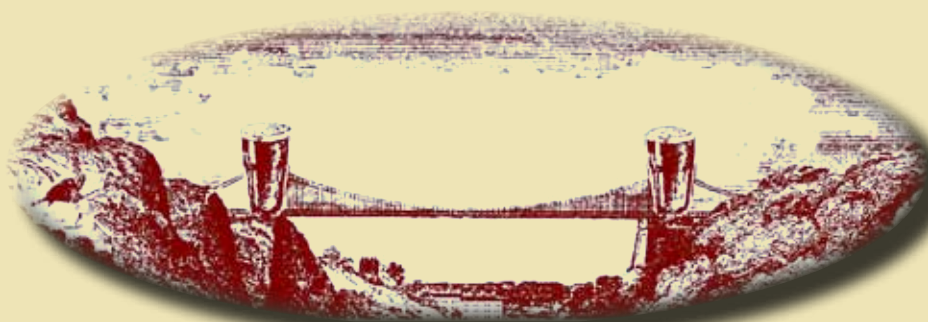




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# PINTS WEST

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



## Beer Essentials : Hops



## Beer Essentials

## Hops

Everyone knows of the bittering abilities of the hop, some are aware of its antiseptic qualities allowing ales to be kept for long periods of time and survive sea voyages to India, and even fewer people know the flavours and aromas derived from different hops - but one thing I had never heard of until recently was a 'hop walk'.

My interest was aroused when I was invited to go on a hop walk in early September, at Pridewood Farm in Herefordshire. Arbor Ales were unable to attend, and as they didn't want the ticket to go to waste, wondered if I would be interested (it turns out that they were busy signing the lease for the Three Tuns - but that's another story). Unsure of what a hop walk actually meant, a bit of on-line research quickly put my fears to rest, as it proved to be an opportunity to see a working hop farm, listen to the latest developments in the hop industry, and sample a range of new beers - oh, and there was a buffet thrown in as well!

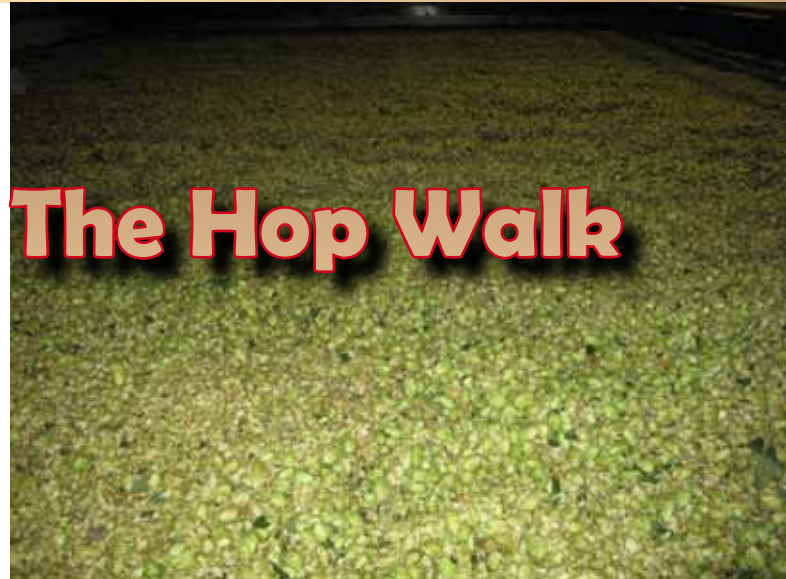


Goldings hops

On a wet Tuesday morning we boarded the train for Ledbury, where a short taxi ride took us to the farm and a large marquee which was full of brewers demolishing the buffet. Of the many people in the tent, there were representatives from probably a hundred breweries, but my eye was drawn to the stillage at the far end where 12 different beers were lined up. Each of the ales were brewed by a different brewery using one of the new hop strains either as a bittering hop or an aroma hop to allow us to taste the flavours that the specific hops imparted to the beer (although my favourite one was Lady Rowena, a well balanced citrus flavoured beer from the Little Ale Cart Brewery that used a new Magnum hop for bittering and Centennial, Chinook and Columbus as late hops).

Some of the hops used in the beers were new strains that had recently been cross bred, or a new strain of an established hop that was more disease resistant (wilt is one of the biggest problems facing hop growers in this country and should not be confused with droop, which allegedly only affects brewers).

The event was organised by Charles Faram & Co. Ltd. (a major UK hop supplier) and there were a series of short talks to update the breweries. Paul Corbett (Charles Faram) gave an overview of this year's hop harvest so far and the likely price movements (probably up). Peter Darby (Wye Hops Ltd.) talked on the developments in the hop breeding programme (which may eventually keep hop prices down) by developing substitutes for imported hops, disease resistance and increased yields. Plant Heritage have just designated the collection of 100 English hop varieties as the National Hop Collection. Jonathon Arnold (Robin Appel Ltd.) appraised the barley market and the future effect on prices



## The Hop Walk

A sea of hops drying on the kiln

that poor yields will have.

A walk around the hop growing fields allowed us to see the way hops are cultivated to get the maximum yield from each plant during the growing season. Each plant produces numerous shoots, or bines, but only eight from each plant are tied to strings where they grow into 15-foot-high hop bines (you may have seen them strung along the top of some pub bars as decoration). Harvesting takes place in the UK between August and September as different varieties mature at different times - they were harvesting the Cobb Goldings whilst we were there.



Loading the hop bines

The harvested bines are taken to the picking shed where they are loaded onto the picking machine which strips them of the leaves and hops. The hops are then separated out and dried on large open kilns before being baled for despatch. The waste bines are chopped up and then composted for mulching next years growth.

We had a very enjoyable day out, despite the rain, so thanks to Charles Faram, Pridewood Farm, Arbor Ales and the twelve breweries who supplied the beer.

Colin Postlethwaite



The late-maturing Target hops at Pridewood Farm





**CAMPAIGN  
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# Real Ale . . .

## a personal account of its recent evolution

**B**ack in the early 1980's when I started drinking, I recall that beer was available quite widely. Much of it however was keg beer that lacked interest when compared to some of the sexy lager brands that were being marketed at the time. I started drinking beer in preference to lager but, after a couple of bad ale experiences and because I was drinking in the 'wrong places', I'm sorry to say that premium lagers were often preferred to some of the beer brands that I was finding. The only real ales found locally to the Bristol area were Courage BA, Best and Directors, the ubiquitous Bass, Ushers Best and Whitbread. If you knew of an outlet for Wadworth 6X, Hall and Woodhouse Tanglefoot or Theakston's Old Peculier then this was something well worth looking forward to. My favourite ale of the time was Eldridge Pope's Royal Oak. A strong dark bitter with a full body, it had a distinctly fruity taste that was preceded by a banana aroma. I knew of two pubs that served this at this time, the Llandoger Trow in King Street and the White Hart at Castle Combe, and it was a real treat to go and seek it out. As the decade progressed it became much easier to find Smiles' beers and Butcombe Bitter. I enjoyed the Exhibition from Smiles, again a dark beer with a fruity taste which was a hallmark of Smiles beers. At 5.2% ABV it packed a very heavy punch.

I remember to this day when I walked into the back bar at the Navy Volunteer in King Street in around 1986 and got excited about seeing a new beer to me – Cotleigh Old Buzzard, the pump clip said. If there is something I enjoy about real ale it is the choice of names. Never mind faux German titles, just give it a proper regional name that people can relate to. The Buzzard is very much part of the Somerset scene and many appear 'old' in their partial moulting stage. The beer was absolutely superb: another dark ale but at 4.8% ABV it had more body and taste than its strength should have allowed. Who can not smile when they see ales named Dog's Bollocks, Dorothy Goodbody, Monkey Wrench or Two Pints?

Towards the end of the 80's things real ale were looking up and I probably consumed my last pint of lager in about 1987. Somehow the comings of Hardington and Ross passed me by, two breweries in Bristol that are celebrated even to this day. Ross were responsible for brewing the world's then strongest beer, Uncle Igor's at 21% ABV. I was living in Yate at this time and was trapped in a bit of a beer desert, and I was guilty of a bit of laziness seeking any out. But this changed when I moved to Coalpit Heath in 1991, where ten pubs within a mile of my house enjoyed healthy competition. Ushers, Eldridge Pope, Wadworth, Smiles, Wickwar, Ind Coupe Burton Ale, Butcombe plus guests from

micro breweries at a couple of pubs offered some diversity.

It was micro breweries that turned it all around. They weren't afraid to offer something different and while Courage offered three varying strength bitters and Bass offered just one, the micros were offering low-strength bitters, best bitters, old ales, pale ales, IPAs, stouts, porters, brown ales and barley wines – typically anything from 3.2% to 7.5% ABV. And what's this? ... milds! Every one thought they had died long ago but their re-invention saw them enjoyed by many a drinker. And the milds weren't necessarily session strength any more – strong milds were in vogue. Then there was the introduction of a style that has recently obtained its own classification, golden ales. Exmoor Gold and Hop Back Summer Lightning were the forerunners of this style which has quite rightly been welcomed with open arms. My favourite is RCH Pitchfork: the citrus hoppy bitterness overwhelms the taste buds while a fruity finish keeps the interest throughout.

Indeed the global brewers that still have a presence in this country admit that the regionals and micros are being left to diversify into the different styles as they are so good at it.

Real ale has come on so well in my drinking lifetime that there is little reason to drink anything else (except if you have a preference for real cider and perry). CAMRA has done so much to influence this and, by organising beer festivals, so many more people have been introduced to real ale. I have often taken non-real-ale-drinking mates to festivals and found them actually enjoying the ale after warming up on a couple of halves. Food matching, mild months, winter warmers and spiced Christmas brews are a celebration of British real ale. So switch off that amber nectar and that stuff which is probably not the best beer in the world and come over to the diverse world of real ale. Great people, great pubs and great product equals a great experience; cheers!

*Mike Jackson*



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# Awards for RCH, Moor and West Country Ales

**Local Businesses Scoop a Treble for Somerset at National CAMRA Awards**

The aficionados of the beer world gathered on Saturday 9th October at the Oval Cricket Ground in London to attend the CAMRA (Campaign for Real Ale) Awards lunch and 2010 Champion Beer of Britain Awards ceremony. The event, the biggest of its kind in the country, recognises and rewards people and businesses that work to raise awareness and the quality of real ale in the UK and proved particularly successful for three Somerset businesses.

Paul Davey and Graham Dunbavan of RCH brewery in West Hensleigh picked up yet another award to add to a collection covering many years. Their PG Steam ale was voted Champion Bitter of Britain, a richly deserved Gold medal for this superb beer. Of course having been brewing since 1984, the brewery is no stranger to success having picked up national awards for several of their other beers in previous years. Traditional beers, brewed to the highest standard are the hallmark of this brewing institution and continue to be recognised as amongst the very best that British brewing has to offer.

Rounding off a highly successful day for Somerset brewers, Justin Hawke of Moor Beer in Pitney picked up the Silver medal for his excellent Revival Bitter in the Champion Bitter of Britain competition, making it a fantastic one-two for Somerset brewers in the most fiercely contested and highly regarded category. Although lacking a West Country accent, Justin brings a passion for beer and the local area, as well as a tendency towards fusing the wonders of real ale with the aggressively flavoured beers of his native California. Justin's insistence on using only the finest ingredients and adding that little bit of magic make Moor Beer one of the most exciting and innovative breweries not just in Somerset but in the UK as a whole.

Finally, Fred Wilde of West Country Ales picked up the National Retailer of the Year award, beating off competition from many larger and more established businesses throughout the country. Now in its second year of trading from the heart of Cheddar Gorge, West Country Ales



From the left: Mark Davey of RCH, Justin Hawke of Moor Beer, Graham Dunbavan and Paul Davey of RCH and Fred Wilde of West Country Ales

triumphed through a combination of great customer service, willingness to source and stock unusual beers and ciders and above all a commitment to promoting genuine real ale in a bottle. Totally thrilled at having received the award, owner Fred Wilde insisted, "I'm really happy that the time and effort that I invest in my business (sometimes to my wife's dismay) has been appreciated by CAMRA. Of course, none of this would have been possible without the support of my loyal customers in store and online and the fantastic ales being produced by the breweries of the West Country. What man would not be happy to be able to make a living from indulging in his personal passion?"



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# News from Arbor Ales

August and September turned out to be the busiest months for Arbor Ales since brewing began. To satisfy demand, Jon Comer is now brewing up to three times a week, is adding a fourth fermenting vessel and has another 100 casks on order. These new casks will ease what has become the main bottleneck in the production process.

Talking of bottlenecks, Jon has just started bottling his own beers, the first being his new strong dark beer **Black Eyed P.A.** (6.5% ABV). This beautifully crafted ale benefits from input from Ned Clarke, late of Dawkins, and Kelly Ryan at Thornbridge brewery, and is something of a paradox. As the name suggests, it is, in effect, a dark India Pale Ale! The colour is black and the aroma a complex mixture of resinous, grassy hop, dark fruits – as well as hints of peach and gooseberry – and an underlying roast. The full-bodied and smooth taste is fruity, bitter but with a balancing sweetness, and the roast character comes through in a spirituous aftertaste that gradually fades into a hoppy memory. The unusually high hop rate adds character without undue bitterness and the bottle-conditioning replicates that of the cask in that the ale, when poured, is not overly fizzy. The yeast used compacts well and so decanting the beer is easy and involves very little waste.

Within the portfolio of six or seven regular beers, one of the most popular is **Single Hop** range (4% ABV). The hop itself changes, usually on a monthly basis (with the exception of **Motueka** whose popularity ensures regular availability). The present one at the time of writing (October to November) is **Southern Cross** and the next **Amarillo** and later, by special request, **Bramling Cross**.

## News of the 'tied estate'

The Good Beer Guide-listed **Old Stillage** in Church Road, Redfield, the main outlet for Arbor's beers, is in the process of commissioning a new kitchen, the intention being to feature Sunday roasts and hot food at themed evenings.

On October 1<sup>st</sup> Arbor Ales took over the lease of the **Three Tuns** in St George's Road. Under the stewardship of the above-mentioned Ned Clarke and wife Natz, the intended range of ten real ales will include only two or so from Arbor; the rest will be sourced from micros of a similar, or superior, quality to Arbor Ales. A fine selection of imported beers, mainly from the USA, will also feature. There will be changes in the food menu and live music policy too. This outlet should prove very popular if the opening night is any indication, for on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> October when Ned opened at 5pm, there was already a long queue outside the door. The first of what will be regular 'tasting nights' recently took place, the subject of this being **Sarah Hughes Dark Ruby Mild** (6.0% ABV).

Back at Kingswood (the brewery's location), some of the existing regular beers will change as part of a drive to re-vamp the entire range with the accent on quality and distinctive taste. The whole philosophy of the brewery relies on a small brew-length (five and a half brewer's barrels) enabling frequent brews of up to seven regular beers to be produced and distributed direct to retailers while very fresh, thus increasing cellar life once tapped.

On the occasion of my last visit to the brewery, Jon was finishing washing a batch of casks, proceeding to rack a brew of the popular and distinctive **Hunny Beer** (4.2% ABV) into them, while bringing me up to date with news. Having reached the limit of one-man operation, I am pleased to recount that Ned will be lending a hand for one day a week.

Henry Davies

## Update on the Plume of Feathers

In the last edition, the re-opening of the Plume of Feathers was mentioned ('A walk from the Centre to the pubs in and around Hotwells'). First, I should make a correction to that article. The landlady Pat Best has made it clear to me it is NOT aimed at being a cider house. That detail was supplied to me by another person. Please accept my humble apologies for that.

The pub is a family-run one, with Pat's sons helping her. The intention is to make this a true 'LocAle' one, that is, concentrating on selling locally brewed beers rather than national ones, which she was working on when I spoke to her recently. The core stock is from Arbor Ales – Hunny Beer and Brigstow Bitter (£2.60 per pint) were on tap at the time. Guest ales are to come; Great Western Brewing Company's Ruby Porter (5.2%) is expected soon. As I recall, an Otter ale was a guest the previous time I visited.

Arbor's Oyster Stout on the third handpump had recently come to

the end. Pat told me how surprised she was at how fast this sold. Due to its popularity, she will be buying double the quantity of this in future.

What takes place at the Plume? Well, there is live music on Friday evenings, Saturday is a night a DJ runs the show, and on Sunday evenings karaoke has proved popular. Also on Sundays, Sunday (roast) lunches are sold at a flat price of £5.50. There may be expansion on special themes to come, but that is to be seen; Pat rightly wants to see what proves most successful.

The number of customers has been rising, although when students are on holiday, this does slip. There again, the other pubs in Hotwells also suffer, it has been noticed. I was visiting at the end of a holiday period and quite a few middle-aged customers came in while I was there – due to it being the DJ's night, maybe?

Opening hours are noon to midnight Sunday to Thursday, noon to 1am Friday and Saturday.

Back to the subject of being a pub with local ales, other pubs in Hotwells have something of a similarity here. The Three Tuns towards College Green has Arbor Ales (as well as guests), the Grain Barge close by is a Bristol Beer Factory outlet and the Merchant Arms is a Bath Ales one – all local breweries!

Tim Belsten



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Arbor Ales  
Single Hop Series  
Amarillo  
4.0%

Arbor Ales  
BRIGSTOW BITTER  
Brigstow Bitter  
4.3%

Arbor Ales  
Snuffy Jack's  
Old Ale 5.9%

Arbor Ales  
Black Eyed PA  
6.5%

# The plight of the Crown, Soundwell



The Crown public house at 82 Soundwell Road in Bristol is currently the subject of a planning application by the Wellington Pub company to convert into flats with associated parking.

This 100-year-old building of red brick construction with lighter coloured facings on two storeys has been closed for around three years and the planning application (Re: PK10/10/1077/F) is currently pending consideration by South Gloucestershire Council's planning offices under delegated powers after the statutory consultation period ended on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2010.

