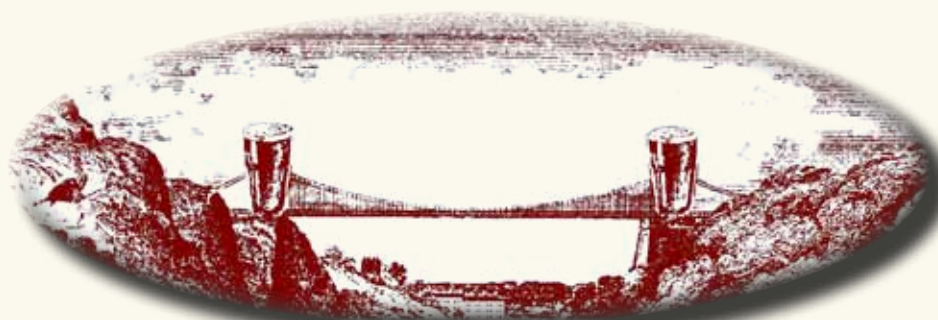




CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE

AWARD-WINNING



www.camrabristol.org.uk



CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE

PINTS WEST

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



Images from the 2011
Bristol Beer Festival





Brewery presence at the Lansdown festival

It was an ambitious undertaking for their first ever beer festival. Charles and Amanda Yaxley of the Lansdown in Clifton decided that for their festival, they wouldn't just put on beers from nine of our local breweries, but they would invite the brewers themselves to showcase them.

And so it was that, on the afternoon of 30th April, the brewers (or if not available, brewery representatives) from **Severn Vale**, **Arbor Ales**, **Cheddar Ales**, **Box Steam**, **Great Western Brewing**, **Cotswold Spring**, **Braydon Ales**, **Ashley Down** and **Avon Brewing Company** set up their casks in the pub's marquee for the Lansdown's inaugural festival.

The idea was that, as the brewers would be selling their own beers, this would be a good opportunity for people to meet and talk to the people who produce some of their favourite tipples. All beers were reasonably priced at £2.50 a pint, and 'off sales' were available too. There was even live music later in the afternoon as things picked up.

Charles said he would like to put on similar events in the future, taking on board lessons from this their first foray, possibly involving other Clifton pubs so as to increase the customer base. All helpful suggestions would be welcome.

About the brewers

Severn Vale. Gloucestershire brewery Severn Vale, based in Cam, Dursley, started brewing in 2005 in an old milking parlour using a new five-barrel plant. Warminster malted barley is used and mainly Herefordshire hops. Their *Session*, a classic bitter that belies its low strength, has been a regular at the Lansdown. The beers on offer at the festival were *Dance (of the Severn Vales)* and *Severn Sins*.

Tel: 01453 547550 or 07971 640244, email: steve@severnvalerebrewing.co.uk

Arbor Ales. Award-winning Arbor Ales began brewing in March 2007 in a small outbuilding at the back of the Old Tavern in Stapleton. When the pub closed in June 2008 they moved to their current location in Kingswood and upgraded to a 5.5-barrel plant. The beers are brewed using the finest ingredients: Maris Otter malt supplied by Warminster Maltings, Britain's oldest working floor maltings, and whole hops from Charles Faram of Malvern. Around 75% of what they produce is sold within 15 miles of the brewery. The beers brought to the festival were *Motueka* and *Transpacific Pale Ale*.

Tel: 0117 9570899, email: beer@arborales.co.uk

Cheddar Ales. Based at Winchester Farm and nestling on the slopes of the Mendip Hills, within a stone's throw of the famous Cheddar Gorge, Cheddar Ales is a 20-barrel microbrewery which was set up in 2006. It serves a mainly local market and has received many award during its short history. Perhaps their two best known beers are Potholer and Gorge Best Bitter. The beers on offer at the festival were *Goat's Leap* and their mild ale, *Mild Cheddar*.

Tel: 01934 744193, email: brewery@cheddarales.co.uk

Box Steam. Wiltshire-based Box Steam Brewery was founded in 2004 on Oaks Farm and boasts a Fulton steam-fired copper, hence the "Steam" in the name. Under present family ownership since 2006, the brewery has undergone a series of expansions to increase production capacity. The names of their beers are inspired by the life and works of Isambard Kingdom Brunel, whose Box Tunnel carries the

London to Bristol railway through a hillside close to the brewery. The beers at the festival were *Steam Porter*, *Tunnel Vision* and *Derail Ale*.

Tel: 01255 858383, email: info@boxsteambrewery.com

Great Western Brewing. Great Western is a 12-barrel brewery set up in 2008 by Kevin and Sandra Stone in a former bakery in Hambrook. The property has been renovated resulting in a bespoke showpiece brewery retaining many of the building's original features. A number of regular and seasonal beers are produced. On offer at the festival were *Classic Gold*, *HPA (Hambrook Pale Ale)* and *Maiden Voyage*.

Tel: 0117 9572842, email: contact@greatwesternbrewingcompany.co.uk

Cotswold Spring. Cotswold Spring opened in 2005 with a 10-barrel refurbished plant that produces beers brewed using only the finest malted barley, subtle blends of hops and natural Cotswold spring water. The brewery is no stranger to awards, most recently having received Gold – and being named "Supreme Champion" – for their *Old Sodbury Mild* in the SIBA National Beer Competition. The beers they brought along to the festival were *Wedding Ale* (celebrating a certain royal event the day before), *English Rose* and *Codrington Codger*.

Tel: 01454 323088, email: info@cotswoldbrewery.com

Braydon Ales. Braydon Ales, located close to Wootton Bassett in North Wiltshire, is a relative newcomer which began in 2009, and which brews a range of flavoursome beers using a variety of malt and hops. All the beers are named after words from Old Wiltshire dialect. The range varies through the year, though the easy-drinking *YerTiz* ("here it is") is always available. And available at the festival were *YerTiz*, *Gert Ale* and *Mooned Up*.

Tel: 01249 892900, email: info@braydonales.co.uk

Ashley Down. The newest of the bunch, Ashley Down was set up in a back lane in St Andrew's, Bristol, just a few months ago by local CAMRA member Vince Crocker. Two beers have been produced so far: *Vanguard* is a 3.9% dark ale brewed with stacks of roast malt and with some residual sweetness, while *Ashley Down Best* is a well-balanced 4.2% hazelnut-coloured best bitter hopped with plenty of Goldings, Fuggles and Bodicea. *Vanguard* was the beer Vince chose to present at the festival.

Tel: 0117 9836567 or 07563 751200, email: julia.tuckey@hotmail.com

Avon Brewing Company. Avon began brewing in 2008 on a six-barrel plant located in Russel Town Avenue Industrial Centre in Bristol. The beers are made using organic malt from Warminster Maltings and organic hops from Charles Faram. Advertising themselves with the slogan "Elusive beer for elusive people," they have been a bit more elusive than normal of late, but this can be put down to recent health and family circumstances. Until recently their range of brews were *Gurt Lush*, a 4.5% golden ale; *GPS (Gurt Port Stout)*, described as a 5.3% stout porter with a bottle of port in every cask; and *Re-Session Ale*, a 3.7% copper-coloured bitter. At the festival, however, along with their *GPS*, were two new brews, *Redcliffe* and *Goldney*.

Tel: 0117 9553353 or 07986 534554, email: beer@avonbrewing.co.uk

Steve Plumridge (photos by Sarah Spalding)



Anna is new brewmaster at Zerodegrees

Zerodegrees, the ultra-modern and spacious pizza restaurant and micro-brewery in Colston Street, at the top of Christmas Steps, has a new brewmaster. She is 24-year-old Anna Schwaeble, who trained at a brewery and distillery run by Benedictine monks in Ettal in Upper Bavaria. Anna took over in April from Chris Thurgeson, who has taken up a brewing job in Sweden.

The computer-controlled micro-brewery at Zerodegrees in Bristol is made mostly in Munich, where Anna studied the theory and practice of brewing at college while working at the Kloster Brauerei in Ettal, near Garmisch Partenkirchen. The Bristol micro-brewery has a weekly maximum capacity of 30 hectolitres, although Anna is currently brewing twice a week, producing 20 hectolitres (2,000 litres). This works out at about 3,500 Imperial pints!

Zerodegrees started in Blackheath, London in 2000, and Bristol opened in 2004 and won a Civic Trust Award for the conversion of the former tram shed. There are also Zerodegrees in Reading and Cardiff. All the brewmasters are from Germany, and three, including Anna, are women. All produce a 4.6% Pale Ale, a Black Lager at 4.6%, and 4.2% Wheat Ale. Then there are selected speciality and seasonal ales and beers – Bristol is offering a mango flavoured ale.

Zerodegrees Bristol employs about 40 people on a full- and part-time basis, but Anna has the daunting task of being solely responsible for brewing, but she can call on brewmaster colleague Victoria in Cardiff for back-up assistance, for instance, during the Habourside Festival.

Bristol has a 'happy hour' on Monday to Friday from 4pm to 7pm, when all pints are £2.20, and half pints £1.40. When this writer was there at that time the place was buzzing with not a few doctors and nurses from the BRI.

John MacRae



RCH Brewery

West Hewish
Near Weston-super-Mare
Tel: 01934-834447

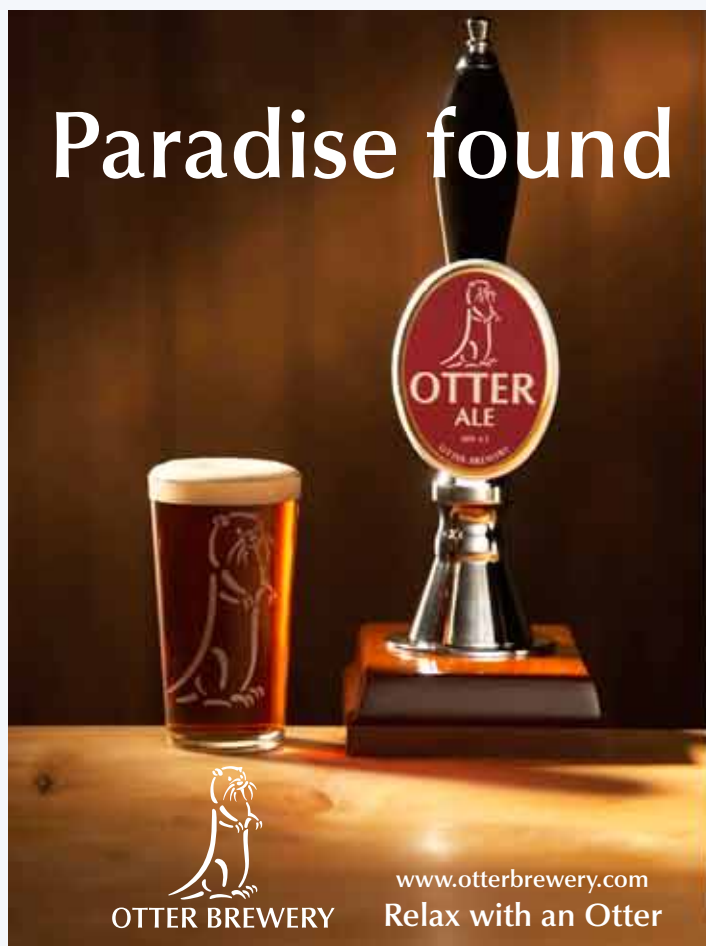
www.rchbrewery.com

Brewers of award-winning beers including

- Pitchfork
- Old Slug Porter
- PG Steam
- East Street Cream
- Firebox

Guest Beers and Beer Festivals catered for

Paradise found



www.otterbrewery.com

Relax with an Otter



The Victoria
Real Ale
Real Food
Real Pub

Chock Lane, Westbury-on-Trym, Bristol
www.thevictoriapub.co.uk
0117 9500 441

Branch Pub of the Year 2011

The winner of the Bristol & District CAMRA branch Pub of the Year 2011 is the **Seven Stars in Thomas Lane, Redcliffe**, and the runner-up is the **Annexe Inn in Bishopston**.

The results of were announced at the 2011 Bristol Beer Festival on 18th March, though the official presentations were not made until May.

This is a back-to-back win for Paul Wratten of the Seven Stars as the pub was also branch Pub of the Year in 2010 – no small achievement.

Congratulations also go to the Annexe, which after narrowly missing out on a certificate last year has secured itself the branch runner-up position for 2011.

Richard Brooks

Bristol Beer Festival



March 2011 saw the fourteenth Annual Bristol Beer Festival take place at the Brunel Passenger Shed, Temple Meads, Bristol and it was another excellent event. As has become usual, tickets were in great demand and sold out in advance. There were around 140 different real ales on sale over the two days of the festival and when the final session closed on Saturday night there were still 50 different real ales available.

The winner of the 2011 'LocAle of the Festival' competition was **Strawberry Line** (4.0% ABV) from **RCH** and the runner-up was **Yakima Valley** (7.4%) from **Arbor Ales**. The 'Cider of the Festival' was **Carey's Organic Medium** and the 'Perry of the Festival' was **Springherne Perry**.



Our thanks go to the many unpaid volunteers who give up their time to organise and run the festival and also to the main sponsors for this year, who were **Great Western Brewing Company** for the festival glasses and **St Austell Brewery** for the staff T-shirts.

The staff T-shirts were rather popular and many customers asked whether they could buy one at the festival. This was not possible during the event; however we will be selling some at £5 each at the branch party for the 40th anniversary of CAMRA that is taking place at the Commercial Rooms, Corn Street, Bristol on the evening of Thursday 30 June.

Richard Brooks (all festival photos also by Richard Brooks)

Pub of the Year presentations



The picture here shows Adrian Bacon (Manager and Cellarman of the Annexe Inn) receiving the Bristol & District CAMRA Pub of the Year runner-up certificate from branch chairman Richard Brooks, supported by local CAMRA members. Adrian has recently taken over from John Woto who was managing the Annexe at the time of the competition.

Photo by Tony Durbin



The Seven Stars is a pub that is clearly focused on the beer above all else. A tired and emotional Paul Wratten – pictured above receiving the certificate from branch chairman Richard Brooks and surrounded by members of the branch – said at the presentation that he was very happy to have won Bristol & District CAMRA Pub of the Year award again and that his vision for the future of the Seven Stars was: "Roll on more good beer, I just want to keep it going."

Photo by Tony Durbin

Seven Stars

Thomas Lane, Redcliffe, Bristol BS1 6JG

8 Real Ales

from far and wide

from £2.20 per pint

(when CAMRA membership card is shown and between 2.30 and 6.30 every day)



Don't miss THE BEERIODICAL, a 20 cask real ale festival - first Monday of every month

FREE HOUSE OPEN ALL DAY

Good Beer Guide 2009, 2010 and 2011

Local CAMRA Pub of the Year 2010

www.7stars.co.uk Tel: 0117 9272845

Still campaigning after 40 years



CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale, celebrated its 40th birthday on March 16th this year. It is an independent, voluntary consumer organisation that is governed by a voluntary unpaid National Executive that is elected by the membership which now stands at over 127,000. It is financed through membership subscriptions, sales of products such as books, and proceeds from the many

CAMRA organised festivals from around the country.

It is no exaggeration to say that CAMRA saved real ale, and as a result saved many independent breweries. No new real ale breweries were set up in the UK for the 50 years before CAMRA was founded. There are now more than 800 producing over 4,000 different real ales, part of a massive real ale revival.

While CAMRA is a single industry group, it has a very wide area of campaigning interests and I thought it worth reminding readers of a few of the campaigns that have been fought since it was founded.



○ CAMRA campaigned for the break-up of the Big Six Brewers' monopoly in the 1980's by providing substantial evidence to the original 30-month enquiry and to the subsequent six-month debate on the "Beer Orders" which followed.

○ In 1988, the reform of licensing hours – CAMRA campaigned to secure the first changes in pub opening hours since World War I.

○ In 1993, achieved a fairer system of excise duty whereby end-product duty was introduced, i.e. excise duty levied on the beer as it leaves the brewery according to strength and its volume.

○ CAMRA, with the great support of CAMRA's "APPLE" committee, has helped preserve traditional cider and perry in the UK.

○ CAMRA campaigned strongly to secure the introduction of progressive beer duty, which was introduced in 2002 then extended in 2004.

○ After a campaign launched at CAMRA's annual flagship event, the Great British Beer Festival last year, a 50% reduction in excise duty on beers below 2.8% was achieved and there are encouraging signs that the Government will support our calls to the EU for this to be increased to 3.5%.

Current high profile campaigns

Much remains to be done and CAMRA continues to campaign to save breweries and pubs. A record number of pubs have closed in recent years as a result of the recession, cut-price alcohol in supermarkets and the smoking ban. Pubs also close as a result of rents and beer prices and in 2009, CAMRA, which has the status of a 'Super Complainant', took its campaign against the pub companies to the Office of Fair Trading. The Campaign complained about the rents and beer prices charged by the pub companies and sought a referral to the Competition Commission. Our evidence showed that pub companies charged wholesale beer prices to its estates that worked out at around 50 pence a pint more than in the free trade. Unfortunately, we were unsuccessful on this occasion and the campaign for a rebalancing of the tied agreements between pub companies and their lessees continues.

CAMRA continues to lobby the Government to abandon the illogical and ineffective escalator on excise duty which resulted in a massive 7.2% increase on beer tax in this year's budget. This is another devastating blow for pubs – the average tax on a pub pint will now hit over £1 with a much bigger impact on pubs than supermarkets. This, coupled with an increase in VAT to 20% is a further direct attack on the on the pub and a remarkable own goal promising to take even more people out of the responsible sociable environment of pubs into drinking cheap supermarket beer at home and alone.

The future

In a nutshell, CAMRA will continue to:

- Promote and support full flavoured beers, real ciders and perries.
- Stand for choice and diversity of both beers and pub users.
- Defend consumers' rights for beer drinkers and pub users.
- Promote and defend the public house as a focus of community life.

Alison Bridle

We're having a party!

Founded in 1971, CAMRA reaches its 40th anniversary this year with both branch and national membership at an all-time high. The Bristol & District branch are holding a party to celebrate this milestone and members are invited to the Commercial Rooms, Corn Street, Bristol on Thursday 30th June from 7:30pm.

As well as a CAMRA 40th birthday cake (and other snacks) there will be ten real ales available, some games and prizes, plus the chance for new and old faces from the history of the branch to meet. This event will also be the opportunity to purchase 2011 Bristol Beer Festival T-shirts for just £5, including the popular black staff T-shirt design that has until now only been available to those who actually worked at the event.

One of the great success stories of the Campaign for Real Ale has been the proliferation of independent breweries. It's incredible to think that we now have about a dozen breweries around our branch area, none of which existed when CAMRA was formed back in the dark days of 1971. So join us at the Commercial Rooms on 30th June to raise a glass of real ale to celebrate.

Please make sure that you bring your CAMRA membership card to gain admittance to the party.

Richard Brooks

Enjoy a Warm Welcome
and a Pleasant Atmosphere

The Annexe Inn

Seymour Road, Bishopston, Bristol
Tel. 0117 9493931

A Real Ale Pub

- 7 Real Ales
- Large conservatory (available for private hire)
- Family room (including baby changing facilities)
- Enclosed garden open throughout the year
- Disabled access
- Lunchtime and early evening snacks
- including children's menu
- Pool table
- All TV sports events covered
- Relaxed, friendly atmosphere

Monday Night is Quiz Night
You can also enjoy various promotions
and special offers during the year

Open Lunchtimes & Evenings
All day Saturday, Sunday & Bank Holidays

BRISTOL PUBS GROUP

The Bristol & District CAMRA Pubs Campaigning Group – or Bristol Pubs Group for short – was formed in response to the growing number of pubs in the Bristol area closing or being drastically altered. The Group was launched formally in 2008 with the support of local councillors, members of the trade and the media.

