucester Road is doing a breakfast promotion Saturdays and Sundays from 9am. The deal is: "Buy a full breakfast and you'll receive a free latte or cappuccino. Conditions for this offer are that you bring a copy of the latest issue of the Bath Ales online newsletter 'Hare and Now'. You can subscribe on the home page of the Bath Ales website at www.bathales.com."

The annual Welly Fest (as the Wellington's beer festival has become known) is scheduled for the May Bank Holiday Weekend, just as Pints West is at the printers, so we can't give you advance warning of that. However, you might just catch the annual Bath Ales beer festival at Bath Racecourse on Friday 4th June, offering a great choice of real ales and ciders plus racing followed by live music.

The Bath Ales annual 'Biking Bonanza' in aid of the Frenchay After Burns Children's Club will be held on Saturday 19th June. Anyone can join this fun, family-friendly cycle from either Bristol or Bath to the brewery in Warmley, where there will be refreshments, food and live music by popular local band Bill Smarme and the Bizness. Sign up online or in any of the Bath Ales pub. It costs just £10 to join. Everyone will receive a t-shirt and refreshment, and proceeds will be donated to FAB. Last year they managed to raise £4,000 and they hope to beat their target this year.

If you want to find out how the likes of Gem and Barnstormer are

brewed, Bath Ales run brewery tours during the week where you can learn all about the process, see a short film about the history of Bath Ales and sample the beers themselves. Check with the brewery for details.

Fabulous food and quality quaffing at a Bath Ales pub near you

The Hare on the Hill
Kingsdown Bristol BS2 8LX

The Hop Pole
Upper Bristol Road Bath BS1 3AR

The Live and Let Live
Frampton Cotterell Bristol BS36 2EF

The Salamander
3 St John's Street Bath BA1 2JL

The Swan
Bath Road Swineford BS30 6LN

The Wellington
Gloucester Road Bristol BS7 8UR

Graze Bar & Chophouse
63 Queen Square Bristol BS1 4JZ

For further pub details and to
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bath ales

Watering Holes in the Desert

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Socials Review

Over the past three months, the Weston sub-branch has enjoyed an excellent programme of socials. In February, our monthly event was a crawl starting in the Hotwells district of Bristol city centre. Part of the A370 was closed due to an accident which caused havoc with the buses, resulting in us arriving later than expected and meant that we had reduced time for drinking. However, we visited four pubs which were all excellent – the Bath Ales-owned **Merchants Arms**, the Bristol Beer Factory-owned **Grain Barge**, then two of the city's best freehouses, the **Bag O'Nails** and the **Three Tuns**. All of these are very highly recommended.

The main real ale event in the area in March was, inevitably, the ever-wonderful **Bristol Beer Festival**. Several local CAMRA members helped with the running of the festival which was good to see. Equally it was good to see so many ale drinkers from Weston visiting the festival. Most of these are never seen at CAMRA socials in Weston. A message to you if you are reading this: please come and join us at any of our events, you will be very welcome.

For our March social we had a skittles evening at the **White Hart**, with the motley CAMRA crew taking on the Weston Lions. This was an excellent evening, with Adnams Dry Irish Stout and Beer Rocks Spring Crazy helping things along, together with food kindly laid on by the pub. The result was, fittingly, a tie. If you are in town, the White Hart is always worth a look.

The week commencing 29 March was CAMRA's National Cask Ale Week. To help mark this event in Weston, our very own Robin "Born To Be" Wild organised a crawl of some of the town centre's finest pubs on Good Friday. The trek began at the **Regency** at midday. The Regency really did themselves proud for National Cask Ale Week. No pub in town did more to support the event – and they were well rewarded for their efforts. Four of their regular beers – Butcombe Bitter, Courage Best, Flowers IPA and Bath Ales Barnstormer – were dropped for the week, being replaced by a range of guest beers over the course of the week.



Tom at the Regency

These were Adnams Bitter, Slaters Craic, Batemans Eggs B, Timothy Taylor Landlord, St Austell Proper Job, Hook Norton Old Hooky, Ringwood Fortyniner and Bath Ales Rare Hare. Landlord Mark Short said that he had kept Bass on, in case his regular customers found all the normal beers being removed as a step too far. He needn't have worried, reporting that the mini festival had proved to be a great success. Most of the guests had been polished off halfway through the week. Mark had held back the Slaters Craic until midday on the Thursday, in order for it to be available for our CAMRA visit on the Friday (Robin had mentioned to him that he had not seen this before and was keen to try it).

Unfortunately, the cask had been drunk dry within four hours – largely due to the arrival of a group of Hockey supporters in town for a tournament.

Mark was so pleased with the success of the initiative that he says he plans to do similar for every week that runs into a Bank Holiday weekend!

We left the busy Regency and walked across town to **RAW** on St James Street. We enjoyed Moor Merlins Magic and superb Hoppiness (6.3% ABV) straight from the cask. Unfortunately RAW proved to be a short-lived venture and has now closed.

Happily the early morning rain had completed cleared up and we enjoyed a pleasant stroll along the seafront, past the new pier rapidly taking shape, before cutting inland and up to the **Criterion**. Since taking over the then-closed pub a year ago, Paul Sprackman has turned the Criterion into a cracking little pub. Features include a dartboard, bar billiards, table skittles, TV, papers (and Pints Wests) to read and an open fireplace. The beers are good too. There is usually a mix of hand-pump and straight-from-the-cask. Theakston's Old Peculier is a regular visitor and much enjoyed by everyone who went for it. Others had Bath Ales Gem and RCH Pitchfork, which were also in very good condition. After a few beers and a few games we made the long, ten-yard trek across the road to the **Raglan**.



Weston CAMRA members undertake the arduous journey from the Criterion to the Raglan

As with the Criterion, the Raglan was also quite busy for mid-afternoon, which was good to see. The Good Beer Guide-listed Raglan does not have any permanent ales, with the range constantly changing – albeit there are a few breweries that are regularly featured, such as O'Hanlon's, Cotleigh and Moor. We enjoyed the O'Hanlon's Red and Gold and Castle from the Taunton brewery.

Next stop was the **White Hart**, tucked away on Palmer Row. Courage Directors was the ale on offer here, which felt a bit of a comedown from some of the day's earlier delights.

A short walk to the **Red Admiral**, opposite Tesco's, another pub that goes to a lot of effort to provide something for everyone – a range of ales, good value food, telly, pool table, papers and a range of magazines to read. There is also occasional live music. Most people went for Skinners Cornish Knocker. The regular Butcombe Bitter and Ringwood Best were also available.

I had to bid farewell at this point, while those left headed, inevitably, in the direction of **Off The Rails** to finish off the day.

This little jaunt helped to demonstrate the number of different beers



Freddie at the Raglan

available at any one time in the town centre. There were 20 different beers on across the seven pubs visited and we didn't get to the **Dragon**, which would probably have had seven or eight more. Weston is definitely not the desert it used to be.



Our regular third Wednesday social in April was one of our annual short trips to Worle. This started at the **Summerhouse**, close to Sainsbury's on the roundabout where the New Bristol Road starts. This is the first time that the local CAMRA branch has visited this pub. The visit followed very good feedback from a local CAMRA member and we were not disappointed. Although perceived by many to be a food-dominated pub (and the two main meals for £10 deal certainly makes it very popular both at lunchtimes and evenings), the management is clearly also very interested in its beer offering. The pub is Marston's owned and has achieved Cask Marque accreditation for the quality of its cellarman'ship. There are always three beers on offer – Marston's Pedigree and two other changing beers from breweries that Marston's have taken over in recent years, i.e. Banks, Brakspears, Jennings, Ringwood and Wychwood. The two "guests" on the night were Ringwood Boondoggle and Marston's Dragon Tale. Both were in very good condition. There are a large number of pumpclips behind the bar from previous ales that have been available and there were Marston's-produced booklets on the tables entitled "Cask Beer – everything you need to know." This included a promotional piece on National Cask Ale week, descriptions of the guest beers for the month, descriptions of different beer styles and guidance on beer tasting. All in all, a heartening visit, with all the handpumps in

frequent use during our hour there. I have been there on other occasions and can vouch that the beer quality seems to be consistently good.

A ten-minute walk took us to the **Woodspring** on Worle High Street. This is another pub that has been awarded Cask Marque. We had the Butcombe Bitter and Moor Merlin's Magic and both were in good nick.

We finished the evening at the **Lamb**. Only one beer here – Butcombe Bitter – but it is always in superb condition at the Lamb. In Mr Wild's words, "If Butcombe was as good everywhere as it is here, I would drink much more of it."

Upcoming socials include a visit to the Old Inn at Hutton and a pub crawl in Taunton visiting five pubs. All are welcome.

Tim Nickolls

Weston Whispers

A couple of landmark pubs in Weston town centre have been closed for some time – the **Britannia**, close to the Playhouse, and the **Major From Glengarry** on Upper Church Road. The latter is owned by Wadworth and at the time of writing there are rumours that Freddie from the nearby Raglan may be taking it on.

The **Observatory** is another Marston's-owned pub in Worle that has been awarded Cask Marque and seems to be keen on its real ales. Like the Summerhouse, it has three beers on offer from the Marston's stable. I particularly enjoyed the Wychwood Paddy's Tout, brought in partly to coincide with St Patrick's Day, and sold at a very attractive £2 a pint. The Observatory is very different from the Summerhouse. There is little emphasis on food, with the focus on being a genuine community pub, with darts and pool teams. If you haven't sought it out, tucked away in North Worle, give it a try.

Good news from the **Windsor Castle**. The Courage Best is being replaced with the locally-produced Butcombe Bitter, which will sit alongside the Sharp's Doom Bar and Greene King Old Speckled Hen. The Windsor is a great venue for watching footie – bear this in mind for the World Cup.

Tim Nickolls



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A Round with Robin

This year at the **Tewkesbury Winter Ales Festival** on the first weekend of February I was the only person from Weston-super-Mare attending, so it was good to meet up with fellow drinkers from Bristol and Cardiff that I meet at other festivals. Here the *Thornbridge Hark Winter Warmer* (4.8%) proved such a complex beer that sipping it was not enough to get all the flavour; it has to be washed around the mouth to get caraway, coriander, and orange flavours whereas ginger is only in the aftertaste. This was only one of 12 excellent beers that I tried with the *Pitstop Monaco Winter IPA* (5.5%) being my personal favourite.

At the **Raglan Arms** in Weston this last quarter year, there have been some excellent bands playing there, accompanied by Cotleigh, Stonehenge, O'Hanlon's and Taunton Ales. The best of the bands, Parrington Jackson, was one that I first saw at the regular Saturday acoustic sessions at the **Seven Stars** in Bristol, which pub, as you will read elsewhere in Pints West, has been going from strength to strength. Another band to please at Raglan Arms was bluesy Ely Plains, and also the young band Tin Pan Gang who were very vigorous.

In early March six members of the Weston-super-Mare sub-branch visited the *Moor* and *Stowey* breweries on an excellent day out with the Bristol contingent. Justin at Moor was on great form, as were his beers *Revival* (3.8%) and *Merlin's Magic* (4.3%), and from there we went to the **Devonshire Arms** at Long Sutton for lunch, where I had a glass of *Burrow Hill* cider which was most refreshing. The coach then traversed most of Somerset to get to Nether Stowey where we waited in the **Rose & Crown** to be called in small groups to visit the tiny brewery. I also went to the other two pubs in Nether Stowey, the **George** and, best of all, the **Ancient Mariner**. We all finished the day at the (now closed) **Royal Artillery Arms** at West Huntspill where *Moor Winter Blend* (4.1%) and *Moor Peat Porter* (4.5%) were served to perfection. On our return to Bristol it seemed logical to three of us to pop into the **Cornubia** for *Quantock Stout* (4.5%), and then join the rest at the **Seven Stars** where I had *Summer Wine Tiberius* (4.2%), and a half pint of the *Battledown Four Kings* (7.2%) before returning to home by train.

The following week was the **Bristol Beer Festival**, which no doubt will be covered elsewhere, and I note that last year I felt tired doing four sessions. This year was more invigorating, though I did two set-up sessions, and three stewarding and bar sessions. In the absence of last year's favourite beer, *Downton Chocolate Orange*, I tried the *Amber* and

Cambridge Moonshine versions of Chocolate Orange but they weren't quite as good. My favourite this year was the *Milk Street Bobbled* (5.9%) but there were many others that were very pleasant!

In Weston-super-Mare we had a new real ale outlet, though it has subsequently closed, called the **RAW** bar in St James's Street, which had been selling the *Moor* and *Bath Ales* beers direct from the barrel. On Good Friday I led a tour of the Weston-super-Mare pubs that have cask ales starting from the **Regency** which had a bigger choice than usual, and where a firkin of Slaters Craic was sold in four hours the previous day. From there we went to **RAW**, **Criterion**, **Raglan Arms**, **White Hart**, **Red Admiral** and **Off The Rails**. The local paper covered the event which is always good from a CAMRA point of view. Incidentally, the Regency plans to have another mini beer festival every Bank Holiday weekend for the foreseeable future. The first weekend in May saw five ales new to the pub including the easy-drinking *Woodforde's Sundew* (4.1%).

For the second year running I went to the **SIBA South West Festival** at Tuckers Maltings in Newton Abbot. The sun shone brightly all day Friday so I sat with Andy from Bristol and fellow drinkers from Leicestershire outside supping mostly great beers. Andy had been on the tasting panel the previous day and therefore could give us some tips. The *Forge* brewery from Hartland, near Bideford won most of the accolades, not only from the judges but also from me. *Forge IPA* (4.5%) was my favourite beer there, but the *Devon Earth*, *Lost in the Woods* (4.7%) and the *South Hams XSB* (4.2%) were also superb. It goes without surprise to add that the *Country Life*, *Moor*, *Plain* and *RCH* beers were also of exceptional quality here.

There are two local festivals I'd like to remind you about coming at around the end of July. These are the Lions second beer festival on the beach lawns at Weston-super-Mare and the Claverham village hall beer festival, which normally takes place in June but has been moved to a time when a non-summery sporting fixture will not clash with it. I hope to attend both of them.

I'd like to give a final mention to the **Eldon House** in Bristol. This pub had an excellent little beer festival on Mayday weekend with some old favourites of mine that I had last year at the Loughborough beer festival, all the ales coming from the East Midlands, Dow Bridge brewery majoring.

Robin E Wild

A million pints and a festival



Cheddar Ales, the microbrewery based in Cheddar village, has recently brewed its millionth pint. "It's a big milestone for us," says head brewer Jem Ham. "We've come a long way in a relatively short time, under some fairly challenging trading conditions." Around this time three years ago the brewery was only a few months old and was producing around 3,000 pints a week. Since then it has battled increasing taxes, cheap supermarket booze, closing pubs and, along with everyone else, the recession. But despite these challenges, Cheddar Ales is thriving, having more than doubled its output since 2006 to around 8,000 pints a week. Its beers are now a regular fixture in many pubs and it has a strong following among local beer drinkers, to whom Jem is very grateful. "We would like to thank everyone who has supported us through these early years, for their good taste, positivity and ongoing support."