The applicants in their viability report suggest that the Crown fails this test because of noise and disturbances to neighbours together with the fact that as a mainly beer-drinking establishment it did not cater for families or offer much in the way of food. However when talking to local residents it became apparent that this was not strictly true. They said that the last landlord did try and run the pub properly and did offer cooked food, but could not make the business run at a profit. Furthermore they thought that the previous landlord to this did not run the pub very well as there were problems with drug dealing and youths causing trouble. The landlord failed to deal with these issues effectively and as a consequence the pub never really recovered. Ironically the people causing the problems were not actually locals but from further afield. With these factors taken into consideration it is possible that the viability tests are at least flawed and quite possibly inaccurate and misleading.

Residents suggest that there is over-provision of flats in the local vicinity and did not want any more built, preferring to keep the pub if it was well run, cooked food and resolved the parking issues. Another factor is South Gloucestershire core strategy policy CS23 covering Community Buildings and Cultural activity, wherein paragraph 10.77 states: "Where the redevelopment of an existing community facility is proposed for another use, the developer should clearly demonstrate that the use has ceased. In doing so it should be demonstrated that a reason-



able amount of time has lapsed for an alternative agency or organisation to re-establish the use, or the facility no longer provides for the needs of its users to modern day standards and alternative suitable provision is available within a reasonable walking distance. Distances should be measured along suitable walking routes (easy walking distance is considered to be approximately 800m)."

Can we be sure that policy CS23 is being used effectively to serve residents of Soundwell's best interest by allowing the Crown to be converted to flats and losing their local pub? Personally I don't think so but if you have point of view please email the case officer Marie Bath as a matter of urgency at South Gloucestershire Council's Planning Department. Or telephone her on 01454 868004 to discuss this planning application. You might like to ask her why the final decision on this scheme has been delegated to South Gloucestershire Council Planning offices instead of going to the full planning committee, bearing in mind how much communities can suffer when they see their local pub closed and the social interaction that goes with it.

Ian Beckey

\*Source: <https://consultations.southglos.gov.uk/consult.ti/CoreStrategy/viewCompoundDoc?docid=441908&sessionid=&voteid=&partId=444244>

## Inn and around Portishead

### The recession hits

Portishead has more than doubled in size in the last few years, what with the new Marina and the housing grouped around it. This has, perhaps, helped cushion the town from the effects of the downturn in the pub industry. However, proof of the downturn was demonstrated in October when two of the three pubs in the High Street closed for business in the same week. Both of these pubs are of historic interest and both are in the ownership of Enterprise Inns. The closures were reported in our local press and much of the detail which follows has been taken from their reports.

It was stated that staff at the **White Lion** turned up for work one day to find metal shutters on the windows and doors. The White Lion is at the end of the High Street, close to the Marina. It was once a water mill and has been a hotel in the past. Previously a Bass pub, it flourished when serving workers from the industries which were based at this end of town before the Marina was developed. More lately, no real ale has been available here on draught.

Over at the **Poacher**, this has a prominent position in the middle of the High Street and has been leased to the Hazelton family for 26 years. For 20 years, Ron Hazelton was publican aided by his wife, Hilary, who ran the food side of things. Their son, Mark, took over the lease six years ago, helped by wife, Sue. Mark has promoted the real ales side, always having four ales available and was rewarded with entry into the Good Beer Guide in recent years. The Poacher has been trading since the 1600s and has also been called the Blew Anchor and the Anchor. Mark has said that there has been a 20% drop in trade over the last year, on top of a 10% drop which resulted from the smoking ban. It has

been reported that the current rent paid to Enterprise is £60,000 a year which seems a lot when taken into account with the high prices which the landlord has to pay the pubco for his drinks (often available for a lot less to free of tie houses). The Hazeltons have two years left to run on the lease and if no buyer can be found for it, the pub will be repossessed by Enterprise.

It is particularly sad to see the state of affairs at the Poacher. Mark and Sue have worked hard to introduce new customers, packing the place out by regular live music nights on Fridays, welcoming charities and being the local hub for community groups.

Enterprise has stated that they plan to reopen both pubs. In the meantime, we can reflect that, even in relatively prosperous areas, the recession has hit and pubcos can only squeeze their publicans so far.

### Clarence House

On a happier note, I can confirm that their third beer festival will be held on the evenings of Friday, 4th and Saturday, 5th February 2011. Tickets are available from the main bar. As before, the festival will be held in the club's Gordano Suite.

### Vic's seasonal message

From time to time, we feature the words of local sage, Vic Long, landlord of the **Ship Inn**, Redcliffe Bay, Portishead. I met Vic and his long-suffering wife, Debbie, last Christmas Eve and was entertained by Vic's own festive story. Apparently, Debbie had once responded to Vic's question "What do you want for Christmas?" with "Just give me something to open." Vic says he bought her three new windows and a door.

Neil Ravenscroft



# News from Butcombe Brewery

## Bitter in a Bottle

Butcombe took a very significant step in October by going ahead, after careful consideration, with the launch of their iconic Bitter in bottle form with an increased alcoholic strength of 4.5% (the cask form being 4.0%).

Although the more recent Gold, Blond and Brunel beers have been bottled since 2006, the flagship Bitter, which accounts for the greater part of the brewery's business, has remained in cask form only for 32 years! Butcombe Bitter has long been a West Country favourite and is currently enjoyed in over 1,000 pubs and clubs within an approximate 50-mile radius of Bristol. Bottling, it is hoped, will bring further exposure to an expanding customer base outside their home territory. Butcombe are very honoured that Fuller's agreed to do the bottling for them. The beer will be available in an eight-pack from selected Bristol Asda stores until the New Year, then nationally through Morrison's from January.

Another official launch took place on 1<sup>st</sup> September at the Colston Yard, that of their traditional cloudy cider, Ashton Still (5% ABV), along with Brunel IPA in its new Autumn programme slot of September to November. Complementary curries were added to the equation making for a very pleasant evening. The cider is doing well after its debut.

December will see the return of Christmas Steps (4.2%), Butcombe's light reddish seasonal offering, then the brewery will start the New Year with another significant event – the launch of their Old Vic Bristol Porter (4.7%), which will be available through to March.

If you're after a brewery-related product as a different Christmas gift, then Butcombe's presentation pack of a trio of preserves might appeal. Gold, Ashton Cider and Brunel are present in a savoury marmalade, chutney and pickle respectively.

The brewery have recently extended their estate with the purchase of another country pub, the **Fox and Hounds** in Charlton Adam, near Yeovil.



Guy Newell and Jon Hayes at the Colston Yard launch of the Ashton Still and the re-launch of Brunel IPA

On the subject of country pubs, many do diversify very successfully, an example being the Harvest Festival Auction, held in September at the Old Crown, Kelston. A good variety of donations were received, attractively packaged by Becky and professionally auctioned by a pub customer, resulting in a donation of £400 to the Dorothy House Hospice. Well done to Stuart and Becky.

Margaret Evett



Stuart Roper with some of the Harvest offerings at the Old Crown, Kelston

## Butcombe goes Dark

and introduces for the first time

### Old Vic

"Dramatically Dark" Bristol Porter at 4.7% abv



This "Dramatically Dark" beer is a complex, satisfying Porter ... smooth, rich, and distinctive. Pale, crystal, brown and chocolate malts, plus fruit, feature on the nose, whilst the Fuggles and Goldings hops ensure a powerful and satisfying finish ... bittersweet with hints of chocolate and toffee.

Available throughout January / February / March  
in good pubs near you

Happy Christmas and New Year to all our Drinkers

# Coalpit Heath and Frampton Cotterell pub guide

So you want to get out of town and try somewhere different? A few miles out of Bristol in a north-easterly direction are the adjoined villages of Coalpit Heath and Frampton Cotterell. Like most towns and villages, many pubs have been lost, but seven pubs are still open for business and all of these bar one have retained the same name for generations. My postal address is Coalpit Heath but my parish and diocese boundaries place me in Frampton Cotterell so for that reason I feel qualified to claim all of the following pubs are in “my village”. In no particular order I’ll take you on a tour of them and introduce you to the ales, ciders and other offerings that you may find.



Ring o' Bells

The **Ring o' Bells** in Coalpit Heath is a very old building dating from the 17<sup>th</sup> century. It has an immense history and has links with farming, coal mining and brewing, and it held coroners' inquests in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Note the historic documents mounted on the walls including a 1925 floor-plan of the building. Up to four real ales may be served including Wadworth Henry's and Courage Best, but more usual are three ales plus Thatcher's Traditional cider. This pub is a hub of the village for community events, many of which raise a great deal of money for charities, and it is well attended at all times. Pool and darts are played and there is entertainment on Friday evenings, as well as a big screen for showing major sporting events. An adults' garden and a children's garden, as well as a smoking shelter, are in place along with a good-sized car park.



Badminton Arms

Also in Coalpit Heath, the **Badminton Arms** changed its name in 1998 from its former name, the Half Moon, a name that came from a local coal pit. The Badminton name comes from the pub's position on the ancient thoroughfare from Bristol to Badminton. This Wadworth pub dates from 1968 when it was built adjacent to the original Half Moon which was demolished. Smart and airy, this is a very modern pub and enjoys comfortable and relaxed surroundings. It continually evolves and its current interior is less than four years old and includes comfy leather sofas and arm chairs. Food is a major part of the trade here where the carvery is much sought after. Real ale drinkers are accommodated, though guest ales are rare here. Up to three Wadworth ales are offered, usually Henry's IPA, 6X and an in-house seasonal. Bishop's Tipple and Old Father Timer are favourites. No real cider is offered however. Watch out for the impressive large Wadworth's Northgate Brewery photo on



New Inn

the wall. There are no pub games other than giant Jenga. There is also external seating next to the generous car park.

Within the north-east corner of Frampton Cotterell, Mayshill stands as a small group of dwellings, a cemetery and a single pub – the local CAMRA branch 2009 Pub of the Year, the **New Inn**. A sprawling pub dating from the 1600's, it was originally a small inn within a terrace of cottages, but over time the cottages have been taken over by the pub. Extensive stone-work with open fire places, one of which is lit in winter, and multi-level floors add character. The pump clips of hundreds of real ales adorn the walls, ceiling and beams and a Volkswagen (model) car collection sits on a shelf behind the bar. With a central bar and a restaurant, food is an important offering here, but real ale is king. Four ales are offered, often from unusual micro-breweries, though a real cider replaces one of the ales in the summer, Weston's Old Rosie was offered this summer. The Scottish landlord is a real ale nut and will talk beer for as long as you like. Card-carrying CAMRA members have generously-discounted beer on Sunday and Monday evenings. Traditional pub games such as dominoes and crib along with Jenga are available. Like many pubs in the area there is children's play equipment in the well-furnished garden as well as a large car park and a smokers' shelter.



Star

The **Star** in Frampton Cotterell is a proper traditional local pub. An old Grade II-listed building that has changed little over the years, it has been licensed since the 1840's. Two rooms linked by a lobby-come-corridor are served by the central bar where Courage Best is served. The Courage is turned over quickly so it's always fresh. Up to two real ciders and/or perries are also served which change regularly. In addition the three keg ciders indicate that the apple is favoured by the taste buds of Star drinkers. A smoking shelter takes its place at the side of the pub and there is limited off-street parking at the front. There is a large garden at the rear. The focus of this pub is its friendly landlord and the dart board. League darts are played, as well as pool and poker. A large screen above the attractive open fire place is often on but muted. There is regular live music on a Friday evening and the feel of this comfortable pub is one of fun and a sense of community.

Next to the River Frome and the church in Frampton is the **Globe**. A free-house with a good ale choice and good food, as well as an enormous garden complete with smoking shelter and children's play equipment, and ample parking. A rare outlet for Uley Pig's Ear and Black Rat cider. Housed in a very old building, it is well run by a very enthusiastic and friendly couple, and this is one of the success stories of Frampton in the past few years. There are no pub games but the golf society are prominent. This pub sits on the Frome Valley walkway and is an excellent spot to start and end a countryside walk.

In the heart of Frampton is the **Live & Let Live**. This pub was taken over by Bath Ales four years ago and has enjoyed a new lease of life.





Globe

Formerly a Courage, Smiles and Young's house, Bath Ales have brought it up to date and ensured excellent-condition ales including a guest, and good food. This pub has become a significant part of the community offering beer festivals which double up as village days as well as brewery visits. This pub was a 2010 Good Beer Guide entry where the Wild Hare is well worth seeking out. A dart board and real fires complete the interior and a garden with play equipment and a good-sized car park are attractive assets.



Live & Let Live



Rising Sun

Just up the hill from the Live' is the **Rising Sun**. This genuine free-house has been run by the Stone family since the early 1980's and is now the brewery tap for the Great Western Brewing Company, as the brewing venture is that of the Stone's. For the drinker this is the pub of choice and although good food is offered it is second to drinking and is mostly confined to the smart dining conservatory. This pub can get very full on the weekend, but is also busy during the week. Six ales are offered in this local real ale institution; 6X, Butcombe and Bass are supported by at least two GWB ales and sometimes a third. There are no pub games, just conversation and good cheer, a real community pub. External seating is often used just because the pub gets so full, and as usual there is a car park.

In the past 200 years there have been 17 pubs trading in Frampton Cotterell and Coalpit Heath. Recent losses have included the Horseshoe, the Fire Engine, the Western Coach House and the Golden Lion. It is interesting to see the former Bunch of Grapes and (another) New Inn now in other uses, but at least they still stand – just as the recent losses of the Horseshoe and the Western Coach House are evident in their respective housing conversions. I am told the Horseshoe's fire place has been retained in the house it now is, but requesting a look may be an ask too much!

If you're feeling like a change and you haven't looked in for a while, Frampton Cotterell and Coalpit Heath are worth a look. The 342 bus route runs right past the Ring o' Bells, Badminton Arms and New Inn, and the others are within ten minutes' walk. The X42 and 327 also pass through. If you live near by and haven't explored your area then look now – you never know what you may find in this welcoming set of pubs.

Mike Jackson

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# The New Inn Mayshill

**BRISTOL & DISTRICT CAMRA  
PUB OF THE YEAR 2009**

**MEALS SERVED EVERY DAY  
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(3+ Real Cider in Summer)**

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*& Monday evenings from 6pm to  
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# Plaques R Us

A great advert for people power, one of the proudest moments of my life was when a plaque was unveiled to Thomas Clarkson on the **Seven Stars** pub in Thomas Lane, Redcliffe, Bristol in May 2009. The plaque campaign had been greatly helped by news items and articles in Pints West, most notably by ace PW contributors Steve Plumridge and Andrew Swift.



The Seven Stars plaque

abolition in Bristol.

The intervening months had seen great things for the pub, going from runner-up in 2009 in Bristol and District's Pub of the Year competition under Steve and Katy's auspices, to out right winner in 2010 under Paul Wratten's reign; where he freely admits to continuing Steve and Katy's mantra of supplying good beer at modest cost and making the most of the pub's history. Along with new research, the Stars' prize winning has also been incorporated in the new pamphlet.

In order to further celebrate the pub's role in history, some of the proceeds from the sale of the new pamphlet will go towards new

Prominent in helping the campaign along was a pamphlet produced by Bristol Radical History Group which outlined the pub's importance in world history and in September of this year BRHG were able to re-launch the pamphlet in a new and enlarged form with the hope that the Seven Stars may one day be part of a World Heritage site marking



The Tom Cribb plate

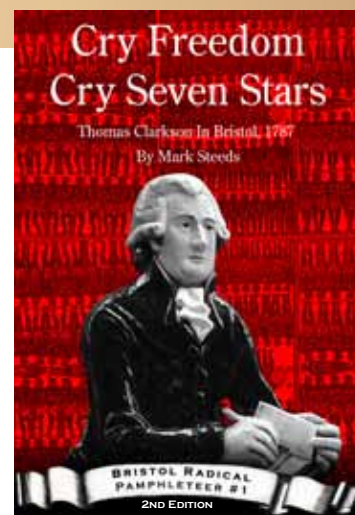
artwork and memorabilia in the Stars – perhaps even including some 'Abolition Abolished' cast-iron pub tables like those resplendent in my own pub, the Beaufort – these were actually made in Bristol and marked the centenary of the abolition of the slave trade.

The Seven Stars is carrying on the real ale theme by presenting a monthly festival, "The Beeriological". November saw 20 tempting ales from North Wales and December's promises 20 sumptuous ales from Sussex – see adverts in the pub for details and don't forget to buy the second edition of the Cry Freedom pamphlet, also available in the pub.

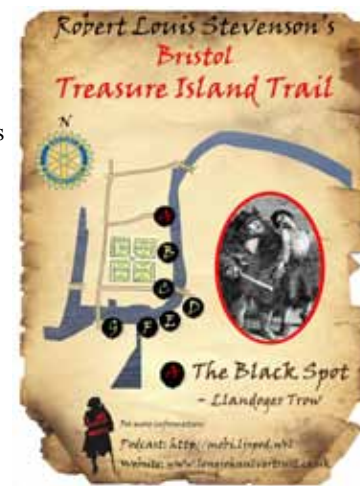
You may also have heard that the **Hatchet** in Frogmore Street is also jumping on the plaque bandwagon, this time celebrating the "Bristol Boys" champion bare-knuckle boxers and the part the region's pubs played in their lives. Local author Jack Allen is the man behind the scheme and he's used the royalties from his book "The Bristol Boys" [Redcliffe Press - £7.95p] and a Bristol Blue Glass plate celebrating Hanham's Tom Cribb [£120 from the makers] plus events in the pub. Pop along if you'd like to contribute.

The designer behind the Clarkson and Bristol Boys plaques is local award-winning artist and historian Mike Baker and he's on the verge of following up these two great feats by producing seven plaques for the Long John Silver Trust; thus creating a "Robert Louis Stevenson Bristol Treasure Island Trail" around Bristol's docks. Essential to this are the **Llandoger Trow**, the **Hole-in-the-Wall** and the **Ostrich**, bringing to life as Stevenson did tales of Bristol's derring do – the pirates and privateers, smugglers and slavers, crimpers and press gangs – once more giving us a taste of our past where pubs and beer played a defining role.