Our aims are simple.

The Bristol Pubs Group will:

Promote the use of community pubs.

Campaign against closure of pubs that could be viable.

Campaign against insensitive alterations.



Pubs – it's not all bad news!

Are't those Bristol Pubs Group lot a gloomy bunch!? So you might be tempted to think from the articles in recent editions of *Pints West*. Pub closures here, threats there, changes of use and demolitions. It can sometimes make hard reading, and in the midst of all the beer tax hikes, pay freezes and anti-alcohol campaigners you could have done with a good stiff drink down at your local. But there is good news behind all of this. For although many pubs have been lost, many have re-invented themselves and re-opened against many forecasts and are thriving despite the recession.

The Pubs Group have been keen to broadcast their successes in these pages, and so we should celebrate success. But the great news is that pubs have also been enjoying a reincarnation in parallel with the activities of the Pubs Group.

Take the **Three Tuns** in the West End of the city on the edge of Hotwells. One of the Holden family's pubs, it re-opened at the end of 2009 and completely transformed itself under the stewardship of Mark Farrel to become an extremely reliable and relaxing real ale pub. Around a year later local brewer Arbor Ales took it on and have applied the skills of Ned and Natz to make it one of the cities must-visit pubs. On Colston Street the **Gryphon** changed its name from the Griffin and re-opened as a real ale and heavy rock pub. The pub has been simply furnished with a lot of darkness and complimentary lighting to offer a unique rock 'n' ale experience. A few years ago you might not have gone near the **Oxford** in Totterdown but this pub has become a wholesome drinking house within the last year that is worth the hill climbs to get to. In South Gloucestershire two pubs have been completely transformed in every way to give them a freshness and quality feel much as Zero Degrees had done a few years ago. The **Royal George** in Thornbury and the **Green Dragon** in Downend have adopted 'Mezze at the...' in front of their retained names and changed into well groomed Mediterranean diners with welcoming drinking areas serving, once again, real ale. The vastness of these pubs' interiors means that many can be accommodated whilst retaining a sense of cosiness with your own social group. Another pub-pairing that has undergone an investment in its future prosperities is the **Royal Oak** in Horfield and the **Cross Hands** in Fishponds. Both run by the same couple, these pubs offer a quality experience that attracts discerning drinkers and diners that are looking for that little extra and are prepared to go out of their way for it. Other pubs that have recently bucked the trend include the **Swan** at Winterbourne with its smartly painted exterior. It offers dining and two real ales. Nearby the **Golden Heart** in Kendleshire is majoring on food and is serving three real ales.

So with the aforementioned pubs enjoying such returns on imaginative and well appointed improvements what can we look forward to in our other pub stock? The **Ship** at Oldbury on Severn is reportedly closed and for sale. Its large size and good sized car park could make it a great destination dining pub with a continued attraction to locals and drinkers. It already has a good association with cider – there is no shortage of cider producers on the east bank of the River Severn! The **Red Lion** in Clifton has (in my opinion) one of the finest pub interiors in Bristol. This has got to continue as a pub. It is under threat at present and needs an entrepreneur to inject life back into it, sitting on the edge of the busy Whiteladies Road/Blackboy Hill area. And what of the **Bag O'Nails** in Hotwells? For well over a decade this was among the top three real ale pubs in Greater Bristol (and often the top one). It even featured in CAMRA's national members' newspaper *What's Brewing* a few years ago. It is closed and seemingly going nowhere. (We know someone has been looking to take this on since well before Christmas, but all has gone quiet.) Word has it that a young ambitious man that has a desire for



The Cross Hands in Fishponds



Mezza at the Green Dragon



The Swan at Winterbourne

pubs has bought the **King's Arms** in Kingswood and will soon re-open it as a quality venue. Nearby the **Queen's Head** at Willsbridge deserves another chance, being such an exquisite historic establishment with so much to offer. Any takers?

So it's not all bad news. The Bristol Pubs Group do recognise the good things that are going on in the local pub scene, and are grateful to the hard working people that are behind it. Long may we all enjoy pub renaissance.

Mike Jackson

Give pubs a chance

April 29th saw the 17th anniversary of my tenure as landlord at the Beaufort Arms in Hawkesbury Upton – people in the village were so pleased that our High Street was closed off for three hours for a street party. In those early far off days, we were able to offer Heineken and Wickwar BOB at £1 a pint, competitive then as supermarkets were charging 50p to 80p for similar offerings.

Now, 17 years on and after a multitude of VAT, duty and producer price rise hikes, we offer Fosters at £3.35p and Bristol Beer Factory No. 7 at £2.75p a pint. Supermarkets are still selling equivalent products in the same 50p to 80p price range.

Fellow Bristol Pubs Group member Glen Dawkins, another Bristol publican, has had exactly the same experience. How has this happened? And bearing in mind the health lobby, why has this been *allowed* to happen?

Society in the 21st century has changed rapidly; mobile phones that can take pictures and even film were considered science fiction just 20 years ago and other associated technologies have sped up life so much that an old fuddy-duddy like me can only marvel at what's coming along next. Supermarkets and others have facilitated this insular stay-at-home society with their goodies and 'life-style' choices, Sky telly, games

consoles and back-door barbies becoming a staple of the British way of life.

Apart from changing society, other factors have been at play. The pub industry is extremely fragmented with no single voice and with different factions abounding, with some representing pubs, some brewers and others the drinks industry in general. Pub customers sometimes pit one local pub against another and its things like this that weaken the licensed trade's position. The best voice we've had is a consumer-based organisation called CAMRA. The Campaign for Real Ale.

The Thatcher era saw the break up of Britain's "Big Six" brewers and their strangle-hold of the pub market, only to be replaced by pub companies applying the self-same tactics. This had another unfortunate consequence of allowing all of our major brewers to either go out of business or become foreign owned. The aforementioned pubcos consequently enjoyed nearly two decades of nigh on monopoly before greed and the market has finally seen their ultimate decline.

The Blair/Brown years saw licensing reform and the smoking ban – against an industry that hardly has a voice, remember – both come in and burden pubs with increased costs, red tape and ultimately fewer customers.

All the while one group has picked up more and more customers – supermarkets – soaking up disenfranchised smokers and encouraging them to stay at home with ever cheaper booze. Worse, youngsters that have been chased out of pubs because of draconian age controls have resorted to slugging down cheap booze behind community facilities – at least pubs offer a modicum of supervision, encouraging responsible drinking.

It's also fair to say that, when once the brewery barons had the ear of the political elite, it's now the supermarket bosses. Former Tesco chief Sir Terry Leahy was Gordon Brown's best pal (allegedly).

We in Bristol Pubs Group are convinced that the Treasury is losing a fortune in VAT revenue because of this cheap booze. If we were a bigger group with more resources we might have been able to do this vital comparison: how much VAT did the drinks industry generate in the year before the smoking ban, and how much did it generate in 2010? People aren't drinking less.

We're sure that this figure will illustrate to the country the negative effect supermarket prices have made to our austerity-strapped country. A combination of these and alcopops has also led to the biggest increase of drink-related illnesses amongst young women since records began.

Fellow Pubs Group member, Keith Shapland, swears blind that they've offset the cost of cheap booze by putting a 30% rise on the cost of cat food! And how can anyone defend bottled water being more expensive than bottled booze?

Another fellow Bristol Pubs Group campaigner, Mike Jackson, says: "If the anti-drink lobby believed (as I do) that they were cross-subsidising the cheap-price booze supply in supermarkets, they would be in uproar – imagine what the anti-smoking lobby's reaction would be if they were treated in the same way."

The current government promised to look into the problem but so far have only faffed around at the fringes. Promised duty hikes to beers over 7.4% and duty relief for beers under 2.8% will only make a marginal difference.

The net result of all this is that our once proud pub industry is shrinking at an alarming rate. The "English Pub" brand, once the doyen of Britain's social life and tourist industry, is going the same way as our car, and for people with longer memories, motorcycle industries.

Pubs are a good way of life, good for employment, good for the country and good for tourism. To paraphrase the great John Lennon, "All we are saying ... is give pubs a chance." Before it's too late!

Mark Steeds

Bristol Pubs Group member and pub landlord
(Georges' tariff board and Oakhill sign from the Beaufort Archive)



The ant-drinks lobby wouldn't approve of this these days – it reminds me of a large enamel advertising sign that used to emblazon the entrance to the Bristol Royal Infirmary: 'Bristol United's Invalid Stout'

GEORGES HOME BREWED	
PRICE LIST (Bottled Beers)	
BITTER ALES	1-05
HOME BREWED	1-31
BROWN ALES	1-1
BRISTOL STOUT	1-1
GLUCOSE STOUT	1-54
OAKHILL STOUT	
GUINNESS	1-7
COURTWALES	1-1
BASS	1-8
WORTHINGTON	1-8
BARLEY WINE	1-8
LALLES	2-0
WHISKY	2-6
GIN	2-6
RUM	2-6
WITH CORDIALS	2-8
EGG FLU	2-9
ADVOCA	3-0
CHERRY BERRY	3-0
DRAMBUIE	3-0
TONIC WATERS	3-0
LEMONADES	10
SHERRY	2-6
BRISTOL MILK	2-
PORT	2-
BARTCHAM	1-10
CHERRAPPEAR	1-10
PINEAPPLE JUICES	1-4
GRAPEFRUIT	1-6
GINGER ALES	3-0
MOUSSEC	3-0

This old Georges' tariff board comes from the early 1960's, just after Courage's 'merger' with Georges. You can plainly see how spirits and lager were priced at nearly twice that of beer with vodka not being an option, Gordon Brown's stance on spirits helping to transform the price differential. When I first started drinking anyone having spirits from the 'topshelf' was considered a bit of a chancer, especially if they were in a large round.

CAMRA award winning BEAUFORT ARMS Hawkesbury Upton

Dependable real ales and good value food
Home of the Long John Silver Trust

The Long John Silver Trust and the Bristol Beer Factory have teamed up to create

Treasure Island Ales

Top Buccaneering brews from Bristol

Silver's GOLD

Ben Gunn's STOUT

Blind Pew's BITTER

Available Summer 2011



Open Every Day
12 to 11 Monday to Saturday
12 to 10.30 Sunday
www.beaufortarms.com
01454 238217



News from Butcombe

Butcombe Expands its Estate

Butcombe have recently increased their pub estate with the addition of three very diverse houses, both in character and location, the **Mill at Rode**, the **Frog and Fiddle** in Cheltenham and the **Pig and Fiddle** in Bath (a bit of a theme going on here!). The latter two give Butcombe their first presence in the centres of both Cheltenham and Bath.

All three pubs belonged to a small family company, Triple Rock, which operated them for over 20 years and with whom Butcombe Brewery, and preceding that the Beer Seller (Butcombe managing director Guy Newell's previous company), had traded.

The Mill at Rode is, as the name suggests, in a very attractive setting which serves as a popular food and wedding outlet, while the Cheltenham pub is, perhaps unusually for Butcombe, a large drinking establishment in the High street.

The last of the trio, the Pig and Fiddle in Saracen Street, Bath (pictured above), is a large split-level city-centre pub with a mixed clientele and a café bar look and feel about it, prompted by its shop frontage. The walls are heavily decorated with a great mix of prints, plaques, pictures and an impressive collection of sporting memorabilia which include a pair of signed Olympic skis, signed rugby shirts and an oar from the Olympic Coxed Eight gold medalists. A collection of clocks, an aquarium and a chess table add to the décor.

The bar, which is situated at the top of the split level, features six

hand pumps, one of which supplies Butcombe's Ashton Still cider. Abbey Ales Bellringer and Butcombe Bitter are regular beers with three changing guest ales. At the time of visiting, Everards Original, Butcombe's new seasonal Mendip Spring and Glastonbury's Hedge Monkey were on offer, the latter about to change to Love Monkey. Maisel's Weisse Bier is also available. The rear entrance, which faces Walcot street, is via a courtyard with seating and canopy covered heaters. There is a varied food menu and Jenny the manager will give you a friendly welcome.

Other Butcombe news

Congratulations are due to Butcombe's brewers (the back-room boys) for their achievements with this year's two new seasonal beers. At the April Maltings Beer Festival in Newton Abbot, Butcombe won the Gold Medal in the Bitter category with their new **Mendip Spring** (3.8%), plus a Silver Medal with their **Old Vic Porter** (4.7%) in the Stout & Porter category.

The brewery are teaming up with Thatchers for the first time this year in the Butcombe and Thatchers Beer and Cider Garden at the Bath and West show from 1st to 4th June.

The brewery's 'Brewer of the Month' will feature beers from Elgoods, Wisbech in June, Castle Rock, Nottingham in July and Okells, Isle of Man in August.

Margaret Evett

Gold Medal Winner



Mendip Spring
Gold Medal Winner

at the recent Maltings Beer Festival in Newton Abbot



The Vittoria

The "real" pub on Whiteladies

Camra
Good Beer Guide
2011

57 Whiteladies Rd
Clifton
Bristol
BS8 2LY
Tel: 0117 330 9414
thevittoria@yahoo.com



SEVEN CASK ALES AVAILABLE

Monday is Live Traditional Jazz Night

++ Courage Best @ £2.50 pt from 8.30pm++
Come along and tap your toes to the best jazz in Clifton

"Cask Ale" Tuesday

Collect five loyalty points and redeem them for a pint of cask of your choice {one point per pint}.

Thursday Quiz & Curry Night.

£1 a person, winning team takes all, plus other prizes

Free food at half time

{grey matter preferred, not i phones}.

New menu available including the
"House Special"