The quality of the brewery's output has also often attracted attention from outside the area, and the brewery has become something of an awards-magnet, culminating last year in its first international prize – a gold medal for its bottled porter, Totty Pot. "It's nice for us to receive such recognition," said Jem, "but where these awards really help is in making people realise that produce from their local area can be world-class." And it is still very much the local market that Cheddar Ales is interested in, with no plans to expand beyond Somerset at the moment. "We've sold a million pints in the area now, but that really is just a fraction of what we can achieve here. We're happy to stay local, keep our standards high and wait for more people to discover us."

One way to get to know more about Cheddar Ales is by visiting its annual beer festival, held at the brewery in June. It's a great opportunity to meet the team and to have a look around the brewery itself. On offer will be a range of the brewery's own beers, including its elusive special brews, and around 40 beers from other microbreweries around the UK. "We source beers on the basis of their success at CAMRA and SIBA beer festivals over the past three years," says John Magill, "So for the beer lover it's paradise – every beer you try will be a champion in its class. Last year was our first attempt at a beer festival and it went really well. We had almost a thousand people visit us over the weekend and they practically drank us dry. This year we're looking to improve it further, with more entertainment, more fun for families and a wider range of drinks. It'll be bigger, better and beerier than ever before, and hopefully should set us well on our way to brewing our next millionth pint."

The beer festival will run from the 18th to 20th June and beers will generally be priced at £2.50 a pint and £1.25 a half. There are camping facilities if you want to make a weekend of it. There's no need to buy festival tickets in advance, just turn up and pay on the door, although if you want to camp you will need to book a pitch. There should even be a free minibus service running up and down the road between Cheddar and Draycott.

For more information on the festival, including camping arrangements, contact the brewery's web site at www.cheddarales.co.uk, email webmail@cheddarales.co.uk or phone them on 01934 744193.

SIBA Beer Festival at Tucker's Maltings

One thing everyone agreed on at this year's SIBA Beer Festival at Tucker's Maltings in Newton Abbot was that the standard was higher than ever. The festival takes place every spring and is an opportunity for brewers from all over the South West to promote their beers. It is very much a social occasion as well, with many brewers turning up in person, with some of them manning the bar. It is also a great opportunity for publicans, punters and beer festival organisers to sample the latest offerings from established breweries as well as trying out beers from new breweries.

The first day of the festival is given over to a blind-tasting competition, with knowledgeable and experienced panels of judges sampling a wide range of beer styles and strengths, with the winner from each category going forward to a 'beer of the festival' competition. Once the winners have been announced, the doors are thrown open to the public, who can then see how far they agree with the judges' verdicts.

The overall winner this year came from Forge Brewery, which opened in 2008 at Hartland, just about the most inaccessible part of Devon – which probably accounts for most people not having come across it. Forge also picked up two other awards, suggesting that there will be an unprecedented demand for their ales in the coming months. Having sampled Forge beers a few times at the Tom Cobby Inn at Spreyton, I was not that surprised by their success, and the Litehouse Bitter which took the Gold award was a worthy winner.

With so many breweries in the running, it was inevitable that most did not feature in the final reckoning. Only one Bristol brewery – Arbor Ales – was rated, with no less than four of its beers



Peter Kerr presents Jon Comer (right) of Arbor Ales with one of his four awards

picking up awards – a phenomenal achievement. As for Somerset breweries, Yeovil Ales Posh IPA was overall runner-up, Moor's Revival and Northern Star both scooped a silver, as did Cottage Goldrush and Exmoor Beast, while Isle of Avalon's Jake's Mild picked up a bronze. Two awards went to Wiltshire, both in the speciality beers category: Wadworth Swordfish was awarded a gold and Box Steam Funnel Blower won a bronze.

Andrew Swift

The full list of results is as follows:

OVERALL CHAMPION

Gold	Forge Brewery Litehouse	4.3%
Silver	Yeovil Ales Posh IPA	5.4%
Bronze	Dartmoor Jail Ale	4.8%

MILDS (up to 4%)

Gold	Otter Mild	3.8%
Silver	Arbor Ales Mild West	3.6%
Bronze	Isle of Avalon Jake's Mild	4.0%

BITTERS & PALE ALES (up to 4%)

Gold	Dorset Brewery Co Ammonite	3.8%
Silver	Moor Beer Co Revival	3.8%
Bronze	Forge Brewery Maid in Devon	4.0%

BEST BITTERS (4.1- 4/5%)

Gold	Forge Brewery Litehouse	4.3%
Silver	Moor Beer Co Northern Star	4.1%
Bronze	Teignworthy Beachcomber	4.5%

PREMIUM BITTERS (4.6-4.9%)

Gold	Dartmoor Jail Ale	4.8%
Silver	Cottage Brewing Co Goldrush	5.0%
Bronze	Forge Brewery Dreckly	4.8%

STRONG BITTERS (5.1-5.5%)

Gold	Yeovil Ales Posh IPA	5.4%
Silver	Bays Devon Dumpling	5.1%
Bronze	Palmer's Tally Ho	5.5%

STRONG ALES (over 5.6%)

Gold	Country Life Devonshire 10der	10.0%
Silver	Exmoor Beast	6.6%
Bronze	Keltek Beheaded	7.6%

PORTERS, STRONG MILDS, OLD ALES & STOUTS

Gold	Arbor Ales Festival Mild	5.2%
Silver	Arbor Ales Oyster Stout	4.6%
Bronze	Penpont Porter	5.8%

SPECIALITY BEERS

Gold	Wadworth Swordfish	5.0%
Silver	Arbor Ales Hunny Beer	4.2%
Bronze	Box Steam Funnel Blower	4.5%

BOTTLED BEERS

Gold	Quantock Stout	4.5%
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BOTTLED BITTERS (up to 4.9%)

Gold	Skinnors Cornish Knocker	4.5%
------	--------------------------	------

BOTTLED BITTERS (over 5%)

Gold	St Austell Admiral's Ale	5.0%
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BOTTLED GOLD BEERS

Gold	St Austell Proper Job	5.5%
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BOTTLED SPECIALITY BEERS

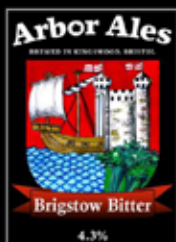
Gold	Downton Honey Blonde	4.3%
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BOTTLED PORTERS, MILDS, OLD ALES & STOUTS

Gold	Quantock Stout	4.5%
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BADRAG - Bristol and District Rare Ales Group

Terrific support for mild ale

The Mild Trail Passport Scheme, as reported in the last Pints West, has received enthusiastic support from both the trade and drinkers. Our thanks go to Ed Lobbett of the Bank Tavern who bore the bulk of the work involved in compiling and getting the passports, posters and scatter leaflets printed, sourcing the self-inking stamps and distributing them all to almost fifty pubs! The over one thousand pound cost has been underwritten by Dawkins Ales and Taverns, the Bank Tavern and the New Inn at Mayhill. CAMRA is most grateful for this very generous support, and also to the support of those who took advertising space in the passports, donated prizes and took the chance of stocking this increasingly rare style of ale, to the trail leaders who had to do 'dry runs' to ensure support of licensees and ensure that there would be mild ale available on the day, and of course to those who have been drinking it. This year, following suggestions from the trade, the whole mild promotion has been spread over two months, mid April to mid June, rather than just the month of May.

Dockside Mild Trail

The first trail took place on Thursday April 22nd starting at 6pm in the **Orchard** where *Arbor Mild West* was enjoyed. This was followed by a walk to the **Nova Scotia** for *Church End Gravediggers Mild*, to the **Adam and Eve** (no mild on the night due to a communication breakdown), and to the **Bag O'Nails** for *Brass Monkey Tamarind Mild* and *Teignworthy Martha's Strong Mild*, ending at the **Three Tuns** for some more *Arbor Mild West*. We are grateful to Colin Postlethwaite who took the lead at the last minute because some people, including the planned trail leader, were delayed getting back from the national CAMRA Members' Weekend in the Isle of Man due to flight restrictions caused by the volcanic dust cloud! This may have contributed also to the comparatively low turnout of ten stalwarts who did this trail, with four more doing it the following Sunday evening.

Centre Mild Trail

No less than thirty-two supporters turned out for the second trail on Saturday May 1st, kicking off at noon in the **Knights Templar** where unfortunately no mild ales were available. Next up was the **Bridge Inn** where *Arbor Mild West* was enjoyed, followed by the **Cornubia** which fielded *Hidden Mayhem* and *Mild Cheddar*, the **Seven Stars** had *Severn Vale's Monumentale* and *Arbor Mild West*. The **Commercial Rooms** excelled and fielded no less than five milds: *Hook Norton SDM*, *Nethergate Mary's Ruby Mild*, *Otter Mild*, *Rudgate Ruby Mild* and *Phoenix Black Shadow*. The one-third-pint glasses enabled a number of these to be enjoyed. The **Three Sugar Loaves** had a beautiful drop of *Theakston's Mild* and the trail ended at the **Bank Tavern** with *Arbor Mild West*. Many thanks to the trail leader for the day, Ed Lobbett. Radio Bristol's Ali Vowles gave us a mention on her Weekend West show for this trail and the next one.

East Bristol Mild Trail

The third trail, on Saturday May 8th, had to be re-routed to end in St Werburghs because we realised too late that the Duke of York doesn't open until 4pm. The number of trailers was less than the previous year, totalling seventeen. Some ate at the first pub at noon taking advantage of the 20% discount on food for that occasion only, negotiated especially for us by Helen Bull who capably manages the Wetherspoon pub, the **Staple Hill Oak**, where *Caledonian Mild Mayhem* and *Rudgate Ruby Mild* were enjoyed. A short bus trip followed to the **Van Dyke Forum** which fielded *Nethergate Mary's Ruby Mild*, *Otter Mild* and *Rudgate Ruby Mild*. From the bus stop outside we went to the **Masons Arms** at Stapleton with *Hidden Mayhem* and *Otter Mild* to quench our thirsts. The number 4 bus took us to Stapleton Road railway station and the **Sugar Loaf** with *Cotswold Spring's Old Sodbury Mild* on tap. Next was the **Chelsea Inn** with *Arbor Festival Mild*, *Jennings Dark Mild* and *Keystone Dark Mild*. Next we walked to Wetherspoon's **St Georges Hall** at Redfield where *Nethergate Mary's Ruby Mild* and *Leeds Midnight Bell* were enjoyed, followed by a short walk to Arbor Ales' brewery tap, the **Old Stillage**, where brewer Jon Comer treated us all to a pint, with *Arbor Festival Mild* and *Mild West* on offer. The long drag to St Werburghs was undertaken by shanks' pony, bus and taxi, arriving at the **Duke of**

York to enjoy *Arbor Ales Festival Mild*, and finally we walked to the original Dawkins Tavern, the **Miners Arms**, where *Otter Mild* and *Rudgate Ruby Mild* were available. Thanks to the trail leader for the day, Henry Davies, who not only ensured that we had a minute-by-minute itinerary to ensure we caught our buses, but also entertained us on the pianos in the Chelsea and Miners.

Bedminster Mild Trail

Colin Postlethwaite was again a trail leader for the fourth trail on Thursday May 13th, one that attracted twenty-two trailers. We assembled at 7pm in the **Tobacco Factory** where there was a gravity-fed cask of a one-off *Bristol Beer Factory Born to be Mild* for us to enjoy. Next, at the **Hen & Chicken**, *Arbor Mild West* was enjoyed, as was an impromptu visit by some of the party to the very high-ceilinged basement that houses the pub cellar. The **Robert Fitzharding** was next on our walking tour with four milds available: *Elgoods Black Dog*, *Hook Norton SDM (Special Dark Mild)*, *Leeds Midnight Bell* and *Rudgate Ruby Mild*, followed by a short walk to the *Assembly* where *Marston's Merrie Monk* was the mild on offer ... and a permanent BADRAG style ale on the bar is *Theakston's Old Peculier*!

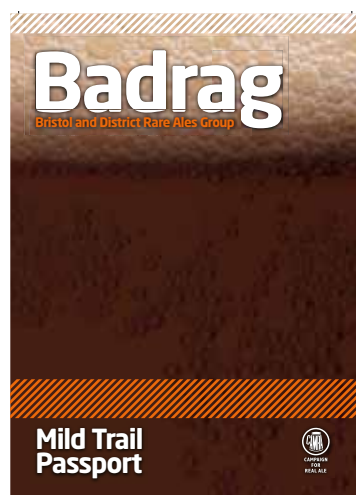
Clifton Mild Trail

The fifth trail on Saturday May 15th, led by Pete Bridle, broke all records for a BADRAG and event. It was supported by no less than fifty-three people at one point or another. Noon was the start time at the **Vittoria** on Whiteladies Road where *Jennings Tom Fool Mild*, **Arbor Mild West** and *Abbey Ales Mild* were on offer (as well as Pieminister pies). There was then a short walk to the **Victoria** with *Three Castles Mad Spring Mild* and *Arbor Mild West* on offer. Next was a longish walk to another Dawkins pub, the **Portcullis**, which had three mild for us: *Great Heck Sweet Mild of Mine*, *Great Orme Welsh Black* and *Kelham Island Night Moves*. The **Lansdown** was next with *Arbor Mild West* on hand pump and *Arbor Festival Mild* dispensed directly from a cask at the back of the bar. (Also available was *Severn Vale Session*, a low-strength bitter that is a regular there and is very similar to some light milds.) The **Quinton House** was busy with people watching football and had *Arbor Mild West* for us. The beautifully refurbished **Eldon House** fielded *Morgan's Mild* and *Bonum Mild* from the *Dow Bridge Brewery* in the East Midlands. The trail officially ended at the **Hope & Anchor** where *Highgate Dark Mild* and *Keystone Dark Mild* were on offer. (For those that had not yet had their fill, visits to the nearby Bag O'Nails and Three Tuns provided yet more mild.)

Weston-super-Mare Trail

The sixth trail on Wednesday May 19th was a visit to the seaside, to join up with Tim Nickolls and other members of the Weston sub-branch. The **Criterion** was the official start with *Mild Cheddar* available straight from a cask behind the bar. (*Theakston's Old Peculier* was also on tap here.) Next up was the **White Hart** with *Arbor Mild West*. The **Dragon Inn**, a Wetherspoon pub, had no less than four milds on tap in the form of *Moles Double MM Mild*, *Elgood's Black Dog*, *Thwaite's Highwayman* and *Cottleigh Nutcracker*. A short stroll to the **Red Admiral** followed where a nice drop of *Caledonian Mild Mayhem* awaited us. The final stop of the evening was **Off The Rails** at the train station (handy for the return journey for those from Bristol). Here we were treated to *Taylor's Pinnacle Mild*. (RCH Hewish Mild was due to come on when that one finished.)

As Pints West went to press we still had two trails scheduled that will be reported on in the next issue, namely the **Kingsdown** and **South Gloucestershire** trails. You may read this in time to book a seat on the coach for the latter trail which takes place on Saturday June



19th, taking in the Cross Hands at Winterbourne Down, New Inn at Mayhill, Lamb at Iron Acton, Beaufort Arms at Hawkesbury Upton, Salutation at Ham and Inn on the Green at Horfield, returning to central Bristol at about 7pm. (Contact Laurie Gibney on 07504 336404 or email badcamrasocials@blueyonder.co.uk.)

It isn't just about the aforementioned trail days though. All the pubs had milds on for a period of time, many for the whole two-month period. Trailers could (and still can if you're reading this in early June) visit any of the pubs in the scheme at any time and collect their stamps (remember, stamps mean prizes). And many of the pubs had a wider range of milds over the period that mentioned on the particular trail days above.