Mark Steeds



The Seven Stars pamphlet



Prototype plaque for the Long John Silver Trail

## The Windmill Inn

PORTISHEAD



6 Real Ales in excellent condition including:  
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## Seven Stars

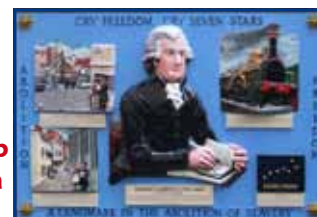
Thomas Lane, Redcliffe, Bristol BS1 6JG

**8 Real Ales**

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# The Inns of Wiltshire

Although Wiltshire has some of the finest – and most historic – inns in the country, they have not had a book devoted to them – until now. *The Inns of Wiltshire in Old Photographs*, just published by Akeman Press, is a comprehensive and lavishly-illustrated survey of over 170 inns, from grand coaching establishments to village alehouses. Stories of coaching days – and highwaymen – feature prominently, while inns such as the Rose & Crown in Trowbridge, the Harrow at Wanborough and the Swan at Enford have mini-articles outlining their history. Changing customs, the decline of traditional industries and the takeover of large areas of the county by the military in the early twentieth century are also covered. There are chapters devoted to the county's major towns, and there are contributions from other authors including WH Hudson, Richard Jefferies, William Cobbett, and an irascible but eminently entertaining gentleman called Mortimer Collins who visited several of Wiltshire's pubs on a walking tour of the county in 1879.

Although lavishly illustrated with Victorian and Edwardian photographs, this is not just a nostalgic look back at a golden age. The authors – Andrew Swift and Kirsten Elliott – will be familiar to many from their books on the history of pubs in Bath and Somerset. They are both active members of the Campaign for Real Ale and stress the continued importance of pubs and inns to communities today. Some of the inns featured are long gone; other are more recent casualties. The Chequers at Box, the Red Lion at Melksham and the Shepherd's Rest at Wanborough are among those that have recently called last orders for the last time, despite determined efforts to keep them open.

It is not all doom and gloom, though. Inns such as the Crown at Everleigh, the Organ at Warminster and the Woolpack at Sutton Veny have been revived by enthusiastic and dedicated landlords. Others have become gastropubs, reinventing the notion of the country inn for a new generation.

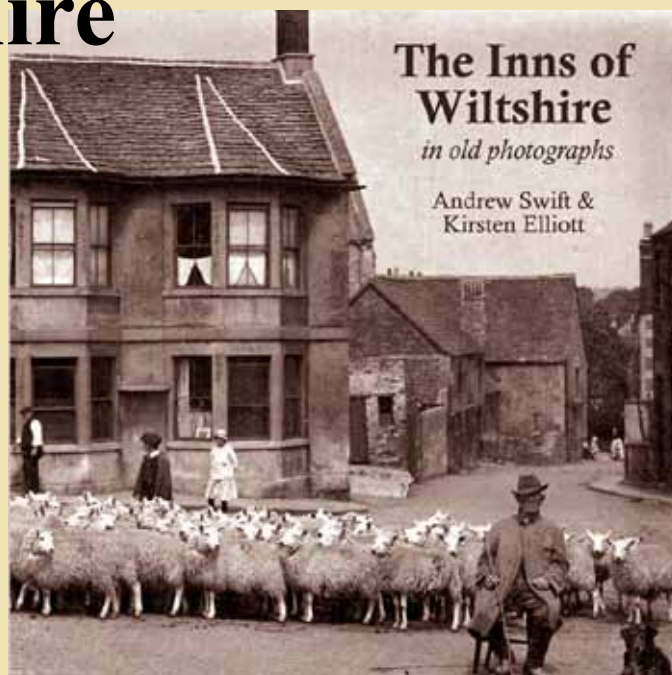
Despite these and other success stories, inns and pubs are closing at an unprecedented rate. The book looks back at how the county's inns have developed over many centuries, but it is also a rallying cry. As the authors say in their valedictory remarks, "the history of the county's inns has been inextricably linked to the lives of ordinary – and extraordinary – people for countless generations. At a time when inns and pubs are closing faster than ever before, this collection of photographs and stories from the past is a reminder of how rich that heritage is – and how important it is to preserve what is left."

*The Inns of Wiltshire in Old Photographs* by Andrew Swift and Kirsten Elliott costs £10 from bookshops or post-free in the UK from Akeman Press ([www.akemanpress.com](http://www.akemanpress.com)).



## ORGAN WARMINSTER

Another success story – the Organ at Warminster closed in 1913. It became a butcher's, and later a greengrocer's. In 2006, however, Daniel Keene and Carly Edwards acquired the lease and decided to reopen it as a pub. Today, the Organ is one of Warminster's most popular real-ale pubs, with a regular slot in the *Good Beer Guide*. As returns from the dead go, that is pretty impressive. In this photograph from 1890, a group of townsfolk – including a man on a penny-farthing – line up outside the Organ.



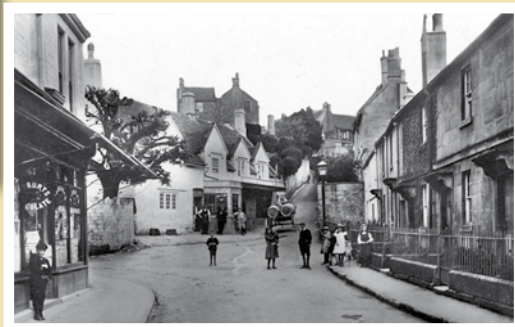
## WILTSHIRE INNS COVER

The cover of *The Inns of Wiltshire* features one of the county's top real-ale pubs, the Three Crowns at Chippenham. After buying the pub from Enterprise, the family team of Tom, Steve, Sally and Hugh Jenner reopened the Three Crowns on 1 May this year. With five ever-changing real ales, up to six ciders and perries, and a 30p discount for CAMRA members, the Three Crowns – within walking distance of the railway station – is definitely worth going out of your way to discover – although there probably won't be as many sheep hanging about outside as there were when this photograph was taken a century ago.



## VOLUNTEER MARKET LAVINGTON

A superb social history shot of the Volunteer at Market Lavington – featured in the *Good Beer Guide* in 1987 but now a private house.



## CHEQUERS BOX

A much more recent casualty is the Chequers at Box, recently granted change of use to residential after a long battle to keep it as a pub. Still fondly remembered by many as one of the best country pubs in north-west Wiltshire, here it is seen in happier days a century or so ago.



## MELKSHAM RED LION

Another recent casualty is the Red Lion at Melksham, seen here around 1910. When Enterprise put it up for sale in 2008, two businessmen, who wanted to run it as a pub, put in an offer. Despite their offer being the highest, it was not accepted, as Enterprise had placed a covenant on the property forbidding it from being reopened as a pub. A high-profile campaign to force Enterprise to back down ended when permission was granted for it to be converted to a residential home.



# Shine on Westbury-on-Trym

Up the top of Blackboy Hill, across the Downs, past the posh schools and down the other side lies the small town of Westbury-on-Trym. Not a suburb of Bristol, as some would have you believe, but a distinct village in its own right. It has its own War Memorial, its own Church and Post Office. Amazingly - and despite the effects of ruinous government legislation; of supermarkets selling booze for home consumption at something like tuppence per lake-full; and of rapacious desire of property developers to turn every licenced premises into flats for a quick buck and the hell with tradition, history and the very fabric of local communities - there are still eight operational pubs in Westbury-on-Trym. Let's pay them a visit shall we? No? Well, that's awkward, since this whole article is based on the premise that we visit the pubs... Please reconsider? I'll buy the first round... and pork scratchings... after all it's not like I'm asking you to watch *I'm Strictly an X-Factor*, *Get My Celebrity Apprentice Out Of Here...* You will? Great!



The Black Swan

First up on the road in from Stoke Bishop is the **Black Swan**, known to many as the Dirty Duck. This is a pleasant little two-bar pub (three if you count the little snug on the left) with a smokers' corral at the front and garden at the back. The wood panelling and furniture at the front have a slightly retro feel to me, while the rear bar (available for functions) has a darker, more properly traditional atmosphere. When I say darker, I mean literally not figuratively, it's not like it's somewhere where all the jokes are about death and the futility of life or anything. Actually, this is a very cheerful pub offering three real ales. Sharp's Doom Bar Bitter, Bass, and Courage Best Bitter. Being a fan of the Bittersweet, I went for the Doom Bar and was not disappointed.



The Prince of Wales

Just a short walk along Stoke Lane is the **Prince Of Wales**, an historic and popular pub which, for the last five years or so, has been in the capable hands of Butcombe Brewery. I have always been a sucker for pubs with the front door built into the corner of the building, and this is an excellent example. The single bar serves a horseshoe-shaped drinking area, with drop down screens to watch the match, and a storming selection of beers with which to celebrate England's victory over the Aussies at rugby (confirmed), or cricket (pending). Butcombe's own Bitter, Gold and Brunel, as well as Bass, London Pride, Courage Best and Bath SPA when I visited. The Brunel is a genuinely pale IPA with a really crisp taste to it. Lovely.

Head across Falcondale Road and in to the War Memorial. On your right is the **Foresters Arms**. No real ales on offer when I visited, though a couple of pump clips were in evidence but turned round. It's a nice old building so I hope the pub thrives, and a decent pint of real ale would be a great start.



The White Horse

Down the High Street, and opposite the Post Office is the truly historic **White Horse**, also known to many as the Hole-In-The-Wall, because of a serving hatch from bygone days. This is a centuries-old building with several distinct drinking areas, and a range of barrels along the back wall behind the bar. An additional lounge up the steps offers views back towards the War Memorial. Bass and Doom Bar on when I visited, plus a very palatable traditional Thatcher's Cider. Although never claiming to be salubrious, this is nonetheless the sort of pub, with its low ceilings and little cubby holes, that nowhere outside Britain can match.

Out of the 'Hole' and turn right down to the **White Lion**, for a long while a Harvester, but these days part of the Ember Inns chain, which



The White Lion



promises grown-up dining and quality real ale. On my visit there was Bass, Sharp's Doom Bar, and Wychwood Hobgoblin, with a couple more guest ales just settling down in the cellar. This is a grown-ups' dining pub, where children are only allowed if eating a meal, and then 14 years and up only. I understand that this can be a blessing or a curse depending upon your own personal circumstances. I have three children under 14, so for me it's a blessing to be able to get away from the little... The beers change regularly and the quality does seem to be pretty good.



The Victoria

Come out of the White Lion and amble down Trym Road (so called because it runs alongside the river) until you reach Chock Lane. Just a few yards up on the right hand side is the **Victoria**. That this is Westbury-on-Trym's only Good Beer Guide 2011 listed pub is testament to the sheer quality of real ale available these days, as three or four other pubs could easily have been included. That said, the Wadworth beers in this former courthouse do the Devizes brewery proud. I had 6X, but the Henry's I.P.A. was also very popular when I dropped in. Butcombe is available too. This is a really good pub to just install yourself for an extended stay and just forget the outside world exists. A step back in time in all the right ways.

Now, a bonus of visiting Westbury's pubs in this order is that, to get to the **Mouse** on Waters Lane, you need to walk up through the Church grounds, which are beautiful throughout the year. The Mouse was actually originally called the Royal Oak, but so many people knew it as the Mouse that they gave in to popular opinion some 20 or more years ago and changed the name officially. Just the one bar now (once there were two) and a very simply furnished 'boozer' type pub. Very welcoming on my visit, and four real ales available. Theakston and Adnams Best



The Mouse

Bitter, alongside Courage Best, plus the guest Caledonian Scottie Dog, which was a real find for me! It's a dark, oaky colour, but with a vanilla cum caramel flavour. Absolutely divine and well worth seeking out!

The final pub in Westbury-on-Trym is the **Post Office Tavern**, reached from the front of the Mouse by crossing the road and pootling along Eastfield Road until you see the POT at WOT beneath you on your right. A pretty red-brick pub which started life as a George's Brewery house, it is now an excellent place for a pizza! There's a small snug bar on the left, with Post Office memorabilia, and a split-level main bar, with dark-wood furnishings and stools ranged along the bar. The beers are Courage Best, Bass, the ubiquitous Sharp's Doom Bar and Otter Ale, plus sometimes a guest. I had Otter Ale and, again, it was delightful.

And that's the joy of Westbury-on-Trym. Eight pubs still going, with seven of them serving a decent selection of real ales. I visited them all over two days, and did not have a bad pint in any. Two days of very pleasant research.

*Duncan Shine*

*(Duncan also writes a regular column on pubs for Flavour magazine) Full details and photographs of all the pubs mentioned above can be found on the [www.britishpubguide.com](http://www.britishpubguide.com) web site. Landlords and regulars in these pubs are welcome to update the information on the website whenever they like.*

## TEWKESBURY CAMRA WINTER ALE FESTIVAL

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**CAMRA members only, free admission, bring your membership cards**

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**Lunch session CAMRA members free admission, non-members £1.**

**Evening session CAMRA members £2, non-members £3**

**Saturday, 11.00 - 23.00**

**CAMRA members £1 admission, non-members £2**

Further info will appear on the website in due course  
[www.tewkesburycamra.org.uk](http://www.tewkesburycamra.org.uk)

# Good Beer Guide 2011 launch

One sunny Friday in September saw us hold our annual launch event for the newly published CAMRA Good Beer Guide. As always, we chose a venue that was newly chosen to be in the Guide – this year it was the turn of the excellent **Bridge Inn** in Passage Street, central Bristol. That said, the Bridge was returning after only a year out of the book due to a change of ownership – previously it had been very much a regular entry. Since taking over, Simon, Christine and Roy have introduced a range of high-quality and interesting guest beers, whilst still supporting Bath Ales on at least one of the four pumps. The pub is once again very popular despite its very small size. They were happy to host the event and really did us very proud. They managed to put on no less than eight excellent real ales for the day, all at £2 per pint to CAMRA members. Good quality food was also available at lunchtime at very fair prices.

The event proved extremely popular with the pub very busy right



Christine, Roy and GBG coordinator Vince Murray

through the event, which ran from noon to 7pm. In previous years we have sold around 50 to 60 copies of the Good Beer Guide on the day, so I thought it was optimistic to start with 96. How wrong could I be as they were all sold by about 6.15pm! Definitely a new branch record. This was despite none of the invited local media putting in an appearance and nothing appearing in the press on the day. A massive thanks to the team at the Bridge for a superb effort.

As for the new Guide, our 63 entries this year included no less than 14 new entries (and therefore, unfortunately, 14 pubs from last year having to make way for them). Aside from the Bridge, other fairly central pubs to make it in are the **Orchard** in Hanover Place (which also won the 2009 National Cider pub of the year award), the **Green Man** in Kingsdown, the **Vittoria** in Whiteladies Road and **Knights Templar** in Temple Quay (Wetherspoon's).

A little further out towards East Bristol there is recognition for the **Old Stillage** (Arbor Ales' first pub) in Redfield and the **Staple Hill Oak** (another Wetherspoon's). The licensee of the latter has since moved to the Commercial Rooms in Corn Street which had failed to make it this time – let's hope she can work her magic on getting the place back to its best. On Bristol's north side there are welcome returns to the Guide for both the **Kellaway Arms** and the **Inn on the Green** in Horfield. Two pubs in South Gloucestershire come in – the **Cross House** at Doynton and the **Anchor** at Thornbury which is run by a very enthusiastic CAMRA member who has helped establish a sub-branch of the Campaign in the area. Down in Somerset, the **Criterion** in Weston-super-Mare and the **Old Inn** at Hutton come in for the first time, and we also welcome back the **Lock Keeper** in Keynsham.

A handful of notable real ale pubs in our area were not eligible for consideration this time as they changed hands around the time that we were voting. These include the **Cornubia** and the **Three Tuns** in central Bristol and the **Robin Hood** on St Michael's Hill. Rest assured that we are well aware of their charms and they will all be considered next year if they stay the same! To show just how tricky the whole thing is, no less than *seven* of the pubs chosen have already experienced a change of licensee in the six weeks since the book was published!

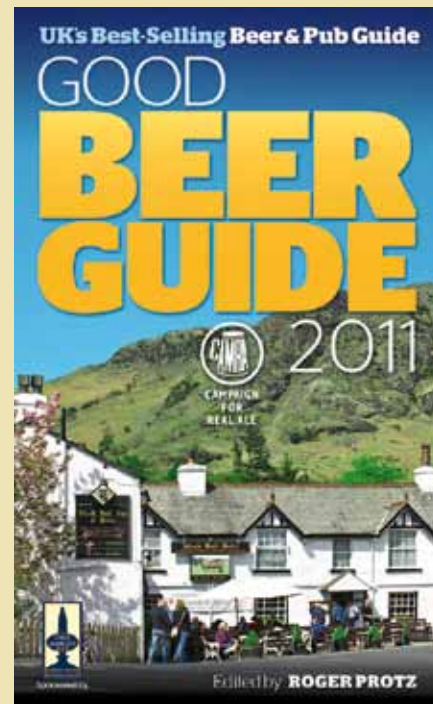
Once again, a big thanks to all at the Bridge.

Vince Murray

Good Beer Guide Co-ordinator

(Photo by Tony Durbin)

P.S. Anyone can suggest entries to or deletions from the Guide by emailing me at [Vincent.Murray@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:Vincent.Murray@blueyonder.co.uk).



## The Bridge Inn

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Food served Mon-Fri, 12-3pm  
**Sunday Lunch**  
Last Sunday of the month, 12-3pm

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# Pub News

The past few years have seen some really bleak news stories on the prosperity of pubs and so it continues. But there have been some good news stories of late so always take time out to celebrate success.