**8oz British Sirloin Steak with chips or salad
for £7.50, a bargain!**

Food served from noon

~~~~~  
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!

# News from Bath Ales

**B**ath Ales has launched a new loyalty card scheme, dubbed “The Loyal Hare Force”. It’s free to join and it allows customers to save money off food and drink in participating Bath Ales pubs. “It’s our way of saying thank you to loyal customers,” says brewery spokesperson Karin Ashwell. They are also planning to roll this out to corporate businesses and sports clubs later this year. The participating pubs are the **Wellington**, the **Hare on the Hill** and **Graze Bar & Chophouse**, all in Bristol, the **Live & Let Live** in Frampton Cotterell, the **Swan** in Swineford, and the **Hop Pole** and the **Salamander**, both in Bath. Details on how to join and “start turning points into pints” can be found on their website at [www.bathales.com/loyalhareforce](http://www.bathales.com/loyalhareforce).

On the beer front, **Golden Hare** and **Rare Hare** have now completely sold out in cask (still available in bottle) and they are now rolling out **Summer’s Hare**. This latest offering is brewed to 3.9% ABV and is described as: “a brilliant light and hoppy beer – it has full malt flavour with a fruity bitterness and is perfect for quaffing on a summer’s evening.” It’s available on draught now in the Bath Ales pubs and various establishments in the region.

It may seem a bit early to be mentioning it, but Bath Ales are very excited about their autumn ale, which is to be brewed to a completely new recipe. Its name will be **Hare & Hop**, a 3.9% beer brewed with a much-heralded hop from New Zealand. It’s the first time Bath Ales have used a non-English hop but they claim it is just too good to ignore: “It ensures we achieve a very full flavour and allows us to create a distinctive and ground-breaking beer.” Hare & Hop will be a copper coloured beer, available in cask only from around the end of August.

## Special events

- Every Monday to Friday you can enjoy a two-course lunch for £10 at the **Hop Pole**.
- Get your “Hare Cut” every Monday to Friday from 4pm to 7pm and enjoy discounted drinks at the **Hop Pole** and the **Live and Let Live**.
- The **Live and Let Live** in Frampton Cotterell will be holding a **beer festival** from Friday 15th to Sunday 17th July.

Bath Ales are sponsoring a **Real Ale and Jazz race night** at Bath Racecourse on Friday 3rd June. A chance to enjoy a selection of fantastic local ales and thrilling horse racing, followed by Bath’s very own “Park Lane Big Band”, who will be performing live. For tickets see the web page at [www.bath-racecourse.co.uk](http://www.bath-racecourse.co.uk).

The annual **Bath Ales Biking Bonanza** will take place on Saturday 18th June. Now in its fourth year, it promises to be bigger, better and “bikier”! You can join the fund-raising bike ride and start in either Bath or Bristol, then after the ride meet up at the brewery for beer, burgers, live music and a chance to win a bike in a raffle. For full details and to register see [www.bathales.com/bonanza](http://www.bathales.com/bonanza).

## THE ELDON HOUSE

‘Seldom do you find such a treasure as the Eldon. It’s the village pub in the middle of the bustling city’.

- ★ 5 Real Ales usually locally sourced and competitively priced.
- ★ Silly prices with ales from £2.20 a pint. Saturday 12 - 6pm Sunday 6 - 11.30pm.
- ★ Good quality food served all day with a fine selection of wines available.
- ★ Monday night quiz, Tuesday film night and live music on Thursday.

6 Lower Clifton Hill just off the triangle opposite QEH school, Bristol BS8 1BT  
Tel: 0117 922 2271 email: [enquiries@theeldonhouse.com](mailto:enquiries@theeldonhouse.com) Website: [www.theeldonhouse.com](http://www.theeldonhouse.com)



bath ales

## Turn points into pints!

### Join The Loyal Hare Force from Bath Ales



*How it works*

Join The Loyal Hare Force and collect points each time you purchase food and drink in one of our participating pubs. Save up points, or just redeem them with each subsequent purchase.

*Join today!*

Find out more and apply for your card now by visiting:  
[www.bathales.com/loyalhareforce](http://www.bathales.com/loyalhareforce)

## The Bridge Inn

Probably the smallest and friendliest pub in Bristol

4 Real ales - 2 changing guests  
**REAL ALE MONDAY, £2.20 a pint**

Food served Mon-Fri, 12-3pm  
**Record player with extensive vinyl collection**

16 Passage Street, Bristol BS2 0JF  
**TEL: 0117 9290 942**

# News from the Bristol Beer Factory

## Bristol Beer Factory Wins SIBA Gold

Bristol Beer Factory struck gold at a beer competition organised in April by the Society of Independent Brewers (SIBA). The competition, held at Tuckers Maltings in Newton Abbott, drew over 320 entries of beers brewed by independent breweries from throughout the south west. Part of a three-day beer festival, now established as one of the premier beer festivals in the country, the SIBA competition is one of seven regional competitions with winners going on to the national finals held in early 2012.

Bristol Beer Factory won two Gold awards and a Silver award for its Southville Hop, a very modern and contemporary beer. Southville Hop struck gold in the 'bottled strong bitters' category, silver in the 'premium strong bitters' and then overall Gold for 'bottled beers'.

Southville Hop is a bottle-conditioned beer brewed with flavourful hops from the north-west of America, tropical fruit flavours burst forth from the glass, and a distinctive resinous bitterness. Bristol Beer Factory's own Californian brewer Brett Ellis said, "It takes influence from the craft beers brewed on America's west coast that have taken the beer drinking world by storm."

Head brewer Chris Kay said, "Southville Hop is one of our expanding portfolio of bottled beers which includes many different styles. As well as this American IPA we also have a German-style wheat beer, a Belgian spiced ale, and our big project of the year is to brew 12 stouts."

Southville Hop is available in bottles in most independent off licenses throughout Bristol and, following the awards, another brew of Southville Hop has been done just for cask.

## Bristol Home-Brew Competition Winner

Bristol Beer Factory celebrated the flavoursome talents of amateur brewers with its second annual home-brew competition to find the best home-brewed beer in the area. The winning brewer was Ali Kocho-Williams with his 'Indian Ink', a unanimous and very popular choice with the judges. Indian Ink is a black IPA, a very unusual and



Home-brew competition winner Ali Kocho-Williams with Bristol Beer Factory brewers Chris Kay and Brett Ellis

contemporary style of beer; black to look at, but very fruity, with a moreish resinous bitterness to drink. Ali has since spent a day alongside the Bristol Beer Factory brewers brewing Indian Ink and received a 72-pint cask of his beer. Indian Ink was launched on 17th May at the Grain Barge and is available in casks and bottles, but it might be best to try it soon as it may not hang around for long.

Second in the competition was Roger Parry with his excellent mild, 'Mildly Wonky', and with the other finalists Peter Dimond, Tim Kearsley and Bradley Cummings all producing beers of exceptionally high quality that wouldn't be out of place on any bar. All 33 competition entrants were invited to the final where they sampled a number of Bristol Beer Factory ales.

Bristol Beer Factory Production Director, Simon Bartlett, said, "The evening was a great success and we were really fortunate to have had a wide range of quality homebrews to try. The standard has been raised from our first year of the competition, with all five finalists brewing beers that any professional would be proud of."

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

## Other New Beers

The next new Bristol Beer Factory beer is an 4.6% American pale ale called Independence. This is continuously hopped for an hour to give a big full and rounded hop character and dry-hopped with some aromatic Citra hops just to finish it off.

On 24th May another beer was to be brewed with beer writer Melissa Cole, linked to a "Ladies Beer & Food Evening". At the time of writing the recipe for this beer was still a closely guarded secret.

## Long John Silver

Bristol Beer Factory, in association with local charity the Long John Silver Trust, is launching a great new range of bottled beers with a Treasure Island theme. This will take place on Sunday 10th July at the Grain Barge at 2pm. Star of the show will be John Cabot's replica ship the Matthew, despatching pirates and party-goers from the Bristol Old Vic, who have a thrilling new open-air production of Treasure Island in King Street (Thursday 7th July to Sunday 28th August).

The new bottled beers are being made especially to celebrate Bristol's maritime and literary heritage, they are **Silver's Gold** (5%), **Ben Gunn's Stout** (4.5%) and **Blind Pew's Bitter** (4.5%). Look out also for pirate packs of all three.

Apparently, all dressed as pirates will be most welcome at the launch!

Richard Brooks



# Cheddar Ales Brewery Beer Festival

The weekend of 17th to 19th June sees the welcome return of Cheddar Ales' annual Brewery Beer Festival. With great ales, value for money and a unique environment, it's a great way to while away a summer weekend.

Cheddar Ales have hand-picked a stellar range of 45 award-winning real ales from across Britain to create one of the finest selections of beers seen in one venue. The range covers a wide variety of styles from traditional bitters, milds and stouts to organic beers, lagers and more unusual offerings flavoured with blueberries or ginger.

There will also be a selection of ciders and wines available. There will be family-friendly fun during the day, with activities to keep the children entertained, live music from local acts and, fingers crossed, a chance to soak up some summer sun. There will be more music and merrymaking in the evenings.

The festival will be based in and around the brewery itself, so you'll also get the chance to see where the beers are made and to get a close look at all of brewing kit.

You can also choose to camp on-site over the weekend so that when you're not busy sampling the nation's best ales, you can explore the gorgeous local countryside and visit the numerous attractions in the area. This year's festival will be raising money for three good causes.

Cheddar are hoping to raise enough money to refurbish communal areas at St. Michael's Cheshire Home in Axbridge, to provide new equipment for Weare Community Pre-school and will also make a donation to the British Heart Foundation.

The festival runs from Friday 17th to Sunday 19th June. It isn't ticketed, so you can just turn up and pay a small entrance fee, though entry is free for all card-carrying CAMRA members! Pints will start from £2.40.

To make getting there and back easy the Bristol branch of CAMRA is planning to run a coach trip to the festival on the Saturday for members. The coach will leave from the Cornubia at 11am and return at 7pm. If you are interested in this trip you should contact [badcamrasocials@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:badcamrasocials@blueyonder.co.uk) without delay.

Further information is available from the Cheddar Ales website

at [www.cheddarales.co.uk](http://www.cheddarales.co.uk) or by calling Jem or John at the brewery on 01934 744193. For information on getting to Cheddar by public transport call 0871 200 22 33 or go to [www.traveline.org.uk](http://www.traveline.org.uk). Cycling is a great way to get there via the excellent Strawberry Line path from Yatton which finishes only a half a mile from the brewery.

Alan Sibley

## Wye Valley returns to Bristol

Drinkers may have noticed a general absence of Wye Valley beers in Bristol over the last couple of years or so. The brewery used to deliver to pubs in and around Bristol, and indeed advertised in Pints West, but that was cut back and distribution was concentrated in their own county of Herefordshire. (I can think of a couple of pubs that still managed to get supplies though, particularly of their HPA, or Hereford Pale Ale.)

Circumstances have changed and Wye Valley are pleased to be delivering to Bristol once again from 1st June. This means you are now much more likely to find pubs stocking the likes of the aforementioned HPA, the popular Butty Bach, and the multi-award-winning Dorothy Goodbody's Wholesome Stout, or even their recent award-winner, Dorothy Goodbody's Country Ale.

The brewery can be contacted by phone on 01885 490505 or by emailing [sales@wyevalleybrewery.co.uk](mailto:sales@wyevalleybrewery.co.uk). Check out their website at [www.wyevalleybrewery.co.uk](http://www.wyevalleybrewery.co.uk) for more details.

SP

**FREE ENTRY FOR CAMRA MEMBERS**

**CHEDDAR ALES**

**BEER FESTIVAL**

**17-19TH JUNE 2011**

**MUSIC CAMPING BARBECUE**

+ KIDS' ENTERTAINMENT

**OVER FORTY UK BEERS**

+ CIDERS & WINES

TWO DAYS OF FAMILY FRIENDLY FUN AND TWO NIGHTS OF MUSIC AND MERRYMAKING, ALL ACCOMPANIED BY BRITAIN'S FINEST BEERS, HAND-PICKED BY OUR BREWERS FOR YOUR DELIGHT.

FRIDAY 17TH JUNE: 7PM - 11.30PM

SATURDAY 18TH JUNE: MIDDAY - 11.30PM

SUNDAY 19TH JUNE: MIDDAY - 5PM

FOR MORE DETAILS SEE [WWW.CHEDDARALES.CO.UK](http://WWW.CHEDDARALES.CO.UK) OR CALL 01934 744193

WINCHESTER FARM, DRAYCOTT ROAD, CHEDDAR, SOMERSET BS27 3RP



## Another great Mild Month for Bristol!

Bristol's mild ale drinkers were treated to another astonishing choice of milds this year, thanks to the efforts of the pub landlords, brewers and BADRAG. The increasing popularity of this annual event has led to more and more pubs taking part and "Mild Month" just getting longer and longer each year as we try to accommodate all the pubs putting on a mild in one of our trails.

The outstanding success of the Bristol Mild Month events attract people from all over the UK and the initial reports received so far, indicate that Bristol had a greater selection of milds than could be found in the traditional mild ale capitals of England – Nottingham, Manchester and Birmingham!

Landlords are sometimes wary of trying something new on the bar, but those who put on a mild for the first time are often surprised at how popular it is, and how quickly before it is all gone. John Sprague of the Merchants Arms in Hotwells said, "It had sold out in one and a half days, so I put on another one a week later." And Mike, the new landlord of the Kings Arms, Kingswood, was rumoured to have had one on all month.

Unfortunately, by the time you read this article, the Bristol mild ale

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)

[BADRAG@camrabristol.org.uk](mailto:BADRAG@camrabristol.org.uk)

events will have finished and we would have started to discuss making next year's event even better, but there may still be the odd pint of mild out there if you look hard enough.

### Mild May Wake - a thank you to all those who helped make it happen

We kicked off "Mild Month" on the 21<sup>st</sup> April at the **Miners Arms** in St. Werburghs, where no less than three Dawkins milds were launched.

George Clarke led the East Bristol trail on 30<sup>th</sup> April to the **Van Dyke Forum, Sugar Loaf, Chelsea, St. George's Hall** and **Old Stillage** where we sampled a total of eight different milds.

Dave Jane led the Clifton & Kingsdown trail on the 7<sup>th</sup> May to a staggering 11 pubs – **Portcullis, Greyhound, Lansdown, Quinton**

**House, Victoria, Vittoria, Highbury Vaults, Green Man, Robin Hood, Hillgrove Porter Stores and Gryphon** – where 17 milds were available (11 different ones).

Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> May saw Phil Luxton leading the Harbourside & Bedminster trail encountering ten milds (seven different) at the **Grain Barge, Merchants Arms, Nova Scotia, Orchard, Tobacco Factory, Hen & Chicken** and **Robert Fitzharding**.

On Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> we had a quiet evening at the **Masons Arms** in Stapleton drinking **Cotswold Spring Old Sodbury Mild** and **Otter Mild**.

The South Gloucestershire coach trip on 21<sup>st</sup> May was another resounding success. While we were waiting for the coach at the **Cornubia**, pub landlord Phil opened up so we wouldn't be too thirsty by the time we reached our first pub (and of course entered into the spirit of the event by making sure a mild was available for us). Tony Durbin led this trail to the **Cross Hands** at Winterbourne Down, **New Inn** at Mayhill, **Beaufort Arms** at Hawkesbury Upton, **Salutation** at Ham, **Anchor** at Thornbury and finally back to the **Annexe** in Bishopston. This was also an opportunity to present the Annexe with their award for being runner-up Bristol & District Pub of the Year. On this trip there were twelve milds available and eight were different.

On 28<sup>th</sup> May – while this edition of Pints West is at the printers – Denise Swain will have taken us to eight pubs on the City & Temple Meads trail, where we will have visited the **Eldon House, Hope & Anchor, Three Tuns, Commercial Rooms, Bank Tavern, Seven Stars, Bridge Inn** and **Cornubia**. Although at the time of writing we haven't done this trail yet, the landlords are all

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

So I should have known better when he took me down his local. Especially when he blindfolded me. Hand on elbow he steered me to a chair and sat me down. "*Here, sup on this,*" he

ordered, holding a glass to my lips.

"*What is it Grandad?*" I CHUNTERED,

apprehensively. "*Never you mind,*" was

the stern reply. "*Just get it down you.*" I

sipped, timidly, then again, bravely.

Then again, with NARY a care in the world. It was smooth,

hoppy and dry. "*It's delicious!*" I exclaimed, ripping the blindfold

from my eyes to reveal my Grandad's laughing face. "*Theakstons*

*Mild,*" he chortled. "*I can tell it with my eyes closed. Now you*

*can too.*" "*But, even my dad says Theakstons Mild is only for*

*pensioners,*" I protested. "*Aye, your father's*

*just not old enough to appreciate it,*" said

Grandad, his eyes twinkling merrily.

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



PECULIERLY  
FINE COMPANY

### WARNING

From the Management of the  
**HOPE & ANCHOR**  
Exceptional Public House

**SPILL BEER  
DON'T**

promising a very special day out for mild ale drinkers.

Other pubs that had on a mild included the **Knights Templar, Staple Hill Oak, Berkeley**, and **Kings Arms**, Kingswood, although there were probably more that we were not aware of before going to press.

The local breweries did us proud with several producing more than one mild. The breweries we encountered on our trails were Arbor Ales (three milds), Beartown, Box Steam, Braydon Ales, Brewdog, Bristol Beer Factory, Camerons, Cheddar Ales, Cotleigh, Cotswold Spring, Dawkins (four milds), Great Western Brewing, Harvestoun, Hook Norton, Jennings, Moles, North Cotswold Brewery, Otter, Severn Vale, St.Austell, Theakstons and Titanic.

While on the subject of milds, we would like to congratulate Cotswold Spring and brewer Nik Milo, whose Old Sodbury Mild was judged SIBA Supreme Champion Beer of Britain recently. And also Arbor Ales (Jon Comer) who took a Silver for their Festival Mild.

### Other BADRAG events

- **16th June** – in the upstairs room of the Cornubia for our only round table meeting of the year – a Mild Trails Wake and AOB!
- **21st July** – BADRAG will be at the Portcullis
- **18th August** – at the Staple Hill Oak.
- **15th September** – Robert Fitzharding.

Colin Postlethwaite

## Exciting times at Cotswold Spring



Changes have been announced in Cotswold Spring Brewery's management. Warren Bryant, one of the three original partners when the brewery was established in 2005, has sold his shares to Mark Frankcom.

Mark is eager to expand the brewery, as mentioned in the last edition of Pints West, and to increase awareness of the brewery and its deserved reputation, especially in our local area. Developing the brand and product range is a priority. Mark said, "We want to bring some interesting and innovative tastes to excite the taste buds of our loyal customers – and new ones alike." With Nik Milo's knowledge and experience as brewer we should be in for an exciting year.

The biggest cause for excitement, though, is that Cotswold Spring have picked up yet another prestigious award. **Old Sodbury Mild** has won the coveted **Supreme Champion** at this year's National SIBA Awards. Pictured above is Nik Milo with a pint of his award-winning brew, taken at the Annexe in Bishopston at the end of a recent Mild Month day out.

Steve Matthews (photo by Richard Brooks)

# Reasons to be cheerful

The accelerating decline in the number of pubs – driven by social and economic change, government legislation, taxation, and the real-estate-fuelled greed of pubcos – has been a dominant theme in recent editions of *Pints West*. My contribution to the last edition – 'Bath's Disappearing Pubs' – was a litany of woe, which was echoed by reports from elsewhere in Bristol, Somerset and Gloucestershire.

But while it is impossible to overemphasise the threat to our pubs – or to pay too much tribute to the pioneering efforts of the Bristol Pubs Group and individual campaigners trying to stem the tide, there is, alongside all the doom and gloom, some cause for celebration.

The number of pubs may be dwindling, but the number of top-quality real-ale pubs – in some areas at least – is increasing. This, however, creates another problem – given that the number of entries in the *Good Beer Guide* has remained constant over recent years, which pubs do local branches nominate for entry? While it is obvious that they will aim to select the best, it is increasingly the case that, as the number and standard of real-ale pubs has increased, some pubs that a few years ago would have been almost guaranteed a place in the *Guide* are left out. As reported elsewhere in this issue, the number of Bath pubs in the 2011 *Guide* is the same as it was in the 1974 *Guide*, when the real-ale revival had hardly got under way.