Laurie Gibney

Apologies to the Three Sugar Loaves and the Lansdown that had half-pint symbols against their entries in the passport instead of full-pint ones to indicate that they were stocking mild for the full two months, and to the Lansdown for not receiving a stamp with their pack.

Other BADRAG news

On Thursday 11th March, the **Portcullis** in Clifton was filled with BADRAG supporters who enjoyed nine examples of rare ales styles. Others drank them dry during the following weekend!

The April monthly social gathering was held at the **Royal Air Forces Association** clubhouse in Westbury-on-Trym by invitation of Phil Lowndes, the chairman and his committee. Unfortunately attempts to source a mild ale were not fruitful, but the fifteen BADRAG supporters present enjoyed Uley Pigs Ear (5% ABV), a light golden-coloured "Strong IPA" that had little bitterness and drank like some barley wines. Also available and enjoyed were Uley Hogshead Pale Ale (3.5%), Wadworth's George and the Dragon (4.5%), St Austell Tribute (4.2%) and Bass (4.4%), all at £2.40 to £2.50 per pint. Five real ales for a club, all in good condition, was remarkable. They have a way of encouraging members to support real ale – they run a 'Cask Ale Club' where members buy 20-pint cards for £40 that offer about 50p discount per pint!

Thursday June 10th is the date for our annual BADRAG review meeting – 7.30pm for an 8pm prompt start – upstairs in the **Cornubia**, Temple Street, Redcliffe. This is our opportunity to review the past year and plan the coming year. It is our only committee-style meeting of the year, so please come and contribute ideas. We need people to take charge of BADRAG tasks in preparation for Laurie's planned retirement from the front line next year (after five years at the helm), when he plans to spend a lot of time with his wife Mary on a canal boat.

Thursday 8th July is a BADRAG social at the **Highbury Vaults**, St Michael's Hill, Kingsdown starting at 8pm. The front snug bar has been reserved for us. The number 9 bus from Temple Meads Station or the City Centre will take you there.

Thursday 12th August is a BADRAG social from 8pm at the **Staple Hill Oak** (BS16 5HN) where you will be able to meet Steve MacDonald, the brewer at Severn Vale Brewery of Cam, Dursley. Subject to availability, Severn Vale's Session, Monumentale Mild, Severn Sins Stout and Severn Seas of Rye will be on tap. Please arrive early if you would like a cellar visit. In addition to the usual Wetherspoon's menu there may be a barbecue available for our evening.

BADRAG, the Bristol & District Rare Ales Group, is a campaigning group within the local branch of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale. Its aim is to promote the rarer styles of ale such as stouts, porters, old ales, strong milds, barley wines, milds, low-alcohol session ales, wheat beers, traditional strength IPAs and real lagers.

(www.badrag.co.uk)

First Bus number 49 or 7 are the main bus routes to Staple Hill, with a journey time from the City Centre of 30 minutes. For full details use www.Traveline.com.

And finally, we're very pleased to announce that three of Arbor Ales BADRAG style ales picked up awards at this year's South West SIBA competition held at the Tucker's Maltings beer festival in Newton Abbot. The Mild West won silver for the second year running, with Oyster Stout also winning silver. The Festival Mild, originally brewed for the 2009 Bristol Beer Festival, took gold in the same category as the Oyster Stout.

Laurie Gibney

GRANDDAD 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 Granddad?" 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 Granddad'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 Granddad, his eyes twinkling merrily. "But I reckoned his son would be."



Shine goes off the rails

If I say the word 'train' to you, what do you think of? Do you think of gleaming steam trains chuff-chuffing across the countryside, with romantic names like "The Flying Filtonian" or the "Hartcliffe Harrier", or perhaps you think of a more modern railway experience, where you sit looking at a copy of *Metro* – someone has written rude words into the intermediate Sudoku grid – while trying not to mind the child opposite kicking your shins almost, but not quite, perfectly in time with the throbbing baseline that is all you can hear from the Ipod the young woman next to you is listening to. Or maybe when I say the word 'train' you just wonder why this overweight chap just said a random word in your ear for no apparent reason?

But maybe, just maybe, we should think of the Train as a gateway to a world of previously hidden real ale treasures. The railway is environmentally much sounder than driving the car, plus you can have a couple of drinks and, perhaps best of all, get to visit some pubs you wouldn't normally see.

So, what are the best places to enjoy a good pint within an easy walk of the station?

In this issue, we'll take a look at the stations in and around the centre of Bristol. Then, in the next issue, Icelandic ash cloud permitting, we'll go further afield and visit Weston, Bath and other areas. First, let's take the train in from Clifton Down, via Redland, Montpelier, Stapleton Road and Lawrence Hill to Bristol Temple Meads, then we'll change trains, pausing only to buy a really expensive but impossibly tiny bar of chocolate from the machine, and get on the train to Bedminster.

CLIFTON DOWN RAILWAY STATION

Although the Roo Bar is actually attached to the station, and therefore more convenient than Tories and Lib Dems suddenly realising they've liked each other all along, it is not the pub I would recommend here. Of course, you have the whole of the Clifton Down strip to choose from, as well as a few pub a little further afield.



The Penny Farthing

Head up to the Whiteladies Road, and across to your right you will see the entrance to the **Penny Farthing**. It was a bank up until a decade or so ago, which was handy if you wanted to pay in your takings or organise a loan, but frankly rubbish for getting a decent pint. Nowadays it is a single-bar pub run by Wadworth (albeit with bank vault remnants on the way to the loo downstairs). On my visit, there were the usual Wadworth beers (6X, Henry's Original IPA), plus four

guest handpumps, which included their own Lily The Pink (4.0%) and the Great Western Brewery flagship brew Maiden Voyage. The Maiden Voyage was a delightfully smooth amber bitter with that dastardly habit of leaving a dry after-taste that left you wanting more. Also on offer was Weston's Traditional Scrumpy. Pop out of the Penny Farthing and turn left. Ignore all the trendy bars – well don't necessarily ignore them, you can offer them a polite nod of the head by all means, just don't have a drink in them. No, head past until you reach the tall red oasis that is the **Vittoria**. Advertised as a 'proper pub' it certainly fits that description. Nowadays a single bar (where once there were two) stretching back from the road. Courage Best, Caledonian Deuchar's IPA and Sharp's Doom Bar plus two guests on handpump on my visit. It being May when I visited, the guests were Mild West from Arbor, and Ab-



The Vittoria

bey Ales Mild. I had the Mild West, which was gorgeous, with a coffee-nut-chocolatey sort of a taste. Cider fans could always try the Symonds Founder's Reserve.

REDLAND RAILWAY STATION

Two minutes down the line you will come to Redland Railway Station. Come out of the station, pop across Redland Grove and walk along Kensington Road until you reach the **Kensington Arms**, nowadays a brightly painted and – dare I say it – quite stylish establishment. It's hard to believe this spent a time as a Rat & Carrot, or some such awful name. These days it is a pure Greene King house, with IPA, Ruddles Best and Abbot Ale on when I popped in. I would always recommend the Abbot from this choice, the others being as little light for my taste. The Abbot was in fine form when I visited, with a fruity-malt vibe going on.



The Kensington Arms

MONTPELIER RAILWAY STATION



The Cat & Wheel

This station is so close to Redland that the pubs mentioned below could quite easily be reached from Redland on foot, but writing a piece about pubs close to stations and ignoring the trains and just walking around the city defeats the object almost as much as agreeing with a woman when you talk to her, then calling her a bigot as soon as you get in the car.

So, from Montpelier Station, head down towards the Arches and you will see the **Cat & Wheel** directly opposite you. Subject to regular repaints and reinvention, the Cat & Wheel (which, by the way, is a corruption of another pub name, the Catherine Wheel) is a Moles' pub. On my visit, the Moles Best Bitter pump was turned away from the customers as if sulking. Tap Bitter was on though. Perfectly well kept but not as flavour-some as I would like. So, through the arches as if heading up the Gloucester Road, and you come to the **Bishops**, a huge sprawling table-strewn, multi-screened hotch-potch of a pub, which nonetheless offers the Greene King range of beers (IPA, Abbot Ale and Ruddles County on my visit). The third pub worth a look while you're here is the **Prince of Wales** (just a little further up on the right just past the traffic lights). This is a lovely old building, beautifully painted on the outside, but cosy on the inside. Caledonian Deuchar's IPA is complemented by the consistently excellent Bath Gem and Butcombe Bitter which, to my untrained but eager palate, seems to be much more consistently good now that it also seems less widely available. I had a pint of Gem and a Butcombe here, so was more than a little surprised not to have fallen asleep before the train got to...



The Bishops



The Prince of Wales

STAPLETON ROAD RAILWAY STATION

Now, if you 'alight' at Stapleton Road, don't go down the slip road

to, er, Stapleton Road. Oh no! While that may seem logical, it would actually be a decision more stupid than starting a Hot-Air Balloon Business in Iceland ... because you would miss an absolute gem. So, out of the station and follow the footpath south down to St Mark's Road where, immediately on your left, you will see the **Sugar Loaf**. This is a genuinely lively community pub offering some fantastic live music as well as a vision-blurring selection of ales and ciders. On my visit, The Reverend James (Brain's as is, Crown Buckley as was), Sharp's Doom Bar and Codrington Old Codger were all on handpump, as well as Avon's Gurt Port Stout. Apple-fiends could also choose from Thatcher's Cheddar Valley and Moles Black Rat traditional ciders. I sat listening to Them Crooked Vultures on the jukebox and supping Gurt Port Stout and could easily have stayed there and forgotten all about my troubles – work, the family, the injunction, everything.

LAWRENCE HILL RAILWAY STATION

Last stop before Temple Meads is Lawrence Hill. Although there are a few pubs here, your best bet is to turn left up towards St George. At 145-147 is the **Old Stillage**, acting now as brewery tap for Arbor Ales. Although Arbor Ales are becoming more widely available, they are still quite a rare treat across Bristol, and this is one of the best places to try them. They usually have four or five on tap, maybe the eminently quaffable Brigstow Bitter, or deceptively drinkable Old Knobbly. The Oyster Stout is always worth a go, and I'm a convert to the Mild West. There are also plans to sort out the garden and kitchen.

BRISTOL TEMPLE MEADS RAILWAY STATION

OK, everyone knows where Bristol Temple Meads is and, yes, it is close to the city centre so pretty much any pub in the city centre is within walking distance. Check your CAMRA Good Beer Guide 2010 for the best city centre pints. However, there are two pubs very close to the station that really are worth a visit. The first is at the bottom of the beautiful and historic approach to the station. Battle across the road to the **Reckless Engineer**. Unprepossessing from the outside,

it is an open-plan pub which is dark but not dingy. Best of all, the two real ales, Butcombe Bitter and Otter Ale, are served from barrels behind the bar!

If you exit the station to the side, and turn right to cross the river on foot, you will come to a new residential development and, on your left, the far-from-new **Barley Mow** pub. For years this pub was a run down, frankly unwelcoming place, but since the Bristol



The Sugar Loaf

Beer Factory took it over it has become transformed into a welcoming traditional pub. Expect No 7, Red and Sunrise to be available, with Red my own favourite.

BEDMINSTER RAILWAY STATION

An easy choice here for any discerning drinker. Leave the station on the Windmill Hill side and pop into the **Windmill**. This is an absolute gem of a pub, with a separate family room for the kids, fantastic pictures on the walls and a golden heron on the window shelf! Bristol Beer Factory beers here too, including the divine Bristol Stout. Not only that, but they have Gwynt y Ddraig Dog Dancer cider, as well as Maredsous Belgian Abbey Beer, Weihenstephener HefeWeissbier. Even the lager is Bath Ales Organic Freedom. If you haven't been here before, or even for a long while, get on the train to Bedminster, it is well worth the trip.



The Windmill

NEXT ISSUE: Stations from Parkway out, including all stations to Weston and Bath, plus I will try and find a decent pint near Parson Street.

Full details of all the pubs mentioned can be found on the www.britishpubguide.com web site. Landlords and regulars in these pubs are welcome to update the information on the website whenever they like.

Duncan Shine

FOSBEER

Your guide to the pubs along Bristol's Suburban Railways

It's worth mentioning here that the Friends of Bristol Suburban Railways (FOSBR) have produced a leaflet giving a flavour of some of the pubs that can be reached taking the Severn Beach Line. Details can be found on the web at bit.ly/fosbeer.

The things publicans say

Mark: "I've been in our pub for 16 years now and when we started, Heineken in the pub was £1 a pint, and supermarkets were charging 50p to 80p per pint. Now Fosters is £3.15 and Stella £3.45p, but Stella in supermarkets is only 80p per pint. How come supermarkets can avoid all of the duty and producer price rises in this time?"

"The smoking ban seems to be the point at which pubs started closing in their droves. The number of pubs in the UK at that time was about 68,000. Where are we now? 58,000? This represents a loss (conservatively, at 20 jobs per pub) of about 200,000 people from the work force – full and part time jobs. If the situation continues, and we're down to 48,000 pubs by the end of this recession, up to 500,000 jobs will be lost from the pub trade. Are the people, and the government, aware of this? Perhaps it's time that we scream this message loud and clear. We need a radical change of direction or our whole way of life will be gone forever."

Glen: "Mark is right. I started in the off-trade 20 years ago and Stella was then on promotion for 99p a 440ml can, equivalent to £1.27 a pint; so it has gone down by over a third in 20 years! I think most publicans get mightily annoyed when the media always seems to focus on pubs as the root cause of social disfunction. It is obvious that much of the problem starts at home with those quarter-the-price tins from the supermarket."



The Reckless Engineer



The Barley Mow

BATH & BORDERS BRANCH

BATH AND SURROUNDING VILLAGES

Barley, 32 Bathwick Street, Bath

This attractive roadside pub near Sydney Gardens has been taken over by enthusiastic landlords Nick Etheridge and Jamie Mealing, who until December ran the Rising Sun on Grove Street. The new landlords took over the pub at the beginning of March and have extended opening hours to all day. Nick and Jamie promoted cask beer when they were at the Rising Sun and are planning to do the same at the Barley. Regular beers on offer at present include Otter, 6X and Speckled Hen

Bath Tap (re-named the Nineteenth House), St James Parade, Bath

Former hotel manager David Rolfe has turned the Bath Tap in St James's Parade into the Nineteenth House. The new name comes from its house number in the road.

Mr Rolfe has spent two months refurbishing the premises. Using a single piece of sample wallpaper as his inspiration he has restored period features and, by making maximum use of the entire building, has created a stylish but homely environment.

The interior consists of a bar, cellar lounge, and (due to open at around the time of writing) a separate dining room with Sunday lunch space for sixty covers. In July Mr Rolfe hopes to open the library on the building's second floor and by then aims to have three rooms available for hire for corporate meetings, parties and diners for up to thirty people.



Northend Inn, Batheaston

Brains Surgery, 36-37 Dafford Street, Larkhall, Bath

This pub, on the eastern outskirts of Bath, has recently been sold and, we believe, is now available to let as a pub.

Northend Inn, 41 Northend, Batheaston

This pub serving the community of Northend (just

north of Batheaston), which re-opened in the autumn of 2009 following a major campaign by local residents, may be under threat of closure again. The landlady has sent a letter to local residents saying, in essence, that not enough people are visiting the pub. She is asking them for suggestions on how to get more customers through her door.