The small corner pub in Colston Street in central Bristol, the **Griffin**, had its freehold for sale a few months ago which is always a reason for concern. However the new owner has re-opened it under a new name, the **Gryphon**, and as it is so close to the Colston Hall and O2 Academy it is targeting music lovers. The theme is real ale and heavy rock. On a visit in November there were three handpumps fitted – two were dispensing dark beers, BBF Bristol Stout and Bath Ales Festivity. Sharp's Doom Bar had just run out. The beer range will change frequently and the pub plans to open all day and until late at weekends. The music played was as advertised – heavy rock, so it may not appeal to the faint-hearted! As (See also separate article.)

In St. Jude's the **Phoenix** has been purchased from Bristol City Council and is in the process of being re-fit as a pub two years after it closed. I am told it should be open by Christmas. Sadly, the nearby **Seven Ways**, so named because of its position on a seven-way junction, which has been closed for a number of years now, is finally in danger of being lost to partial demolition. In Old Market the historic **Stag and Hounds**, one of only two Bristol buildings that has its first floor jutting out over the pavement, is closed and a leaseholder is sought. This pub needs and deserves a committed operator to fulfil its potential. West of the city centre the **Three Tuns** in St. George's Road has been acquired by Arbor ales and is offering their excellent ales, plus guests, as well as a range of bottled beers from the USA. On Blackboy Hill, the **Jersey Lilly** is under new management and is serving real ales. South of the city, the **Velindra** near the General Hospital has been acquired by the same people behind the Albert, Apple Tree and Plume of Feathers, and is undergoing a refurbishment before re-opening as a pub. The former **Raymond** in Bedminster has had a make over and name change; it is now the **Victoria Park** and is offering a comprehensive food menu as well as the usual pub fayre including real ale. In the north-west, the **Mason's Arms** in Lawrence Weston remains closed, as does the **Lamplighter's** in Shirehampton. As a pub this has got to be a great opportunity as the economic climate heads out of recession. In Fishponds, old real ale favourite, the **Cross Hands**, has been acquired by the couple that have done so much good at the Royal Oak on Gloucester Road and is due to re-open before Christmas.

Outside of the city, the **Highwayman** in Kingswood has re-opened, the **Horseshoe** at Filton is undergoing work before re-opening, and the **Codrington Arms** at Codrington near Tormarton has the builders in for a face-lift under the guidance of Marston's. There is worrying news at Willsbridge where the leaseholder has left the fantastically charming **Queen's Head**. The **Crown's** future at Staple Hill is still in doubt due to a planning application to convert to flats. In Chipping Sodbury the **Grapes** has reverted to being a pub following nearly four years frozen out by its restaurant business. The new owners are offering several real ales in this traditional pub. Within striking distance, the **Bell** at Sodbury is due to re-open any time. Meanwhile the **Swan** in Yate has finally been demolished and now 70 car-parking spaces are occupying the site. The works to re-fit the closed **White Hart** at Bitton could well be underway any time now following delays that have been beyond control.

If you are concerned over your local pub then contact the Bristol Pubs Group at [bristolpubsgroup@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:bristolpubsgroup@yahoo.co.uk).

Mike Jackson

- Jauma has left the **Old Fish Market** in central Bristol and been replaced by former assistant manager, "Aussie" Ben Reidy. A most welcome return to Ben who plans to open early for coffee and breakfast during the upcoming Ashes series.
- The **Shakespeare** in Prince Street, Bristol, a Greene King pub, now serves two changing guest beers as well as the Greene King range. Recent sightings include Brew Dog, Hydes and Batemans. The beer was in great condition on our visit.
- **Horts** in Broad Street central Bristol is extending its beer range and will have up to nine real ales on handpump.
- The **Horse & Groom** behind the Council House, which we reported as having re-opened recently, has once again closed.
- The **Bag O'Nails** in Hotwells may be opening again soon under the stewardship of Luke Daniels who ran the Cornubia a while back. He hopes to lease it off the Council and open in mid or late January. The emphasis will be on ever-changing real ales, probably starting with four and building up as demand allows. He may even open an upstairs room for meetings and such.
- The **Myrtle Tree** just round the corner from the Bag, very well known as a Bass house, has been doing guest ales served directly from casks.
- The **Hope & Anchor** in Jacobs Wells Road recently gained recognition from the *Observer* for the quality of its food. The quality of the real ales served here is excellent too.

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We would like to thank every one who voted and supported us in our quest to gain entry in to the Camra Good Beer Guide. Cheers!

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# BATH & BORDERS BRANCH

## BATH and SURROUNDING VILLAGES

### Alehouse, 1 York Street, Bath

The leasehold of this city-centre pub is up for sale by Melrose Property.



Brains Surgery in Larkhall

### Assembly, 16-17 Alfred Street, Bath

This Abbey Ales pub near the bottom of Lansdown Hill has recently been refurbished (see separate article).

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

Planning permission on this former Brains brewery pub, which has been closed for several months, has been granted to convert the premises to private housing.



The Centurion in Twerton

### Centurion, Poolemead Road, Bath

The leasehold on this hillside pub in the Twerton area of Bath is up for sale by Melrose.

### A possible Cosy Club in Bath

Following the success of its Cosy Club in Taunton, licensed premises operator Loungers are aiming to

establish a similar outlet in Bath. The company is looking to establish a further 40 premises around the country by the end of 2013 and expects between eight and twelve of these will be based on the Cosy Club concept. The Cosy Club has been developed for smaller towns and is less urban in atmosphere than the Loungers café-bar concept. The Cosy Clubs have greater food and wine choices, offer more premium spirits and, unlike Loungers, take reservations. Loungers founder Alex Reilly describes Cosy Clubs as “quirky, eccentric and playful with a gents-club-meets-village-hall-meets-cricket-pavilion feel”.

### Crown Inn, 2 Bathford Hill, Bathford, near Bath

After several weeks closure this roadside pub, on the eastern outskirts of Bath, has re-opened as a bistro pub.

### Huntsman, 1 Terrace Walk, Bath

This spacious city-centre pub, close to the abbey, was, at the time of writing, undergoing a major refurbishment both externally and internally.



The Huntsman in Bath, dating from around 1740 and seen here in the early twentieth century

### Horseshoe, 124 North Road, Combe Down, Bath

A planning application has been submitted to turn this pub into five flats. The application is being made on the grounds that the Horseshoe was struggling to maintain its existence as a pub. It has been discovered, however, that a local

pub owner and developer with a good reputation for turning around the fortunes of many previously failing pubs, had wanted to buy the Horseshoe and turn it into a real ale pub. It is understood that he had even sent off a deposit but in early July this was returned to him. The local branch of CAMRA is fighting this application.

### New Westhall Inn, Westhall Buildings, Upper Bristol Road, Bath

The lease on this pub, situated on the busy Upper Bristol Road around a mile from the city centre, was, at the time of writing, on the market.

### Northend Inn, 41 Northend, Batheaston, Bath

The freehold of this pub, which re-opened last autumn following a strenuous campaign by local residents to save the pub from redevelopment, has been on the market since February 2010 for £600,000 with Christie & Co the selling agents. Meanwhile a second planning application has been made by the licensee and owner Sally Gray to convert the premises to residential use. (The first application was refused in 2008.) At the time of writing (end of October), local residents were planning to hold a public meeting on 3 November to organise opposition to the application. The pub is still open though the opening times seem to be erratic.

### Opium Bar, vaults beneath Grove Street, Spring Gardens Road, Bath

This modern chic new cocktail bar, tucked away in the vaults beneath Grove Street near Pulteney Bridge, opened on Friday 25 June. The bar, according to its own website, offers a “unique experience for the senses”. The design of the interior references a wide range of periods. Cocktails, wine and a wider variety of world beers are served along with tapas. The bar is not open on Sundays.

### Rose & Crown, 6-8 Brougham Place, Larkhall, Bath

This Wadworth pub, situated on the eastern outskirts of Bath, closed in around early October for a smartening-up. At the time of writing (26 October), however, the pub was still closed.



The Rose & Crown in Larkhall

### Trinity Brewery Inn, 49-51 James Street West, Bath

The leasehold on this centrally located pub is up for sale by Melrose.

### White Horse, 42 Shophouse Road, Twerton, Bath

Bath MP Don Foster has presented the *All-Party Parliamentary Beer Group Certificate of Excellence 2010* to this excellent community pub as part of British Pub Week. He said well-run community pubs played “a huge role in social interaction, boosting local economies and promoting responsible drinking” but called for action to force pub companies to relax some of the tight rules constraining their tenants.



The Trinity in Bath

### White Lion, 229 London Road East, Batheaston, near Bath

The leasehold on this pub on the outskirts of Bath is up for sale by





**The Porter Butt in Bath – now Richer Sounds**

Melrose. The White Lion is still open.

## **Porter Butt, York Place, London Road, Bath**

This pub, which closed around the end of last year, has been acquired by hi-fi and home cinema chain Richer Sounds and has now re-opened as a retail outlet.

## **EAST SOMERSET**

### **Crown & Sceptre, 38 Trinity Street, Frome**

The freehold of this pub, situated on the outskirts of Frome but not too far away from the town centre, is up for sale by Christie & Co for £295,000.

### **Farmers Arms, Spring Gardens, Frome**

This pub, situated on the northern edge of Frome and, at the time of writing in early October 2010, owned by Four County Inns, was due to be auctioned by Carter Jonas in Bath on Wednesday 6 October with a guide price of £210,000 to £250,000 but we do not know as yet the outcome.

### **Mendip Coaching Inn, on A37 between Gurney Slade and Shepton Mallet**

This isolated pub has been closed since around midsummer and is now boarded up with a for-sale sign outside. The freehold is being offered by selling agents James A Baker for £325,000 plus VAT.

### **Hungerford Arms, Farleigh Hungerford**

This leasehold on this attractively situated pub, with commanding views of the river Frome valley, is up for sale by Melrose.

### **Bell, Rudge Road, Standerwick, near Frome**

The leasehold of this large roadside pub, situated on the A36 between Warminster and the Beckington bypass, is up for sale by Melrose.

## **WEST WILTSHIRE**

### **Bear Inn, 26 Silver Street, Bradford-on-Avon**

This long-closed pub has been acquired by Blindman's Brewery and is currently undergoing a major refurbishment. It is believed that this town-centre pub may open in the not-too-distant future.

### **Beehive, 263 Trowbridge Road, Bradford-on-Avon**

A planning application to convert this once popular near-canal-side pub, which closed in around September 2008, to private residential use was granted by the planning committee of Wiltshire Council at its meeting on Wednesday 27 October. Branch chairman James Honey attended the meeting and, along with a local resident, spoke out against the application but, with a recommendation to allow conversion in the case officer's written report, the application was carried by nine votes to two.

Formerly an Usher's pub the Beehive was bought by local landlord Clive Crocker in around the early nineties and almost immediately became a popular freehouse, serving a wide variety of guest ales sourced from near and far alongside excellent traditional pub food. In 2004 Clive, largely because of his wife's ill health, retired and the freehold



**The Beehive in Bradford on Avon**

was quickly sold on to Punch Taverns. We believe that lack of investment in the pub, combined with cripplingly high rents, made it difficult and ultimately impossible for subsequent landlords to make a success of the business. The last of these abandoned the pub in the autumn of 2008. The freehold was then placed on the market. The pub was, we believe, sold to its present owner at around the beginning of this year but it was only in around May that the for-sale signs came down. A planning application for conversion to residential use was lodged in June. This was a development that had long been feared. There was always a temptation that, given the pub's relatively idyllic location on the southern edge of the town, it would be sold off ultimately as a residential development.

Earlier this year local branch members became aware that potential purchasers who wished to re-open the Beehive as a pub were denied access to view the premises on the basis that the pub had already been sold to the present owner. Yet the for-sale signs remained up until around May this year. The planning application to convert the pub to residential use was noticed by chance by a local member. Residents of the town and the Bath & Borders branch of CAMRA mounted a vigorous campaign to save the pub. A partial victory was achieved when the town council decided to object to the application. It is a disappointment that this once great pub, which featured regularly in the Good Beer Guide when under the management of Clive Crocker, will be no more, but not really a surprise. Reading the planning report that went before the councillors, closure was virtually a foregone conclusion.

*(Continued overleaf)*



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# BATH & BORDERS BRANCH

(Continued from previous page)

## King's Head, Chitterne

The relatively isolated village of Chitterne on Salisbury Plain is slightly out of the branch's area. We understand, however, that this pub is on the market.

## 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, continues to undergo a major refurbishment. It remains closed but, we believe, should re-open before the end of the year. The building has been completely gutted and is to undergo a complete internal remodelling and be completely re-wired. The refurbishment includes various external alterations and additions, including a conservatory extension and the relocation of the main public entrance from the front to the side of the building.

## King's Arms, 79 Wyke Road, Hilpert Marsh, Trowbridge

The leasehold on this large pub on the edge of Trowbridge, near to the village of Staverton, is up for sale by Melrose.

## Rising Sun, 61 Woodmarsh, North Bradley, Trowbridge

The leasehold on this large village-centre pub is up for sale by Melrose.

## Old Bear Inn and Samuel's Restaurant, Staverton, near Trowbridge

This cosy food-oriented pub, which closed suddenly in mid-July, has been refurbished and re-opened on or around 21 October 2010. The pub has been smartened up and, when visited by a branch member on 27 October, was found to be serving Sharp's Doom Bar and Wychwood Hobgoblin.

## Anchor & Hope, 64 Frome Road, Trowbridge

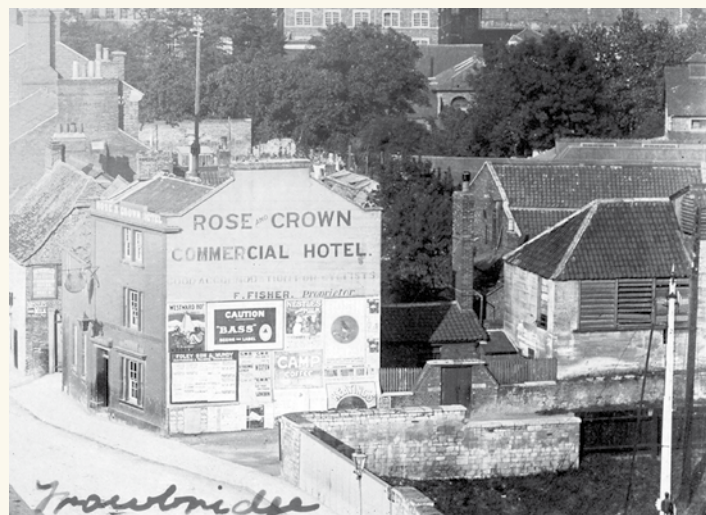
The front of this pub, situated near the busy junction of Frome Road and Bradley Road, has been given a new lick of paint.

## King's Arms, 5 Castle Street, Trowbridge

This town-centre pub, which closed in around the spring of last year, has undergone a major refurbishment both inside and out. The now much-smartened-up King's Arms, formerly owned by Punch Taverns, re-opened on Thursday 19 August as a freehouse. Three beers, Sharp's Doom Bar, RCH Pitchfork and Hop Back Summer Lightning, and a cider, Thatcher's Heritage, are available. Food is also served. Trowbridge now has a potentially excellent pub in the very centre of town.

## Rose & Crown, 36 Stallard Street, Trowbridge

This pub has been closed since October 2006 and boarded up for most of the time since then. A repeat planning application has been sub-



The Rose & Crown in Trowbridge – a early-twentieth-century photograph from *The Inns of Wiltshire* showing the brewery at the back

mitted to demolish rear toilets and two-storey garage block at the rear of the pub and erect new single-storey toilets and three-storey bedroom block. The intention then would be to re-open the premises as a pub. An original application to carry out a similar alteration was turned down in around September 2009. The owner Thomas Rothschild needs listed-building consent as the rear buildings are considered to be part of the curtilage of this Grade II-listed pub. The pub was offered at auction on 26 November 2009 with a £200,000 reserve but did not sell. The planning authority is Wiltshire Council and the application references are W/10/02462/FUL and W/10/02463/LBC.

## Ship Inn, 1 Frome Road, Trowbridge

This pub, situated on the junction of Frome Road with Newtown, has been given a fresh exterior coat of paint and had new signs erected.

## Prince Leopold, Upton Lovell

The village of Upton Lovell is just off the A36 south of Warminster and the Prince Leopold is something of a gem. The pub is now run by a local family who have simply refreshed and updated everything without changing the character. They are clearly trying hard to make it appeal to a wide range of people from locals to visitors. The beer range during a recent visit by branch members included Butcombe, 6X and a ginger brew from Keystone.

## The Bell at Wylfe

There are new managers running this pub, which actually lies slightly outside the branch's area. The pub, which had been part of a fledgling Hidden Brewery estate, had started to suffer from neglect following the brewery's demise. The beer range includes Otter, Hop Back and Ringwood. The pub still needs a spruce up but, on a positive note, does seem to appeal to the younger folk in the village.

Steve Hunt

(Photos supplied by Andrew Swift)



The Bell at Wylfe around 1950

## Beer festivals in Bath to look out for over the coming weeks and months

The **Royal Oak** in Twerton will be holding an informal Christmas Beer Festival in the week leading up to Christmas. The big event at the Oak, though, is the annual Winter Beer Festival which in 2011 will be held in the second week of February. It starts on the Monday, with live music from Thursday to Saturday – and loads of winter ales to sample.

Up the road at the **White Horse** in Twerton (recent winner of an award from the All-Party Parliamentary Beer Group) the next beer festival starts on 24th February. There will be the usual mix of local and new breweries and beers plus music from some of Bath's upcoming bands.

The St Piran's Day Festival at the **Star** in Bath is on the weekend of 4th and 5th March and will feature an extensive and enticing range of beers from Cornwall, plus pasties shipped in specially for the occasion.

Andrew Swift



# Refurbishment of the Assembly

Abbey Inns, part of Abbey Ales of Bath, has completed a major refurbishment on its city-centre bar, the Assembly Inn. Situated in Alfred Street, off the Lansdown Road, it is one of four pubs currently being run by the brewery.