Pubs that offer a choice of only one or two real ales because of low turnover, or pubs whose range is limited by breweries or pubcos will increasingly fail to be included, not because their standards have declined, but because the competition has intensified.

Of course, the increase in the number of good real-ale pubs is to be welcomed – but it is a pity (to put it mildly) that many excellent real-ale pubs are falling off the radar.

The lamentable decision of the editors of the *Good Pub Guide* (a commercial non-CAMRA publication) to charge pubs for inclusion from next year means that the *Good Beer Guide* (CAMRA's publication) is now the only guide that lists pubs solely because they are good enough to warrant inclusion.

There have been suggestions that it might be better if entries in the *Good Beer Guide* were scaled back from 50-80 words to the sort of laconic entry, often of no more than half a dozen words, that once characterised the *Guide*.

Certainly, given the current size of the *Guide*, there is no scope for expansion, and a slimmed-down lighter version would, I feel sure, be welcomed by many.

The problem is that, while the *Good Beer Guide* remains a reliable guide to the very best real-ale pubs, it does not include the runners-up – pubs considered for inclusion by local branches which ultimately had to be excluded.

It could be argued that the *Good Beer Guide* is failing to respond to or to reflect the growth in the number of good real-ale pubs. This means that real-ale drinkers may miss out on good pubs. It also means that the contribution of many landlord to the ongoing real-ale revival is not being adequately recognised or rewarded. Publicans who support CAMRA's aims not only deserve but need CAMRA's support – because, if they fail to attract real-ale drinkers in sufficient numbers, they may have to consider other ways for their businesses to remain profitable.

The traditional real-ale pub is not the only viable business model. The gastropub, the vodka-shot pub, the sports pub, the family-friendly pub – all feature more prominently in the pages of the trade press than the old-fashioned boozer.

Many people in the industry claim that the traditional pub has no long-term future. They may be talking nonsense, but there is no denying that these are difficult days. Landlords selling well-kept real ale in friendly community-oriented pubs deserve all the support and publicity they can get – not only for the benefit of real-ale drinkers but for their own benefit as well. If an increase in the number of successful real-ale pubs means that abbreviated entries in the *Good Beer Guide* may have to be considered, that seems a price well worth paying.

Andrew Swift

# Great Western Brewing and the Rising Sun

If someone says the words 'brewery tap' to you, what image is conjured up in your mind? If the phrase means anything at all, then it probably evokes tatty bars tacked on to industrial-sized breweries where the beer is as fresh as you like but that's the only positive thing to say about it. This stems from the days when breweries thought that the only responsibility they had to their customers was to brew good beer. Such niceties as good food, carpets and – how demanding can you get? – an enjoyable customer experience were barely considered.

Fortunately, these days a brewery tap is seen as a showcase for the best the brewery has to offer, and as such seeks to combine good beer with fine hospitality, comfort and a lovely meal. This is certainly true of the Rising Sun in Frampton Cotterell, brewery tap of the Great Western Brewing Company in Hambrook, just north of Bristol. More of the brewery anon...

## The Pub

The Rising Sun is tucked away down a residential street in a quiet part of Frampton Cotterell, and so is not a pub you will find by accident. It is well worth seeking out, though. A cream-coloured building with tiled roofing, a sloping car park and a few bench tables by the road side, its exterior is deceptive. This is a good old traditional village pub.

As you enter through an extended porch, you find three brickwork squared arches ahead of you leading to the bar. Before that a sharp turn right will take you into a corralled seating and dining area with red banquette seating, and circular tables with wrought iron bases. There is a piano in the corner, which has been known to be pressed into service by the locals, and shelving above the window adorned by bric-a-brac, toby jugs and a variety of figurines.

To the left is the conservatory – a much later, though now well-established, addition. Beautifully light and airy in the summer, this dining area seems to me as if it were designed for Agatha Christie characters who wanted a light tea while discussing the awful events at the Big House. This conservatory is very popular on Wednesday, which is grill night, and for Sunday lunch.

Back through those square arches, though, and you find the real character of this delightful locals' pub. A black-tiled L-shaped drinking area is served from a dark-wood bar with full-height stools ranged along it. There are pictures and mirrors on the walls and, above the bar, framed confirmation that the Rising Sun has been a regular entry in CAMRA's Good Beer Guide for the last umpteen years, including 2011.

And no wonder, for the gleaming hand pumps offer a delectable choice of real ales. As well as two from the Great Western Brewing Company, there is Butcombe Bitter, definitely at the bitter end of the bitter scale but no less refreshing for that; Draught Bass, the Grand Old Lady of real ales; and the fragrant copper Wadworth 6X.

But it would seem more than a mite churlish to visit a brewery tap without 'tapping' the beers from the brewery... On our visit, the Rising Sun was showcasing *Maiden Voyage* – somewhere between a best bitter and a premium beer, almost fulvous in colour and dangerously quaffable; and *Classic Gold* – a stronger, much-more full-bodied pint despite its blonde colour.

There is also a skittle alley, function room and secret garden to the rear. All in all, the Rising Sun is a very convivial place to sample some fine beer, exquisite restaurant or pub food and a good old natter. I only popped in for a pint and ended up relying on the designated driver to get me home after several pints and a heated debate on the talents or otherwise of 50s heart-throb Johnnie Ray...

## The Brewery

The Great Western Brewing Company was founded in January 2007, and the old bakery just off the Hambrook traffic lights on Bristol's ring road was purchased in the spring of the same year. This was the beginning of a major transformation. Anyone who regularly travelled out of Bristol towards Winterbourne and beyond will have noticed the bakery as a dilapidated, ramshackle, run-down old place, and I remember hearing about the purchase and thinking, "That'll never work!" Parts of the bakery building date back to the Regency period so this was always more than just a lick of paint.

But the transformation is complete, with a real best-of-breed brewery



The Rising Sun, brewery tap for GWB

now thriving by the old stream. What is particularly impressive is that as much of the original features as possible have been restored rather than just destroyed and replaced. Would that all developments were so considerate.

Brewing started the following year, again in the spring, using a ten-barrel plant put together using equipment bought and modified from all over the country.

The brewery is open to the public, and you can contact them via their website to arrange a brewery tour, followed by maybe bread and cheese or sausage and mash at the Rising Sun.

The brewery shop is open all day, six days a week, and as you can buy the real thing, rather than a carbonated version, it is worth considering the 'shelf life' of the beer. Don't buy a 72-pint firkin if you're a 'half a pint every three days' sort of person.

To find out what brews are currently available, and where to get them, why not get in touch (details below)?

## The Beers ... a personal view

**Maiden Voyage (4%)** – Halfway between a 'Best' and a 'Premium' bitter, this amber coloured beer is fruity to the nose, but is very easy on the taste buds. Successfully manages the trick of leaving you feeling just as thirsty after you've finished it!

**Classic Gold (4.4%)** – Coloured as its name suggests, this is a slightly stronger ale than it tastes. There's a clean and clipped quickness to it and just a hint of fresh flowers wafting on a summer breeze. That said, it is deceptively full-bodied and should be savoured rather than gulped down.

**Summer Nights (3.8%)** – A popular brew in the Summer of 2010, which I hope to see return this summer. Its colour reminds me of the willow of a cricket bat, and my notes say that last year it 'just tastes of summer'! It's certainly the sort of beer that makes me wonder why anybody drinks lager on a hot summer's day.

**Bees Knees (4.2%)** – Actually brewed using real Mexican honey, but to me it has a sort of orangey feel to it. First time I tried this was after an all-too-rare bout of physical exercise. It is dangerous in these circumstances, because the first pint disappears quicker than an election manifesto promise.

There is also **Old Higby (4.8%)** and **Edwin's Ruby Porter (5.2%)** but I haven't tried them yet.

Duncan Shine

Rising Sun, 43 Ryecroft Road, Frampton Cotterell BS36 2HN (01454) 772 330  
GWB: email [contact@GreatWesternBrewingCompany.co.uk](mailto:contact@GreatWesternBrewingCompany.co.uk) (0117) 957 2842



The site of the Great Western Brewery

(Duncan also writes a regular column on pubs for Flavour magazine)

# Inn and around Portishead

## Spotlight on the Windmill Inn

With the installation of the new main bar this February, a two-year-long programme of building work and refurbishment at the Windmill Inn came to an end at this Portishead free house. Owner, Jeff Churchill, is pleased that his loyal customers are no longer being inconvenienced by the work and also welcomes new customers to see the improvements. These include an extension to the rear of the pub which provides increased views of the surrounding area, which incorporates the Severn Estuary. The extension makes use of floor-to-ceiling glass so that the extensive views are now available to all customers in these areas, not just those seated next to the windows.

All of the pub has been refurbished with new floors and furniture. The kitchen has been extended and new toilets have also been installed. The patio at the rear has been upgraded, a swanky smokers' shelter has been added and a second bar installed to serve the family area and the patio. All the while, the Windmill's well-earned reputation for good food and drink have been maintained. In particular for our readers, they continue to serve six real ales (including two changing guest ales).

The final piece in the jigsaw was the new main bar and the changing of the lay out to include a dedicated drinking area next to the bar.

It needs to be stressed that this is not part of a chain or a pub group but is a truly independent free house run by an individual, albeit an individual with high standards and a good team. It was certainly a brave step to put in place these improvements at this time but evidence so far is that the customers like the changes.

### Other news

Over at the **Albion** on Bristol Road, Andrew and Dawn Simonite have returned and intend to increase the range of real ales. Meanwhile at the **Poacher** on the High Street, the new landlords have increased the real ales on tap. On my last visit there were Sharp's Doom Bar, Butcombe Gold, Wadworth 6x and a guest ale in the shape of GWB's Maiden Voyage. On the other hand, I am afraid that the **White Lion** at the end of the High Street closed again after a period under a temporary landlord.

### Sad news

Tony Smith, husband of Monica and father to current landlady of the **Phoenix Bar**, Dawn, passed away on 14<sup>th</sup> April this year. A colourful character who occupied one corner of the Phoenix's bar with distinction, Tony will be missed.

### And finally

I'm pleased to report that a couple of likely lads have agreed to take on the running of the **Redcliffe Bay Beer Festival**. More details can be expected in the next edition of Pints West, but the dates are fixed for the evenings of Friday 18<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> November this year.

Neil Ravenscroft



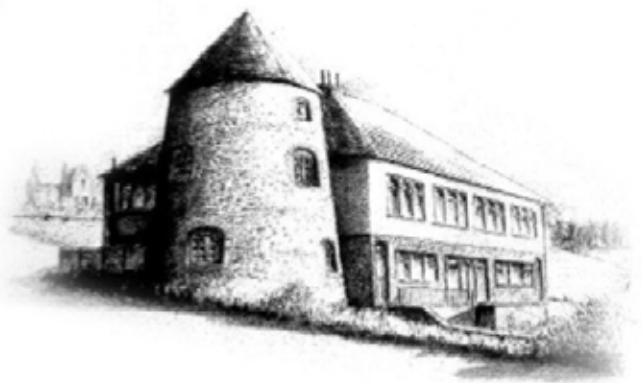
The extension to the rear of the Windmill Inn



The new main bar area at the Windmill Inn featuring Stan

## The Windmill Inn

PORTISHEAD



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

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

To contact us please ring 01275 843677.

## Cycle tour of pubs

A joint cycle ride involving CAMRA and Bristol Cycling Campaign has been organised to explore two dozen of Bristol's best pubs, all on one lazy Sunday afternoon! We'll only be stopping off for a half-pint at four of these pubs though, plus a break for a pub lunch.

The event takes place on Sunday 26th June, starting at 11am. Riding approximately 10 miles, at a relaxed pace and with only two hills, we shall press into use many of Bristol's cunning urban cut-throughs, threading a route touring St. Werburgh's, Eastville, Snuff Mills, Fishponds, the Dings and Harbourside. We shall pause briefly to hear about some history and highlights of each establishment, hopefully discovering several pubs which you might not have noticed before, whilst taking traffic-free and quiet cycling routes which you might not previously have known existed. Some of the route will take in new Cycling City facilities.

Planned stops are at the Masons' Arms, noon, the Downend Tavern (lunch), 1:15pm, the Barley Mow, 2:30pm, the Orchard Inn, 3:30pm, and the Seven Stars, 4:30pm. All timings are approximate.

Meet at the Knights Templar beforehand for a swift half, or just turn up in time for a prompt 11am start. The Knights Templar is at Temple Quay, 200 yards from Temple Meads station at BS1 6DG. Finish at the Seven Stars at BS1 6JG late afternoon.

For further details, contact Tony Durbin (CAMRA), [tonyd@fsmail.net](mailto:tonyd@fsmail.net) – or Mark Brough (Bristol Cycling Campaign), 07971 628 555, [markjbrough@googlemail.com](mailto:markjbrough@googlemail.com).

Tony Durbin

# BATH & BORDERS BRANCH

## Pub and brewery news from the CAMRA Bath & Borders branch

### BATH and SURROUNDING VILLAGES

#### Bladud's Head, 1 Catsley Place, Larkhall, Bath

The freehold of this pub on the eastern outskirts of Bath has been acquired by David Derrick, who also owns the Charmbury Arms in Oldfield Park. The Bladud's, which dates back to 1848, occupies a row of three former cottages. It was previously owned by St John's Hospital, one of the city's biggest landowners. Despite the change of ownership, the pub will continue to be run by Paul Faulkner.



Bladuds Head

#### Curfew, Cleveland Place West, Bath

Heidi Hunt, who has been at the pub since 2006, has left and it has been taken over by Hugh and Audrey Lawson. Hugh has over 23 years experience in the trade, running pubs in London and Salisbury. He plans to keep the Curfew as a traditional pub, open from noon every day, and serving 'British pub food.'



Curfew

#### Full Moon, High Street, Twerton, Bath

Situated on the western outskirts of Bath this pub has recently undergone a £70,000 refurbishment funded by owners Admiral Taverns. Manager Samantha

Humphries, who has been at the Full Moon for three and a half years, hopes the new look will improve the pub's image and attract more customers. With Sky TV recently installed and regular darts and pool teams playing in the pub, Ms Humphries is hoping that the revamp will draw in even more sports fans



Full Moon at Twerton



Horseshoe

#### New Inn, 23-24 Monmouth Place, Bath

Colin and Gunilla Walters, who have run the Good Beer Guide-listed New Inn for the past 15 years, left on Sunday 3 April. On their final weekend at the pub, friends and regulars were invited along to share a goodbye drink, with nibbles laid out on the bar. On the Sunday, Councillor Andy Furse presented the couple with a framed photograph

of the pub with regulars lined up outside. Colin and Gunilla were the longest-serving licensees in the city centre, and the New Inn was a supremely welcoming, traditional community pub, serving excellent beer and great food, with no TV, fruit machines or music – everything a pub should be.

They will be much missed. Since 4 April, a temporary manager has been running the New Inn, but it is understood that a new landlord has been appointed and will be taking over shortly.



Andy Furse presenting Colin and Gunilla Walters with a framed photograph of the New Inn

#### Nineteenth House, 19-20 St James Parade, Bath

This Enterprise Inns owned pub, just off the city centre, is up for grabs only around a year after a major refurbishment. The Nineteenth House, formerly the Bath Tap, has reduced its opening hours and is on the market after the current landlords have struggled to overcome the impact of the recession and property costs. Landlord and former hotel manager David Rolfe says that he has found it difficult to establish a business in the city, which he claims is very expensive in comparison to other places in the UK, including London. The pub, which will no longer be serving food, is still open in the evening from 5pm



Nineteenth House

to 11pm Tuesday to Thursday and from 5pm to midnight Friday and Saturday. Last year's refurbishment and name change brought to an end the former Bath Tap's image as a predominantly gay bar and took it in the direction of a more traditional pub with an emphasis on food.



## blindmans brewery

**Award-Winning Real Ales  
Brewed with Natural Spring Water**

|                |                    |
|----------------|--------------------|
| Buff 3.6%      | Golden Spring 4.0% |
| Mine Beer 4.2% | Icarus 4.5%        |
| Eclipse 4.2%   | Siberia 4.7%       |

**BLINDMANS BREWERY LTD**

Talbot Farm, Leighton, Nr Frome, Somerset BA11 4PN

Tel: 01749 880038

email: [info@blindmansbrewery.co.uk](mailto:info@blindmansbrewery.co.uk)

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

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

# BATH & BORDERS BRANCH

## Northend Inn, 41 Northend, Batheaston Bath



Northend Inn

A second planning application to convert this pub to private use has been withdrawn. The pub had been on the market for an eye-watering (even by Bath standards) £600,000.

## Old Farmhouse, 1 Lansdown Road, Bath

This Wadworth's pub is under new management. The new landlords are two men who also run pubs in Cirencester. The Farmhouse now serves four Wadworth's beers on hand-pump.

## Richmond Arms, 7 Richmond Place, Lansdown, Bath

Punch Taverns have placed this pub on the market with James A Baker for £500,000. Advertisements in trade publications indicate that it is in a 'golden postcode' area. It is situated in a terrace in a very sought-after area on the northern outskirts of Bath, but any planning application to turn this pub into a private residence will be fiercely fought by the Branch. The Richmond Arms is one of only a tiny handful of pubs in the whole of the northern part of Bath and the only pub in the residential area around Richmond Road. It is currently being run by Phil Cleverley, who is running it as a traditional community rather than a gastro pub – although quality pub food is still available – and has been successful in attracting drinkers back to this gem of a backstreet boozier.



Richmond Arms

## Pig & Fiddle, 2 Saracen Street, Bath

This popular and lively city centre pub, well known for screening live rugby, has been acquired by Butcombe Brewery. This is one of three pubs in the region recently taken over by the Somerset brewer and pub operator, which now has an estate of twenty pubs, the other two being the Mill at Rode, just off the A36



Pig and Fiddle

north of Frome, and the Frog & Fiddle in Cheltenham.

## Rising Sun, 58 Lymore Avenue, Twerton, Bath

This pub closed briefly in around early April but has now re-opened under a temporary landlord.

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

This Wadworth's pub, situated on the eastern outskirts of Bath, opened during the week beginning Monday 14 March. The new landlord is Gary Lee. The beer range is Wadworth's Henry's IPA and 6X with guests to come. The pub has also recently appointed a new cook.



Rose and Crown, Larkhall

## Waggon & Horses, 150 London Road West, Batheaston, near Bath

This pub has a new landlord. Local resident and experienced pub manager, Jim Mackrell, took over the Waggon & Horses pub on Friday 1 April. Jim has big plans for the pub.

These include plans to introduce traditional pub games such as horseshoes and pétanque in the garden, one of the pub's hidden gems, and throughout the summer hold various activities, including a children's activity day, barbecues and hog roasts, and a beer and cider festival. The pub has live music on Friday and Saturday nights. Meanwhile the pub's popular OAP lunches are set to continue. Jim also plans to introduce themed dinner nights, featuring Indian, Mexican and perhaps even Celtic food.



Waggon and Horses

## Former White Hart, 242 High Street, Batheaston, near Bath

This pub, that closed some years back, is now being converted into private housing.



White Hart, Batheaston