Porter Butt, York Place, London Road, Bath

A group of squatters, known as the Black Cat group, have moved into this pub, closed and empty since late last year, in the hope of setting up a social centre. Meanwhile plans have been submitted by national firm Richer Sounds to convert the premises into a hi-fi and TV store. Local Councillor David Dixon has met with the members of the Black Cat group, who have already been evicted from a number of other buildings, to explain about the plans for the store and see if a reasonable solution could be met. He is hopeful the council might open up a dialogue with a view to finding the group a proper home so that they do not have to continue to squat in empty properties.



Porter Butt

Raven, 6-7 Queen Street, Bath Bath & Borders Branch City Pub of the Year

This popular city-centre pub has been awarded the accolade of the branch's City Pub of the Year for 2010, running a close second in the overall branch Pub of the Year competition, which has been won by the Griffin in Frome. The Raven, which was also the branch's Pub of the Year in 2006, occupies an eighteenth-century building in the heart of the city. It serves six real ales. Three of these are brewed exclusively for the pub by Blindman's brewery whilst the three others are regularly changing guests often featuring many rarities. The same beer range is available on both the ground-floor and in the quieter first-floor bar. The pub runs mini beer festivals throughout the year and is famous for its selection of sausages and *Pieminister* pies. It's also worth noting that the

Raven is one of the few pubs in Bath to serve food Sunday evenings.

White Horse, Shophouse Road, Twerton, Bath

It was the perfect excuse for a drink. Regulars at the White Horse were able to justify their extra pint by saying it was all for their local church. Jason Clarke, the landlord of the White Horse, had managed to secure two free barrels of beer to sell in support of the church.

An open mic night was held on 2nd March, with beer selling for £2.50 a pint, to help raise funds for St Michael's Church, which had been attacked by vandals two weeks before. The incident, which saw several of the building's historic stained glass windows smashed, had saddened residents but has also had the effect of boosting community spirit in the area.

The Reverend Richard Wilson welcomed the efforts from the pub and thanked all those who had offered their support. The Genesis Charity shop in High Street has set up a money box for donations and an art group, which meets in Rose Cottage, also clubbed together to paint murals with sunshine and flowers on the protective boards that were used to cover up windows.

Abbey Ales presents...

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Hungerford Arms, Farleigh Hungerford

EAST SOMERSET

Hungerford Arms, Farleigh Hungerford

This roadside pub with commanding views of the river Frome valley had closed in around early January and was for a time boarded up. This is the second closure in recent times. It has recently re-opened.

Tucker's Grave, near Faulkland

The freehold of this uniquely traditional pub, situated in glorious isolation on a crossroads between the villages of Norton St Philip and Faulkland, has been on the market for some time. Recently, however, it has been taken off the market as the owners and landlords have decided to wait for better times.

Angel Inn, 1 King Street, Frome

This town-centre pub has been closed for some time. We understand that it is to be refurbished as a restaurant.

Griffin, Milk Street, Frome Bath & Borders Branch Pub of the Year

We are proud to announce that the Griffin is the Bath & Borders branch Pub of the Year for 2010. This a well-deserved award for this small, recently smartened-up, drinkers' paradise on the outskirts of

Frome. Effectively the brewery tap for Milk Street brewery, the Griffin is situated in the older part of Frome known as Trinity or Chinatown. The brewery itself occupies a former small cinema behind the pub. The single bar retains original features including open fires, etched windows and wooden floors. A stained glass Griffin can be seen behind the bar. Live music is played regularly at the pub and a small garden out back is open all year. The pub has a wonderful atmosphere which, once one is settled in, makes it difficult to leave.

Old Globe Inn, 31 Vallis Way, Frome

This friendly unpretentious locals' pub, south of the town centre, had been closed for some time. We understand that it has now been sold as a house.

Ship Inn, Oldford, near Frome

This attractively situated roadside pub remains closed. The freehold is still up for sale.

Fir Tree Inn, 140 Frome Road, Radstock

This large roadside pub has been closed as a pub for some time. We understand that a planning application for change of use has been turned. Some land associated with the pub has been sold for use by the nearby secondary school.

Sun Inn, Whatley, near Frome

This fairly isolated pub has been closed for some time. The owner has, we believe, attempted to lease out the building as a pub but has attracted no or little interest.

WEST WILTSHIRE

King's Arms, 24 Coppice Hill, Bradford-on-Avon

This town-centre Greene King-owned pub closed recently for a tidy-up and, much smartened, re-opened in April as a more food-orientated venue.

Duke, Westbury Road, Bratton

New landlords took over the Duke in around August 2009. This two-bar pub remains essentially unaltered and caters well for locals and diners alike. The beer range consists normally of three Moles beers and a regularly changing guest sourced from other local breweries. Well worth a visit.



Kings Arms, Bradford on Avon



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Duke Inn, Bratton c1901

King's Head, Chitterne, near Warminster

This pub is technically in the Salisbury branch area but only a little beyond the boundary of the Bath & Borders branch. The King's Head, the only pub in the isolated village of Chitterne on Salisbury Plain, has recently re-opened following several months of closure. A massive refurbishment had to be carried out because of the damage caused by burst pipe during the recent cold winter. The refurbishment is ongoing and the locals are returning. There are two real ales on permanently.

(Continued overleaf)

BATH & BORDERS BRANCH

(Continued from previous page)

Lamb Inn, Westbury Road, Edington

This pub, which was the focus last year of a major campaign by villagers to save it from permanent closure, is undergoing a major refurbishment. It remains closed but should re-open in around August. The building has been completely gutted and is to undergo a complete internal remodelling and be completely re-wired. Meanwhile planning permission is being sought for various external alterations and additions, including a conservatory extension and the removal of the main public entrance from the front to the side of the building.



Somerset Arms, Semington

Somerset Arms, High Street, Semington Bath & Border Branch Community Pub of the Year

This handsome old village pub, which looked almost as though it might close around a year or so ago, is the branch's Community Pub of the Year for 2010. The pub was bought out and effectively rescued by a local family who have turned it into a smart, upmarket, but very

welcoming pub specialising in locally brewed real ales. As well as the two regular beers, Bath Ales Gem and Box Steam Golden Bolt, there are always at least two guests available plus a local real cider. The pub, which serves very good quality food, is close to the Kennet & Avon canal and a good spot for walkers and boaters to visit. It is also conveniently close to the West Wiltshire Crematorium and is a useful venue for wakes, receptions and other funerary gatherings.

Plain Ales, Unit 17c, Deverill Road Trading Estate, Sutton Veny

This relatively new brewery, which was originally started up in the village of Chitterne, tucked away on Salisbury Plain, has recently relocated to a small industrial unit on the edge of Sutton Veny. The move takes the brewery out of the Salisbury branch area and into that of the Bath & Borders branch.

King's Arms, 5 Castle Street, Trowbridge

This town-centre pub, which has been closed for some time, has been sold and is undergoing internal refurbishment.



Kings Arms, Trowbridge c1910

Stallards Inn, 15-16 Stallard Street, Trowbridge

This pub, situated on a busy junction near the railway station, has been taken on by Milk Street brewery and is undergoing a major refurbishment. The revamp suffered a minor set back when a break-in occurred during the last weekend of January. Victorian pub fittings, including a set of eight brass bull's head bar fittings along with some coloured glass light fittings, were among the items that were stolen from the 210-year-old pub. Some power tools were also taken. A burglar alarm has since been installed to prevent any more break-ins.

The Grade II-listed pub, which dates back to the 1790s, was bought by Four County Inns in 2008 after closing in late 2007. When it re-opens (which we believe will be soon) it will be run by Rik Lyall, head brewer of Milk Street Brewery, as a real ale house specialising in the micro-brewery's beers. The pub already features a mahogany back bar with painted, carved, wooden flowers and has had a new roof and kitchen installed so classic English pub fare can be served. It will also have a beer garden, where smoking will be permitted.

Weymouth Arms, 12 Emwell Street, Warminster

This cosy locals' pub, which had closed for refurbishment, re-opened quietly on Wednesday 8th December as a dry-run for a later grand re-opening. New landlord Ashley bought the pub, which is tucked away down a side street just off the town centre, from former owners Enterprise Inns in the summer of 2009 and has completely re-vamped it ready for the re-opening. The bar to the right of the main entrance has a traditional lounge feel whilst the bar to the left is much more for diners. Meanwhile, behind the latter, a third area has been opened up. The beer range consists of good quality Butcombe Bitter and Wadworth 6X.

Steve Hunt

(Photos supplied by Andrew Swift)



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News from the city of Bath

The real ale scene in Bath is as lively as ever, with a number of festivals to look forward to over the coming months . . .

White Horse, Shophouse Road, Twerton

The White Horse is holding its 4th Summer Beer Festival on 8-11 July. For the duration of the festival the pub will be open all day from noon to midnight (11pm on Sunday). There will be 20+ beers available plus cider and food. Entertainment includes the Deltics on Friday nights and the Scout Killers on Saturday.

On the afternoon of 24 July the White Horse is holding another **Charity Bungee Jump**. Last year's event was a huge success, and even more participants are expected this year, so if you fancy a go contact the pub on 01225 340668 (www.thewhitehorsebath.com).

Royal Oak, Lower Bristol Road, Twerton

The annual Parkinson's Disease Fundraising Night on 24 April raised over £850. Music was supplied by Dudlow Joe and a star-studded cast of local musicians, with Magic Matt as compere. The Royal Oak's annual **Punk & Cider Fest** on 13-16 May, with 20+ ciders on offer, was as brilliant as ever. The ciders included two from Derbyshire weighing in at an eye-watering 10.5%. Other delights included Roaring Meg from Lyndown, Newton Court Perry, Mr Whitehead's Crimson Medium, several unusual offerings from Gwatkins and Millwhites Blackberry Blush, plus a Millwhites speciality matured in rum barrels. Next up will be the annual **Folk & Beer Festival** on 15-18 July. As one of the biggest and best beer festivals in the area, this should need no introduction. Details of the beer line-up had yet to be confirmed at time of going to press, but there will undoubtedly be enough – and enough rarities – to satisfy the most demanding palate. As before, there will be music on all four nights, and all day on Saturday and Sunday. Acts confirmed so far include Steve Robins & Ali Byrne, Hodmadodderly and James Hollingsworth.

Star, Vineyards

Another top event in the Bath beer calendar is the annual **Cornish Beer Festival** at the Star, which also kicks off on Thursday 15 July and runs all weekend. Lots of pasties, the singing of Cornish songs and (non-obligatory) Cornish costume are the order of the day. This year it is hoped there will be even more breweries represented than before, as RCH will be bringing the beers up from Cornwall. Proper job, as they say!



Cornish costumes at the Star Inn

Bath Folk Festival

Following the success of the folk club at Widcombe Social Club, from 7 to 15 August Bath will play host to a Folk Festival, with over 17 concerts, an Irish music summer school, workshops in music and dance as well as informal sessions. Performers booked already include James Fagan, Nancy Kerr & Rob Harbron, Maclaine Colston & Saul Rose, Fernhill, Afterhours, Fabula Rasa, The Scoville Units, Inu, Hodmadodderly, Jon Hicks, Jennifer Crook & the Hawthorns and many more. Venues include the Widcombe Social Club (which serves a particularly fine pint of Cheddar Potholer), St James's Wine Vaults, the White Horse, the Royal Oak and the Hobgoblin. (See bathfolkfestival.org.)

Old Green Tree, Green Street

The Old Green Tree is closed on Sunday afternoons until the end of July, opening for the evening session at 6.30pm. However, on the afternoon of 4 July, the pub will be hosting a Mad Hatter's Tea Party, with jam tarts, sandwiches, tea served from a giant teapot. More a tea festival, then – although beer will be available. Anyone who turns up in costume gets in for nothing; for those who don't, there will be an entry charge. Details available from the pub.

Elsewhere there have been plenty of changes on the pub front, with plenty to celebrate on the ale front. David Derrick, who has run several pubs in Bath, recently bought the freehold of the **Charmbury Arms**, a few doors up from Twerton's Royal Oak, from Wadworth. His sister, Susan Smith, is running the pub, and not only is the price of a pint 20p less than before, they are determined that the Charmbury will be a community pub and will not be serving food. Three beers are currently available – Abbey Bellringer and two from Moles. Well worth checking out the next time you're in the vicinity.

The **Griffin** on Monmouth Street, which narrowly escaped conversion to apartments a couple of years ago, has not only been smartened up no end, it is fast establishing itself as an excellent real ale pub, with four or more beers, mostly from local breweries, on offer. Good value food is also available and the pub is proving increasingly popular. As the Griffin is one of the city's oldest pubs, probably opened in the 1730s, it is particularly pleasing that it has come back from the brink so successfully.

The **Westgate** in Westgate Street – once a coaching inn called the Angel – is even older than the Griffin. Until recently it was the Rat & Parrot, but an extensive makeover (including the installation of a life-size model of a Roman centurion!) has seen real ale introduced. Three or four ales from local micros are available, and there are tasting notes and news of upcoming beers scattered around the pub, as well as posters promoting real ale.

The old Belvoir Castle on the Lower Bristol Road has also been smartened up by the new owners and reopened as the **Victoria Works** after a factory that once stood nearby. Beer-wise, Timothy Taylor Landlord, Adnam's Broadside and St Austell Tribute were available on a recent visit. Pies and pizzas are available, and the garden is likely to prove a real draw if the promised heat wave materialises.

Another pub that has been totally transformed is the old Bath Tap in St James's Parade, which has reopened as the **Nineteenth House**. As with the Griffin and the Victoria Works, months of hard work have really paid off, turning it into a light and airy modern pub, which will cater for drinkers as well as diners. No real ale was on offer when I called in shortly after it reopened, but Doomb Bar and possibly another real ale are on their way.

As reported elsewhere, the **Barley** in Bathwick Street has been taken over by Nick Etheridge and Jamie Mealing, previously at the Rising Sun in Grove Street. With the excellent **Pulteney Arms** just around the corner and the **Curfew** and **King William** at the other end of Bathwick Street, a pub crawl to this end of town is now a very tempting proposition. Although very much a community pub with the emphasis on real ale, the Sunday lunches are going down a storm.

Talking of the **Curfew**, the pub is having a **charity day for Dorothy House on 29 August**. One of the locals used to make dolls houses, selling them to people like Paul McCartney and David Bowie. He is auctioning one off, which will be displayed in the pub after the World Cup is over. It will be an all-day event, with a hog roast in the excellent garden at the back and live music.



The Nineteenth House

Inn and around Portishead

Everyone's having a beer festival

24th April saw the first beer and cider festival at **Portbury Village Hall**. This historic village is just the Bristol side of the motorway roundabout at junction 19 of the M5. It has one very successful village pub, the **Priory**, which supported this festival in aid of the hall itself along with other local pubs, the **Kings Arms** at Easton in Gordano and the **Rudgley** which is on the A369, close to the motorway. The organisers were also grateful to other local businesses who responded to various amounts of arm-twisting to sponsor the beer and cider.