Managing director of Abbey Ales, Alan Morgan, said, "It is a major refurbishment and one we have completed in partnership with Punch Taverns. It is a complete change from our more traditional pubs like the Star, Coeur de Lion and the Farmhouse, although we will obviously be selling our own beers including Bellringer."



Frances Haley is the new manager, previously from the Pig and Fiddle. She has employed a new team to work with her at the Assembly.

"I am looking forward to the challenge," said Fran. "The Assembly is known by everybody in Bath and we aim to take it back to its glory days. It had got tired and run down but we

hope to turn that around with the new refurbishment and our range of beers, including of course Abbey Ales beers, and also beers from around the world, including Weihenstephan from Munich which is the oldest brewery in the world. A new menu is also being prepared and bar food will be served as soon as we finish the refurbishment to the kitchen."

Live sports are a major attraction at the Assembly and Sky Sports ESPN will be shown on the big screen and all in the latest HD. Quiz nights started on Wednesday 17th November and a loyalty card will also be introduced in the very near future.



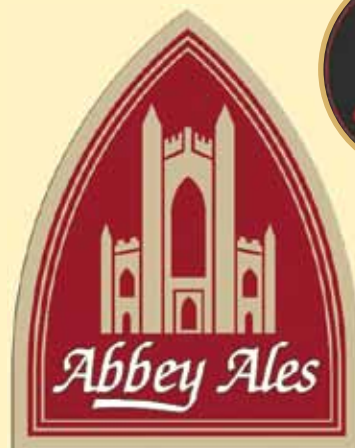
Local real ales will also be featured alongside Abbey Ales beers and continental lagers from Belgium and Prague will be served in draught and bottles.

## Bath & Borders diary

- **Thursday 9th 8:30pm.** A social at the Kings Arms, Castle St, in Trowbridge. This pub has recently been very nicely refurbished under a new landlord and is selling some excellent ales. Well worth a visit!
- **Tuesday 14th 8:30 PM.** A social at the Seven Stars in Winsley. The landlord has just opened his very own brewery at the pub, the Devilfish, so we ought to be trying some as soon as possible.
- **Thursday 23rd 8:00 to 8:30 PM.** Starting at the Salamander, a Christmas crawl of some of the best pubs west of Bath centre. Taking in the Garrick's, Westgate and the Griffin (and maybe more!).

## Bath & Borders contacts

Branch socials contact: Denis Rahilly on 01225 791399 or 07711 004501, email [denis.rahilly@talktalk.net](mailto:denis.rahilly@talktalk.net).  
Contact for all non-social matters: James Honey on 01373 822794.



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# Award presented to the Bristol Cider House

We reported in the last issue that the Bristol Cider House had come third in the 2010 Regional CAMRA Cider & Perry Pub of the Year awards, an amazing achievement for such a new establishment.

The award was given to Charlie Jarvis in October and now has pride of place hanging behind the bar. It was presented at one of the pub's regular cider festivals. These are held every Saturday and feature twenty local ciders accompanied by live open-mic sessions and hog roast rolls. One added bonus of these events is that they tend to be serving anything up to twenty ciders during the following week, which is very popular.

They have also been holding several cider tasting events. These are fun events involving the tasting of eight half-pints of different ciders with food in a competitive format and a prize for the winner.

The pub also hosts cider parties such as for birthdays or company events, where the whole of the upstairs can be reserved (for free) and buffets arranged. And Thursday night is open mic night – all sorts of performers welcome.

As well as selling great cider for consumption on the premises, Charlie can also offer 40-pint containers of cider to take away. He says he can source most ciders, so why not take advantage?

SP

## Talking of cider...

In early 2010 alarm bells rang through the whole industry as the Chancellor put forward plans to increase the level of tax on cider by 10%. Notice 162 was the demon, but proving at the same time any publicity is good publicity, cider was nationwide news, causing a reac-



CAMRA cider representative Jerry Fletcher presents the award to Charlie Jarvis (right) of the Bristol Cider House (photo by Richard Brooks)

tion from the masses and celebrities. CAMRA advised that this could cause cider prices to rise by up to twenty pence. Campaigns were started that included Facebook, and West Country icons such as the Wurzels were at the spearhead of the campaign. Happily, before the biggest West Country rebellion since 1685 by the Duke of Monmouth had got into full swing, the proposal was cancelled.

Sometimes we don't realise how lucky we are in Bristol. Not only is it a great place to drink real ale but it is also a great city to drink real traditional cider and perry. It's a city that has dozens of pubs that sell real cider, including some where cider is the speciality, including such gems as the Orchard, the Bristol Cider House, the Apple, the Coronation Tap and the Cotham Porter Stores. Apologies if you come into this category and I haven't mentioned you. The trend is growing as more and more pubs find a market for traditional cider.

I would also add if you have never tried traditional cider or perry (by which I mean the pure natural product rather than fizzy industrial concoctions) why not give it a go just for a change – there's something for everyone.

I'll finish by introducing myself. I recently became the local CAMRA cider representative, and I've enjoyed myself greatly since, meeting new people including pub landlords and local producers, large medium and small. Thanks everyone. And if you want to join me and fellow cider lovers on a Wassail in January, check out the branch diary in this copy of Pints West.

Jerry Fletcher

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# Watering Holes in the Desert

## brought to you from Weston-super-Mare

### Pub news

After an ever-increasing list of closures in recent months, it is pleasing to note a couple of re-openings. The **Britannia** on the High Street has recently re-opened after being closed for around six months. It is now badged as the **Brit Coffee and Wine Bar** and has undergone a major internal refurbishment. Indeed it is practically unrecognizable. Owners Chris and Sam Cureton are clearly aiming for a relaxed, laid-back ambience. Ideal for conversation – don't expect telly! It is probably unlikely to ever become a significant real ale house, but I had a spot-on pint of Butcombe Bitter on my recent visit and there is a second handpump, which trade will hopefully justify bringing in to use.

The **Market Tavern**, almost opposite the Brit on the High Street, has also re-opened (again). No real ale here, but it is still good to see it back in action.

On the downside, the **Ashcombe** on Ashcombe Road, and one of Weston's oldest surviving pubs, is about to be flattened. The adjacent photograph makes for a sorry sight and apparently the land is going to be used for flats and a rehab centre.

The **Major From Glangarry** also remains closed, despite various rumours of new people going in.

The new management at the **Parish Pump** opposite Sainsbury's in Worle has brought in some welcome changes, in particular ales straight from the cask. Three or four beers are normally on offer, invariably including Wychwood Hobgoblin and Butcombe Gold. Good value food lunchtime and evenings.

Tim Nickolls

### 2011 Good Beer Guide - the New Boys

Our congratulations to Paul Sprackman at the **Criterion** on Upper Church Road and John Hayes at the **Old Inn**, Hutton on achieving entry into the 2011 edition of the Good Beer Guide. In both cases the new incumbents have breathed new life into pubs that were down on their fortunes.

John took over the Old Inn at the end of June last year and quickly overhauled the entire operation. The food is excellent but the main attraction for local beer lovers is the good range of beers on offer in top-notch condition. These always include local Somerset beers, as well as treats from further afield. John has now put the pub back where it belongs – at the heart of its community.



Paul Sprackman at the **Criterion**



The challenge for Paul was even greater, as the **Criterion** had been closed for some time when he took over in March 2009. He has quickly made the **Criterion** into one of the very best pubs in the Weston area. It is a bit of a throwback, with no food on offer aside from the odd lunch-time cheese roll, the aim being to create a relaxed atmosphere where people can go for a quiet chat, read the papers (today's or some from the 1920s!) or enjoy a game of darts, bar billiards or table skittles. The beers are a mix of near-and-far, with some served straight from the cask.

Both these pubs are worthy of your support. Other pubs in the area in the new Good Beer Guide are **Off The Rails** and the **Raglan** in town and the **Queens Arms**, Bleadon, **Old Inn** and **Plough**, Congresbury and the ever-wonderful **Crown** in Churchill.

Tim Nickolls



John Hayes at the **Old Inn**

## Weston diary

- **Thurs 23 Dec** – 12th Annual Seasonal Ales Crawl. Visiting 5 or 6 pubs in town offering a Christmas or Winter beer. Starting point will be the **Criterion**, Upper Church Road, departing from there at 8.15.
- **Fri 14 Jan** – Congresbury Crawl, to include the Good Beer Guide-listed **Old Inn** and **Plough**. 7.35pm bus from Weston.
- **Fri 28 Jan** – Minibus trip. Visiting 5 Good Beer Guide pubs. **Burcott Inn** Wookey, **Wookey Hole Inn**, **Queen Victoria** and **Hunters Lodge** Priddy, **Crown Churchill**. Depart **Off The Rails** 6.45. Back at **Off The Rails** 11.00. Cost £7 in advance to Tim Nickolls.
- **Fri 18 Feb** – Worle Crawl. The **Observatory** 8.00, the **Parish Pump** 9.00, **Summerhouse** 10.00.

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

### Weston contact

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



# A Round with Robin

As you may recall, in my last sentence in Pints West 87 I was just about to visit Manchester. For some months previously a group from Weston CAMRA had been desirous of visiting the north east but the train fares had proved a sticking point. However Mike found an offer in the local paper that we couldn't resist, a Monday-to-Friday trip with Majestic staying in Manchester, with day trips to Liverpool and Chester, for under £150. The Hotel Britannia was superb with excellent food, and a good base for the city centre. On the first evening we went to three pubs in a row, less than quarter of a mile from the hotel: **Circus Tavern** (*Tetley's draught bitter*), **Old Monkey** (*Holt's Humbug*) and the **Grey Horse** (*Hyde's Original & Mild*). After a huge dinner, we visited the **Castle** (*Robinson's Hatter*) and the **Marble Arch** (*Marble Chocolate & 1723*) finishing at the **Angel** (formerly the Beer House) for *Liverpool Organic Iron Men*.

Tuesday saw us go to Chester, initially going to a pub I chose (out of 16 possible pubs, in five hours) which was a typical corner street boozer with bagatelle table, but the **Talbot** had no real ale on that day! Then a longish walk to the **Union Vaults**, where Graham and I played bagatelle badly, and consumed *Everards Tiger* before going to the Good Beer Guide-listed canal-side pub, the **Mill Hotel**, which had ten beers on. With only limited time, I had halves of *Sandstone Wrexham Ale*, *Mayfield Copper Fox*, *Weetwood WA bitter* and *Phoenix Cornmill*, the latter the most expensive at £2.05p a pint! A quick trip to the next canal-side pub, the **Canalside Inn**, where I had *Golden Sheep*, proving expensive for £1.55p a half, on my way to the next door pub the **Harkers Arms**, which had an impressive array of malt whiskies and a few ales too. Here I tried the *Weetwood Cheshire Cat* and the *Facer's Landslide*, my favourite beer of the day. We then rushed to the charming **Albion** with its original William Morris wallpaper, Art Deco lamps and WW1 paraphernalia, and though there was no choice of beer, the *Deuchars IPA* was good. On the landlord's recommendation we visited the **Bear**, as it was on our way to the coach pick-up point, and rejoiced to find *Salopian Gold* and *Newman's Wicked Weasel* there. In the evening, back at Manchester, we went to the **Bull's Head** (*Jennings Cockerhoop*), **Peveril of the Peak** (*Jennings Cumberland*), **Rain Bar**, set in an old umbrella factory (*Lees Strawberry bitter*) and finally **Briton's Protection** (*Robinson's Unicorn*).

The following day, probably the wettest day of our trip, was spent in Liverpool, where an attempt was made to imbibe culture as well as ale. Graham and I visited the Walker gallery and he also went to the Tate, and I found the **Vernon Arms**, recently reopened after a gap of several years. From five beers I drank the *Aspinalls Apricot Haze* wheat beer and *Liverpool Organic Johnny Handsome*. Then unexpectedly we all met at the Good Beer Guide-listed Art Deco pub, the **Ship & Mitre**, where from a huge list of beers I chose to drink third-pints of *Stringers Lakeland Victoria*, *Lees Dragonfire* and *Northern Dark Secret* (chocolate stout). We then went off to differing pubs; I made my way to **Thomas Rigby** (*Abbeydale Leviathan*), **Ye Hole in the Wall** (*Tim Taylor Landlord*), **Ma Boyles** (*Wem All Seasons Ale*), **Pig & Whistle** (*Tim Taylor Landlord*), before meeting the other three at **Baltic Fleet** conveniently close to the coach pick-up point. Despite the scaffolding outside, this famous Good Beer Guide-listed pub was predictably a highlight of the week, and the house ales *Wapping Stout* and *Summer Ale* were excellent. Before the evening meal we squeezed in a visit to the **Ape & Apple** (*Holts Bitter*) and *Keltek King* at the **City Arms**, and later we got into the **Lass O'Gowrie** (*Outstanding Betties Best bitter*) and a long walk to **Knott** in Deansgate, which although the city pub of the year lacked the atmosphere of the student-filled Lass, it did provide *Marble Bitter* and the *1723* beer.

As we wanted to try out the tram system we went to Eccles on Thursday, and our first port of call was the **Royal Oak** with a splendid oak bar and heated foot rail! Lots of original tiling, old prints of Eccles and *Holts Mild* gave the proper flavour that we were 'oop north'. Here we were told about the **Town Hall** pub, formerly the George III, but when the citizens of Eccles built a town hall in 1888 the publican couldn't resist changing the name. When we went to the pub it didn't have real ale, but the *Hydes Black* at £1.40 a pint is well worth trying (and is even cheaper on market day!). The **Lamb Inn** opposite the tram terminus is another fine pub, little altered with much fine glass, and we chose to sit in the billiard room, with more than adequate heating, decorative tiles and quaint Edwardian prints on the walls. Here I had a bottle of *Holts Fifth Sense* which set me back £2.05, although draught

beers were available. We then caught a tram back to the city and visited the Manchester Art Gallery, before going to the **Hare and Hounds** at Shude Hill, where two halves of *Holts bitter* set us back by £2.15. Then we met the other two at the **Marble Arch** (*Marble Ginger* and *Thornbridge Ashford* delighting my palette here) and, smelling malt coming from a passageway, I investigated and met James the brewer preparing the mash for the next brew. We had time for *Marble Summer* and *Bitter* before passing Strangeways prison and the site of demolished Boddingtons brewery, and to **Dutton Hall** (*Hydes Original*) – very strange pub indeed, with a collection of anvils. After dinner we visited the **Crown & Kettle** (*Hornbeam Swift Swallow*), and **Bar Fringe**, a Belgian-style quirky bar with loud music (*Hornbeam Battlecruiser* and *Clearwater Real Smiler*). The following day we returned to Bristol satisfied with the choice of ales and the diverse pubs we found.



Near the end of August there were two beer festivals I attended. The **Brewers Arms** at South Petherton had 19 beers and nine ciders, including the *Quantock Royal Stag IPA*, an excellent beer though misnamed as not hoppy enough for a proper IPA. The **Crossways Inn** at West Huntspill, under new management, had their first beer festival, with well-written notes, in a marquee in the back garden. On the Saturday we were ably entertained by Johnny Edgar who was a hit with the younger generations there, this being a family affair. All the beers were from Somerset and Bristol, but all well kept and served including the wonderful *JJJ IPA* from *Moor*, and there were also 11 ciders and perries. The *Exmoor Beast* was my favourite that day. However, I returned there on Bank Holiday Monday with friends from Weston and the *Cotleigh Blue Jay* suited the fine weather, before we walked to the newly reopened **Royal Artillery Arms** for their very reasonably priced *RCH Doubleheader* and *Wilkins Cider*.

This year I had opted to work Friday to Sunday at the Somerset CAMRA beer festival at Minehead Railway station. This entailed sleeping overnight in a stationary railway coach, and on the Friday night the Tornado steam-engine was simmering on the opposite platform, so it was an interesting experience. As those who went on the Bristol CAMRA trip will know, it was very well attended, and we were selling

## News from Cotswold Spring

News to some, but others may well have seen the evidence: Codrington Royal (4.5%) is again being brewed after having a summer's rest. Brewer Nic Milo has decided on a new strategy, to rotate two of his regular brews: Codrington Best (4.4 %) March to September and Codrington Royal October to February.

After a busy year in which Nic scooped up a Silver award in the SIBA national competition for his Honey Bear, much more brewing is being planned for the winter period. Here's what to look out for:

**November:** Uncle Dick's Cottage Ale (6.3%).

**December:** Christmas Old Ale (5.0%).

**January:** Codrington Winter Royal (5.8%).

Also in January, Honey Bear (5.2%) and Old Sodbury Mild (3.9%) will be brewed for the SIBA 2011 competitions. So three specials plus the regulars – Codger (4.2%) and Olde English Rose (4.0%) – what a start to the year!

What happens in February depends on what energy Nic has left after a busy January. There is still hope that the whispered "Wheat" may appear in March, in time for our beer festival.

Steve Matthews





Shaking hands at the Barley Mow festival

out of the 107 beers by late afternoon, so it was fortunate we had some reserves for Sunday (set up late on Saturday night). My favourite beer here was the *Crouch Vale Apollo*, only 4.3% but packed with American hops, although the *Phoenix* and *Pictish* beers were both exceptionally good.

A week later the **Barley Mow** in The Dings had their first beer festival where I had my first taste of *Wessex Beast of Zeales* (6.66%), surprisingly pale for a strong ale, and the *Beer Factory Acer* from the bar made a pleasant hoppy contrast. Also two other well hopped ales, *Cheddar Bitter Bully* and *Moor Hoppiness*, were very quaffable.

On two or three occasions this quarter the **Regency** pub in Weston-super-Mare has had mini beer festivals, which have kept the regulars on their toes. *Bass* has always been available for the unadventurous, but although some of the beers have been quite well known, they're not often seen in the town.

The **Raglan** has kept its prices down and the beers have included *Severn Sins* which Fred hopes to keep on a regular basis through this winter, whilst across the road the **Criterion** normally has four beers on including gravity-served beers. Congratulations to both pubs for their Good Beer Guide status, to add to the **Old Inn** at Hutton and **Off The Rails** in this neck of the woods.