## White Horse, 42 Shophouse Road, Twerton, Bath Bath & Borders Pub of the Year 2011

This popular community pub has been awarded the accolade of the branch's Pub of the Year for 2011. The pub, which is owned by Enterprise Inns, is the first company-owned pub to have picked up the award for many years. Landlord Jason Clarke, who has run the pub of five years, has worked hard to turn the White Horse into a first class real ale pub with a strong community base. The award was presented to Jason

(continued on next page)



Founded in 2004,

## THE BOX STEAM BREWERY

is a Wiltshire microbrewery rapidly becoming recognised as a name associated with a high quality, handcrafted product.

All our beers are carefully brewed in our rural microbrewery, combining traditional methods with ingredients sourced as locally as possible.



For more information call

01225 858383

or visit the online shop at

[www.boxsteambrewery.com](http://www.boxsteambrewery.com)

# BATH & BORDERS BRANCH

(continued from previous page)

and his staff on Tuesday 3 May. There was live music from local band Man Overboard. In a recent article in the Bath Chronicle Jason said, "It is absolutely amazing, and we never expected to get it as there's a lot of competition in Bath. We are just made up about it." Jason has made a determined effort to support local microbreweries. There is an ever-changing range of guest beers and the cellarman's standard is very high. The White Horse also wins out as a community pub, with regular live music and fundraising events.

## EAST SOMERSET

### George, Long Street, Croscombe, near Wells

This welcoming community pub has been awarded the accolade of Bath & Borders Branch Country Pub of the Year. This is the second time the George has won this award. (The first time was in 2009.) Congratulations to landlords Vryan and Peter Graham for keeping up the good work and making the George one of the most pleasant pubs in the area. At the time of writing a presentation had yet to be arranged.



George, Croscombe

### Devilfish Brewery, Highchurch Farm, Hemington, Faulkland

Devilfish is a new microbrewery set up by the landlord of the Seven Stars in Winsley, near Bradford-on-Avon. It has recently moved into the above premises from a smaller initial plant. In fact Devilfish runs as two breweries: the five-barrel commercial plant produces a growing range of traditional cask ales alongside US beer styles such as Californian golden ales, whilst the Devilfish nano-brewery produces bespoke beers for specific events and occasions such as weddings or office parties. An open day for local pub landlords is being held on Monday 16 May. Regular beers include Devil Best, a 4.2% traditional bitter, and Bomb Shell, a refreshing 4.5% blonde beer. The brewery has also brewed a number of special beers, including a 5.5% dark Christmas ale and a recent richly flavoured 4.2% royal wedding beer. Regular outlets for the brewery include the Seven Stars at Winsley, the Hungerford Arms at Farleigh Hungerford, the Three Crowns, Chippenham, and the Faulkland Inn, which is in the village of Faulkland itself, and is the nearest pub to the new premises. ([www.devilfishbrewery.com](http://www.devilfishbrewery.com))

### Tucker's Grave, near Faulkland

This uniquely traditional pub, situated in relatively uninhabited countryside on a crossroads between the villages of Norton St Philip and Faulkland, will be closing at the end of May due to the retirement of the current landlords and owners Ivan and Glenda Swift. The freehold of the pub, which includes extensive grounds, was placed on the market freehold in around the summer of 2009 but failed to attract a buyer and was subsequently withdrawn from sale around a year ago. The pub's future now is uncertain. Ivan and Glenda have been at the pub for 27 years.



Tucker's Grave

The loss of this National Inventory listed pub is a major blow to the local pub scene. This eighteenth century former cottage has been a pub for over 200 years. The name comes from Edwin Tucker, who committed suicide in 1747 and was buried nearby. The two original rooms, which are both delightfully unspoilt with simple panelling and fixed bench seating, are situated either side of a panelled corridor. On the right is the tap room. On the left is the tiny public bar with a genuine Victorian tiled fireplace. There is no bar counter. Cask beer and cider are served from a bay window in the public bar. Beyond the public bar there is a third room, formerly Ivan and Glenda's living room, which was brought into public use in 1985. At the end of the passage a door leads out onto

the attractive back garden and the outside gents and ladies on the rear right of the building. There is shove-halfpenny board in the tap room and a skittle alley in a separate stone building at the rear of the building. The pub has long been a favourite of the Stranglers and a song called Tucker's Grave is featured on the band's 2004 *Norfolk Coast* album.

### Mendip Coaching Inn, on A37, Gurney Slade

This large roadside pub, which has been closed for some time, is under new ownership. At the time of writing, March 2011, the new owners were recruiting staff with a view to opening in April. The new owners are the Rossi brothers and they appear to be restaurateurs rather than pub owners. They seem to be looking for a whole team of chefs and front-of-house staff rather than bar staff, the implication being that the pub will re-open as a restaurant.

### The Mill, off A36, near Rode

This large pub, a converted mill on the outskirts of the village of Rode that specialises in food and functions, has been acquired by Butcombe Brewery. This is one of three pubs in the region recently taken over by the Somerset brewer and pub operator, which now has an estate of twenty pubs, the other two being the Pig & Fiddle in Bath and the Frog & Fiddle in Cheltenham.

## WEST WILTSHIRE

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

This long-closed pub re-opened on Friday 11 February. It had been originally acquired by Blindman's and a major renovation of the premises was started under the brewery's ownership. More recently the lease has been sold on. The newly opened Bear is very much targeting the food trade. Half of the bar is taken up by dining tables and the other to low tables and easy chairs. There appears to be no policy of discouraging people who simply come in for a drink. Only one cask beer seems to be available. This was Wadworth's 6X when the pub opened but during a recent visit by a CAMRA member the beer had changed to Bath Ales Gem.



Bear Inn

### Three Horseshoes, 68 High Street, Chapmanslade, near Westbury

This pub (along with the Rose & Crown in Trowbridge) has been acquired by the company run by the landlord of the Duke of Cumberland at Edford, near Radstock, which itself has been transformed into a thriving real-ale-based community pub. The Three Horseshoes opened on Friday 20 May. Butcombe, Wadworth and Milk Street are available, and it is also planned to have beers from Devilfish.

### King's Head, Chitterne, near Warminster

The pub is technically in the Salisbury branch area but only a little beyond the boundary of the Bath & Borders branch. It was reported as closed in the last edition of Pints West. It re-opened on Friday 1 April and has been visited by local branch members. The couple now running the pub have lots of experience in the pub trade and are seeking to make the King's Head a village local that serves pub food. At the time of writing (late April) they were aiming to get the kitchen back into use soon. They plan to keep beers from the nearby Plain Ales brewery as a standard alongside two guests.

### Axe & Cleaver, Frome Road, Southwick, near Trowbridge

This long-closed pub has recently re-opened. Situated on the busy A360 between Trowbridge and Frome, this large open-plan pub became part of the Usher's brewery estate in the nineties and was re-named the Wych. Following the demise of Usher's the pub's fortunes seemed to go into a decline. It later underwent a further revamp and name change to become an Indian restaurant. This in turn closed and, for the last few years, the building has been boarded up. In early May this year it

# BATH & BORDERS BRANCH

was noticed that, despite the lack of any signs, the premises had in fact re-opened as a pub. A large chalk board in front of the pub carried the heading "Axe & Cleaver Re-opened" and went on to give a price list for the drinks on sale with "Real Ale £2.80" at the top of the list. This is as much as was known at the time this news was submitted. Hopefully we'll have more on this pub in the next edition of Pints West.

## Red Admiral, a new pub on Paxcroft Mead, Trowbridge

Work is nearing completion on a new pub cum restaurant on the large Paxcroft Mead development on the eastern outskirts of Trowbridge. The Red Admiral, off Hackett Place, should open in May and create around 40 jobs. It is owned and will be run by Marston's Taverns. At the time of writing (March 2011) a free drinks voucher was available from the Marston's website.



Rose and Crown, Trowbridge

is undergoing a major refurbishment. It is anticipated that it will open in late June.

## Fox & Hounds, 6 Deverill Road, Warminster

This pub has been awarded the accolade of Best Community Pub

## Rose & Crown, 36 Stallard Street, Trowbridge

This Grade II listed pub, notable for its vibrant pink painted walls, closed around two years ago and has been boarded up ever since. Recently it was acquired (along with the Three Horseshoes at Chapmanslade) by the company run by the landlord of the Duke of Cumberland at Edford. The Rose & Crown is currently encased in scaffolding and

in the Bath & Borders branch area. This pub excels in both real ale and real cider with normally three of each on at any one time. Warminster Warrior and Foxy's Best, both from the nearby Wessex Brewery, are regularly available whilst Thatcher's Traditional, Cheddar Valley and Rich's Farmhouse make up the cider range. The pub has a strong local community base. Recently landlord Chris Pitcher invested in a large extension in order to bring skittles to the pub.

## Masons Arms, 34 East Street, Warminster

This pub, just off the town centre, has been awarded the accolade of Most Improved Pub in the Bath & Borders branch area. Landlords Helen Fitter and Richard Findlay took over the Mason Arms in July 2009. Formerly the pub had been known for its drum 'n' bass nights and had a reputation for drug-taking. That sort of activity is well and truly in the pub's past. Following a major refurbishment in the summer of 2009 the Mason's Arms re-opened as an attractive and welcoming community pub with a growing reputation for its excellent food. The beer is served on gravity using a cooling system of Richard's own design. Beers from the nearby Plain Ales micro-brewery form the mainstay of the range.



Fox and Hounds, Warminster



Marsons Arms, Warminster

Steve Hunt (photos Andrew Swift)

## Beer festivals in Bath & Borders

### ● Somerset Arms Summer Beer Festival, Semington, Wiltshire, BA14 6JR: 27-30 May.

A stone's throw from the Kennet & Avon Canal, this splendid community pub serves superb local ales as well as terrific food. There will be 24 beers on over the weekend, and, although you have to get there by car (unless you're lucky enough to have a narrow boat) four-star accommodation is available. ([www.somersetarmssemington.co.uk](http://www.somersetarmssemington.co.uk))

### ● 5th White Horse Summer Beer Festival, Shophouse Road, Twerton, Bath BA2 1EF: 7-11 July.

The new Bath & Borders Pub of the Year. 20+ beers, along with ciders and music every night. Ten minutes' walk from Oldfield Park railway station or take the No 5 from Bath Bus Station, get off in Twerton High Street and walk up Shophouse Road. ([www.thewhitehorsebath.com](http://www.thewhitehorsebath.com))

### ● Royal Oak Annual Folk & Beer Festival, Lower Bristol Road, Twerton, Bath BA2 3BW: 14-16 July.

One of the top beer festivals in the area, with a terrific line-up of performers. Five minutes' walk from Oldfield Park railway station and served by the No 5 bus from Bath bus station. ([www.theroyaloak-bath.com](http://www.theroyaloak-bath.com))

### ● Annual Cornish Beer Festival at the Star, The Vineyards, Paragon, Bath BA1 5NA: 14-17 July.

Pasties, pirate patches, lusty singalongs and pints and pints of great Cornish beer. Coincides with the folk and beer festival at the Royal Oak (see above) – if you only come to Bath one weekend this year, this is the weekend to pick. ([www.star-inn-bath.co.uk](http://www.star-inn-bath.co.uk))

### ● 34th Bath Beer Festival at the Pavilion: 14-15 October.

It may seem a bit early to be thinking about October when summer's not even here, but this is the biggest event in the Bath beer calendar, so make a note in your diary now. Last year almost 2,000 people sampled the 90+ beers and 18 ciders on offer and listened to some excellent bands. More details in the next Pints West – tickets on sale at the end of August.

Andrew Swift



Somerset Arms, Semington



The 34<sup>th</sup> Bath Beer Festival is on 14-15 October

# Real Ale in Bath 40 years on

CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale, has come a long way in the last 40 years – and so has real ale. CAMRA was founded on 16 March 1971 and the first edition of the Good Beer Guide came out the following November. It cost 25p – around the same as a couple of pints of beer. As far as drinkers in Bath and Bristol were concerned, its use was limited – no pubs from either city were included, the only pub in Gloucestershire was the Wadworth-owned Bull Inn at Hinton, and Somerset was represented by the Bakers Arms in Bridgwater, a Courage house. Wiltshire fared somewhat better. Several Wadworth's pubs around Devizes were included, as was the Boot at Berwick St James – the entry for which included the cryptic comment “handpumps recently reconnected,” a reminder of how close real ale came to dying out altogether.



The Boot at Berwick St James in Wiltshire, where handpumps had been reinstalled just in time for the 1972 Good Beer Guide.

The 1974 Good Beer Guide cost 75p and achieved notoriety for advising drinkers to avoid Watneys “like the plague.” Threats of legal action forced the publisher to recall the first print run and tone down the wording, advising drinkers merely to avoid it “at all costs.” Eleven pubs in Bath were included in the Guide:

Broadleys, Sawclose (now Gascoyne Place)  
Coeur de Lion, Northumberland Place  
County Wine Vaults, Westgate Street (now Flan O'Briens)  
Curfew, Cleveland Place West  
Garrick's Head, Sawclose  
Saracen's Head, Broad Street  
Smith Bros, Westgate Buildings (now the Cork)  
Star, Vineyards



On 16 March, members of Bath & Borders CAMRA celebrated CAMRA's 40th birthday in the Star, which featured in the 1974 Good Beer Guide.



One of the pubs in Bath which has lost its historic interior, complete with snug, is the Full Moon on Upper Borough Walls (now Sam Weller's), seen here in all its glory before the wreckers moved in.

Trinity Brewery, James Street West  
Volunteer Rifleman's Arms, New Bond Street Place  
York Street Wine Vaults, York Street (now the Alehouse)

They are all still open, and three (the Coeur de Lion, the Garrick's Head and the Star) appear in the 2011 Guide. It is extraordinary to note (especially in light of my comments elsewhere in this issue) that the

number of Bath pubs in the two Guides is the same – eleven pubs in 1974 and eleven pubs today.

The real clue to how much has changed since 1974 comes when you look at the list of beers on offer in Bath back then. They came from seven breweries – Bass-Worthington, Mitchells & Butlers, Marstons, Whitbread, Wadworth, Courage, and, in the Coeur de Lion, Devenish. That was it – no guest beers, no beer festivals, no micros, no rare beer styles. And pubs were under threat just as surely as real ale was. Breweries vied with each other to modernise their estates, gutting historic buildings to attract the lager-guzzling, Mateus-swilling, chicken-in-the-basket-chomping, fruit-machine-feeding punters of a bright new tomorrow.

One of the few pubs to avoid modernisation – but only after a bitter battle – was the Star. It is appropriate that, on 16 April, 40 years after the founding of CAMRA, members of the Bath & Borders Branch chose the Star as their starting point for a mini-pub crawl of Bath. From there they went on to visit the other pubs that featured in both the 1974 and 2011 Guides. Needless to say, the choice of beers on offer was a good deal more exciting than it was back then!

Andrew Swift

## Rucking Mole joins the pack!

ALL YEAR ROUND

**Tap Bitter** 3.5%<sub>abv</sub>  
Smooth malty flavour & clean bitter finish

**Best Bitter** 4.0%<sub>abv</sub>  
Well balanced, copper coloured bitter

**Molennium** 4.5%<sub>abv</sub>  
Deep amber coloured premium ale

**Rucking Mole** 4.5%<sub>abv</sub>  
Clean, dry & malty golden bitter

**Landlord's Choice** 4.5%<sub>abv</sub>  
Dark, strong and smooth hoppy bitter

**Molecatcher** 5.0%<sub>abv</sub>  
Copper coloured ale with spicy hop aroma

IN SEASON

**Holy Moley** 4.7%<sub>abv</sub>  
Spring beer that's heaven 'scent'

**Barleymole** 4.2%<sub>abv</sub>  
Straw coloured Summer ale

**Molegrip** 4.3%<sub>abv</sub>  
Rich ruby red, Autumn brew

**Moel Moel** 6.0%<sub>abv</sub>  
Warming Winter ale



[www.molesbrewery.com](http://www.molesbrewery.com)

# Great British Beer Festival August 2nd - 6th

The Great British Beer Festival 2011 (GBBF) at Earls Court is drawing ever closer, with CAMRA hoping for another record-breaking event!

In 2010, over 66,000 people attended the five-day extravaganza, with over 1,000 CAMRA volunteers giving up their time to make the Festival the biggest to date.

This year, Festival-goers should expect over 700 real ales, ciders, perries and foreign beers from around the world, with CAMRA claiming to have something to suit every drinker's taste buds! To accompany this heady range, the Festival offers a great choice of food from traditional cuisine to classic pub snacks, unforgettable live music, a wide variety of pub games to occupy your time, and an array of tutored tastings from some of the leading authorities in the beer world.

Tickets for the event are now available and can be pre-ordered for a discounted price from the ticketing website at [www.seetickets.com/gbbf](http://www.seetickets.com/gbbf). With such demand at the door of Earls Court for tickets, pre-ordering is a great way of ensuring you do not miss out on the Festival fun!

## Festival opening times

Tuesday August 2nd: 5pm - 10:30pm

Wednesday August 3rd: Friday August 5th: 12pm - 10:30pm

Saturday August 6th: 11am - 7pm

For further information on the Festival, visit [www.gbbf.org.uk](http://www.gbbf.org.uk).

Searching for the perfect pint?

# Great British Beer Festival

Organised by the Campaign for Real Ale

**2-6 August 2011**  
Earls Court, London

**BOOK NOW**  
**ADVANCE TICKETS**  
Discounts for CAMRA members

0844 412 4640  
[www.gbbf.org.uk](http://www.gbbf.org.uk)  
[www.seetickets.com/gbbf](http://www.seetickets.com/gbbf)

GBBF  
GreatBritishBeerFestival

CAMRA CELEBRATING 40 years OF CAMPAIGNING

# Cryptic Crossword

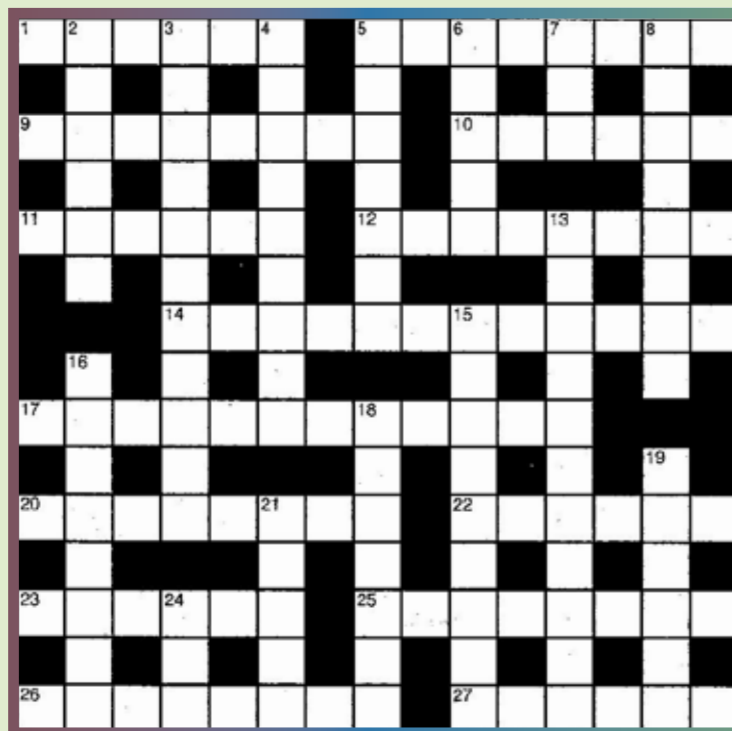
Compiled by Pete and Eddie Taberner

## CLUES ACROSS

1. Rock around after peace-keepers open the champagne (6)
5. Very clever German has just one glass of beer (8)
9. Shade of the sad customer in 6 & 15 dn (4, 4)
10. Observer of little Violet's jug (6)
11. Used to control a sneeze by the sound of it (6)
12. Beer initially not evident in 'Casualty' setting, so take a trip to Jerusalem (4, 4)
14. Washington State product that hops over here for real ales (6, 6)
17. Drunken barmen do tell of a contemporary dance (6, 6)
20. Appear agitated, having had an ice cream in McDonalds (8)
22. State of those who toddle into the pub and don't get served? (6)
23. Merlin's ale could be described as absolutely spiffing (6)
25. A bar rent is peculiarly corrupt (8)
26. 6 & 15 dn finding a sexual partner on board (8)
27. Singer messed up but will take new contract at club (6)

## CLUES DOWN

2. Yeasty vitamin complex I can get with 'in' cocktail (6)
3. Homer's long tale of his search for a real ale (7, 4)
4. Like mixed drink? There's eighteen gallons of it in here (9)
5. Adam's first lady's a bad actress in this Cotswold brewery town (7)
6. & 15 dn. Seafarer not impressed by a Bristol pub (5, 9)
7. & 13 dn. Bristol tower with weapons on display becomes a pub (3, 7, 4)
8. The 'Holly Bush' gets a makeover - becoming bigger with a posh name (4, 4)
13. see 7 dn
15. see 6 dn
16. Bed actress Vivienne in a brewery full of birds (8)



18. Tough, Jack- they don't begin to describe an Islay brewery (7)
19. A cracking drink when made with hot spirit! (6)
21. Place where the beer is usually paler than the natives (5)
24. Electrical power unit found in Hanham pub (3)

Solution on page 33.

# The unstoppable rise of real ale in Bath

The changes in the real-ale scene in Bath in the last 40 years have, of course, been enormous. Even in the past ten years, however, a great deal has happened. At the start of the new millennium Bath was arguably one of the top real-ale towns in the country. A decade on it is even better. If you look at the 2002 Good Beer Guide, all the pubs listed are still open and still serving excellent beer, while the 'Big Three' from back then – the Bell, the Old Green Tree and the Star – are as good as if not better than ever.

The **Bell** stocks seven regular real ales, plus two guests, and the live music scene is still as vibrant. Traditional games, such as bar billiards, chess, backgammon and table football are still the order of the day. As before, a policy of sourcing virtually all beers from breweries within 50 miles prevails.

The **Old Green Tree** remains the wood-panelled shrine to the imbibing of fine ales and wines it always was, with great home-cooked food at lunchtimes. The installation of a new five-motion beer engine this spring and the hanging of a new sign (subtly different to the old one) are among the few changes this most traditional of hostelrys has seen. Here too, local ales hold sway, with RCH Pitchfork still the favourite tipple.