The hall itself dates back to the 1890s, with a lovely vaulted ceiling. Ale drinkers were well looked after with beers such as Old Spot from Uley Brewery and East Street Cream from RCH, but it was clear that the organisers had an enthusiasm for local ciders. Cider drinkers had 10 to choose from including Port Wine of Glastonbury from Hecks, Bristol; Port Traditional Cider from the Original Cider Company; Millwhite Cider; Norton Wood Cider; Wilkins Farmhouse Cider; and the locally brewed Portbury Poke. Having put my "ciderhead" on for the day, I joined the crowd on a warm Saturday which encouraged much of the crowd to sit outside. The organisers' enthusiasm was rewarded. I would guess that up to 200 people visited the hall over the day and on through into the night and nearly all of them were drinking cider. Somerset Paddies entertained the crowd in the hall and a burger van entertained the people outside.

What struck me was that the event had a friendly village feel and there was real interest in trying the ciders which are rarely found in local pubs. No doubt the punters were also grateful for the reasonable prices of the drinks tokens – £5 for six half pints. Let's hope this festival will become an annual event. For a first attempt, it's difficult to know how it could have been improved.

Meanwhile, over the Easter Bank Holiday, the **Windmill Inn** held its traditional Easter beer festival. I have to hold my hand up here and admit that I organised the beer list. The intention was to showcase new breweries which had not been seen at this pub before and beers were put on from Braydon Ales, Wootton Bassett; Avon Brewing Company, Bristol; Severn Vale, Cam, Gloucestershire; and Moor Beer and Isle of Avalon Brewery which both come out of Ashcott, Somerset. In addition, Scottish breweries – Caledonian, Harviestoun and Brew Dog – were



The Portbury Beer and Cider Festival in full swing

represented. I have to be honest that the list was a touch experimental for quite a few of the customers.

Over at the **Poacher** on Portishead High Street, landlord Mark is aiming to hold his own beer festival sometime in the Autumn, date to be announced. Mark is very keen on his ales so his first festival should be one to enjoy. His regular live music, usually on Friday nights, continue to be successful and he is looking to erect a stage area.

Neil Ravenscroft

Bath Cyder

The name Denis France is well known to cider enthusiasts around Bath. What Denis doesn't know about apples, pears and cider probably isn't worth knowing. So there's considerable excitement at the news that he and Erica Pease are setting up the Bath Cyder Company. The accountants have agreed a business plan, the name is registered at Companies' House and the official launch ... well, the official launch isn't scheduled yet. Here's the story so far.

Denis has 6,000 litres of Cyder ready to go and but bottling and brand-design are still being investigated. They are also trying to find premises for the business. They need about 600 to 900 square feet of space. As Erica says, the ideal would be a lovely old stone barn with a high roof and flagstone floor – but that is a dream! Once they have a branded bottle designed for them, they are aiming to get it stocked in a few, select independent Bath pubs, restaurants and bars and independent off licenses in the city. In future they will be selling in five-gallon polypins, but as quantities of stock are limited this year they will be restricting circulation to specific outlets until June of 2011.

One thing was intriguing me. Is there, I asked Erica, a difference between cider and cyder – or is the latter just a fancy spelling? It turns out that it is not. She told me cider – with an 'i' – has water in it, but cyder – with a 'y' – was traditionally made with pure apple juice, and is much closer to what they are making. And the way in which Denis is making cider – or cyder – is very traditional indeed.

So why mention this now, when the plans are still a little vague? Well, the official launch is planned for early autumn, and it would be very sad if cider fans in the area missed it because it was too early for the Autumn Pints West. So you can find out exactly what is happening by going to the Bath Cyder Company blog at <http://bathcyder.wordpress.com>. You can even sign up to receive emails. The company is also on Facebook and Twitter, and they are working on getting a website up and running.

And it's not just about the company. There's all sorts of appley news, and even pictures of trees in bloom. Did you know that the so-called champagne method of producing bubbly wine was cribbed from West Country cider makers, who had been using it for years, long before Dom Perignon was even born? Erica and Denis are full of nuggets of information like that – just the thing for pub-quiz addicts.

So all you cider fans out there, that's something to look forward to around September time – and in the meantime, if you hear of suitable premises, Erica would like to know. Contact her through the blog.

Kirsten Elliott

The Windmill Inn

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News from Cotswold Spring

A recent visit to Cotswold Spring brewery confirmed that *Old Sodbury Mild* (3.9%) is once again available for Mild May, with *Old Sodbury Porter* (4.8%) also being brewed.

Brewer Nik Milo is still planning a special brew to mark the World Cup, called *It's Coming Home* (4.3%), which Nik described as a "lager beer". This cask-conditioned brew is being made with American San-tium Hops. *Apricot Harvest* (4.7%) will then follow in July and August.

Cotswold Spring's popularity is clearly spreading, as *Olde English Rose* (4.0%) is once again being supplied to Wetherspoon for the summer.

Nik's final comments were that *Codrington Royal* is being temporarily discontinued for the summer and replaced by *Codrington Best* (4.4%).

Cotswold Spring is based in Codrington, just off junction 18 of the M4. It can be contacted by phone on 01454 323088 or by emailing info@cotswoldbrewery.com. The website is www.cotswoldbrewery.com.

Steve Matthews

News from Arbor Ales

The great news from Arbor Ales is that Jon Comer picked up no less than four awards at SIBA South West Beer Festival at Tucker's Maltings, Newton Abbot. Festival Mild won gold in Strong Dark Beers category while Oyster Stout won silver in the same category. Mild West took silver in the under 4% Mild category and Hunny Beer was the silver winner in the Speciality category. That brings the total awards this year to six.

Both Mild West and Festival Mild are currently in production. In spite of numerous requests – from people wanting to set up new micros – to come and "do a day's brewing" (involving the setting up of a separate pilot plant) Jon has decided not to increase the brewery's capacity beyond the present 5.5 barrels. He does, however, intend to install a fourth fermenting vessel and has just installed a cask washer – this saves a day's work each week – and is looking to employ a part-time driver.

With regard to the recent refusal by the JD Wetherspoon chain to sell Arbor beers, Wetherspoon now say that Arbor Ales can sell their beer to any of their outlets *except those in Bristol!* So much for Wetherspoon's policy on LocAle. The chain stopped buying from Arbor in February but the brewery had its busiest month yet in March so Jon's "not bothered". The Old Stillage – origin of the JDW dispute – is doing well and landlord Namaya Reynolds is recuperating at home following recent surgery.

Henry Davies



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News from the Bristol Beer Factory

Bristol Beer Factory celebrated the flavoursome talents of amateur brewers at their official launch party for Bristol Beer Factory's Visitor Centre in North Street, Bristol.

There were 20 competition entrants in the inaugural home-brew competition. The winner was Richard Poole with his *Mountain Goat IPA*, a unanimous and very popular choice with the judges. Richard can now look forward to spending a day alongside the Bristol Beer Factory brewers, with the resulting brew sold in local pubs in Bristol. Richard will also receive a 72-pint cask of his beer and a meal for two in the Barley Mow.

Second in the competition was Chris Tazewell with his dark brew *Eastville AU*, with *And So To Bedminster* winning the title of best-named brew. The award for the best label went to *Windmill Pale Ale* which had a picture of a windmill gaffer-taped onto the bottle.

Bristol Beer Factory's production director, Simon Bartlett, said, "The evening was a great success and we were really fortunate to have had a wide range of quality home-brews to try. The judging panel were impressed with the care and ingenuity which had gone into creating some really interesting beers using all sorts of ingredients including chocolate, coriander, orange peel, ginger and cardamom."

Head brewer, Chris Kay, was also full of praise for the entrants: "The home-brew industry is growing increasing popular with people who appreciate the variety and quality of traditional beer, and the art of brewing is such a fascinating process. We wanted to encourage people to take part to gain experience and valuable feedback on their brews but the competition is also a fun way to celebrate the ethos of real ale."

In other news, Bristol Beer Factory also celebrated a key landmark recently as it brewed its two-millionth pint, just five years after brewing its first. The brewery is apparently running flat out trying to keep up with demand and have ordered extra fermentation tanks and new casks to meet the growing demand.



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

White Horse, Twerton

Just a quick note to comment on the above pub. My partner and I recently spent a weekend in Bath and were impressed with all the Good Beer Guide pubs we visited. Considering the distance it is from the city centre we were very impressed with the welcome we received from Jason on our arrival. As mentioned in the Guide, he is very enthusiastic and is certainly knowledgeable on his beers. We had Yeovil Ales Ruby on the day of our visit.

So well done for including this pub in the Guide. It is obvious he is working hard in improving things and hopefully local members will continue to support his efforts.

Kind Regards,
Vince Curtis,
Aldermaston,
Berkshire.

Pricing

Firstly can I say what a great publication Pints West is, and long may it continue. After receiving delivery of the Spring issue, I once again trawled through the pages consuming the local news, reviews and comments to find an excellent article by Vince Murray, "2009: Terrible year.... except for the beer". In the piece Vince points out that some establishments, especially in the Clifton area, where charging £3 and more for standard strength beers and earmarks one (unnamed) who charges £3.35

for a pint of what would be considered 'weak' beer. I completely agree with Vince, we do pay far too much for our beer thanks to the Chancellor!

Speaking for ourselves, we are tied and can pay up to and sometimes over 50% more than a 'free of tie' premises for a cask of ale even after receiving discount. Whilst I'm not in complete opposition to the tie, after all we accepted it when we took over the Vittoria, but I am struck dumb by the cavalier attitude to pricing by the pubcos (they have their take on pricing, which is somewhat different to ours). We at the sharp end can only unwillingly pass on these inflated prices, or fall foul of the ever lengthening list of pub closures.

Some weeks ago there was a Tuesday night CAMRA visit at the Vittoria which was good to see some old friends, very pleasant and we thank you for your custom, although there were one or two comments with regards to the price of beer. I would like to apologise for the prices, but won't, as those apologies should come from other quarters. It is not our greed that predicts our pricing policy, it is necessity.

A little while after the visiting body left to complete their grand tour I had a thought. Does the general CAMRA member understand why their national body has pursued a super-complaint with the OFT with regards to the anti-competitiveness of the tie or are they comfortable drinking in 'free of tie' pubs who can offer greater choice and sell their beers at a price which is unrealistic for pubs like ours? All real ale pubs should received backing from local CAMRA, just because we are 10p/20p+ a pint more than others, are we to be excluded from your attentions, one would hope not. (*You certainly aren't. Ed.*) Let's hope that headway is made with the appeal and the OFT force reforms to reduce the inflated pubco pricing

policy. Then we can give you good beer at a sensible price. This letter is not meant as a rant, its to enlighten the local branch members to the huge cost price differential there is manifesting itself in the trade. By the way, its always good too see you people.

Les Clayton
The Vittoria,
Whiteladies Road,
Clifton, Bristol.

Guinness bottle found in the Clifton Rocks Railway tunnel

We have been refurbishing Clifton Rocks Railway since Easter 2005. This started life as a cliff railway linking Hotwells to Clifton between 1893 and finished operating in 1934.



From 1940 it had multiple war-uses because it was divided into sections by the Ministry of Works for use by Imperial Airways to mend barrage balloons, for use as a night time refuge shelter from bombs by the residents, and by the BBC as a transmitting station. There are three refuge areas, two large and one small, the large ones each having ledges for about 90 people, the small one for about 40.

We have been fortunate in finding many wartime artefacts including several beer bottles as last reported in Pints West, Spring 2007. During one of our recent weekly group trips down the tunnel, we were going slowly back up the 300 stairs and noticed a bottle underneath. We managed to fish it out and were in-

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Wednesday Night is Steak Night

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Thursday Quiz & Curry Night.

£1 a person, winning team takes all, plus other prizes and a free curry & rice at half time {grey matter preferred, not i phones}.

Food served from noon
{camra discount available}

Some of the guest breweries featuring over the summer will be:
Adnams, Wychwood, Banks, Ringwood, Hook Norton, McMullen, Caledonian & Sharp's.

A big thank you to all who turned up on the Clifton Mild Trail, we hope you had a great day.
Well done to the organisers Excellent job.



trigued to find it was a Bristol United Brewery bottle with part of a Guinness label. We contacted the Guinness Collectors Club who told us that the bottle was from pre-1945. The label was their own design Guinness label which went out of use in 1953. They kindly sent me

a picture of a complete label which is shown here. Bottlers used mostly recycled bottles during the war due to shortages. Bristol United beer was made between 1889 and 1961, being merged with Georges Brewery in 1956.

If you want to see the bottle along with all our other beer bottles, come along to one of our open days where it will be on show. Have a look on the website at www.cliftonrocksrailway.org.uk for more information about this amazing site.

Maggie Shapland,
Restoration officer,
Clifton Rocks Railway.

Castle Green Inn

Issue 85 of Pints West had a note by Robin Wild about Taunton's Castle Green Inn. Carlos Alfaro, the landlord, hit the headlines last year when he turned around the then failing White Hart at nearby Wiveliscombe, earning an award for his labours.

Since he took over the Castle Green (renamed from the Firestone, with all that implies) we now have an excellent proper pub with real ale and high quality foods at modest prices.

We have jazz early on Sunday afternoons, once a month, performed by talented locals led by nationally known Dave Lunniss. Children are welcomed with well-behaved parents, and one of the guys even brings his mild-mannered wolfhound along from time to time to entertain them!

There is even the 'Castle Green Beer Society', membership of which gives us a discount on real ale after 4pm on Wednesdays.

I am old-fashioned enough to think that all these things go together to make the sort of places we all knew years ago. Good and consistent hospitality and kindness to customers of all ages and conditioned.

Yours sincerely,
Jim Skeggs,
Wesley Buckland,
Wellington.

To remind people, Robin said in his article:

"If you are in Taunton the best real ale pubs are undoubtedly the Racehorse in East Reach (try the St Austell's Proper Job) and the Castle Green Inn, convenient for the bus station and open from 9am (usually with four beers from the West Country)."

News from Dawkins

News of the brews

Dawkins Ales (previously Matthews) brewed a mild for the month of May in the form of *Miners Morris Mild*, a dark 3.8% concoction spiced up with a hint of coriander.

Next up is the *Double Dawkins*. Originally a 4% ABV beer, they are upgrading the recipe to a 5% malty, smooth strong ale.

Over the summer they shall be brewing *The Dog Delusion*, a 5% true golden ale (that's all Ned at the brewery is saying so far) and *ALE-X* which they are describing as "a super-strong, uber-hoppy, lip-smacking volcano of beer. For this one we intend to use a different hopping method and put lots and lots and lots in."

News of the pubs

The Miner's Arms is hosting a Summer Beer Festival on 11th to 13th June, coinciding with the nearby St Werburghs City Farm Fair. Over 20 ales from near and far will be on offer.

Ned and Natz at the Portcullis in Clifton celebrated their recent wedding with their own brew, *Dawkins Bittersweet Symphony*, a cheeky 6.8% beer that got them a toast in the *Evening Post*.

The range of guest beers in all Dawkins' other pubs is still growing. Whilst still focussing on 'LocAle' brewers, they are looking at getting in extra, rarely seen beers from further afield, as the brewery is getting into 'beer swaps' where they exchange a van load of ales with another microbrewer elsewhere in the country.