In October I went to the **Castle Green Inn** at Taunton for their second beer festival where 20 ales had been set up on racking and a

further three from handpump on the bar. Though most of the beers were local it was our good fortune that the *Bristol Beer Factory Sunrise* was not available and their *Southville Hop* (6.5%) was its replacement and became my beer of the festival.

A week later I worked the bar at the 33<sup>rd</sup> Bath Beer Festival, which though the programme was well set out with carefully written notes, this was rather spoilt by having 19 replacement ales which was confusing for the beer tickers. However once again the replacements were mostly good and my favourite was from them – the *Phoenix Flash Flood* (4.1%) is one I'll be looking out for again, but the *Elland Space*, *Harveys Old Ale XXXX*, *Plain Imndulgence* and *Roosters Leghorn* were all superb and the *Salopian Hop Twister* (4.5%) fairly takes your breath away!

Also in October I revisited the **Farmers Union** pub in Exeter (see Pints West 87) and the Good Beer Guide-listed **Crediton Inn** which now has ten handpumps, though normally only five beers.

A few days later two of us went to Wellington in Somerset initially to research the pubs there and to use the diverse skittle alleys. We found the **Cottage** to have beers on draught including *O'Hanlon's Stormstay* as a regular, and the **Vintage** to have Sharp's *Doom Bar*, *Otter Ale* and a new one for us to try, *Bay's Spooky Ale*, and very friendly bar staff. The last pub we had time for was the **Kings Arms**, recently taken over by a CAMRA orientated publican from Lacock, who put on *St Austell's Bucket of Blood* (4.5%) red ale for us, though he was keeping it for his party at Halloween!

Two evenings later three Weston-super-Mare members went on the Wetherspoon's coach trip from the **Commercial Rooms** which was most enjoyable and with interesting history notes for their four other pubs visited. The *Broad oak Perry* (7.5%) that I had at **St Georges Hall** was out of this world.

The following Saturday we went by bus via Wells to the **George Inn** at Croscombe for their winter beer festival (and to play skittles on their peculiar alley). As well as the *Arbor Blackeyed PA* direct from the barrel which we all liked, the landlord sold us locally produced cider which he had helped to make.

Of course you realise that *A Round with Robin* is only the highlights of an otherwise mostly enjoyable trawl though the delights of Bristol and district pubs, but I cannot finish this column without a mention for the brilliant reopening of the **Three Tuns** which I'm sure will be covered elsewhere in Pints West. I only need to say that the experimental use of the Randall in conjunction with *Arbor Jolly Jack Tar* produced a most memorable hop experience only matched by a visit to a brewery.

Robin E Wild

## “He was the man who had everything, except *Theakstons* OLD PECULIER”

We'd been muƙkers at school. Then he went into property and made so many millions they ran out of multi's to describe them. Some years later and here I was in the Med, a guest aboard this floating testament to his wealth.

“Aye, I've got plenty of ACKERS,” grumbled my friend, twiddling the umbrella

in his coƙtail, “but no bloomin' pub and no bloomin' *Theakstons*

*Old Peculier*, that's for sure.” “Why don't you just go home and get

some?” I asked. He snorted, glancing at his trophy wife soaking up

the rays beside him, “It's the missus, won't go anywhere it rains.” “Ah, I see.” I replied, wondering

how the leggy Latino lovely liked being referred to as the MISSUS. Then, wistfully, I thought

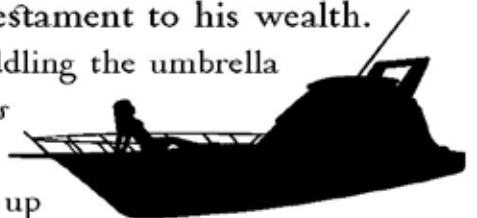
of my very own special rain-spattered corner of Yorkshire. The lady

I loved would be there now, behind her bar serving pint after pint of

*Theakstons* Old Peculier, dark, rich, and deliciously strong. With my

return ticket burning a hole in my poƙket, I turned to my mate in exile.

“Fancy another *Pina Colada*?” I enquired, smugly.





# When in Rome (or rather Lausanne)...

On a recent trip to Switzerland with 16 friends from Great Western Runners for the marathon, half marathon and 10k, I was pleasantly surprised to stumble across a pub that sold the Swiss equivalent to real ale. Called 'Les Brasseurs' (the Brewers), it is very similar to the Zero Degrees concept that we have in this country. There is a small brewery on the ground floor and it sells the beers without filtering or pasteurisation.

Four beers were on offer – *la blonde pur malt*, *la blanche*, *l'ambree double malt* and *la speciale de saison*. All were available in what are best described as five-litre test tubes



which just fitted between the tables and ceilings, saving trips to the bar but making work for the person sat next to it. We managed to get through five or six of them between the 15 drinkers (well we had had a hard day's running).

Les Brasseurs can be found at 4 Rue Centrale, Lausanne and also 20 Place Cornavin Geneva, opposite the railway station.

Pete Tanner



# Real Ale and Metal

The Griffin, close to the Colston Hall in central Bristol, reopened as the Gryphon on the 18<sup>th</sup> September after being shut for a week.

The new leaseholder John Ashby started as a barman some years ago, but more recently worked at The Plough in Filton, soon becoming manager and licensee. His good relationship with the owners meant that he was able to take over the Gryphon when they bought the freehold from Enterprise Inns.

This pub was probably best known for its odd triangular shape and fairly narrow appeal. John's aim is 'Atmosphere, Music and Real Ale', and with this in mind he is aiming for a much broader customer base. The shape of the pub won't change though – the main bar is triangular because of the pub's position in the fork of two roads and there are two small rooms behind the bar. The smaller one has a fruit machine and the larger will be a snug with soft carpets and settees.

No other changes to the décor downstairs are planned. There is also an upstairs function room with a bar which he hopes to open for bands twice a week.

The music theme is alternative and mainly metal but includes rock, punk and ska. The volume is subtle at lunchtimes and on weekday evenings, but rather louder on Friday and Saturday nights. The back rooms are quieter.

There are currently four handpumps, which may be expanded to six if there is enough demand to keep the beer fresh. There are no brewery or other ties, but Bath Ales' Barnstormer has been a regular and Festivity will be on for the season. Prices are around £2.80, and CAMRA discounts are a possibility when things settle down – perhaps in the New Year. There will also be a choice of quality bottled beers and lagers. On my visit I tried the Bristol Beer Factory Stout, which was excellent. John also aims to offer lunchtime meals later, preferably homemade.

Opening hours are 12 noon till 11pm on weekdays and 1am on Fridays and Saturdays.

Chris Rogers



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# Bristol & District CAMRA Pubs Campaigning Group

## Want to get involved?

The Bristol & District CAMRA Pubs Campaigning Group – or Bristol Pubs group for short – was formed nearly three years ago. Since that time the group has been involved in a number of campaigns, some successful and some not, to save community pubs from closure. The group also campaigns against unsympathetic alterations to pubs where considered necessary.

The successes for the group so far include:

- successfully opposing change of use;
- saving a landmark Bristol pub from conversion, allowing it to re-open;
- getting a historic interior restored after unauthorised works;
- challenging use of restrictive covenants (which had a national impact);
- commenting on planning applications;
- lobbying decision-makers on pub-related issues;
- raising the profile of threatened pubs in the media;
- highlighting the importance of local pubs within communities;
- alerting potential buyers to threatened pubs;
- organising the Branch's Local Pubs Week, thus encouraging pub use;
- close liaison and lobbying of local MPs many of whom now support our aims.

## Bristol Pubs Group demands action to save community locals

Bristol Pubs Group, part of Bristol & District CAMRA, has written to all Bristol city councillors requesting that they adopt policies to protect community pubs.

Speaking at the start of the very successful "Local Pubs Week" organised by the group in November, the group's chairman Peter Bridle said: "We have lost far too many local pubs in our communities in recent times and this trend is a major concern. The threat to our community locals is as great as ever and we urge all of our councillors to adopt policies to protect these community assets as a matter of urgency.

"The fact is we now have areas with no local pubs left. Well-run community pubs can be the heartbeat of local communities and the city council must not stand by and watch these being lost to redevelopment, one after another. Other councils have adopted policies to protect pubs and we would be delighted to meet up with councillors and planning officers to help formulate a policy."

Bristol Pubs Group is recommending Bristol City Council adopts a policy based on the following:

***The Council supports retention of public houses and will oppose their conversion or redevelopment where they contribute to the liveliness and vitality of the local area, where they provide a service of particular local value, or where a consequence would be the loss of important historic features.***

Unfortunately, due to many factors outside the control of pubs such as the smoking ban, increases in excise duty, beer being sold in supermarkets as a loss-leader, pubs now more than ever need protection from redevelopment. There can be no doubt that many pubs can be successful in the right hands. All too often however the onerous conditions pubs have to operate under, including the practice between large pub companies and their lessees (who are subject to supply ties that prevent them from buying beer and other products at open market prices), hinder pubs from thriving. Some pubs are also just badly run. But this is no reason for allowing permission for redevelopment or demolition as many pubs can be turned around. Why should a community asset be lost forever when it could be the focal point of a community once again?

Most recently, we have campaigned for Bristol City Council to adopt policies to protect community pubs from redevelopment. This is a new campaign which is in progress.

The group meets in a pub every other month and also enjoys informal socials several times a year. Much of its liaison is done by email, texting and, sometimes, a small number will meet up to take forward specific campaigning, as in the ongoing case concerning the Lamplighters in Shirehampton.

We are now looking to attract some new people to join the group. The qualifications to join are that you want to see community pubs stay at the heart of our communities and you are prepared to attend meetings where possible. The meetings are always held on a Thursday, start at 7pm and usually held in a central Bristol pub. We are also looking for a web-master for the Pubs Group web-site. We need a web-site as another tool in our campaign. We are all volunteers and the most important aspect of our Group is enthusiasm.

If you are interested, please do make contact. You can either email the group at [bristolpubsgroup@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:bristolpubsgroup@yahoo.co.uk) or why not pop along to a branch event in the near future? (See the branch diary of events inside the back page.) The informal Gloucester Road Christmas crawl would be a good opportunity. This is on Tuesday December 21st and starts at the Inn on the Green in Horfield at 7pm and then onto other Gloucester Road pubs. Or, if you can't make that, why not see when else you can come along to a branch event?

Either way, please do get in touch by e-mail. We are a very friendly group with many different backgrounds and we will be delighted to welcome you.

Pete Bridle



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## Readers' Letters

Readers are welcome to send letters to Pints West Editor, Steve Plumridge, Garden Flat, 6 Royal York Villas, Clifton, Bristol BS8 4JR  
[steve.plumridge@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:steve.plumridge@bristol.ac.uk)

### Cider pubs

I read with interest an article in Pints West no. 87 written by Richard Walters and Richard Brooks. It was headed "Fantastic cider pubs."

We at the New Inn on the Green here in Priddy – the highest village on Mendip – class ourselves as being a fantastic cider pub.

We, as a minimum, stock 20 draught ciders, across the spectrum of flavours, single varietals, blends, sparkling and still, as something to suit all tastes. All are locally produced and offer all our visitors and guests an opportunity to "try before you buy".

Many of our customers enjoy designing their own favourite blends and name them. We have our own InnCider still and sparkling too.

Additionally, since our family took over the pub, four years ago this October, we have sold over 200 different real ales and hold twice-yearly beer/cider festivals!

What does a pub need to do to get some recognition? Still .....

We always look on the bright cider life!

Yours, Steve Webster,  
 The New Inn, Priddy.

### MPs on the cover

It was good to see MPs Charlotte Leslie and Chris Skidmore photographed on the cover of your latest edition, having joined the fight to

save pubs within their constituencies.

I hope they will now encourage the Conservative Party to follow the lead of the Green Party, which at its recent Autumn Conference passed a motion incorporating much of the CAMRA 'Beer Drinkers and Pub Goers Charter' into Green Party policy.

Now that their party is in Government, our local Conservatives have the opportunity to do more than merely protest, and we may hope that they will now press for changes in policy to protect well-run community pubs.

Yours sincerely,  
 Chris Millman,  
 Coombe Dingle.

### Provenance

One of today's current retailing buzzwords is 'Provenance'; in effect, stating the point of origin. You'd expect Wiltshire ham to come from Wiltshire, Lincolnshire sausages from Lincolnshire, and Yorkshire tea from .... well, have a guess.

It's no different in the world of beer. CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale, believes that both cask and keg products should indicate the place of brewing of any product, at the point of dispense for draught products and on the label for packaged products.

In the World Heritage city of Bath, the city's only brewery, Abbey Ales, does just that. The company is so proud of its home that the words 'Brewed in Bath' appear on all its pump clips and bottle labels.

So if you're looking to support your local brewery and drink a beer that is brewed locally, don't be swayed by the name. Look at the pump clip or bottle label. If it doesn't tell you where it's brewed then it is probably because it isn't brewed locally!

Alan Morgan,  
 Bath.

### Pub poem

I wonder if you would be interested in printing this poem by my wife Patricia Hawkhead in Pints West.

She wrote it one Sunday while we took shelter in an old pub with a crackling fire and fine ale. It has been published before in a small press literary magazine Odyssey, but it seems particularly apt for Pints West.

John Hawkhead,  
 Yeovil,  
 Somerset.

**A lattice-work of burning carbon,  
 waxing hues of amber,  
 blue, sometimes green,  
 my focus of attention  
 against a background glow  
 of conversation.**

**The promise of laughter blooms  
 with a gradual rise in heat,  
 mellow air brimming  
 with social lubrication.**

**I'm happy now,  
 looking forward to a warmer future,  
 a dreamtime away  
 getting better by the glass.**

Patricia Hawkhead

## Coming soon

## Ashley Down Brewery!

Details in next edition . . . .



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# News from Dawkins

### Brewery news

The new winter beer from Dawkins is a 5% double chocolate vanilla stout called **Chocadee** and should be out from mid-December. Their strong, true IPA **Mumbai PA** will also be out around Christmas.

Bristol Silents have asked Dawkins again to brew a beer for their international Slapstick Festival of silent comedy which takes place from 27th to 30th January. It will be a 5% black and white beer, of course. (See [www.slapstick.org.uk](http://www.slapstick.org.uk).)

### Pub news

The **Portcullis** Christmas beer festival will take place between the 9th and 13th December, featuring 25 ales and ciders, over half of them served on gravity from the cask. There will be festive offerings from local brewers and further afield.

During 2011 the new Portcullis manager Joe Goldsworthy (who has moved up from assistant manager now Ned and Natz have moved on to the Three Tuns) is planning half a dozen festivals and will be indulging his love of hops with a range of American microbrewery bottled beers.

Dawkins have reached outline agreement with Punch to go free-of-tie on ales (at a price!) at the **Miner's Arms** so, barring unforeseen problems, from early 2011 they'll be selling their own beers there, plus many more *Locale* and other microbrewery beers than before.



# A visit to Berrow Brewery

## *(a brewery for sale with house attached)*

**B**errow Brewery was founded in 1982 by James Johnstone, is a family affair run by James and his wife, and occupies a site on the Coast Road in Berrow, near Burnham-on-Sea, in the grounds of the owners' home. I first visited this small but perfectly formed operation eight or nine years ago and found little had really changed by October 2010 on my most recent visit with the Bristol and District CAMRA branch. However, a big change is in the offing: James has now decided to call time on the brewing operation and to move away not only from the brewery but from what is a very large and attractive family home to a more modest place, still in the local area.

Finding the place in our coach on one of the first dark early evenings of the year was something of a challenge, and was only achieved after an interesting detour around the caravan parks and holiday centres of Berrow and Brean, and several phone calls to a rather bemused James. Nestled amongst the holiday homes are several much older properties, including the brewery site; the original out-buildings of the main house are now host to this five-barrel plant serving several local pubs and occasionally pubs in central Bristol such as the Seven Stars.

James welcomed our rather late and directionally-challenged party with an outline of the brewery's history, a 'tour' of the plant and an invitation to sample two of the brewery's ales: Best Bitter, also known as 4Bs (3.9% ABV), a really tasty beer for its strength with a good balance of malt and hops, and Topsy Turvey (5.9% ABV), perhaps its best-known ale outside the local area, again well-balanced but with a strong bitter hop and fruit finish. It has to be said that the brewery tour was something of an intimate affair: just a dozen or so of us huddled in the front half of the brewery where the boiler, water tank, brewing vessels and full cask storage is just around 9 by 3.5 metres. We also viewed the back of the building, where two fermenting vessels nestle happily in an even smaller but perfectly adequate space. I was rather taken by what, to my untrained eye, looked like a somewhat Heath-Robinson affair but which is in fact a well-functioning gas-fired boiler that provides all the steam needed to heat the water for mashing, boiling the wort, boiling a caustic soda solution for cleaning the brewing vessels and very efficiently steam-sterilising clean casks prior to filling them with beer.

We left the brewery after a very pleasant evening in James' company, partially filled with beer ourselves, but with space to take in more of Berrow's output at *The Place*, South Road, Brean. Directly opposite the entrance to Pontin's, this large upstairs bar is very busy during the tourist season, but was pleasantly relaxed on our visit. Berrow Porter (4.6% ABV), ruby-coloured with a good hop character, is consumed in good quantity by Brean's holidaymakers during the season, and we were lucky still to find some on sale at *The Place*. What we might think of as a beer for Autumn and Winter is much-appreciated by visitors to the West Country as part of their Summer holiday.

Our thanks to James for an interesting brewery visit, and for nearly 30 years of brewing in the South West. Whilst the eight-bedroom



James inspects the mash



property and brewery are available for purchase as one lot, James is also open to offers for the house and brewery as separate lots. Whilst he would prefer to sell the brewing operation in situ, to perpetuate brewing in Berrow, he is also willing to consider sale of the plant for re-location.