The **Star** too has gone from strength to strength over the past decade. Bass from the barrel remains the biggest seller, although, with the pub now part of the Abbey Ales estate, Bellringer runs it a good second. Paul Waters, who runs the Star, is from Cornwall, and the two annual Cornish beer festivals are among the most eagerly-awaited events in the Bath beer calendar (the next starts on 15 July). A superb acoustic band called Sulis play most Tuesdays and Fridays and there is a singers' night most

Sundays. Dr Who screenings and a popular quiz are also held once a month.

To have one of these three pubs on your doorstep would be counted lucky; to have all three is fortunate indeed. In the last ten years, though, several other heavyweights have stepped forward.

First, there is the **Royal Oak** in Twerton. Closed in 1999 and earmarked for demolition in 2001, few people thought it would ever bounce back. But bounce back it did with a vengeance. After a lengthy and arduous renovation it reopened in August 2005 with ten hand pumps and an ever-changing selection of real ales. Since then, John and Becky Whinnerah, who still hold the lease, have gone on to open the Art Brew Brewery in Dorset, leaving the pub in the hands of Chris Powell and Dave Selby. Three times local CAMRA Pub of the Year, visiting the Royal Oak is like visiting a mini-beer festival. You never know what is likely to be on and you stand a good chance of trying several beers you won't have come across before. Now there is the added incentive of sampling the increasingly adventurous range of beers from Art Brew. In the six years since it reopened, the Royal Oak has established itself as one of the city's top music pubs, with legendary acoustic sessions on Wednesdays and bands playing most weekends. With over 2,000 students in halls of residence nearby, the opportunity to introduce students to the delights of real ale and cider is one that has been taken up with gusto. The next major event at the Oak is the annual Folk and Beer Festival which starts on 15 July.

Then there is the **Raven** in Queen Street, formerly Hatchett's. Twice voted local Pub of the Year, the two house beers – dark Raven and Raven Gold – are brewed by Blindman's at Leighton. The other four beers are an ever-changing selection from an eclectic range of breweries across the UK, with many rarities turning up. During the two annual beer festivals, the range is increased to twelve. Tim Perry along with many of the staff at the Raven have formed a cross-country mountain-bike team called Team Raven which participates in local and national events. This summer they are covering Wales from coast to coast – 300 miles in five days – to raise money for the RICE charity.

Two pubs that have been turned round in more ways than one in the last ten years are the **Garrick's Head** in the Sawclose and the **King William** on London Road. Both were closed for long periods before being taken over by Charlie and Amanda Digney, who pulled off the seemingly impossible trick of making them top gastropubs at the same time as getting them into the Good Beer Guide. Many Bath pubs have gone gastro over the last decade – the Chequers, the Marlborough, the Foresters at Combe Down (now the Flower & Forester), the Hat & Feather (now the Hudson Bar & Grill) – but, while all serve real ale, none of them make such a feature of it as the Garrick's and the King William, where at least three interesting and well-kept beers from local breweries are available, along with a range of cider.

Another transformation has been worked by Jase Clarke at the **White Horse** in Twerton. Before he took over in July 2006, it had little to recommend it to real-ale drinkers. Five years and lots of hard graft later, it's just been voted local CAMRA Pub of the Year – not only for the quality and range of its beers but for its dazzling success as a model of what a community pub should be. This summer's beer festival, celebrating the fifth anniversary of Jase's arrival at the pub, has 20+ beers, along with cider, and music every night. It runs from 7 to 11 July.

Then there is the new kid on the block. After closing in 2008, there were fears that the **Griffin** in Monmouth Street would be converted to flats. It reopened, however, after a six-month refurbishment, in August 2009, with seven four-star letting rooms, five handpumps and a stylish but relaxed ambience. Beers from local breweries, all superbly kept, predominate – a very welcome return to form for one of Bath's oldest inns.

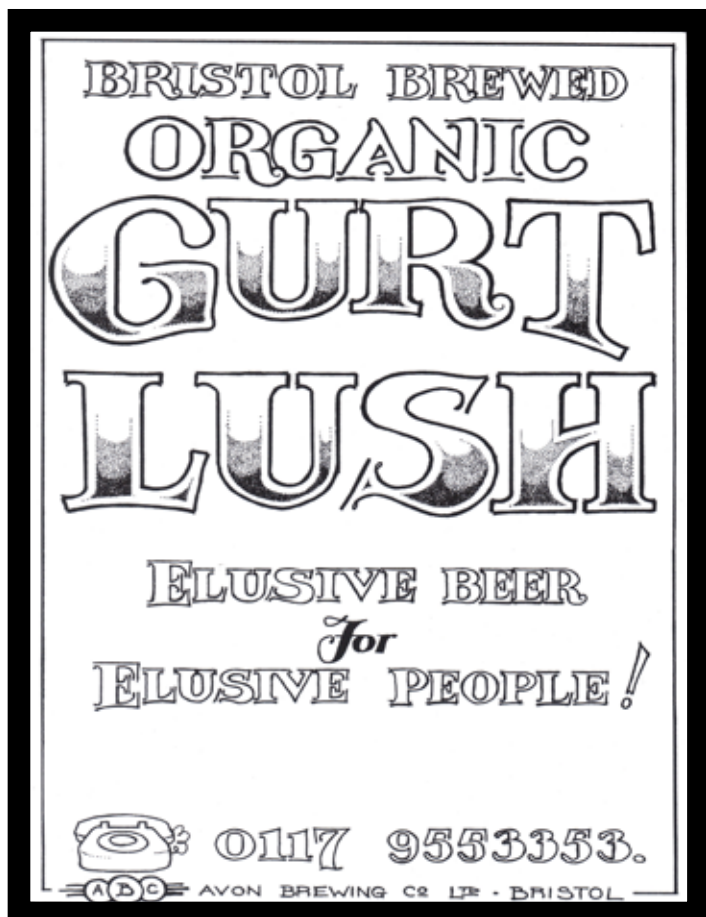
With only eleven entries in the Good Beer Guide, and the number of good real-ale pubs increasing all the time, there is obviously much



Interior of the Star, hardly changed in over 150 years



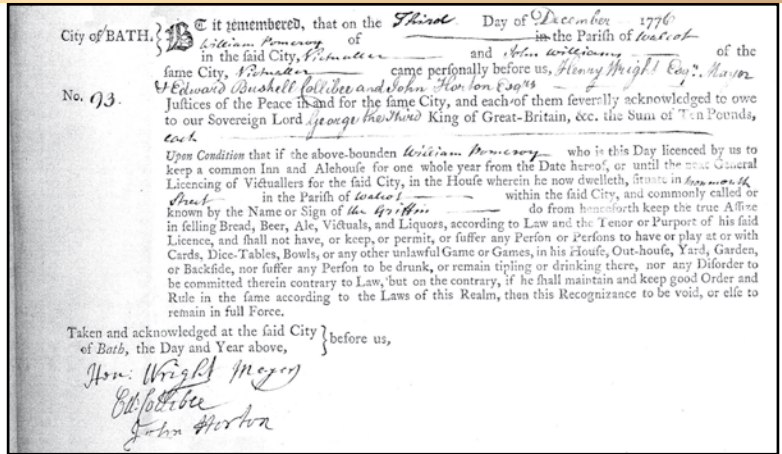
The new sign at the Old Green Tree





The Barley Mow, now with its original name restored and with a growing reputation for real ale

to discover beyond the Guide. Take Widcombe, for example, where Simon Wynne's two pubs, the **Ram** and the **Royal Oak**, continue to serve an excellent range of real ales. The garden at the Royal Oak is one of the top places in the city for alfresco drinking. The **White Hart** in Widcombe, although better known as a gastropub, has two real ales as well as a glorious garden at the back – although you



The Griffin may only recently have been put on the real-ale map, but it is one of Bath's oldest inns, as this licence from 1776 proves. (Courtesy Bath Record Office)

need to get there early to get a seat.

In Bathwick, just round the corner from the ever-dependable **Pulteney Arms**, Nick Etheridge and Jamie Mealing have recently taken over the Barley, smartened the place up, changed the name back to the **Barley Mow** and started serving some excellent real ale. There are three handpumps at present, but as trade continues to pick up a fourth is planned. The pub opens at 11, the home-cooked food is excellent and on Sunday nights it is the venue for perhaps the quirkiest pub quiz in Bath.

In the city centre, there are plenty of other good pubs to check out.

The **Pig & Fiddle** in Broad Street, with five real ales, has recently been taken over by Butcombe. Last year, the Dorset brewer **Hall & Woodhouse** opened a pub in the old King Street auction rooms. Around the corner in John Street is the **Salamander**, one of two Bath Ales' pubs in the city (the other is the **Hop Pole** on the Upper Bristol Road). The ever-lively **Volunteer Rifleman's Arms** not only has the longest pub name in Somerset but also serves four beers usually sourced from local microbreweries.

Two traditional pubs serving well-kept real ale whose futures are now more secure are the **Charmbury Arms**, a cracking little boozer just up the road from the Royal Oak in Twerton, and the **Bladud's Head**, which, given its position on the very edge of town, almost counts as a country pub. The Charmbury was until recently a Wadworth's pub, while the Bladud's belonged to St John's Hospital. About ten years ago, St John's applied to convert it to residential use, only to back down when over 150 local residents objected. Both pubs have now been acquired by David Derrick, who has owned and run pubs in Bath for many years. His commitment to the future of small, traditional community pubs is in marked contrast to the attitude

of companies focused on real-estate values to the virtual exclusion of everything else, and gives further proof, if proof is needed, that, while such pubs will not generate the sort of get-rich-quick megabucks that suit sharp-suited Hooray Henrys, they can still, despite all the banana skins thrown in their path by politicians and legislators, operate successfully in the modern world.

Andrew Swift



- Over 350 UK Bottled ales – many 'bottle conditioned'
- 120 Belgian bottled beers
- Wide range of other quality international beers
- Over 100 ciders – bottled and on draft
- English specialist wines

10% Discount on all bottled beers and ciders for CAMRA members (card required)

## Opening Hours

|             |             |
|-------------|-------------|
| Monday:     | Closed      |
| Tues-Thurs: | 11.00-19.00 |
| Friday:     | 10.30-19.30 |
| Saturday:   | 10.30-19.30 |
| Sunday:     | 12:00-16:00 |



105 Hewlett Road, Cheltenham, GL52 6BB  
Tel. 01242 220485  
[www.favouritebeers.co.uk](http://www.favouritebeers.co.uk)

Introducing The Bar Code by Eddie Taberner



07/03/11

# Reasons to be cheerful . . . in North Devon

If you're thinking of heading west over the coming months, North Devon – generally quieter but at least as spectacular as the south coast – is definitely worth considering. And for real-ale drinkers there are many delights in store, not all of them listed in the Good Beer Guide.

The obvious place to start is **Barnstaple**, but all the Good Beer Guide (GBG) lists in the town is a Wetherspoon. About half a mile north-west of the town centre, however, is the suburb of Pilton (which actually predates Barnstaple). There you will find the **Reform Inn**, not just a superbly friendly and defiantly down-to-earth boozier but also the brewery tap for the excellent Barum Brewery.

Moving on to **Ilfracombe**, a new GBG entry this year is the quirky but very welcoming **Helebillies** (don't be put off by the name) half a mile east of the town at Hele. Down by Ilfracombe harbour, however, is the **Ship & Pilot** – definitely worth a special trip. Opened in the 1970s, this has long been one of the friendliest locals in town. Last summer it was bought by Nick Waters who has really put it on the real-ale map, installing five beer engines, sourcing beers from local breweries and holding beer festivals. The pub does not serve food, there is no TV, the walls are lined with old photographs of the town, and, unlike many other pubs in the town, locals predominate.

Three miles west of Ilfracombe, along one of the most spectacular stretches of the South West Coastal Path, is the village of **Lee**, idyllically tucked into a fuschia-lined valley. The **Grampus Inn** opened around



The Rock at Georgeham, once Henry Williamson's local

1970 in an old farmhouse in the heart of the village. Not only is the low-beamed building full of character, the range of local ales is pretty impressive as well.

A few miles to the south, inland from the surfing hotspot of Croyde, in the village of **Georgeham**, you will find the **Rock Inn**. It was once Henry William-

son's local, and pictures of the author enjoying a pint with regulars line the walls. Although it has been expanded, and has an enviable reputation as one of the top food pubs in the area, it is still very much a proper local with a range of four or five well-kept West Country real ales.



The Anchor at Hartland

Moving further inland, deep in the heart of the country and reached by a maze of narrow lanes is another gem of a pub, the **Pyne Arms at East Down**. Last year it was taken over by a local woman called Sarah Snowden and has been getting rave reviews. Food is reported to be top notch, and I can personally vouch for the quality of the beer from local microbreweries.

North Devon has some excellent microbreweries. One of the newest is Forge, based at Hartland, which has won the top award in the last two SIBA South West Beer Competitions. Forge Beers are hard to find outside North Devon, although they sometimes appear at the Seven Stars in Bristol. Needless to say, they are well worth seeking out, and if you are in North Devon there is no better place to sample them than at the **Anchor in Hartland**, just down the road from the brewery – well-kept award-winning ales in a lively and very friendly community pub.

Some eleven miles to the west of Hartland is the **Marisco Tavern** – 'Lundy Pub of the Year every year since 1868' as it says on the T-shirt! The granite-floored tavern is adorned with memorabilia from the hundreds of shipwrecks around the island. As in all



The Marisco Tavern on Lundy



Gloucestershire's largest regional brewer has been brewing 20 years! Come and celebrate BOB's birthday, or try some of our other award-winning ales...

## BOB (4.0%)

Our brand leader, a great session bitter

## BANKERS DRAFT (4.0%)

Pale and malty with a citrus kick

## COOPERS WPA (3.5%)

A golden, refreshing brew with a dry finish

## COTSWOLD WAY (4.2%)

Rich and well-balanced with a hoppy finish

## IKB (4.5%)

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

## STATION PORTER (6.1%)

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

Available from:

**Our flagship pub–The White Lion,**

Quay Head, Colston Avenue, Bristol, BS1 1BE

**The newly reopened Downend Tavern,**

125 Downend Road, Fishponds, Bristol, BS16 5BE

**The Brewery Shop,**

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

tel: 01454 299592

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

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

the best pubs, there are no jukeboxes, fruit machines, TVs or muzak, and mobile phone users face a strictly-enforced fine. Two beers – Old Light and Lundy Experience – are brewed by St Austell, and there is usually a guest on as well. As far as many regular visitors are concerned, this is their favourite pub, but, with a return trip from Ilfracombe or Bideford costing £33.50, it is not surprising that local CAMRA members do not get out to survey it that often! And what would happen at the regional judging stage if it were ever to be local pub of the year is anyone's guess.

No such problem with the current North Devon Pub of the Year – the excellent **Old Market Inn in Holsworthy**, with no less than nine real ales. Despite its modern décor, this is a supremely traditional and friendly community pub in a part of Devon few visitors get to – but well worth seeking out.



The Old Market Inn in Holsworthy – North Devon Pub of the Year

On the fringe of North Devon, with the foothills of Dartmoor as a backdrop, the current runner-up Pub of the Year is the **Taw River in Sticklepath**, busy, traditional, and with an excellent range of ales. Across the road is the **Devonshire Inn**, an absolute gem of a place that doesn't look to have changed for half a century or more, with beer from the barrel, home-made pasties – a step back in time.

Real-ale drinkers are well served in this part of the county, for only a few miles up the road – and officially out of the North Devon area – is the **Tom Cobley Inn at Spreyton**, former national CAMRA Pub of the Year and still as brilliant as ever. In the last few months the bar area has been extended by the opening of an archway into the former cellar area. The new room is called Jimmy's Snug – Jimmy built it and somehow he's made it look as though it has always been there. The new cellar

boasts state-of-the-art equipment with 14 beers on tap at any one time. Beer from local micros still predominates, although more up-country breweries are featuring as guests. The range of traditional cider has also been extended.

Apart from being superbly scenic, North Devon has some cracking pubs, and, away from the tourist hotspots on the coast, life tends to move at a more relaxed pace than in most parts of the country. There are plenty of superb pubs in the Good Beer Guide – the **Castle at Combe Martin**, the **Hunters Inn in the Heddon Valley**, the **Grove at Kings Nympton**, the **Tally Ho at Hatherleigh** and the **Crediton Inn at Crediton** are all well worth a visit, but



Hunter's Inn in Devon



The Tom Cobley in Spreyton – starting-point for one of the most celebrated horse rides of all time

there are plenty more as well. A few may have been recently turned around by new owners, but most of them have been quietly doing their own thing, serving good real ale to locals and discerning visitors for years.

Andrew Swift

## Reasons to be cheerful . . . in Hampshire

Anyone staying in Petersfield, as we did for a few days last summer, could be forgiven for thinking that the area is something of a write-off in terms of real ale, with no entries in the Good Beer Guide. Bizarre as it may seem, however, our decision to base ourselves here was largely influenced by the presence of two local pubs. The first of these, the **Harrow at Steep**, a mile out of Petersfield, is by any reckoning one of England's finest pubs. We had paid it a flying visit a couple of years earlier and were determined to return for a longer stay. We were not disappointed. This quirky, traditional local, which prints its own Private Eye-style newspaper and offers fruit, veg and plants for sale at the front, is the archetypal village pub. Beer comes straight from the barrel and is served through a hatch. The building dates from the seventeenth century and has been in the same family since 1929. It is run by two sisters, Claire and Nisa McCutcheon, who were born and brought up there. It has featured in the Good Pub Guide for over 25 years, receiving a unique long-service award, and being named as 'Unspoilt pub of the year' in the 1996 and 2008 Guides. It is also a supremely friendly and down-to-earth establishment, where conversation – round a large table filling one half of the main bar – is the order of the day. What it does not have is a listing in the current Good Beer Guide, despite serving a range of well-kept local beers, including Bowmans Swift One, Ringwood Best, Triple F Alton Pride, Hopback GBF and Oakleaf Bitter, straight from the barrel. It was our local for an all-too brief three days – would that it had been longer.

The writer Edward Thomas, who died in 1917, lived nearby, and he would have little trouble recognising the Harrow if he were to return, so little has it changed. It was not the Harrow he immortalised in one of his poems, however, but the **White Horse at Priors Dean**, high on a lonely common three miles away. His poem 'Up in the Wind' recalls a chance meeting at the pub, and the pub has repaid the compliment by dedicating a corner of the pub to him. The White Horse is better known as the Pub with No Name, acquiring the nickname after the sign went missing (long before Thomas's visit) and was not replaced. Although extended since Thomas's day, the core of the old inn is intact and little changed. Here too, tradition rules, and the atmosphere of an old-time hostelry, untainted by music or machines, still prevails. Up to ten real ales are served and the annual Longest Day Beer Festival, with 100 beers, takes place this year on 16-19 June. With two such great pubs so close to each other (although unlisted in the Good Beer Guide), this part of Hampshire is well worth a visit.

Andrew Swift



The Inn with no Name



The Harrow at Steep, one of the most unspoilt pubs in the country

# Severn Vale CAMRA

**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.

## Pub news in brief

- The **Swan** in Thornbury has now closed down and been boarded up.
- The **Ship** in Oldbury on Severn is closed down and is up for sale. It's uncertain whether it'll reopen as a pub or be converted into residential property.

## Sub-branch news

The Severn Vale sub-branch has a new chairman in the form of Andrew Pickin, who takes over the reins from Neil Halsall. Neil has retired due to other commitments, but we thank him for having been instrumental in setting up the local sub-branch. We also congratulate and thank Andrew for taking on this role. The other sub-branch officers were returned unopposed. They are:

**Vice Chairman:** Martin Farrimond  
**Secretary:** Keith McIndoe  
**Membership Secretary:** Rod Lees.

*Martin Farrimond*

## Severn Vale diary

- **Fri Jun 3rd:** Social / pub crawl - New Inn, Mayhill; Rising Sun, Frampton Cotterell; Cross Hands, Winterbourne.
- **Wed Jun 15th:** Sub-branch meeting followed by beer-tasting talk (with samples!). Anchor, Thornbury. 8:00pm.
- **Fri Jul 1st:** Social / pub crawl - Lammastide, Wandswell; Berkeley Hunt, Purton; Salutation, Ham.
- **Wed Jul 20th:** Sub-branch meeting. White Horse, Northwick. 8:00pm.
- **Fri Aug 5th:** Social / pub crawl - Fox, Old Down; Cross Hands, Alveston; Ship, Alveston.
- **Wed Aug 17th:** Sub-branch meeting. Bowl, Almondsbury. 8:00pm.
- **Fri Sept 2nd:** Social / pub crawl - Boar's Head, Aust; White Hart, Olveston; Swan, Tockington; Bowl, Almondsbury.
- **Wed Sep 21st:** Sub-branch meeting. Fox, Old Down (tbc).
- **Fri Oct 7th:** Social / pub Crawl - Thornbury town centre. Meet at Wheatsheaf (tbc), 8:00pm.

For latest details, please check our online diary at  
[www.severnval.camrabristol.co.uk](http://www.severnval.camrabristol.co.uk)

## Severn Vale contact

**Keith McIndoe (secretary):** [ainsdeng@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:ainsdeng@blueyonder.co.uk)

## 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)

### Bristol's Disappearing Pubs

Having read the Spring edition of Pints West and the article about North Bristol/South Glos pubs written by Rob Lees ("Bristol's Disappearing Pubs"), I would just like to point out an inaccuracy regarding the Black Sheep at Aztec West. While this is from the frontage a Starbucks it also retains a bar serving beer as the building is also the adjacent "Lodge on the Park's" reception building. While it serves no real ale it still serves alcohol.

Just thought I would bring this to someone's attention.

Regards,  
 Jonathan Wilde  
 (by email).

*Rob Lees replies: Whilst I welcome Jonathan Wilde's comments, the main emphasis of my report was the demise of traditional community pubs in the north Bristol area and not to promote their new after-life following closure. Many pubs that are turned into cafes, restaurants, Indian restaurants, cafe bars, retain their licence and continue to sell alcohol. My mistake was to refer to the "Lodge on the Park.Com" as a Starbucks coffee house and not, as stated on the internet, a Starbucks cafe or Starbucks cafe lounge. Had I used either of these terms I would not have elaborated any further in the text or summary. Many other hotels across the area sell alcohol but they were*