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Warrington – not a bad place for a holiday

Warrington may seem an unlikely holiday venue. Indeed, I was amused in December to see a text from Vince Murray referring me to the Daily Telegraph. “Warrington is ranked bottom in the UK in a quality of life survey,” the report read. We could afford to chuckle. A group of us were to descend upon Warrington in February to celebrate Vince’s 50th birthday. For as Vince says, though he is a lifelong cricketer, his forte is with ball rather than bat, and this would be his first fifty! Why Warrington? Well, it sits between two great beery cities, Liverpool and Manchester, with easy train links to both. We had the advantage of securing cheap accommodation at the Travelodge a short walk from the station, considerably cheaper than in either Liverpool or Manchester, plus central Warrington possesses four Good Beer Guide pubs itself. So travelling by car, with the exception of a couple of us who were on a train, we left Bristol. (Our party consisted of Vince and his wife Marilyn, Phil and Di Brooks, myself, Richard Walters, Clive Williams, Tim Proudman and Dave Bowden, aka ‘Lord Lucan’ for his penchant for disappearing on previous forays. For once Sonic, the beer dog, was left behind.)

To counter a monotonous journey Vince had scheduled a lunch (and beer) break at a town unfamiliar to all of us, Stone. For all I know there maybe several reasons for visiting Stone, but ours was to visit two intriguing Good Beer Guide pubs, the **Swan Inn** and the **Royal Exchange**. The former proved to be a traditional boozier par excellence, with nine ales on, including a favourite of mine, Slater’s, and beer from Limestone, a local micro-brewery. We also enjoyed the open fire. After slaking our thirst we did the short walk to the Royal Exchange. Owned by the splendid Titanic brewery, there were six of their own brews available plus four guests including the lovely pale and hoppy Roosters Yankee.

Following lunch we drove on, a little later than planned, to Warrington. After meeting up those who came by train, it was off to Manchester, to visit some of the city’s northern-quarter pubs. First stop was a pub I had wanted to visit for a very long time, the **Marble Arch**, in Rochdale Road. This beautiful heritage pub is home to the excellent Marble brewery, and it was a delight to try some of the six of their beers available, whilst taking in the floor mosaics and the glazed, painted tiled ceiling. I particularly enjoyed the Ginger and Lagonda IPA. Next time I hope to have time to sample the cheese boards, a weakness of mine!

From the Marble Arch it was a short walk to the **Angel**, a curate’s egg of a gastro pub. Some headed upstairs to tackle dishes such as Guinea Fowl, while the rest of us concentrated on liquid refreshment downstairs. Next up was the **Smithfield**, serving beers from Facers and Phoenix amongst the seven ales on offer. I was surprised to see a big screen showing Saturday night talent shows at the far end of the bar, but to be fair there was no football to show at the time, which would definitely have been my preference! After a quick visit to a packed **Bar Fringe**, time was pressing so we returned to Warrington. The **Lower Angel** and the **Tavern** proved to be busy, decent city-centre pubs, the latter’s three handpulls all being occupied by independent brewery beers. I tried Indulgence from Toon brewery. We finished at (or were finished off by!) **Porters Ale House**. Open to midnight, this very lively bar, with live rock music performed in the centre of the pub, was a most convivial place to call it a night!

Sunday was Vince’s birthday, and Liverpool was in our sights. So after leisurely breakfasts we took a train to Liverpool, re-convening at midday at the **Baltic Fleet**, a stone’s throw from the trendy and thriving Albert Dock, home of the Beatles Museum and the Tate Gallery. This cracking hostelry is the only brewpub in the city. A very decent lunch was served with two courses for £11.95, washed down by the pub’s fantastic dry and bitter stout, a recent award-winner at CAMRA’s winter ale festival. Cards and presents were presented, in a very convivial scene.

After a rest to let lunch settle we made a leisurely walk to the city centre. First up was the **Philharmonic**, renowned as one of Britain’s greatest historic pubs. A riot of stained glass, spectacular tiles and carved wood, complete with marble gents’ toilets, the beer’s also sound in the “Phil” – I enjoyed the Glencoe stout. A short walk away (Liverpool’s pubs have the advantage of being easy to get to on foot) was

the **Fly in the Loaf**. Owned by Isle of Man brewery Okells, this smart and efficient pub offered seven ales – Mordue’s Workie Ticket and Salopian Shropshire Gold were particularly worthy – making watching England’s dire Six Nations rugby victory over Italy more watchable.

We called at the **Swan** next. Easily spotted by its illuminated sign, this Liverpool institution is famed for its heavy-metal jukebox, incongruously situated next to a large picture of classical composer Johannes Brahms! The dangerously drinkable Phoenix brewery’s 6% ale Wobbly Bob is always available, making the pub unmissable! Prices were keen too, and some lingered here while the rest of us headed to the **Lion Tavern**, another classic Grade II-listed city-centre pub, with lovely cream tiling in the bar contrasting with the cosy lounge with its large glass dome skylight. After a swift half of Spitting Feathers brewery’s Thirst Quencher, our eye was taken by a fine range of malt whiskies, always a great way to celebrate a birthday! Vince had the 1979 independent bottling of the classic Islay malt Ardbeg, whilst I had a splendid independent bottling of Old Pulteney.

So on to the **Vernon**, where curiously the floor seemed to be vibrating (we weren’t that drunk, honestly!) and another tasting of Phoenix Porter. Before heading for Lime Street station we had to do one more pub – this was the **Ship & Mitre**. Vince tells me the pub’s much smarter inside these days, though it still appeared fairly basic to me! Not that I cared really, as the fourteen hand-pulled beers took my attention, as did a particularly impressive selection of German bottled beers.

Somewhat bleary eyed we all reconvened back at **Porters Ale House** in Warrington. I can’t honestly say we were impressed by the female Meatloaf impersonator on stage – who was named Maltloaf! – but the beers were fine, with Dunham Massey Milk Stout and Winter Warmer on great form, all at £1.80 per pint! The final memory of a great day was the gob-smacked look on the faces of the girls working in the chippy, when they asked us where we were working in town and we replied we were on holiday!

So came Monday morning and our journey homewards, this time stopping for a break in the fascinating Shropshire town of Bridgnorth. We rendezvoused at the **Railwayman’s Arms**, terminus of the Severn Valley Railway. Here we had a surprise for Vince, for one of our party had secretly brought along his yard of ale, but this is no ordinary yard, as I can say with conviction having been the first person to have to drink its four-and-a-half-pint capacity in the Anchor in Digbeth on the occasion of my fortieth birthday. This time it was Vince’s turn! Although taken by surprise he manfully tackled the yard filled with a Slater’s beer, finishing with an impressive lack of spillage. With his wife Marilyn now behind the wheel, the **Kings Arms** was our next stop. Perhaps unsurprisingly Vince’s directions were below his usual standard! So after a pint in the impressive Kings Arms and a final stop at a Wetherspoon’s for a late lunch and a last pint we headed back to Bristol. None of us would say Warrington ranks bottom in the UK, for sure!

Phil Cummings



Can that be Lord Lucan observing the proceedings?

Kelham Island Tavern - national pub of the year again!

Every year a very long and exhaustive process culminates with the announcement of the National CAMRA Pub of the Year – the most prestigious award that we can give to a pub. All branch pub of the year winners are entered into various levels of regional competitions and judged by volunteers at each stage, until a small shortlist covering the whole country is arrived at. This takes months and considerable effort by the judges to get to a number of pubs spread over wide areas, and pass judgement on each. From there national judges are appointed to produce an overall winner. Naturally this award is much sought after and brings priceless publicity and new trade to the winner.

A couple of pubs have managed to win the national award twice over the years but for the first time ever a pub has won for two consecutive years. The pub in question is the **Kelham Island Tavern** in Sheffield, South Yorkshire. This a truly remarkable achievement, particularly for a pub rescued from dereliction as recently as 2002. The pub also suffered severe flooding in the storms of 2007 and had to close for quite a while.

I had visited this pub a couple of years ago but decided to go back and see for myself what made it so special. I persuaded Phil Cummings to accompany me on a midweek overnight visit to Sheffield in early May. I offered to write the whole trip up but the editor pointed out that there are several other write-ups of boozy trips to the North in this edition – and he wasn't keen on renaming the magazine "Pints North" – so I will stick to my subject!

Having stopped at a few of Sheffield's other excellent hostellers, we made our way via the excellent Super Tram service (oh for one of those in Bristol!) to Shalesmoor stop. From there it is a five-minute walk through a somewhat unpromising industrial area to Russell Street in the Kelham Island district. You can't help but notice that the very next road, Alma Street, contains another award-winning free house, the **Fat Cat**, which makes for an excellent two-pub crawl, but I will leave that for another story.

Upon entering the Kelham Island tavern you are greeted by the sight of a plethora of handpumps all around the bar dispensing 10 ever-changing beers, largely from small local brewers. Two of the pumps are dedicated to selling a mild and a stout or porter, guaranteeing a range of styles at all times and to keep any visiting BADRAG members happy too! The pub has two main indoor areas divided by an unusual glass partition which allows a full view of each from the other. Conversation is king in both with no obtrusive music, TVs or machines. We visited at around 7pm on a Wednesday and the pub was doing a decent trade, despite the absence of very many chimney pots in the vicinity. This gave it a cosy, relaxed atmosphere. People are obviously happy to walk some distance to experience this kind of quality. The beers are priced extremely keenly at around £2 to £2.30 per pint, low even for Sheffield. My *Acorn Old Moor Porter* and Phil's *Barnsley Best* were in excellent condition too. Food is served lunchtimes Monday to Saturday only, so we were not able to sample that on this occasion. To the side and rear is an excellent award-winning beer garden which is a pleasant spot in good weather. Folk music plays on Sundays and a quiz is held on Mondays. The pub is open from 12 to 11 daily.

So just how good is the Kelham Island Tavern? Our own verdict was that, whilst it is undoubtedly a truly excellent pub that any of us would be delighted to have in our locality, it was perhaps just a little flattered by winning the national award twice in succession. It is obviously hard to properly judge it on a fleeting visit, but that is what judges normally have to do anyway. It is just that, personally, we felt that we have visited quite a number of pubs that are at least as impressive, and in some cases, dare we say, possibly more so? The award is a very difficult one to administer, but is arrived at democratically and that is why it is so respected and coveted. It is a considerable achievement to win the national award two years running. An even more amazing fact is that, in a city of fantastic real ale pubs – arguably the best choice in the UK – it has won the Sheffield CAMRA Pub of the Year award seven years on the trot, since soon after its reopening in 2002.

I can imagine the Kelham's long reign coming under threat soon, though, as an outstanding new pub has opened, the **Sheffield Tap** on



Platform 1 of the city's main train station. It has four pumps dedicated to the wonderful Thornbridge brewery and four more for guest brewers, plus an enormous range of draught and bottled beers from around the world. On our visit all eight pumps featured different Thornbridge beers, with eight different beers from our own excellent Moor brewery coming soon. An astonishingly good new venture – all stations should have a bar like this then nobody would complain about late trains again!

Anyway I am venturing off topic and risking the editor's wrath so will stop right there!

Vince Murray

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A weekend of NewcastAle

A weekend in the North for the Maker Faire provided an excellent opportunity for ale sampling. We arrived with a thirst on Friday night and headed out into town which was as eye-opening as any city on a Friday night: lots of people out and about, wandering between venues for drinks and good times. We were no exception. Just around the corner from the Waterside Hotel (our home for the two days) we found the **Crown Posada**, a lovely bar with fabulous wood panelling (unsurprisingly on the National Inventory of Historic Interiors) and a cosy snug. We sampled Mordue's Workie Ticket (4.5%) before heading off on the hunt for a pizza.

After our hunger was sated we strolled round the corner to the **Newcastle Arms**. This is a one-room bar which had a run of being awarded regional Pub of the Year from 2006 to 2008 and was pipped at the post for this year. A hand-written list of all the ales through the pumps over the years made interesting reading, not only for the variety, but also the sheer number. The list was handily broken up by the hundred. We settled in here for the rest of evening, between us trying Marston Moor's Brick-

dust (3.8%), low strength, fruity and hoppy; Mallinson's Rocket Ship (4.1%) which had a lovely citrusy hoppiness; Thornbridge's 5.9% Jaipur, which was on top form; and finally we tried the house beer: brewed by Big Lamp Brewery, the C'coat of Arms oatmeal stout was a delicious end to the evening.

After a day at the Maker Faire, held in the Centre for Life (where we saw 3D printing, home-made CNC machines, robots, microcontrollers, hackers, woolly types and Tesla coils being used as speakers firing lightning into the sky), we were ready for a beer. Wanting a good quality burger to accompany our beverage we found ourselves in the **Cluny**, an arts/theatre/gig venue which had the Ian Siegel band pumping out blues rock in the back room. An eclectic and friendly clientele were enthusiastically consuming the range of beers alongside their burgers. We had a Lady Godiva (Warwickshire Brewing Company, 4.2%) and a Fog on the Tyne (Northumberland Brewery, 4.1%). After chatting with a few locals we were pointed towards the **Cumberland Arms**.

A short walk over the quay and up a steep set of stairs we pushed open the doors to a packed two-room bar.

The Cumberland Arms had eight handpumps dispensing a fabulous range of ales. Alongside the extensive range of beer was a similarly extensive, and popular, range of ciders deservedly resulting in this pub being the region's Cider Pub of the Year for several years running. Unfortunately, we didn't have time for more, but we sampled a couple of Mordue ales: IPA (5.1%) and Bunny Hop (4.5%). Despite only staying for such a short time we also found out that the pub has a room upstairs for parties and bands, had four bed and breakfast rooms and was in the 1978 Good Beer Guide. And for those of you interested in rapping (with swords, not with words) this pub has also played host to the Dancing England Rapper Tournament. We strolled back to the Crown Posada for a night-cap of Festival's Pride and Amber (3.8%).

Our Sunday started by watching Centre For Life's Ian Simmons use a Pepperami and oxygen blow torch to slice his way through a steel sheet – a good start to any Sunday – followed by more Making, a stroll around the Quayside market and a cuppa in the sun. We headed for the train station, only to find we had half an hour to spare. A quick pint of Jarrow's Rivet Catcher (4%) was a tasty end to the weekend in the station's fantastically tiled **Centurion Bar**.

Helen Featherstone and Toby Seely

Rucking Mole joins the pack!

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Cider news

The Bristol Cider House in Surrey Street, between the Georgian Portland and Brunswick Squares and only a couple of hundred yards from Cabot Circus, is selling 40-pint barrels, or "ciderkegs", of traditional, real ciders. Each ciderkeg is of sturdy construction and has a built-in serving tap for easy dispense. They say the cider will remain fresh for a month unopened or for 10 days when opened.

Their web site at www.bristolciderhouse.co.uk has more details. (Note that if you click on the link to buy their cider, a pop-up near the bottom of the screen asks you to confirm that you are over 18 years of age. If you don't spot it you may think the link is not working, but if you scroll down the screen you should see it.)

Pints out West

Taking the name 'Pints West' literally, my mate and I have recently been way out west in Breckenridge, Colorado, USA and think it's worth writing a few words on one of the local haunts, the Breckenridge Brewery & Pub.

Breckenridge is an old cowboy mining town that is a couple of hours' drive from Denver in Colorado. Sited conveniently on Main Street and sitting at a somewhat oxygen-sapping altitude of 9,600 feet, it was an unexpected holiday high in every sense.

On entering you're struck by the fact that it is a pub used by the locals, which is always a good sign in a ski resort as this usually means good value and good beer. The next things that grab you are the fermenting vats and mash tuns behind the bar, all indicating that this is a pub beyond the norm in the USA.