Lesley Huxley

**Berrow Brewery, Coast Road, Berrow, Burnham-on-Sea, Somerset TA8 2QU (01278) 751345**

**Brewery plant:** 2qtr stainless steel mash tun (insulated and wooden clad) with false bottom and grist hopper mounted on top complete with mashing and sparging devices; 5Brl stainless steel wort copper and hop back (insulated and wooden clad); platform comprising swing bend panel to facilitate liquid movements between the 2 vessels; a plate heat exchanger; a product pump and a water pump and small electrical panel for the 2 pumps; 600 gallon stainless steel insulated hot water tank complete with

stainless steel heating coil; 350lbs/h LPG Fulton gas fired boiler complete with condensate return system; 2x 20 Hl stainless steel fermenters, cylindrical, open with conical base standing on 3 stainless steel box type legs, equipped with an external stainless steel coil for attenuation of the beer during fermentation; refrigeration system providing chilled water for recirculation through the fermenter cooling coils; Tofte Jorg spray head for cask rinsing with associated cask supporting platform in mild steel; water reservoir for incoming mains water linked to a booster pump and pressure tank to provide a constant water pressure in the brewery.



# Wetherspoon beer festival social

To help showcase the recent JD Wetherspoon's autumn beer festival, Helen Bull, the manager at the **Commercial Rooms**, had the excellent idea of hiring a coach to take us to some of their pubs. Not surprisingly, this trip sold out in double-quick time, and on the evening in question over 45 local CAMRA branch members met at the Commercial Rooms before boarding the coach.

Our first stop was at the **Kingswood Colliers**, unusually a new-build pub, opened by them in 2000. After the official photographer had taken photos of us by the coach and inside the pub, we set about choosing from the selection of festival ales available.

The coach then took us to Helen's previous pub, the **Staple Hill Oak**, which has won several awards in the past, and is a new entry into the 2011 CAMRA Good Beer Guide. Demand was high enough to see at least one beer sell out during our time here.

Next we headed to the **Van Dyke Forum** in Fishponds, although this one was a little disappointing in that it only had a limited selection of festival beers available during the short time we were there.

Our last pub for the evening was the **St. George's Hall** in Redfield, formerly a cinema, and part of the JDW empire for over ten years. Managed by Barbara Bowdler, who was also accompanying us on the coach all evening, this wonderful pub featured a most interesting range of festival beers, including some of the darker and stronger ones that appeal to many discerning drinkers these days.

Finally, we had to drag ourselves away for the coach back to the **Commercial Rooms** where, proving that ale demand must be increasing, almost all the festival ales had changed in the four hours we had been away! Time for another beer then....

The festival included a weird and wonderful of beers. Some of my favourites included Scottish brewer Brewdog's "Edge" – an incredible dark beer of just 3.2% proving that low-gravity beers can pack a massive amount of flavour and taste. As a fan of dark beer, I also enjoyed Banks & Taylor's Black Squirrel, apparently brewed for the first time in 12 years; a range of international ales including Lion Stout from Sri Lanka at 5% ABV; and much closer to home, RCH's Strawberry Line – a lovely 5% fruity beer that is dangerously drinkable and didn't taste like I expected a 5% beer to taste!

Our thanks must go to Helen for organising this trip, and to all her colleagues, especially Barbara, for their assistance during the evening. The beer (and cider) gifts, plus the bottle opener and various other JDW goodies were also much appreciated by all on board. A most enjoyable evening was had by all, and we warmly applaud Helen's innovative idea in promoting some of the many beers available during the festival – and not forgetting the usual excellent range of guest beers available outside of the festival too.

We note that there are a number of other 'Spoons pubs in Bristol that we didn't have time to visit this time. Over to you, Helen!

In the meantime, keep an eye out for the next JDW festival – it's not to be missed!

Tim Proudman

## Bristol Beer Factory news



The Bristol Beer Factory team at the Facterfest

The Bristol Beer Factory have won a national design award, scooping first prize for their range of bottled beer labels at the SIBA (Society of Independent Brewers) Brewing Business Awards in London. This event is now in its fifth year, although this is the first time these marketing awards have been celebrated. SIBA Chief Executive Julian Grocock described the entry as being "as contemporary as design can get, and conclusive proof that this is a vibrant and forward-looking industry. The pint pot logo used to great minimalist effect to create a brewery family identity." The new labels were designed in the summer by Bristol-based graphic design house Miller Design who worked closely with the BBF team to design a striking, yet simple bottle label that could be used throughout the ever-expanding range of bottled beers.

The Bristol Beer Factory have released a number of new beers over the last couple of months, including **Southville Hop** at 6.5% ABV and brewed with aromatic American hops. The BBF are now selling their seasonal Christmas ale **Bristletoe** at 4.3% ABV and spiced with ginger, coriander and orange peel to give a Christmassy aroma and flavour. Other special BBF beers to look out for in both bottled and cask form will include **Ultimate Stout** and **Exhibition**. Bottled beers can be purchased from the BBF online shop at [www.bristolbeerfactory.co.uk](http://www.bristolbeerfactory.co.uk).

The **Facterfest** beer festival at the Tobacco Factory was the biggest yet. Held over two days, there were 33 beers and more food, music and markets than ever before. BBF **Hazelnut Latte Stout** was the first beer to sell out and the brewery have advised that this will appear again (including in bottles) although probably not before the New Year.

Richard Brooks





# Severn Vale CAMRA

## Pub survey trip - October 29th

Another intrepid group of stalwarts. Another sacrifice. But someone's got to test the beer, don't they?

We started in the Swan, Almondsbury. Not a pub that any of our group had visited any time recently. There was one real ale on offer; Jennings Cumberland. Probably not in its best condition and a little too cold for our tastes. Apparently, they normally sell Marston's Pedigree, but there was no sign of it on this occasion. The pub has a juke box, large screen TV and pool table, plus lots of seating, but sadly was lacking customers and hence atmosphere on our visit.

The next venue was just up the A38 at the Masons Arms. Here there was the choice of two ales, Greene King IPA or Butcombe Bitter. Both were sampled and were – once again – served too cold, thus robbing them of their flavour. However, these were the cheapest beers I've come across for a long time, the IPA being £1.80 and the Butcombe £2.00. The pub is primarily a food venue, and it was worryingly difficult to find a clean table to sit at. Friday night is quiz night: hopefully, they'll fix the microphone soon!

From there we journeyed on to the Ship, Alveston, where Greene King's Old Speckled Hen and Wickwar's BOB were on offer. Fuller's London Pride had just gone off. Both sampled (naturally!) and both were very well received. The atmosphere in the place was upbeat, the place was crowded, with many people eating, but also plenty in the bar drinking. They also had three good-looking ales, on the hand pumps, but we were told they were not on until next week. (A further visit one week later revealed the same three handpumps, with the same three clips on them, still not in use. Upon asking, I was given the un-forthcoming news that, "Oh no, we don't have those".)

We then descended the hill into Thornbury to check out the Black Horse, where once again there were two real ales available: Old Speckled Hen and the unusual (for these parts) Howling Ale from the Cottage Brewery. Both beers were in great condition – the best all evening. Also,

**S**evern Vale CAMRA is a sub-branch of the Bristol & District branch of the Campaign for Real Ale. The sub-branch covers 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 atmosphere here was just what I require from a pub. Most tables had people sitting chatting, or playing crib. No music, just the hubbub of chatter.

*Martin Farrimond*

● Although outside of our area (just!), the Swan at Tytherington has re-opened with new landlord in place. Beers on offer are Courage Best and Sharp's Doom Bar – a seemingly odd combination with both beers at 4.0% ABV. I was told there would be some guest beers appearing, but I've not spotted any as yet. Business seems to be very slow at the moment – whether this is post-closure blues or something else, only time will tell. I wish the new landlord success.

*Martin Farrimond*

**We're in the process of setting up our own website which is going to be tagged onto the Bristol CAMRA website. We'll be working on this and starting to populate it from the middle of November, so keep checking in for local news and events.**

[www.severnval.camrabristol.org.uk](http://www.severnval.camrabristol.org.uk)



**CAMPAIGN  
FOR  
REAL ALE**

## Severn Vale diary

- **Wed Dec 15th** – Sub-branch meeting at 8pm at the Anchor, Thornbury, followed by Christmas social. Non-members welcome.
- **Wed Feb 23rd** – Branch meeting at the Anchor, Thornbury, 8pm. (Check web site for further diary dates.)

## Severn Vale contact

**Neil Halsall (chair):** [Neil.Halsall@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:Neil.Halsall@southglos.gov.uk)  
**Keith McIndoe (secretary):** [ainsdeng@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:ainsdeng@blueyonder.co.uk)



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### **IKB (4.5%)**

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

### **STATION PORTER (6.1%)**

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**The Brewery Shop,**

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

tel: 01454 299592

Web: [www.thebreweryshop.com](http://www.thebreweryshop.com)

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



## Bristol Club is South West Regional CAMRA Club of the Year

The RAFA Club in Westbury-on-Trym has won the prestigious title of CAMRA South West Regional Club of the Year in this year's competition. The award was presented to delighted Club members on Sunday, 31st October. This follows on from their winning the local Bristol & District Club of the Year award earlier in the year, as reported in Pints West two editions ago.

On presenting them with the award, Ian Packham, South West Regional Director of CAMRA, said: "I was very impressed with the RAFA Club due to the quality and range of its real ales, some of which are regularly collected from Devon. There was a friendly welcome and atmosphere which all added to the experience. In a region stretching from Gloucestershire and parts of Wiltshire in the north of the region to Cornwall in the far South West, there is still good competition for this award, despite the fact that clubs are not as prominent as in other parts of the country. The RAFA Club was up against some very good competition including the winner for the last four years, with more good clubs appearing each year."

The RAFA Club was established soon after the Second World War and is currently run by a committee of beer enthusiasts. Since being freed from a national brewer's beer tie three years ago, members of the Club now travel to various regional breweries in Devon, Gloucestershire and Hereford, to name but a few, to source their real ales.

When told of the award, Chairman, Phillip Lowndes said: "We are honoured to receive such an award which we see as recognition of the hard work our dedicated team have put in to enable our regulars to enjoy



From the left, Tony Chew, Phillip Lowndes and Brian Pearce are presented with the certificate from CAMRA regional director Ian Packham, centre, plus other CAMRA members. (Photo by Tony Durbin.)

such a diverse and always changing range of real ales."

Alison Bridle of the local CAMRA Bristol & District branch said: "This is fantastic news for the RAFA Club. We are very pleased to see a club in our area with such a dedicated commitment to real ale. The standard of ales is always very good and it is great to see the RAFA Club get this recognition."

The RAFA Club will now go through to the final stage of CAMRA's Club of the Year competition, where it will be competing against other regional contenders in a bid to become CAMRA's National Club of the Year.

*Club opening hours are:*

*Monday to Thursday, noon to 2.30pm and 7pm to 11pm.*

*Friday and Saturday, noon to 3pm and 7pm to midnight.*

*Sunday, noon to 5pm.*

*Non-members of the Club may gain entry on showing a valid CAMRA membership card.*

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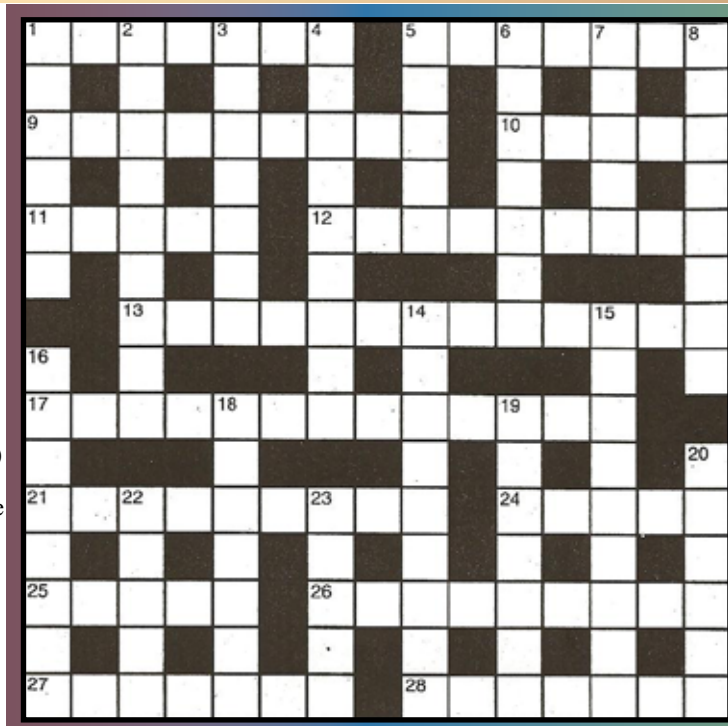
# Prize Crossword

## CLUES ACROSS

1. A feature of fizzy beer – like Double Diamond? (7)
5. Keep your distance from the dreadful body odour of ale (2, 5)
9. White wine unavailable; so re-order as an alternative (4, 2, 3)
10. Lovely Italian girl in the Bluebell Arms (5)
11. Drunken aunt I enrolled in a liberation army (5)
12. Badly handled the date or the Devon strong brew (5, 4)
13. Old sailor together with Doc – sitting on the food bar (4, 3, 6)
17. James, Bruce, Cary, Meryl, Michael, Helen and Kate meet in a Bristol pub (3, 5, 5)
21. Out of white rum due to broken down bad air con (2, 7)
24. Wake up to Famous Grouse with the top off (5)
25. London suburb where you'll find some open Gem bitter (5)
26. Most valuable structural component of central Bristol public house (4, 5)
27. See 15 down
28. What the redundant publican may have to do. Hold it. Keep right in there (7)

## CLUES DOWN

1. Star beer from the Globe Brewpub (6)
2. Bass is ace cock-up for horizontal mathematicians on the line (9)
3. Presumably ideal, but irritating, member of the pub quiz team (4-3)
4. Large measure of beer from a Durham brewery (4, 2, 3)
5. Edit first beer washout in the toilet bowl (5)
6. A beer mug male dropped got smashed at French hostelry (7)
7. Headless sheepdog beer from Dolphin brewery (5)
8. Battle flared up around Scottish & Newcastle initially (8)
14. Gordon's ideal new job in London? (9)
- 15, 27 ac. Reckoned to be easy to organise – or not! (4, 2, 2, 1, 7)
16. Well-built inn at the home of Limestone Brewery (5, 3)
18. Take the piss (literally) on former Greek island (7)
19. Tumbling entertainer throwing coat around the bar (7)
20. Sounds like little Kenny got to water the beer (6)



22. Being rather confused after experiencing one of these (5)
23. Midland town where a Rucking Mole might be found (5)

Pete and Eddie Taberner

The first correct crossword selected at random after the end of January 2011 wins a copy of the book *The Inns of Wiltshire* by Andrew Swift & Kirsten Elliot and *Cry Freedom Cry Seven Stars* by Marks Steeds. Entries to the editor, address inside the back page.

# Pumpkin beer – served from a pumpkin!

Pints West received a press release from Roosters brewery of Knaresborough in Yorkshire offering something different for Halloween this year: beer direct from a pumpkin (no barrel) and tapped direct into the flesh of the pumpkin.

As the press release explained: "The classic pumpkin pie involves five spices: allspice, nutmeg, cinnamon, ginger and clove; Roosters used all five spices in their beer."

The pumpkin was processed to the consistency of soup, sterilised and added to mash, boil and fermenter to put maximum flavour and colour into the beer.

To dispense the results, they went to the annual Mere Brow Giant

Pumpkin competition at Stockport and bought the biggest pumpkins they could get their hands on (up to 1000 lbs – have a look at mere brow big pumpkins on the internet).

They removed the insides and used an oxyacetylene torch on the inside flesh to remove the vegetable taste and replace it with a caramelised flavour and to help seal the flesh. Then they filled it with beer, primed and replaced the lid, sealed it with bees wax and, hey presto, pumpkin-conditioned beer! All that remained was to drill a pilot hole into the pumpkin, tap it and serve.

The beer was sold in bottle, cask, and pumpkin. Nine-gallon and 18-gallon casks and "whopping great big pumpkins." Something different!

Norman Spalding

## Rucking Mole joins the pack!

ALL YEAR ROUND      IN SEASON

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Tap Bitter</b> 3.5% <i>abv</i><br>Smooth malty flavour & clean bitter finish<br><b>Best Bitter</b> 4.0% <i>abv</i><br>Well balanced, copper coloured bitter<br><b>Molennium</b> 4.5% <i>abv</i><br>Deep amber coloured premium ale<br><b>Rucking Mole</b> 4.5% <i>abv</i><br>Clean, dry & malty golden bitter<br><b>Landlord's Choice</b> 4.5% <i>abv</i><br>Dark, strong and smooth hoppy bitter<br><b>Molecatcher</b> 5.0% <i>abv</i><br>Copper coloured ale with spicy hop aroma | <b>Holy Moley</b> 4.7% <i>abv</i><br>Spring beer that's heaven 'scent'<br><b>Barleymole</b> 4.2% <i>abv</i><br>Straw coloured Summer ale<br><b>Molegrip</b> 4.3% <i>abv</i><br>Rich ruby red, Autumn brew<br><b>Moel Moel</b> 6.0% <i>abv</i><br>Warming Winter ale |
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# BADRAG - Bristol and District Rare Ales Group

The last few months have been relatively quiet on the BADRAG social front, compared to the excitement of Mild Month. August saw many of us in Earls Court for the Great British Beer Festival, where we were treated to a vast array of milds, stouts and porters. In September we closed on the Old Stillage in church road, where landlord Namaya laid on a choice of beer from Arbor Ales and Plain Ales. The following Saturday saw us travelling to Minehead Beer Festival for another range of dark ales.

The Hen & Chicken in Bedminster was chosen for the October social, where landlord Julian Sarsby presented the Oyster Stout from Arbor Ales. At the end of the month, the Wetherspoon's three-week beer festival kicked off, with some lucky CAMRA members being invited on a bus tour of their East Bristol pubs where we could indulge in some of the festival beers.