*not included in my report.*

### No dogs

I refer to Pints West No. 89 which contained a letter and an article about dogs in pubs.

A few months ago I was in a pub as the sun was setting, causing bright sunbeams to shine through the window. A dog in the pub shook itself, causing a cloud of dust to fly off its coat and into the sunbeams before settling on customers, furniture, and of course into the glasses of beer on the tables. This would not have been at all obvious had it not been for the rays of the setting sun.

Shortly afterwards I happened to read an article by a vet in which it was stated that "dogs' coats can be good transporters of dead skin cells, saliva and urine".

Personally, I don't want that on top of my pint, and I find it hard to understand how, in these days of stricter hygiene regulations, and with smoking not allowed in pubs, dogs are still permitted in so many pubs, particularly where food is sold, which is most pubs these days.

I have also seen, on many occasions, bar staff coming from behind the bar to collect glasses, and whilst they are about it, pausing to stroke and pat dogs in the pub, before returning to the bar where they then carry on pouring drinks and serving food, without washing their hands.

Perhaps information could be provided to Pints West as to which pubs do not allow dogs. I am aware of only one pub in Bath where dogs are not permitted; that is the excellent Raven.

Martin Faherty,  
 Bath.

*Exaggerating the "dangers" perhaps? Ed.*

### A warm welcome for dogs

We have the George Inn in Croscombe near Wells and I was very interested to read your article in the last edition of Pints West concerning dogs in pubs.

We are a very dog-friendly pub and allow our canine friends everywhere apart from our dining room! We have a great outside space for them and quite often we have a variety of different breeds.

It would be great if you could mention this. We recently won the Bath and Borders Country Pub of the Year for 2011 which was fantastic.

Peter Graham,  
 The George Inn,  
 Croscombe, Wells,  
 Somerset.

### CAMRA Bristol Branch founder members

Calling Bristol Branch founder members . . . or am I the last one standing? If there is anyone from the 70's, I should be pleased to hear from them.

The Bay Horse in June 1974 was the first meeting and whilst I did my bit in those early days I admit I have not been to a meeting since the 21st birthday party. I occasionally see Simon Whitmore (retired founder of Butcombe brewery) in the Swan, his old Butcombe pub, and we have a laugh about the old days when he was the Honourable Member for the Opposition (Courage).

CAMRA's 40th - I hope to be around for our 40th and will try and persuade Simon to join us and tell tales.

Tim Pritchard (Membership No. 138)  
 Tel: 01934 852568  
 Email: [stantonys@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:stantonys@hotmail.co.uk)

# Pewsey: a town with three breweries (and three rather fine pubs)

Most real-ale drinkers will be familiar with **Three Castles Brewery** which was established at Pewsey in 2006. More recently, however, two other breweries have opened in the town. In 2009, Vaughan Roberts opened the **World's End Brewery** at the back of the **Crown Inn**. World's End is the old name for the part of town where the Crown – a friendly, community pub – is located. The one-barrel plant brews



The Crown at Pewsey

for the pub and also supplies beer festivals. On a recent visit we sampled a bitter, a golden ale and a stout, all of which were excellent. The Crown is a free house and five real ales are always available. Apart from World's End, beers from the likes of Hop Back, Downton, Stonehenge, Three Castles, Ramsbury, Hidden and Keystone

regularly appear at the pub. The Crown will be holding a Summer Solstice Beer Festival on 17-19 June ([www.thecrownatpewsey.co.uk](http://www.thecrownatpewsey.co.uk)).

Another Pewsey brewery which should be coming on line any time now, and which will be available at the Crown, is the **Shed Brewery**, housed unsurprisingly in a shed. No further details available at present.

If you are visiting Pewsey, don't miss the rather fine **Waterfront Inn** at Pewsey Wharf on the canal. Graham Lee, who owns the place, has been involved with the canal for years and is one of the most entertaining and informative landlords you are likely to meet. The inn is on the first floor of an old canal warehouse, renovated by Graham, with a bistro, open at weekends, on the ground floor. Real ale is served straight from a barrel behind



The Waterfront Inn at Pewsey

the bar, and to you give you an idea how much of a one-off this place is there is a life-size figure of Michael Jackson (the singer not the beer writer) slumped by the fire.

Just west of Pewsey, one of the most famous canalside pubs in the country, the **Barge at Honeystreet**, has just seen major changes. After closing last year, its future looked doubtful, but it has now been taken over by **Honeystreet Ales**, in collaboration with the Barge Inn Community Project, a group of locals who clubbed together to save it. Although you will probably not be familiar with Honeystreet Ales, you may well know the brewer – Stig Anker Andersen of Stonehenge Ales.



The Barge at Honeystreet

The Barge recently closed for a month-long refit, during which the iconic ceiling mural was touched up by the original artist. The Barge is not just a great pub in a great location, but the international centre for crop circle enthusiasts – a shrine in other words not only to real-ale but to the finest traditions of English eccentricity ([www.the-barge-inn.com](http://www.the-barge-inn.com)).

How to get there: The Crown is only a few minutes walk from Pewsey station. There is a limited service from Westbury (served by trains from Bristol and Bath) to Pewsey. Arriving at the station from Westbury, cross the footbridge, turn right out of the station, follow a footpath between

houses and when you reach the road turn right.

The Waterfront is in the other direction from the station, about half a mile up the hill.

The Barge at Honeystreet is four miles west of Pewsey Wharf along the canal tow-path.

Andrew Swift



The mural in the Barge at Honeystreet

## White Horse Pub of the Year Award

It was party-time at the White Horse in Shophouse Road, Twerton, on Tuesday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, when the landlord, Jason Clarke, received the Bath and Borders branch award for Pub of the Year. It was a measure of how far Jase and his team have come in making this former street-corner boozer into a real community pub that it was packed to the doors on the night, with people of all ages from 18 to 80+.



A delighted Jason Clarke (right) receives the award from Bath & Borders branch chairman James Honey

What's more, as ward councillor Tim Ball said to me, this award is seen not just as good news for the pub but for Twerton. For too long, this part of Bath has been regarded as some sort of no-go area, though the crime statistics tell a very different story – you're safer in Twerton than in central Bath or even genteel Bathwick. Thus for the pub to win an award, in which they were up against several well-known city centre pubs and the Royal Oak at Windsor Bridge, three times winner of the award, is being seen as an achievement for the area as well, as under the standards set by the branch for Pub of the Year judging, clientele mix counts. Little wonder then, that the locals burst into a chorus of "For He's A Jolly Good Fellow" when Jase Clarke took possession of the certificate.

For CAMRA members, it was a night to remember. While all pub landlords are clearly pleased at getting Pub of the Year, no one on the committee could recall a pub and its patrons which received the award with such enthusiasm. It's clear it meant a great deal to everyone present, and, judging from delighted comments on Facebook, many who weren't present.

The evening continued with a superb buffet, including the famous White Horse home-made sausages, and music from local duo Man Overboard. The sausages can be tried out at the pub on speciality sausage nights on Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, while open mic nights are on Thursdays. Details of charity events and other occasions can be found by following the pub on Facebook and Twitter.

Kirsten Elliott

# Watering Holes in the Desert

## brought to you from Weston-super-Mare

Weston Whispers

As many of you may be aware our “leader” Tim Nickolls is going to be away from the Bristol area for a year, so muggins will be writing this unless someone else steps forward to write it!

There are an increasing number of pubs in Weston-super-Mare that are giving CAMRA discount. Sometimes they are not obviously displayed, so this is a run-down of those that I know about. Should you know of any I have missed, please let me know for the next issue of Pints West: **Parish Pump** (near Sainsbury’s at Worle); **Raglan Arms** (details in current Good Beer Guide); **Woolpack Inn** at St Georges; **Queens Arms** at Bleadon and **Red Admiral**, Locking Road.

The Good Friday saunter around ten real ale pubs in Weston was very well supported with at least 29 on the trail at sometime (not all CAMRA members). There were at least seven from Bristol and two from Somerset.

We met at Good Beer Guide-listed pub **Off The Rails** and proceeded to the **Bristol Hotel** where the *Butcombe Bitter* was so good I had two of them, and the Bristol crowd found a little garden which I didn’t know existed to soak up sunshine and ale. From there, just around the corner to the **Red Admiral** where John had put three beers on, and the *Yorkshire Terrier* was very refreshing. We then trekked down Orchard Street to the **White Hart** where the *Harvistoun Bitter* and *Twisted* was supplied without complaint. A stroll along the cherry-blossomed-tree-lined Boulevard to the **Regency** for a choice of five beers – my choice was the *Flowers IPA*, currently made for InBev by Brains of Cardiff. There were two routes to the Raglan and Criterion, I took the uphill one but most visitors took the seaside route!

At the **Raglan Arms** the first there got the CAMRA discount bringing the price to £2.20 but later arrivals got the special weekend price of £2 for O’Hanlon’s or RCH beers. Opposite at the **Criterion**, they were having a seven ale beer festival at £2.50 a pint, so many stayed there longer than was scheduled. The *Castle Rock Hemyock* and *Nethergate*

*Augustinian* were my favourites (served from the barrel, as were two others, with three on hand pumps). Strolling back down the hill to the **Royal Hotel** (the Feathers Bar) I had the *Bath Ales Spa* at £1.55p for a half pint. A few of us hardy souls remained to go to the the **Dragon**, where after trying a couple of ales not to our taste, we settled on *Roosters Elderflower* (3.8%). Later we went the short bus ride to the **Waverley** and finished the day in the garden there.

Congratulations must be made to the **Imperial** in South Parade for their excellent transformation and interior décor. I’m also pleased to tell you they have both *Butcombe Bitter* and *Gold* on hand pump.

The **Criterion** received a good splash in a recent edition of the Weston & Somerset Mercury due to its inclusion in the new Good Pub Guide. This achievement is now added to its inclusion in CAMRA’s 2011 Good Beer Guide. This pub and the *Raglan Arms* opposite are planning a joint beer and music festival towards the end of August. As the Criterion is not on the phone I suggest you phone the Raglan if you need details nearer the time or contact me, Robin E Wild (see Weston Diary & Contact).

Robin E Wild

## Weston diary

- **Friday 17 June:** Social at the Waverley, Severn Road, 8pm.
- **16 & 17 July:** Uphill Cricket Club Beer Festival.
- **12 to 14 August:** Weston Lions Beer Festival on Beach Lawns, Friday & Saturday 11am to 10.30 pm, Sunday 11am to 4pm. Social there on Friday at 8pm.

Non-members welcome at all of the above events.

## Weston contact

Robin E Wild: email [robin-e-wild@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:robin-e-wild@hotmail.co.uk) or text 07857602293 (only phone if really necessary)

# A Round with Robin

Bristol Beer Festival seems an age ago now but I enjoyed working there more than ever this year. The setting-up session on Wednesday and working the Locale bar both on Friday and Saturday lunchtimes were all interesting and, though it was less hectic, it was still good fun working on the cider bar on Saturday evening. The stewarding on Friday night was easier than usual, and I had time to cover for bar staff on the main bar. *Arbor Yakima Valley* (7.4%) was my overall favourite ale (I was lucky to get it again at the **Seven Stars** a week later) but the *Saltire Triple Chocoholic* (4.8%) was a close second.

Once again (I missed out last year) I have been on the Somerset pub trail, which involves visiting pubs and getting stickers to collect for a T-shirt; it’s fun to do and gets you to pubs that you don’t normally visit. In early April I, with others from Weston, went by train to Taunton (**Castle Green Inn**), on by bus to Dulverton (**Rock Inn**), Waterrow (another **Rock Inn**) and Wiveliscombe (**Bear Inn**). This last pub has improved since I was there two years ago, and had four real ales on including *Cotleigh Harrier* at only £2.40. Then on by bus to Norton St Phillip (**Cross Keys**) and finally back to Taunton to the **Racehorse** for *St Austell Proper Job* and a game of skittles on their weird and wonderful alley (the balls are the shape of a haggis!). A week later with Mike, I went via Wells and Shepton Mallet (which is in the Bath & Borders CAMRA region) to South Cadbury (**Camelot Inn**) with polite staff and a very quiet garden, and with a few miles walking, on to Corton Denham (**Queens Arms**). In Shepton we visited three pubs as the bus times allowed us to do so, namely the Good Beer Guide-listed **Swan Inn**, and also the **Bell Hotel** and the **Wine Vaults**. At this pub I had the new *Greene King* seasonal ale *Alepril Fool* (4.3%). A couple of days later I visited by bus **Burcott Inn**, near Wells, and the **Rifleman’s Arms** at Glastonbury, both with excellent but expensive ales!

On St George’s day, the Chalice Morris Men (of which I am a mem-

ber) went to dance at the **George Inn** at Middlezoy where they had their normal Easter beer festival, and later to the **Woolpack** at St Georges, near Weston-super-Mare (very acceptable *Butcombe Gold* here) and both pubs had good-sized audiences. Finally that day we danced to a huge crowd in the street between the **Criterion** (where they were having a beer festival with beer at £2.50) and the **Raglan Arms** (where they were having a music festival in aid of WsM Hospicecare, and the real ales were £2 a pint). After the dancing was over I stayed for the music (the most exciting band was The Self Inflicted, a very gifted punk band) and the excellent *O’Hanlon’s Dragon Bitter* (4.8%).

On Easter Monday the pub trail seekers visited Williton (**Masons Arms**), Watchet (the **Star Inn** and **West Somerset Hotel**), Alcombe (**Britannia Hotel**) and Minehead (**Old Ship Aground** and the **Queens Head**), and a few days later when I was visiting the **Crossways** at East Huntspill (First 21A bus, or Webber 15 bus from Burnham on Sea both stop near), they confirmed that they will be having their beer festival on August bank holiday. If it is as good as last year’s it will be a miracle!

Recently I have added the **Old Stillage** in Redfield to my list of favourite pubs in Bristol, and try to get there, and the **The Gryphon**, **Three Tuns**, **Cornubia** and **Knight’s Templar** when I can tear myself away from the delights of the **Seven Stars**. Thank goodness other people besides me voted for it as Bristol pub of the year for the second time consecutively.

Robin E Wild



# Meanderings in the Midlands

On the evening of the recent royal wedding (I had been travelling north by train during the day) I found myself in the village of Chipping, some nine miles north east of Preston for a morris wedding the following day. The **Sun Inn** was to be the meeting point for a sing and a play and with four real ales on hand pumps – the *Hawkhead Bitter* was my choice of session beer. As half of those present were from the south we were shocked to be getting only 80% of a pint as the beer was through sparklers to give a northern head. No amount of pleading with the bar staff would alter this, but the beer was good and the price was OK.

On the Sunday, Mayday, following the real wedding, we danced at the village fete conveniently situated at the rear of Chipping's Good Beer Guide-listed pub, the **Tillotsons**. Here the head was a 5% less than the Sun, and a bigger choice of ales. The *Hart Icemaiden* (3.8%), *Bowland Pheasant Plucker* (3.6%) and the inevitable *Hawkhead Bitter* were all tasty and well kept. In the evening I went and had some very good food there, and more beer, and I played dominoes (with up to nine dots) and darts (no trebles on the board) with the Shafto family from Harrogate.

The following morning this family gave me a lift to Preston (as there were no buses, it being another bank holiday), and not being able to find the Old Dog and Partridge (GBG listed 2011) in Fishergate, I had to settle for a beer in the **Old Vic** opposite the railway station. This doesn't look much from the outside but it is a really splendid pub, with four local ales and Courage Directors, two dart boards, pool table, big screen, a good collection of old bottles and plates, and sepia photos of old Preston and Preston dignitaries before 1900. The staff were ever so polite, and the pints were actually topped up. I had the *Moorhouse Broomstick Bitter* and *Bank Top Old Slapper*, both 4% and £2.70, and though I didn't eat there the menu is incredibly cheap and has good looking food.

Catching my train to Coventry and going to stay with friends in Balsall Common took up most of the rest of the day, and I was encouraged to drink a good selection of bottle beers there. However the following day we started an expedition over the next two days to some of their favourite canal-side pubs on the Grand Union and Stratford Canals. We went to the Good Beer Guide-listed **Cape of Good Hope** near Warwick, where we drank *TwoLocks* bitter from the *Churchend* brewery at 4%. This ale is brewed for the pub and is derived from "Two Locks". I followed that with a local ale, *Studley Weatheroak Keystone Hops* (5%) which was beautifully hoppy and, like all but two of their seven beers, served straight from the cask. Later that day we visited the **Watermans** near Hatton locks where only two beers were on offer but the *Slaughterhouse Arkwrights* (4.2%) bitter from Warwick was excellent. John drank the *Weston Scrumpi* which was not fizzy! The following day we went to eat at the **Navigation** near Lapworth near where the Grand Union and Stratford Canals join, and the *Holden's Black Country Bitter* (3.9%) was better even than the *Timothy Taylor Landlord* there. The food was very good and three of us ate for just over £20! Following that we went to the **Fleur de Lys** at Lowansford which, though having a superb garden by the Stratford canal, has been turned by Greene King from a delightful pub into a restaurant and bar and not the anticipated pleasure that my friends had envisaged when they brought me there. However the *Greene King Old Trip* (4.2%) was OK and the garden was quiet. The next day I made my departure from Balsall and, passing through Coventry on the way to catch a bus to Leicester, I visited the medieval Spon Street and the GBG-listed pub, the **Old Windmill**, which is the Coventry Pub of the Year winner and has been before. A fascinating pub with at least four snugs and two large rooms, a range, a huge fireplace, a mash tub and copper in the brewhouse snug and more beers than rooms. The landlord apologised to me for having to serve the *Timothy Taylor* bitter from gravity as the usual customers prefer it from hand pump!

There is an excellent bus service from Coventry to Leicester, taking 80 minutes, which if you get off at Charles Street drops you opposite the **Ale Wagon** which I wrote about in Pints West some two years ago. Nothing seems to have changed here, mostly Hoskins beers, at about £2.40 pint but the guest ale *Newark Wyke* (3.8%) from Grantham was £2.70 and the *Hoskins Old Navigation Ale* (7%) was more expensive. Then to the **Criterion** which I had neglected to visit two years ago, and which was coming to the end of a beer festival. This GBG pub has loads of Euro bottled and draught beers, and nine other beers still on. I had the *Abbeyle Repetition* (4.7%) royal wedding ale, *Blackwater Mild* (3.7%), *Spire Chariots of Fire* (4.5%) and *Oakham JHB*, all at about

£2.70 a pint. The following day I went to the *Swan Inn* at Mountsorrel, betwixt Leicester and Loughborough, where the GBG pub is kept by a lady hailing from Weston-super-Mare! The pub has recently been converted into a two small rooms from the lounge bar into eateries, and the public bar into a stepped large room with the bar dividing it. Old photos adorn the walls and four real ales were on, of which I drank the *Castle Rock Harvester* for £3.15. Also in Leicester I visited the GBG-listed (and Pub of the Year winner) pub, **The Pub** on New Walk, with minimalist furnishings but which had 15 hand pumps and reasonably priced beers. They had five beers from *Salamander*, and my new brewery choice here was *Captain Cook Easter Island* (4.1%). My favourite pub in Leicester is now the Everards **Old Horse** on London Road, not so much for the beers, which are seven Everards and two guests all on hand pumps, nor even the 15% discount to CAMRA members, but the superb long garden with its tall trees, boules court, children's play area furthest from the pub, and a real old police box (a Tardis to Dr Who fans).