Then a quick glance up to your left and there is the beer board. Boasting eight beers on tap, ranging in colour from golden to black and strengths from 4.0% to a heady 9.2% Double IPA, there was plenty to choose from.



Each beer is classified by colour and ABV (strength) and there are tasting notes added to help with choice. For those who think that American ale is all about Bud and Coors, then think again; this is a bit of a taste sensation, a kind of mini beer festival all year long! Personal favourites would

include the Christmas Ale that, like Christmas itself, was over far too soon, and what was billed as an English-style Brown Ale, brewed to celebrate their 20th anniversary, coming in at a powerful 8.1% and very drinkable. For those like me with a touch of altitude sickness, dropping down for a couple of days to the Golden Breck Lite, a 'cream ale with the subtle balance of malt and hops', did not stop the flavour fest, each beer having its own unique effect on the pallet.

At a loss as to which beer to choose? Well why not try them all? One option was to have a taster tray with small glasses filled with each type of beer – a good way to start the evening and decide which beer or beers would be the order of the day. Also, for those in a rush, there was an off-licence trade as you could buy bottles and get them filled at the bar with your favourite draught (or draft as the Americans would have it). All possibilities are catered for.

The service was also something that some more local pubs could learn from. With the bar often two to three deep, the bar staff always seemed to know who was next and could line up individual pints, pitchers, food orders and update the beer tabs with amazing efficiency – top guys with whom a friendly shooter to accompany the beer was certainly a good way to see the night through.

Around the pub, as often found in England, there were a series of



Ron and Jon with bar staff Ken and Jim

TVs showing various sports and news channels, but nothing so loud as to stop the conversation. Around us there were many families as there is a good mix of bar snacks and main meals. Beware the main meals as they are really big – in our time there we saw enough doggie bags to feed us for a couple of months.

Now twenty years young, the Breckenridge Brewery & Pub is going strong and is a magnet for the Brits and locals. Good beer, good food and good company – a veritable gem in a rarefied atmosphere. Here's wishing them all the best for the next twenty years ... well worth a try if you ever heed the advice of the Pet Shop Boys and 'Go West'!

Jon Parr

CAMRA Members' Investment Club

Have you ever wished that you owned part of a brewery or one of the many pub chains now in existence? We turn that wish into a reality and, as company shareholders, we help to make a difference to policies introduced by their directors.

We have been investing in breweries since 1989 and we have approximately 4,000 members in the Club. At the end of February 2010 the fund value stood at £8.67m with a unit value of £2.98.

You are eligible to join us at the CAMRA Members' Investment Club only if you are a member of CAMRA. You can invest any amount from £5 to £83 per month with an annual maximum of £1,000.

The funds are invested in a wide range of companies including Black Sheep, Marston's, Greene King, Fuller's and Young's, together with a few overseas companies including Duvel Moortgat and the Cantillon Brewery, both in Belgium. The Committee is actively seeking to increase the Club's involvement with the ever increasing micro-brewery sector.

The fund and the investments are managed by an elected, ten-strong Committee who meet on a regular basis to discuss the Club's portfolio,

future investments and any other matters which may affect the Club.

The Club has its own web site, www.CMIC.uk.com, where you can find more details, including planned brewery trips and other events, reports on past visits and the AGM which is normally held in June each year, usually in Beeston, Nottingham.



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Reasons to visit Frome

On 11th March, Frome's **Milk Street Brewery** won a silver award at the Society of Independent Brewers' annual conference in Stratford-upon-Avon for their Funky Monkey, a 4% blonde beer with citrusy overtones. Only 27 beers received an award at the event, out of around 1,400 that entered. Funky Monkey had to get through seven regional heats, plus the final, to win the award.

National recognition was followed by the news that the **Griffin**, the Milk Street brewery tap, had been voted Pub of the Year by the Bath & Borders Branch of CAMRA. The award was presented on 11th May, at the same time as one of the pub's very popular open mic nights was in full swing.

The Griffin is very much a community pub, with a staggering line-up of events (all of which can be checked out on their excellent website: www.milkstreetbrewery.co.uk). A tempting array of Milk Street beers are of course available as well. On the first weekend in May, the brewery celebrated its 11th anniversary with a weekend-long beer festival, at which beers from around 20 other Somerset breweries were available alongside Milk Street's, plus a full programme of music.

If you don't know the Griffin, or haven't visited since its recent makeover (enhancing rather than altering its character) then it makes a perfect choice for a summer excursion, especially as Frome is served by direct trains from Bath and Bristol. Opening hours are 5 to 11 Monday to Thursday, 4 to 1am Friday and Saturday and 1 to 7 on Sunday.

Frome is worth visiting in its own right as a historic weaving



The Griffin in Frome, Bath & Borders branch Pub of the Year

centre, with more listed buildings than any other town (except Bath) in Somerset (see www.frometouristinfo.co.uk/town_map.asp for more information). It also has another brewery tap – the Lamb on Christchurch Street East, owned by **Blindmans** (www.thelambinnfrome.co.uk; open 12-3 and 5-11 Monday to Thursday, 12-12 on Friday and Saturday and 12-10.30 on Sunday). Two excellent brewery taps in one of the most interesting towns in Somerset – what better reason could there be for a day out in Frome?

Andrew Swift

CAMRA's Beer Drinker's and Pub Goer's Charter

CAMRA launched its Beer Drinker's and Pub Goer's Charter during the recent General Election campaign.

The document urges politicians to promote the interests of Britain's pub goers; to champion well-run community pubs; to rebalance alcohol taxation to support beer and pubs; to reform the beer tie to deliver a fair deal for consumers; and to support the role of well-run pubs as solutions to alcohol misuse.

Specific measures proposed in the Charter include:

- 1) giving local authorities greater control over planning, particularly the change of use and demolition of pubs;
- 2) extending the Sustainable Communities Act to allow local people to submit proposals to protect smaller brewers, producers of traditional cider and community pubs;
- 3) action on irresponsible price promotions in supermarkets that encourage drinking away from pubs by treating alcoholic drinks as a "loss leader";
- 4) business rate relief for community pubs;
- 5) reforms to the taxation of beer, and particularly draught beer, to make drinking in pubs more attractive;
- 6) "full pint" legislation to stop short measures being served;
- 7) protecting the changes made in the 2003 Licensing Act (e.g. more flexible licensing hours and powers for Councils to deal with disorderly pubs);

8) reform of the "beer tie" under which pub-owning companies can tell their landlords what they are allowed to sell and require them to buy it through the pub owner;

9) banning the use of restrictive covenants to stop the new owner of a former pub from reopening it as one;

10) when a pub-owning company wishes to sell the building into alternative uses, giving the current leaseholder and the community an opportunity to buy;

11) strengthening consumer protection through a Consumer Minister who attends Cabinet.

Over the course of the campaign 670 election candidates committed to speak up for real ale, community pubs and consumers, and 150 of the candidates who signed up were elected and are now serving as MPs in the new Parliament. Signatories to the Charter include Nick Clegg, Leader of the Liberal Democrats, and other local MPs David Heath (Somerton & Frome), Don Foster (Bath), Stephen Williams (Bristol West) and Tessa Munt (Wells). All are Lib Dems.

CAMRA intends to continue putting pressure on the governing parties in the hope that they will work together to deliver the policy proposals described above. Readers can help by doing the same at every opportunity!

Norman Spalding

The Bag O'Nails

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Club of the Year

The RAFA Club in Westbury on Trym has been chosen as Club of the Year 2010 by the Bristol & District branch of CAMRA.

The club is perhaps one of Westbury's – and indeed Bristol's – best kept secrets. The Royal Air Forces Association Club (38 Eastfield, Westbury on Trym) is run by a group who are nuts about good beer, and they are eager to share their passion.

The club has been running since 1946, the building bought by half a dozen ex-RAF men for £2500, the monies obtained by the raffle of a new car! During the War it was the Home Guard headquarters and before that the farm manager's house and farm for the big estate next door.

Until recently you needed to be ex-RAF or have a family member in the RAF to become a member, but that has now changed and it is open to everyone, with membership set at £25 per year (£12.50 half year). Furthermore, membership of CAMRA also grants you entrance to the club.

The club's opening hours are Monday to Thursday noon to 2.30pm and 7pm to 11pm; Friday and Saturday noon to 3pm and 7pm to midnight; and Sunday noon to 5pm. Facilities include off-road parking for 30 cars, three bars and two beer gardens, a skittle alley and conference room, plus darts and a pool table. There are Sunday meals and on all main events such as Mothers' Day, Fathers' Day, Easter, Christmas and saints' days, with two-course roast meals for £7.50 and on most days bar snacks are available. Bars and the skittle alley can be hired for parties with buffets provided. Live music features Saturday nights.

Now for the most important thing – the beers. On recent visits they have had Otter Mild, Otter Ale, Uley Pig's Ear, St Austell Tribute, Bass, and Swordfish, Henry's IPA and 6X from Wadworth. There was also draught Rattler cider and a good selection of bottled beers and ciders. I have now been quite a number of times and the beer is excellent. Beers are always changing and if you join their 'Real Ale Club' it's only £2 per pint. Last year for the first time they had a beer festival which was very popular, with the next one planned for 28th August featuring 15 different beers and some ciders too.

Mike Wilson (photo by Tony Durbin)



Branch chairman Richard Brooks presenting 91-year-old RAFA regular Don McLean with the certificate on behalf of the club, supported by RAFA staff and regulars.

News from RCH

The RCH brewery based in West Hewish near Weston-super-Mare recently brewed a mild for the first time, namely "Hewish Mild" at 3.6% ABV. This was a dark traditional mild with a full body and a lovely smooth semi-sweet finish. It was intended to be just for the month of May, but a few outlets in the Midlands (where a lot of RCH beers are sold) have asked them to keep it on. In reply, brewer Graham Dunbavan has said, "I am thinking about it." Let's hope we get to see some more of it around here too then.

Future brewing plans include brewing Strawberry Line – a 5% golden beer with added Cheddar strawberries – for the next Wetherspoon festival in October.

They have lost a major outlet (and the Graham's local pub) with the recent closure of the Royal Artillery Arms in West Huntspill. Apparently the landlord is reported to have closed it after a large rent hike from the pub company – a sadly familiar tale. (Graham now drinks in the Crossways.)

Vince Murray

Butcombe's success continues

Butcombe participated in a successful National Cask Ale Week which ended on the Easter weekend, despite the best efforts of the weather to put a dampener on events. The Butcombe-sponsored Arthritis Research Campaign's walk raised over £3,000 for the charity with 90 walkers taking part. The campaign's organiser, Suzie Ladbrooke, expressed her thanks to the brewery and their managers, Andy and Mark, from the Queen's Arms at Bleadon and the Swan at Rowberrow respectively. Mark had a particularly busy weekend with his Celtic-themed beer festival also taking place.

The brewery saw a great many people turning up for the open morning on Easter Saturday, which offered brewery tours and complementary drinks. The Butcombe-sponsored Mendip Morris Men provided the entertainment, even having to move into the brewery shop for their final performance to escape the rain.

June will see the welcome return of the cask version of the lovely Butcombe Blond, which will be available until the end of August. A one-off slightly more bitter recipe, with the addition of Cascade hops, was brewed for the recent Wetherspoon's beer festival.

Butcombe's on-going programme for their guest 'Brewer of the Month' is proving very popular. St. Austell brewery will feature in June, Moorhouses in July, Titanic in August and Castle Rock in September, with four beers available from each.

The brewery report excellent growth in sales of their Butcombe Bitter, requiring the acquisition of additional delivery vehicles, while Velts premium imported Pilsner is also proving very popular.

Another fermenter was recently installed and it is hoped that work can soon commence on the build of a new on-site warehouse.

Finally, as the saying goes, "keeping the best to last", Butcombe plan to launch two new beers next year. More details later in the year.

Margaret Evett



To sample perfectly kept Butcombe Bitter, Gold and Blond, plus numerous guest beers, why not visit a Butcombe pub...

RED TILE

Cossington, near Bridgwater
01278 722333

THE SWAN

Rowberrow (off A38 south of Churchill)
01934 852371

RING O'BELLS

Compton Martin (A368 between Blagdon & West Harptree) 01761 221284

THE BELL

Hillgrove Street, Bristol
0117 9096612

PRINCE OF WALES

Stoke Lane, Westbury-on-Trym
0117 9623715

THE LAMB

The Square, Axbridge
01934 732253

QUEEN'S ARMS

Celtic Way, Bleadon, near Weston-super-Mare 01934 812080

RING O'BELLS

Upper Road, Hinton Blewitt
01761 452239

WOOLPACK INN

St George's, near Weston-super-Mare 01934 521670

CROSS KEYS

High Street, Rode, Frome
01373 830900

ROSE AND CROWN

High Street, Hinton Charterhouse
01225 722153

MALT SHOVEL

Bradley Green, Cannington, Near Bridgwater 01278 653432

QUEEN VICTORIA INN

Pelting Drove, Priddy 01749 676385

OLD CROWN

Kelston, near Bath 01225 423032

COLSTON YARD

Colston Street, Bristol 0117 3763232

COTTAGE INN

Baltic Wharf, 0117 9215256

Great Beer / Great Food / Great Wine / Great Company
BUTCOMBE BREWERY 01934 863963 www.butcombe.com
PRIDE IN EVERYTHING WE BREW

Bath City Pub of the Year

The Bath & Borders branch of the Campaign for Real Ale has named the Raven in Queen Street as its City Pub of the Year.

The Raven has been a pub for over a century, but has only been known as the Raven since October 2004, when Tim Perry and Jill Forsey reopened it after a complete refit. Formerly known as Hatchett's, they renamed it after an eighteenth-century inn called the Raven which stood nearby. Their aim was to create a family-run free house, with the emphasis on good beer and locally-sourced food, and no music, slot machines or TV. Their efforts were rewarded eighteen months after reopening, when they took the coveted title



Tim Perry and Jill Forsey of the Raven in receive the City Pub of the Year award from Denis Rahilly of Bath & Borders CAMRA

of local CAMRA Pub of the Year against stiff competition in April 2006.

Now, four years later, their efforts have been recognised again. Two beers – Raven and Raven's Gold – are brewed exclusively for the pub by Blindman's Brewery at Leighton near Frome, and there is a constantly changing range of three other beers from microbreweries across the country. There are also regular beer festivals. As well as the main bar on the ground floor, there is a quieter bar on the first floor, with the same range of beers available. The pub specialises in traditional fare, including Pieminister pies from Bristol and a range of locally-produced sausages. Food is served lunchtimes and evenings during the week and all day till 8.30 at weekends.

Andrew Swift



blindmans brewery

Award-Winning Real Ales Brewed with Natural Spring Water

Buff 3.6%	Golden Spring 4.0%
Mine Beer 4.2%	Icarus 4.5%
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BLINDMANS BREWERY LTD

Talbot Farm, Leighton, Nr Frome, Somerset BA11 4PN
Tel: 01749 880038 email: info@blindmansbrewery.co.uk
www.blindmansbrewery.co.uk

**** ALES ALSO AVAILABLE VIA SIBA DDS ****

The Lamb Inn, Frome

1 Christchurch Street East, Frome, Somerset, BA11 1QA Tel. 01373 472042
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Fleece	£19.00 each

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.**

Email enquiries to badrag@camrabristol.org.uk.

Please allow up to 4 weeks for delivery.