The November social was at the Barley Mow in St. Philips, a Bristol Beer Factory pub where landlord Andy served us with Old Freddie Walker, a 7.5% giant from Moor Brewery. The ever-popular Bristol Stout (which is replacing Guinness on the bars of many Bristol pubs) was also available, but quickly ran out.

As we look forward to seeing the many Christmas beers and old ales over the coming months, it is worth noting the following events in your diaries.

- Thursday, December 9th – Christmas social with the local branch (CAMRA members only), 7pm at the Chimp House, Gloucester Road, Bristol.
- Thursday, January 13th – BADRAG social at the Annexe in Bishopston, 7.30 for 8pm, everyone welcome.
- Thursday, February 10th – BADRAG gathering at the Commercial

**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, brown ales and traditional strength IPAs.**

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

Rooms, Corn Street, central Bristol (back room booked), 7.30 for 8pm.  
 ● Thursday, March 10th – The year's first BADRAG mini-trail where an exciting range of ales are anticipated as we will be visiting the Seven Stars (7-8pm), Bridge Inn (8:15-9:15pm) and Cornubia (9:30-10:30pm).

Colin Postlethwaite

## Sinking the Bismark

Many Pints West readers will be familiar in some shape or form with Brewdog brewery, whose beers have graced the Bristol CAMRA Beer Festival for several years. For the uninitiated, Brewdog are located in Fraserburgh, way up the Scottish north-east coast. An unlikely location for a craft brewery, you might think. Well, pretty much everything about Brewdog is unusual.

Starting in 2007, they rapidly built up a cult following for their extraordinary beers, such as the majorly hoppy Punk IPA, and Paradox, a 10% beer matured in whisky casks. Brewdog certainly know how to promote themselves too, launching the immensely hoppy Nanny State, at a mere 1.1%, as a response to the negative press of the hysterical types who accused them of promoting excessive drinking with their Tokyo oak-aged stout, which weighed in at a mighty 18.2%.

Their next extreme venture was Tactical Nuclear Penguin, a double-aged 32% stout, claimed to be the world's strongest beer. However, deep in the Franconian lakes of Germany, Schorschbrau brewery had other ideas and produced Schorschbock, weighing in at 40%. The boys from Brewdog leapt to the challenge, and on 16<sup>th</sup> February they launched Sink the Bismark, a 41% IPA (the style known as India Pale Ale), thus retaking the record. The name cheekily refers to a mighty German battleship of World War II vintage, which was eventually sunk by the Royal Navy after several epic encounters.

As an admirer of Brewdog from my first taste, I felt this was a beer which needed to be tried. Dave Bridges, who had enjoyed the pleasure of sampling Tactical Nuclear Penguin at the New Inn at Mayhill agreed, and suggested ordering a bottle. So it was after an anxious wait that a group of us (Dave, myself, Vince Murray and Richard Walters) gathered at the Seven Stars to sip the precious nectar, which was £40 for a 330ml bottle! Dave carefully unwrapped the bottle, which came in a brown paper bag with 41% scrawled on it, and landlord Paul, who had cellared the bottle for us, provided us with a spirit measure so that we could be sure of fair measures. You will appreciate great care was taken in the pouring! The tasting notes on the bottle state that this is a quadruple IPA, with four times the hops, four times the bitterness and frozen four times.

What does it taste like? Well, the result is quite extraordinary. It is recognisable as beer rather than spirit, despite its incredible strength. Our tasting came up with the following: copper colour, massive hop taste throughout, bitter orange, an aroma of intense apricots or like Grand Marnier, a spirit-like warming mouth feel. (Rich thought mouth quivering!) For myself, the best comment I heard was that it was like a hop-oil whisky – it certainly had a fiery edge as it went down, such as you get with whisky. One bottle between four was certainly enough, as it's not a drink to knock back! It was an experience not to be missed.

If you want to sample some of the less extreme but still remarkable Brewdog beers, they are available on occasion at the Seven Stars and frequently at the Portcullis in Clifton.

A footnote: the record continues to escalate, with Brewdog producing a very limited edition beer, the End of History at 55%, each bottle rather curiously being served from within a stuffed animal. Despite or maybe because of this all bottles sold out despite the £500 price tag! I gather a Dutch brewery may have surpassed this record since.

Phil Cummings

## Pub News

There is a new name at the top of St. Michael's Hill, Kingsdown, but not a new pub. **Bar@155** has been renamed '**Chin Chin**' and repainted outside, possibly to differentiate it from the premises next door which matched their colour when they opened two years ago. Host Darren still serves a good pint of Doom Bar and is licensed until 2:30 on Friday and Saturday nights.



During the summer, Bradd at the **Highbury Vaults** sensibly cut back to six or seven real ales as trade quietened down with the students being away. But now they are back, the eighth hand pump is back in use. With Bristol Beer Factory no longer brewing Exhibition all year round and a gap in the seasonal Young's brews, he has taken the opportunity to have a range of guest beers in to supplement the Young's Bitter and Gold, St. Austell Tribute, Bath Ales Gem and Brains SA. Recent beers have come from Great Western Brewery, Plain Ales, Box Steam, Downton, Hop Back and Yeovil Ales.

A bit further away, the **Clyde Arms** is sprouting a "Lease for Sale" sign and a recent advert in the Morning Advertiser said it was "due to retirement". It is very much a community pub and always seems busy whenever I go in or walk past. Also advertised in the same publication was the lease for sale on the **Clifton Cow** in Clifton, or as most people still remember it, the **Richmond Spring**.

Pete Tanner



# The Crown & Kettle, Manchester

I was in Manchester a few weeks ago and wanted to quench my thirst shortly after arrival. Armed with my Good Beer Guide, I had about six pubs marked up in the vicinity, some to visit that night and others to do a dry run on for the following night. After visiting the Marble Arch for some Marble Chocolate (5.5%), I headed around the corner to the Crown and Kettle along Great Ancoats Street, to check it out for the next night. With eight handpumps, it has been in the Good Beer Guide a number of times since it reopened in 2005. "Sorry, I'm not stopping, just checking for tomorrow," I told the barmaid. I had to eat my words! I saw a Milk Stout (4.0%), brewed by Dunham Massey, so I stopped to try this. Rather similar to Bristol Beer Factory's I felt, but very slightly more sweet in flavour – very nice!



Sat down, this pub became very interesting for its historic appearance. It is not to the standard of CAMRA's National Inventory, but still attracts attention. This was obviously a style of building you would not expect to house a pub! The ceiling is very high – rather like that of a church, I first thought. The pitched archways between rooms looked like those of a

church, as well. Chandeliers were hanging from the ceiling, which was heavily patterned and obviously very old. There was netting suspended below it, due to it flaking away, unfortunately. There was a separate, smaller lounge at the rear. It had obviously been refurbished to a fair extent, with the ceiling redecorated. Since my return home, I seem to have missed one room, going by the pub's photo gallery.

Apparently, this building, built in the 19th century, was once a court, although there is some uncertainty over its use as one. In the early 18th century, a pub was on the site, though. There again, some pubs used to also be used as courts. The Stag & Hounds in Old Market Street, Bristol, is one example.

The windows of the pub, at first glance, looked Gothic, until I real-



ised it is was a trick in their design. The patterning between the panes is the cause. They are not the original ones, though. The bar also has some screens, giving a small degree of privacy for some.

I feel that, both for the looks of the pub and the quality and prices of beers, this is a pub very worthy of visiting if in Manchester. One piece of advice – if you seek the pub walking east to west, walk on the south side of the road. You could totally miss the place otherwise, as the sign was taken down after high winds caused some damage about two years ago. (If you have a GPS, tap in SJ8467498708 to take you there!)

For more details on the pub, visit [www.crownandkettle.com](http://www.crownandkettle.com) or, for details on the National Inventory, visit [www.heritagepubs.org.uk](http://www.heritagepubs.org.uk).

Tim Belsten

## Twelve months on

Regular readers may recall an article four issues ago headed "Revival of real ale houses in Bristol" about four pubs having been re-opened at about this time last year. A year later, the Three Sugar Loaves, Quinton House, Golden Guinea and Three Tuns are still looking healthy and successful.

At the bottom of Christmas Steps, Jason Arnall is still runs the **Three Sugar Loaves**, with three handpumps on the bar for real ales. Shepherd Neame's Master Brew, Brain's Reverend James and Skinner's Betty Stoggs, plus "flat Bass", were available when I visited recently. The intended kitchen is hoped to be ready by Christmas. A cocktail/shot bar is on the upper level, and a new wine list has been drawn up. Trade has been steady, with good support so far, Jason feels.

Just off the Triangle in Clifton, the **Quinton House** is busy. In the cold winter months, the two fireplaces gave a warm, cosy welcome. Fuller's London Pride and Sharp's Doom Bar are still core beers; guests recently were Marston's Pedigree and Wickwar's Bob. This year's first-year university students have latched onto the pub, although, when I visited, office workers seemed to be making use of this valuable asset. One local customer told me, "It's so good, I brought my mum in here!", indicating its appeal to all.

Over in Redcliffe, next to the Bristol General Hospital, the **Golden Guinea** retains its four handpumps. I enjoyed Addlestone's Cloudy Premium Cider, after trying Wickwar's Bob. Bob was the only beer available, maybe due to it being a Wednesday evening. Cheddar Ales' Potholer either had been on, or was not at the time ready, going by the pumpkin being reversed. A polypin of a Weston's cider was on the bar as well.

Not far from the Council House, along St George's Road, the **Three Tuns** is still popular. When this re-opened, the clientele totally changed and improved from before it closed a few years ago. This was all thanks to Mark Farrell, who deserves a high compliment for his hard efforts. The pub changed management again on 1st October (only closed for a few hours though!). Ned and Natz Clarke previously of the Portcullis in Clifton, hold the reins now. Besides being an outlet for Arbor Ales (£2.50), changing guests are far from ignored. In addition are bottled American craft beers.

If you've not yet visited any of these, don't lose an opportunity when you have one.

Tim Belsten

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## Join CAMRA today...

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](http://www.camra.org.uk) or call 01727 867201. All forms should be addressed to Membership Secretary, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, AL1 4LW.

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Please state which CAMRA newsletter you found this form in. *PINTS WEST (Bristol & District) - edition 88*

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# Branch diary

## Diary of the Bristol & District branch of CAMRA

- **Thurs Dec 2nd** – ‘Meet & Greet’ at the Ship Inn, Keynsham, from 7pm.
- **Sat Dec 4th** – Cider (and beer!) crawl. Start at the Old Bank 12.30, then the Apple Barge, followed by the Orchard, Golden Guinea, Seven Stars, Bristol Cider House, Cornubia. All welcome. Jerry Fletcher leading.
- **Wed Dec 8th** – Committee meeting, Cornubia 8pm.
- **Thurs Dec 9th** – Branch Christmas social at the Chim House, Gloucester Road, BS7 8NZ. Starts 7pm. Membership cards must be shown.
- **Tues Dec 14th** – Explorer trip, coach departs 6.45pm from Cornubia. Cost £6. To pubs in Portishead, Easton in Gordano, Clapton in Gordano, Easter Compton.
- **Wed Dec 15th** – Bristol Beer Festival committee meeting, Cornubia, 8pm.
- **Tues Dec 21st** – Christmas crawl, meet Inn on the Green 7pm for Gloucester Road pubs. Pete Bridle leading.
- **Sun Jan 2nd** – Clifton crawl. Meet at the Vittoria on Whiteladies Road at midday, and then walk on to Victoria, Lansdown, Royal Oak and finish at the Portcullis.
- **Wed Jan 12th** – Branch quarterly meeting, Horts, 7.45 for 8pm.
- **Thurs Jan 13th** – BADRAG gathering, 7.30 for 8pm at the Annexe, Bishopston (BS7 9EQ).
- **Sat Jan 15th** – Wassail, Westcroft Cider. £10 + coach. Details TBC.
- **Tues Jan 18th** – Explorer trip, coach departs Cornubia 6.45pm. Cost £6. To pubs on the Weston-super-Mare fringes including Hutton, Bleadon, Worle.
- **Wed Jan 26th** – Explorer trip, coach departs 6.45pm from Cornubia. Cost £6. To pubs in Severnside.
- **Thurs Jan 27th** – Pubs Group meeting, Cornubia, 7pm.
- **Sat Jan 29th** – Rescheduled visit to Plain Ales brewery on Salisbury Plain, plus brew pub and other GBG pubs. Coach departs 09.45 from Cornubia. £1 a pint, all to charity.
- **Wed Feb 2nd** – Surveyor trip to Westbury-on-Trym area. 6.45 from Cornubia or First Bus option.
- **Sun Feb 6th** – Bristol Beer Festival ticket sales, session for CAMRA members only (and those joining on the day), Old Fish Market, Bristol.
- **Wed Feb 9th** – Committee meeting, Cornubia, 8pm.
- **Thurs Feb 10th** – BADRAG gathering, back room at the Commercial Rooms, Bristol, 7.30 for 8pm.
- **Tues Feb 15th** – Final explorer trip of the season. Destination TBC. Coach departs 6.45pm from Cornubia.
- **Sat Feb 19th** – Regional meeting, Plymouth.
- **Sun Feb 20th** – Bristol Beer Festival public ticket sales, Commercial Rooms, Bristol.
- **Wed Feb 23rd** – Branch meeting at the Anchor in Thornbury. Coach 7pm from Cornubia.
- **Sun Feb 27th** – Good Beer Guide selection meeting. Details TBC.

Please check our website or sign up to our yahoo group for the latest information and more details on any of the above events. Email Tim Proudman at [badcamrasocials@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:badcamrasocials@blueyonder.co.uk) for the latest information. Please note that all coach and brewery trips must be booked in advance, either by email, or in person at a branch meeting.

## Severn Vale diary

See page 29

### Severn Vale contact

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

## Weston diary

See page 21

### Weston contact

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



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Ten thousand copies of Pints West are distributed free to pubs in and around the cities of Bristol and Bath ... and beyond.

**LETTERS:** please email correspondence to:

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**Published by** the Bristol & District Branch of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale, end of November 2010 ©

**Next edition:** end of February 2011 (probably).

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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](mailto: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 for problems such as consistent short measures, no price lists...

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**Design & Layout:** Steve Plumridge.

**Printed by** Caric Press Limited ([www.caricpress.co.uk](http://www.caricpress.co.uk)).



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Inclusion of an advertisement does not imply endorsement by CAMRA.

## Bath & Borders diary

See page 19

### Bath & Borders contacts

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

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

# Bristol Beer Festival 2011

The fourteenth annual Bristol Beer Festival will take place at the Brunel Passenger Shed, Temple Meads, Bristol on Friday 18th and Saturday 19th March 2011 and will feature around 130 real ales as well as a range of cider and perry. Tickets will be sold using our established method of two organised ticket sales sessions as follows:

**CAMRA members only on Sunday 6th February at the Old Fish Market, Baldwin Street, Bristol from 11am until 2pm.**

Tickets will only be sold to card-carrying CAMRA members at this session. There is a maximum of two tickets for each valid CAMRA card presented for the Friday evening and Saturday lunchtime sessions of the beer festival, however we have increased the limit on ticket purchases for the Friday lunchtime and Saturday evening sessions to four tickets for each valid CAMRA card presented. Anyone who signs up to join CAMRA on the day will also be able to purchase festival tickets.

**On Sunday 20th February tickets will go on sale at the Commercial Rooms, Corn Street, Bristol from 11am to 2pm.**

Tickets will be on sale to everyone (including CAMRA members) at this session up to a maximum of four tickets per person.

**Simultaneous ticket sales sessions will take place with the same rules at Off The Rails at Weston-super-Mare train station on both 6th and 20th February.**

Tickets will not be held back, so once they have sold out they really are all gone. If there are any tickets remaining after these sessions they will be put on general sale at the **Seven Stars**, Thomas Lane, Bristol from Tuesday 22nd February. Once again all ticket prices include £5 worth of beer festival tokens, which customers will receive on entry enabling them to go straight to the bar. Please bring the correct cash to the above ticket sales sessions as we will not be able to accept cheques or credit cards. Ticket details and prices are as follows.

|                      |                         |                                |
|----------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Fri lunchtime</b> | <b>11:30am - 4:00pm</b> | <b>£10 (incl £5 of tokens)</b> |
| <b>Fri evening</b>   | <b>7:00pm - 11:00pm</b> | <b>£10 (incl £5 of tokens)</b> |
| <b>Sat lunchtime</b> | <b>11:30am - 4:00pm</b> | <b>£10 (incl £5 of tokens)</b> |
| <b>Sat evening</b>   | <b>7:00pm - 11:00pm</b> | <b>£9 (incl £5 of tokens)</b>  |

We strongly advise people to keep an eye on our website [www.camrabristol.org.uk](http://www.camrabristol.org.uk) as this will feature information about the ticket sales procedure and updates as to ticket availability, as well as the beer and cider lists as they become available.

If you wish to join CAMRA, details are on the website, or you can fill in the membership form in this copy of Pints West. Please note that JD Wetherspoon has extended their offer for a further year to supply all new and renewing members £20 worth of Wetherspoon real ale vouchers as part of their CAMRA membership package.

Richard Brooks



## CAMRA pub discounts

An extra benefit of CAMRA membership is that a number of pubs are now offering discounts on the price of real ale to card-carrying CAMRA members. Some examples from the Bristol & District branch area:

- The **Seven Stars**, Thomas Lane, Bristol
- The **Cornubia**, Temple Street, Bristol
- The **Bank**, John Street, Bristol
- **Horts**, Broad Street, Bristol
- The **New Inn**, Mayshill
- The **Old Stillage**, Redfield
- The **Anchor**, Thornbury



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The actual details of the discounts vary from pub to pub and from time to time. For the latest details check out our web site at [www.camrabristol.org.uk](http://www.camrabristol.org.uk) or, even better, visit the pubs and check for yourselves.