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If your order is for a selection of items more complex than this form can accommodate, please print your exact requirements on a separate sheet of paper.

Add postage & packing £3.00 for single garment plus £1.00 for each additional item ordered.

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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.

A new venture for Wickwar

The reconstituted board of the Wickwar Brewing Company, having resolved to establish a tied estate of ten pubs, have taken a lease on the **Downend Tavern** in Downend Road, Fishponds, Bristol.

Reopening the pub at the end of April, the new landlord Sam Glenn (previously of the White Lion in the centre of Bristol) pushed boat out with a beer festival held over the May Day holiday weekend. This was a somewhat bold venture as the extra stillage was set up in the skittle alley with only ice-packs to cool the casks, and the weather was on the warm side. Of the 20 casks racked up only 10 were tapped. The Sunday afternoon, which hosted a hog roast and a performance by jazz band Henry's Hot Six, was very well attended but at the end of the festival rather too much beer was left over. With the exception of Gales Festival Mild, which was on handpump later in the week, the untapped casks went to Wickwar's other outlet, the White Lion on the Centre.

In future all casks will be racked in the cellar with the exception of the regular Wickwar BOB served directly from casks on cooled spring-stillages behind the bar. One bank of three handpumps will dispense Wickwar beers and the other three guest beers. Two more pumps are available for use during festivals.

The regular Wickwar range includes Coopers (3.5% ABV) at £1.79 a pint and Station Porter (6.1%) a bargain at £2.49 a pint. BOB (4.0%) and Bankers Draft (4.1%) are £2.70 a pint. Sam plans to have guest ales as 'Beer of the Month'.

Living only minutes away, I have made regular visits and have found the beer quality impeccable. This is a fine example of a community local that has been a Good Beer Guide entry in past times. Let's do all we can to make sure that the Downend Tavern stays open this time.

Henry Davies

Historic Queen's Head reopens

At last it looks like some good news for the Queen's Head in Willsbridge. This pub, which used to be listed in CAMRA's National Inventory of pubs with important historic interiors, closed (again) in April. It has had a troubled and chequered recent past but reopened in mid-May and is now in the hands of someone who looks intent on respecting and taking care of the place.



It has been taken over by the landlord from the Criterion in Weston-super-Mare (itself an excellent pub). He has put in a local manager with pub and club experience who used to run the Longwell Green social club until about eighteen months ago and before that had the Myrtle Tree and the Plume of Feathers – an encouraging track record. The intention is to run the Queen's Head as a "real ale pub". Beers on recently, in excellent condition, were Bath Gem, Cheddar Gorge Best and Cheddar Potholer, plus a real cider on handpump. He says he will have one of the Cheddar beers as a regular and a changing guest or two as well. Lots of effort has gone into sprucing the place up. All the rooms and the toilets have been painted; the floor in the main bar has been sanded and sealed; they took 150 black sacks of rubbish away from the back garden (which people are now using); and it has an encouragingly positive feel. There may even be plans to start doing food soon as well.

This pub deserves your support. As the saying goes, use it or lose it!



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BOB (4.0%)

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A golden, refreshing brew with a dry finish

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Rich and well-balanced with a hoppy finish

IKB (4.5%)

A complex, ruby red ale with strong hints of cherries and plums.

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The CAMRA supreme winter beer 2008, a rounded stout with hints of chocolate

Wickwar Brewing Co, The Old Brewery, Station rd, Wickwar, GL12 8NB tel: 01454 292000

Available from:

Our flagship pub–The White Lion,

Quay Head, Colston Avenue, Bristol, BS1 1BE

The newly reopened Downend Tavern,

125 Downend Road, Fishponds, Bristol, BS16 5BE

The Brewery Shop,

Arnold's Cooperage, Station rd, Wickar, GL12 8NB

tel: 01454 299592

Web: www.thebreweryshop.com

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Complete the Direct Debit form below and you will receive three months membership free and a fantastic discount on your membership subscription. Alternatively you can send a cheque payable to CAMRA Ltd with your completed form, visit www.camra.org.uk or call 01727 867201. All forms should be addressed to Membership Secretary, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, AL1 4LW.

Your Details

Title Surname

Forename(s)

Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy)

Address

Postcode

Email address

Tel No (s)

Partner's Details (if Joint Membership)

Title Surname

Forename(s)

Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy)



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FOR
REAL ALE**



Please state which CAMRA newsletter you found this form in. *PINTS WEST (Bristol & District) - edition 86*

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Branch diary

Diary of the Bristol & District branch of CAMRA

- **Wed June 2nd** – Explorer/Surveyor trip to Frampton Cottrell area. Coach departs 6.45pm from Cornubia, cost £6.
- **Sat June 5th** – The Annual Docks Cider Saunter. Start mid-day at the Orchard, then Avon Packet, Coronation, Apple Barge, and possibly Bank Tavern and Bristol Cider House.
- **Wed June 9th** – Committee meeting upstairs at Cornubia, 8pm start.
- **Thurs June 10th** – BADRAG review meeting, 7.30 for 8pm upstairs at Cornubia.
- **Wed June 16th** – Branch meeting, Robin Hood, St. Michael's Hill, Kingsdown. NOTE REVISED DATE.
- **Sat June 19th** – BADRAG South Glos Mild Trail and Explorer/GBG trip (to include the Salutation at Ham, Beaufort Arms at Hawkesbury Upton, New Inn at Mayhill, Cross Hands at Winterbourne Down and Lamb at Iron Acton).
- **Tues June 22nd** – Explorer/Surveyor trip to East Mendips. Coach departs 6.45pm from Cornubia, cost £6.
- **Thurs June 24th** – Meet & Greet, Portishead, probably at Poachers, but full details to be confirmed.
- **Thurs July 1st** – Pubs Group Quarterly Social. Meet Blackboy Inn, Blackboy Hill, near the Downs, 7pm, and visiting five other pubs.
- **Thurs July 8th** – BADRAG gathering, Highbury Vaults, Kingsdown, front snug. 7.45 for 8pm.
- **Tues July 13th** – Explorer/Surveyor trip to Thornbury area. Coach departs 6.45pm from Cornubia.
- **Wed July 14th** – Committee meeting, Cornubia 8pm.
- **Wed July 21st** – Explorer/Surveyor trip to North Somerset. 6.45pm from Cornubia.
- **Wed July 28th** – Branch AGM to be held upstairs at Horts. Please bring your membership cards. 7.45 for 8pm sharp.
- **Thurs July 29th**, Pubs Group meeting, 7pm, Cornubia.
- **August** – Full details of events will be announced on the website www.camrabristol.org.uk although a forward date for your diary is the August Branch meeting, likely to be held on August 25th at a venue to be confirmed.

Please note that pre-booking of all coach trips is essential to avoid disappointment. To book, or for more details on any event, or to join our 'yahoo' group for weekly updates please email Tim Proudman at badcamrasocials@blueyonder.co.uk.

Severn Vale diary

- **Wednesday 16th June, 8pm** - meeting at the at the Plough in Pilning (address Pilning Street, Nr Pilning, Bristol, BS35 4JJ).
- **Wednesday 21st July, 8pm** - meeting at the Fox, Easter Compton (address Main Road, Easter Compton, Bristol, BS35 5RA).

Non-members welcome at the above events.

Severn Vale contact

Neil Halsall (chair): Neil.Halsall@southglos.gov.uk (07776 236145)

Weston diary

- **Wednesday 16 June** – Old Inn, Hutton, 8.30pm.
 - **Wednesday 21 July** – Taunton Crawl. Depart Weston 18.55. Five pubs to be visited – including three in current Good Beer Guide. Confirm train time with Tim on number below.
 - **Friday 23 to Sunday 25 July** – Weston Lions Beer Festival, Beach Lawns.
 - **Wednesday 18 August** – Off The Rails. 8.30pm onwards.
- Non-members welcome at all of the above events.**

Weston contact

Tim Nickolls: 01934 644925 (evenings) or email tim.nickolls@postoffice.co.uk

Thanks to this issue's contributors

Andrew Swift
Dave Graham
Duncan Shine
Helen Featherstone
Henry Davies
Jon Parr
Keith Shapland
Kirsten Elliott
Laurie Gibney
Les Cooper
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Mark Steeds
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Pete Bridle
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Richard Brooks
Robin E Wild
Steve Hunt
Steve Matthews
Tim Nickolls
Tim Proudman
Toby Seely
Trevor Prideaux
Editor:
Steve Plumridge



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LETTERS: please email correspondence to:

steve.plumridge@bristol.ac.uk

or post it to:

Pints West Editor, Steve Plumridge,
Garden Flat, 6 Royal York Villas,
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CAMRA Good Beer Guide: suggestions for future entries, and comments on existing ones, can be made to our GBG co-ordinator, Vince Murray: vincent.murray@blueyonder.co.uk.

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

Trading Standards Officers: contact numbers for problems such as consistent short measures, no price lists...

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Glos: 01452 426201 / N. Somerset: 01934 632026

B.A.N.E.S.: 01225 396755

or visit www.tradingstandards.gov.uk

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Bath & Borders diary

- **Thursday 3rd June 8:30pm.** The 2010 Community Pub of the Year presentation, the Somerset Arms, Semmington, nr Trowbridge. A superb pub, rescued from closure by a local family to become a hub of village life. Great beers as well!
- **Thursday 10th June.** A trip to the Plain Ales Brewery. A brand new brewery in our area but already making a mark with its fine beers. We'll probably visit the Masons Arms later in the evening. Book a place on the minibus!
- **Saturday 12th June.** Cardiff Beer Festival at the Cardiff International Arena. Anyone for the lunchtime session?
- **Tuesday 15th June 8:30pm.** A mini crawl in Bath, starting at the White Horse in Twerton and then on to the Victoria Works on the Lower Bristol Rd. The former, and old favourite, the latter, newly refurbished (and renamed).
- **Thursday 24th June 8:30pm.** A social at the Bell in Buckland Dinham. This is a fine old village pub run by a genuine real ale enthusiast.
- **Tuesday 29th June 8:30pm.** The Branch Meeting at the Prince of Wales in Dilton Marsh, nr Westbury.

Bath & Borders contacts

Branch socials contact: Denis Rahilly on 01225 791399 or 07711 004501, email denis.rahilly@talktalk.net.

Contact for all non-social matters: James Honey on 01373 822794.

The Great British Beer Festival 2010

Britain's biggest beer festival
3-7 August 2010, Earls Court, London

The Great British Beer Festival at Earls Court, Britain's biggest beer festival, once again brings together a wide range of real ales, ciders, perries and international beers.

There's plenty to occupy you at the festival: you can play on some traditional pub games, enjoy live music, sample some food, including good traditional pub snacks, and also attend tutored beer tastings.

Advance day and season tickets for this year's festival can be purchased through the *See Tickets* hotline on 0844 412 4640 or from the festival website at www.gbbf.org.uk. Or you can just turn up and pay on the door.

Opening times are:

Tuesday 3rd : 5.00pm to 10.30pm

Wednesday 4th to Friday 6th : 12noon to 10.30pm

Saturday 7th : 11.00am to 7.00pm

Visit the web site at gbbf.camra.org.uk for more information.



Some festivals to look out for

June 10-12 : Great Welsh Beer & Cider Festival, Cardiff International Arena

Contact name: Keith Jenkins Tel: 07807609712 Web: www.gwbcf.org.uk

June 11-13 : Miner's Arms, St Werburghs, Bristol

Web: www.dawkins-ales.co.uk

June 11-12 : Pucklechurch

Contact name: Mike Rawlings Email: mike@elec-mech.co.uk

Web: www.beer-festival.org/beer-festival.html

June 18-20 : Cheddar Ales Brewery, Winchester Farm, Draycott Road, Cheddar, Somerset, BS27 3RP

Contact name: John Magill Tel: 01934 744193 / 07786 128606

Email: webmail@cheddarales.co.uk Web: www.cheddarales.co.uk

July 2-3 : Three Tuns, Hotwells

Contact name: Mark Farrell Tel: 0781 2201844

July 2-4 : Claverham, Village Hall

Contact name: Barry Straughton

Tel: 01934 832438 Email: jasjbs@talktalk.net

July 2-4 : Ashcott, Whitley Farm

Contact name: Duncan Cameron

Tel: 07966 133901 Email: sharkcage@btinternet.com

July 8-11 : White Horse, Twerton, Bath

Tel: 01225 340668 Email: www.thewhitehorsebath.com

Web: www.thewhitehorsebath.com

July 9-10 : South Cotswold, Chipping Sodbury

Web: www.yaterotary.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk/beer2010

July 9-10 : Newt, North Newton

Contact name: Frank Clegg Tel: 01278 663059

Email: frankclegg248@btinternet.com Web: www.newtbeerfest.com

July 15-18 : Nailsea & Backwell RFC, BS48 4BY

Contact name: Paul Turner Tel: 07900 937287 Web: www.applefest.co.uk

July 15-18 : Royal Oak, Twerton, Bath

Web: www.theroyaloak-bath.co.uk

July 15-18 : Cornish Beer Festival, Star Inn, Bath

Web: www.star-inn-bath.co.uk

July 16-17 : Exeter, Exeter City FC, EX4 6PX

Contact name: Ray Dwan

Tel: 01395 223212 Email: devonlion@btinternet.com

July 16-18 : Sherston Inn, Wells, BA5 1SU

Tel: 01749 673743 Email: info@sherstonwells.co.uk

July 23-25 : Beach Lawns, Weston-super-Mare

Email: wsmrealale@aol.com Web: www.westonlionsrealalefestival.org.uk

July 23-25 : Cotswold Beer Festival, Postlip Hall

Contact name: John Barrett Tel: 01242 239785

Web: www.gloucestershirecamra.org.uk/cbf

July 23-25 : Riverside Inn, Cheddar, BS27 3PX

Contact name: Huw Tel: 01934 742452

Email: info@riversidecheddar.co.uk

Aug 3-7 : Great British Beer Festival, Earls Court, London

Tel: 01727 867201 Email: camra@camra.org.uk Web: gbbf.camra.org.uk

Aug 27-30 : Brewers Arms, South Petherton

Contact: Duncan Webb Tel: 01460 241887

Email: duncan@thebrewersarms.ecipse.co.uk

Sept 10-11 : Chew Valley, Ubley, Village Hall

Contact name: Steve Blanchard Tel: 01761 462468

Email: shblanchard@aol.com Web: www.chewvalleybeerfestival.co.uk

Sept 11-12 : Somerset CAMRA, WSR, Minehead

Contact name: Alan Walker Tel: 01823 330364

Web: www.wsr.org.uk/camra2009.htm

Sept 17-19 : Wedmore, Village Hall, BS28 4EQ

Contact name: Trevor Prideaux Tel: 01934 710004

Email: trevorprideaux@hotmail.com Web: www.wedmorerealale.com

Collated by Trevor Prideaux and SP

Seventh Annual Nailsea Beer and Cider Festival

at Nailsea and Backwell Rugby Club

Friday 16 July 6pm to 11pm

Saturday 17 July Noon to 11pm

Sunday 18 July Noon to 6pm

Raising funds this year for



Nailsea
Army
Cadets

Over 80 beers, ciders and perries

Free live music all weekend

*Advance ticket valid for all sessions £6.50
includes commemorative glass and first half pint*

*Available from Nailsea stores,
the Rugby Club or via mail order*

See our website www.applefest.co.uk for full
details, directions and public transport links