Boating in a narrow boat on the Ashby Canal over the next two days, I visited the **Olde Red Lion** in Market Bosworth so that I and my companion, the boat owner, could have a beer there and eat too. There was one other pub in Market Bosworth, but this looked dubious and I'm always put off by places advertising ice cold lager. At the Olde Red Lion we had a pint of *Marston's Dragon Ale* and *Marston's Old Empire* for which we paid £7.10. Strangely, at the Marston's pub in Worle near Weston-super-Mare, the **Summerhouse**, I have drunk both beers at £2.60 a pint, and Market Bosworth doesn't seem to be so much more upmarket than Worle. The food was OK and was £22 for the two of us. However on my last evening in Leicester we went to the **Cow and Plough** at Oadby, which I would thoroughly recommend to anyone. This is a *Steaming Billy* pub, and had two of its beers on plus three guests including *Timothy Taylor Mild*. A GBG pub of course, it has a long bar decorated with World War Two repro and original posters, whilst the back bar is more like a Belgian-style bar, with oddments all around, a stained-glass bar window behind the servery and a pre-decimal cash register.

I hope this will be useful if you are visiting these places in the Midlands.

Robin E Wild

Note: 'GBG' = 'Good Beer Guide'

Now the South West's largest independent beer festival

## 2011 Nailsea Beer and Cider Festival



at Nailsea and Backwell Rugby Club

**Friday 15 July from 6.00pm-11.00pm**  
**Saturday 16 July from Noon-11.00pm**  
**Sunday 17 July from Noon-8.00pm**

Raising funds this year for



children's hospice  
SOUTH WEST

Over 100 beers, ciders and perries.  
 Free live music Saturday and Sunday.  
 Children's village and free entrance to the grounds.

Advance ticket valid for all sessions £7.00 includes programme, commemorative glass and first half-pint.  
 See our website [www.applefest.co.uk](http://www.applefest.co.uk) for full ticket details, directions and public transport links, or call us at the Club on 01275 810818.

# A day trip to South Devon

With a couple of days off and some pre-booked cheap fares, I set off to South Devon with the aim of seeing what the resorts of Teignmouth and Dawlish have to offer the real ale drinker. I particularly wanted to focus on beers from local south west breweries.

A good tip? Yes, it certainly was! First stop was Teignmouth, and armed with a bit of research from the 'real ale hunter' website, the recommended pub to start my survey at was the **Blue Anchor** on Teign Street, less than ten minutes' walk from the station. A medium-sized pub with a pool table on one side, the Blue Anchor was almost deserted at 1pm. But the one local and landlady were most friendly (and had connections with Bath Ales) and, with my eye on local beers, I started off with Red Rock's Devon Coast, a most enjoyable 4% golden beer (a 'tick' in the book too). The pub sells six ales, and today also featured Bays Best and South Hams Golden Harvest, also 4%.

With a busy agenda, and certain that no other pub would feature such a range, I hopped on the train to Dawlish, and with a print-out of the Dawlish Ale Trail (see [www.dawlish.com](http://www.dawlish.com)), I had identified four or five pubs that looked to be of interest to the real ale drinker. The famous black swans would just have to take a back seat this time!

First stop was the Laffin Pig – but I didn't think it looked a particularly happy place, rather dark and dingy with two hand pumps on, so I moved on.

The furthest pub in the town (from the station) was the **Swan Inn**, a good ten-minute uphill saunter through the picturesque streets. The jovial landlord was serving three beers today, and I went for the Dartmoor Best, 3.9%. Not as local as I would have liked – coming from 'over the border' brewery, St. Austell – but a most tasty easy-drinking beer. The landlord helpfully provided some advice on other pubs worth a look too.

Next stop was the **Lansdowne**, the pub with the largest range in the town. It's a large pub, with the bar in a semi-circle in the centre. There were two different beers on each part of the bar (six in total...yes, I know, what sort of semi-circle is that?!), and I started off with local brew Citra, a 3.8% offering from Isca. Very refreshing! Again, the bar staff were very friendly, and offered tasters of some of the other beers on offer. These included a black ale from Hunters Brewery at Ipplepen called Black Jack, and weighing in at 6%! It was delicious! The pump clip was an amazing cast metal design which must have cost a bit to manufacture, and the landlord told me the beer had only recently been launched.

Still, I couldn't linger with more pubs on my list, and fortunately the next one was just a minute's walk down the hill, the **White Hart**. Just two beers on here, but both from Skinner's, one of my favourites. So a quick half of Keel Over at 4.2% was enjoyed – amber colour and very tasty, a typically enjoyable Skinner's beer. The pub is quite small, so I sat outside watching the 'rush hour' go by – just the occasional vehicle!

I'd been tipped off by the landlord at the Swan that the **Exeter Inn** had recently reopened. It's located in a quaint side street, well alleyway really, that's easy to miss. But it's only about one minute from the station so it was ideal. It was empty at 5pm, but featured a couple of real ales, including Otter Bright at 4.5% which was just what I needed before dashing for the train. The landlord is ex-navy (I think) and the pub is in a very tidy condition.

I just hope that with so many pubs in the town that they can all survive.

With the Anchor at Cockwood Harbour said to be under new management, I decided to leave that one for another time and head to Topsham. Well, any visit here would have to go to that great institution, the **Bridge**, and sitting outside by the river with a Branscombe Vale beer – one of several available – was delightful in the warm evening air. There's not much more that I can say about this pub that's not already been written – suffice to say, if you've never visited, go! It's a beautifully traditional pub – you won't be disappointed.

Next and last on my list was the **Globe Hotel** on Fore Street, home of the recently launched **Topsham Brewery**. Although it was too late for a proper tour, one of the friendly staff took time out to explain what their plans were and show me the equipment. As luck would have it, a porter was just being brewed but not ready, but I would have to sup the Steam Beer, a darkish brew coming in at 4.5% or was it 4.6%....my notes were starting to resemble a drunken spider by now, but I do recall the taste was delightful. There were at least four other ales on in this Good Beer Guide-listed venue, a rambling pub/hotel with several distinct drinking areas and good food too. Nice and smart.

So, as I stumbled towards the station for the journey home, I mused that my day had been most enjoyable. There are some interesting pubs in the Dawlish and Teignmouth areas serving good tasty local ale, even if they aren't in the current Good Beer Guide, and my quest for good locally brewed beer had been successful. Quiet tidy pubs, helpful bar staff, good well-kept ales....and time for 40 winks as the train sped me home.

Tim Proudman

## DAWKINS ALES

Timsbury, Bath 01761 472242 [www.dawkins-ales.co.uk](http://www.dawkins-ales.co.uk)

### SUMMER SPECIALS SINGLE HOP VARIETY SERIES



Great beers at our own pubs

#### The Green Man: Cider & Cheese Fest 2-6 June

Alfred Place, Kingsdown, BS2 8HD 9304824 CAMRA GOOD BEER GUIDE 2011

#### The Miner's Arms: Summer Beer Fest 10-13 June

Mina Road, St Werburghs, BS2 9YQ 9079874 CAMRA GOOD BEER GUIDE 2011

#### The Victoria

Southleigh Rd, Clifton, Bristol BS8 2BH 9745675 VENUE BRISTOL PUB OF YEAR 2009-10

#### The Portcullis

Wellington Ter, Clifton Village, BS8 4LE 9085536 CAMRA BRISTOL PUB OF YEAR 2010 RUNNER UP

#### The Hillgrove

Dove St, Kingsdown, BS2 8LT 9249818 CAMRA BRISTOL PUB OF THE YEAR 2007 GBG 2011

## News from Dawkins

### Pub news

There will be a **Cheese & Cider Festival** at the **Green Man** in Kingsdown from 2nd to 6th June, with over 20 ciders from six counties, and 10 cheeses from each of those counties to match.

The **Miner's Arms** in St Werburghs is holding its annual **Summer Beer Festival** from 10th to 13th June, which coincides with the St Werburghs City Farm Fair on the Saturday. Dawkins is brewing **Fair Ale**, a 4% golden beer, and 10p from each pint sold will go to the farm charity.

Owing to demand, the **Hillgrove** in Kingsdown is shortly to add another two beer engines, taking it up to a dozen real ales and two real ciders. Landlord Jamie says it is encouraging how many people of all ages are converting to real ale.

Over the summer Dawkins will trial a loyalty stamp scheme for their popular Dawkins Club members, in which for 10 stamps members can claim a free pint of Dawkins ale of their choice.

### Brewery news

Brewers Alex and James have embarked on a programme of beers for summer using new wave hops.

For June there is **Guerilla Gold**, a 4.6% blonde, **Juno**, a 4% elderflower wheat beer, and **Citra Bullet**, a 4% blend of USA Citra and New Zealand Green Bullet hops.

In July Dawkins will start their rolling series of single hop variety recipes, kicking off with the 4.2% hoppy blonde **Aurora Beerealis**, followed by the 4% blonde and lemony, slightly creamy Japanese-hopped **Sorachi Ace**.

August sees the crisp and golden 4.2% **Green Bullet** followed by the American-hopped **Simcoe**, a 4.2% blonde with pine and citrus tones.

Dawkins has just taken delivery of a small bottling kit which they'll be experimenting with over the coming weeks with the aim of producing a range of their brews in bottle-conditioned form.

# Wiltshire pubs by train

With some excellent new real-ale pubs opening in Wiltshire, a pub crawl by train is not only possible but highly recommended. A mere ten minutes east of Bath is **Chippenham** – and if you haven't yet sampled the delights of the **Three Crowns**, taken over by the Jenner family a year ago, then you are in for a treat. The pub is a gem, a real traditional local. Six real ales are always on offer, with an emphasis on lesser-known breweries, and a policy of serving a range of beer styles, from pale and hoppy to dark and luscious. There are also three farmhouse ciders and perries available. Food is limited to rolls, except at festival times (the most recent being 27-30 May), when more substantial fare is available. It is around 10 to 15 minutes walk from the station, straight through the town centre. ([www.threecrownschippenham.co.uk](http://www.threecrownschippenham.co.uk))

Heading south from Bath, some trains stop at **Avoncliff** on request.



The Cross Guns at Avoncliff

Here a stroll across the canal aqueduct will take you to the **Cross Guns**, where the full range of Box Steam Brewery beers are available. Incredibly, this pub, which is almost always busy, was disposed of by Ushers in the 1960s because they considered it unviable – but that was before the canal was restored. Superb location, excellent beers and food available all day – well

worth breaking your journey for. ([www.crossguns.net](http://www.crossguns.net))

Next stop is **Bradford on Avon**, an historic and fascinating weaving town with the Good Beer Guide-listed **Castle** and **Rising Sun**.

It is Trowbridge, the next town along the line, that has really seen things look up for real-ale drinkers in recent months, however. The 2011 Good Beer Guide has no entries for Trowbridge – making it possibly the only county town in the country not to feature in the Guide. Despite that, it is definitely worth stopping off here. A few minutes walk from the station (away from the town) will take you to **Stallards** on Stallard Street (BA14 9AJ). Open from 3pm on Mondays to Fridays and from noon at weekends, this is Milk Street Brewery's latest enterprise, and an excellent place to sample their ales.

Milk Street reopened Stallards after a major refit last August, the same month that Mike Lefever took over the **Kings Arms** on Castle Street (BA14 8AN) in the town centre. Previously a run-of-the-mill backstreet boozier, this is now a free house with a good range of well-kept real ales, and again is well worth a visit.

Another two stops down the line brings you to Warminster. The **Fox & Hounds** west of the town centre on Deverill Road, a long-time Good Beer Guide entry, is always worth a visit, but there are now several more reasons to visit Warminster. The **Organ**, opened in the eighteenth century, closed in 1913 and reopened in 2006, is a splendidly atmospheric inn with a fine range of real ales. ([www.theorganinn.co.uk](http://www.theorganinn.co.uk)) The **Masons**

**Arms** in East Street has joined the ranks of Wiltshire's top real-ale pubs even more recently. Helen Fitter and Richard Findlay reopened the pub in July 2009 after a major refurbishment, with a determination to transform it into a place people would want to visit. Two years on, they have succeeded magnificently. This is a truly excellent and friendly pub, with beer straight from the barrel, loyalty cards, good food, and a rather fine line in jumbo-size Scotch eggs. ([www.masonsarmspub.com](http://www.masonsarmspub.com))

Finally, there is the **Weymouth Arms** in Emwell Street, under new ownership from December 2009. Formerly aimed at the youth/sport market, it has been totally transformed, with the aim of taking it back to what it originally was – a substantial and well-appointed eighteenth-century merchant's house. The illusion of Georgian elegance in the wood-panelled drawing room is astonishing and, while the inn has a growing reputation for food, there are also up to three real ales on tap. ([www.weymoutharms.co.uk](http://www.weymoutharms.co.uk))



The Three Crowns at Chippenham a century ago



The Organ in Warminster in the 1880s



The Weymouth Arms in Warminster

Beyond Warminster, the next stop is Salisbury, packed with decent pubs, and another great place for a pub crawl ... but that will have to wait for a future issue.

Andrew Swift

The Bar Code



21/03/11

# Pub News

## Clifton gardens

With summer bursting upon us, it's worth mentioning, if you find yourself drinking in the Clifton Village area, some pubs which have new outdoor drinking areas that you may not have been aware of. The **Portcullis** recently opened a garden after an extended period of wrangling. This is accessible from a doorway off the top of the stairs leading up from the end of the bar. The **Greyhound** also recently reopened their garden at the back of the pub. This had been opened a few years back, but just temporarily. The **Richmond** by the Students Union now has a renovated roof-top area that's a glorious sun-trap. There are of course a few others that have long had gardens; these include the **Clifton Wine Bar** and the **Lansdown**.

The **Gryphon**, the "Real Ale and Metal" pub close to the Colston Hall in central Bristol, now offers discounts to card-carrying CAMRA members of 30 pence off a pint and 15 pence off a half pint of real ale. It's also just £2 a pint on ales and some other drinks on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6pm.

The **Three Tuns**, the Arbor Ales pub in Hotwells, not far from College Green, is celebrating this year's summer solstice with another beer festival, running from the 17th to the 19th of June. There should be custom one-off brews from Arbor, Dawkins, Bristol Beer Factory and Marble on top of a load of beers from Thornbridge Salopian, Saltaire,

Moor and Dark Star. The theme is summery flavours and a lots of blond, hoppy and rare ales. There will be food served all weekend, some mel-low DJ's on the Saturday and morris dancing on the Sunday. Beer prices are promised to be cheaper than usual as a special treat. The pub is also reported to be about to install a eighth ale pump "in preparation for the winter onslaught" and developing its food menu.

The **Orchard** in Hanover Place (on Spike Island), well known as an award-winning cider house (with over twenty real ciders and perries normally available), is also a great place for real ales. It recently closed for a few days for a major bar re-fit, opening again with up to seven real ales stillaged behind the bar, offering beers direct from the cask. The official re-opening was marked by having a great range of "Champion Beer of Britain" ales on offer alongside their regulars, London Pride, Gem and Otter Bitter. Card-carrying CAMRA members should be able to buy the real ales for £2.50 a pint on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

The **Nailsea Beer and Cider Festival** takes place at Nailsea and Backwell Rugby Club from Friday 15th to Sunday 17th July, featuring over 100 beers, ciders and perries. See the website [www.applefest.co.uk](http://www.applefest.co.uk) for full ticket details, directions and public transport links, or call the Club on 01275 810818.

There will be a beer festival organised by Yeo Valley Lions at **Claverham Village Hall** on 1st to 3rd July. Lots of beers and lots of entertainment will be provided. See [www.claverham-beer-festival.org.uk](http://www.claverham-beer-festival.org.uk).

The **Bird in Hand** in Salford is having a beer and cider festival from Friday 24th to Sunday 26th June.

SP

## News from Arbor Ales

Arbor Ales continues to experiencing overall growth. The brewery is now busier than ever before. Jon Comer told me that at one stage a

while ago that he had nine distinct real ales were available for distribution. Paul Worsley is now assisting with the actual brewing as well as all other duties. Another batch of casks is on order in order to remove a bottleneck in the production process (no pun intended).

Look out for a planned new beer *Alpha IPA*; according to Jon this will be "stupidly bitter" with lots of high-alpha hops. Another collaboration ale is on the cards, this time with John Winerah of Dorset based brewery, Art Brew.

Keith Hewett of the Chelsea Inn, Easton, a regular outlet for Arbor's products, will have a bespoke ale to take with him to this year's Sunrise Festival in Bruton. Keith, known to all his friends and customers as 'Lemmy', has run a real ale bar at the festival for a number of years now. This year patrons will be able to enjoy *Lemmy's Ruin*.

Drinks writer Adrian Tierney-Jones is currently working on a new book about public houses. One of the subjects is the Arbor Ales house the Three Tuns in St Georges Road.

Finally, in response to queries about the origin of the Arbor Ales logo – this depicts a maple leaf, genus *Acer*, and was adopted because of the family connection with Canada. Jon's brother-in-law Namaya Reynolds, landlord of the Old Stillage, hails from Toronto.

Henry Davies

**Arbor Ales**  
KINGSWOOD - BRISTOL  
Tel. 0117 9570899  
[www.arborales.co.uk](http://www.arborales.co.uk)

**SOLSTICE BEERFEST**  
Friday 17th - Sunday 19th June

**The Three Tuns**  
78 St Georges Road - Hotwells - BS1 5UR

Arbor Ales Annual Winning Craft Brewery  
**Artisan** 4.8%

Arbor Ales Annual Winning Craft Brewery  
**Hunny Beer** 4.2%

Arbor Ales Annual Winning Craft Brewery  
**Inferiority Complex** 3.4%

Arbor Ales Annual Winning Craft Brewery  
**Breakfast Stout** 7.4%

The Bar Code



29/03/11

# Pub News

Good news in Bristol city centre where we understand the **Horse and Groom** in St. Georges Road has been acquired by a local pub operator. This pub has closed and re-opened frequently of late but we are hoping that the new owner can give it some consistency with staple real ale and cider offerings. The **Velindra** in Commercial Road has re-opened having been renovated by local pub owner, the Holden family, and is serving Doom Bar and Thatcher's Cheddar Valley cider. This is a welcome return for this long-closed pub. Over the river in Bedminster, the music-friendly **White Horse** in West Street has closed and is fenced off; the reason for this closure is unknown to us. On Gloucester Road the Hobgoblin has re-opened with a name change. Formerly the Royal Hotel, it is now **Madame Geneva's**.

In Coombe Dingle, the vast **Iron Bridge** is suffering a planning application to partly demolish and convert to a children's nursery with additional housing on the site. Bristol Pubs Group is opposing the application. The Group is also opposing the demolition of the **Farriers Arms** in Fishponds where a decision on Morrison's destructive planning application is expected very soon.

Easton has lost a lot of pubs in recent years and cannot afford to lose another; the **Armoury Tavern** on Stapleton Road is the only pub trading

between the Lebeqs Tavern and the Crown in St. Judes, and is for sale. It is important that this well known pub is retained.

The **Red Lion** in Whitehall is open and trading, however a "for sale" board is displayed outside. This pub has been at the heart of the Whitehall community for many years and Bristol Pubs Group sincerely hopes that it can continue to serve the local area in the future – as a pub.



The Red Lion in Whitehall

In South Gloucestershire the **Blue Bowl** in Hanham has undergone a refurbishment and is now open for business. The **Swan** in Winterbourne has also enjoyed a smartening up following ten months of closure and has re-opened. Doom Bar and London Pride were offered on a recent visit.

A mile away, the **Golden Heart** at Kendleshire (between Downend and Coalpit Heath) has re-opened with an emphasis on food, while three real ales are offered including Wadworth 6X and Greene King Old Speckled Hen.

The long-closed **Crown** in Staple Hill is to be converted into flats with an additional building for homes at the rear. Another **Crown**, that at Hambrook, is closed and so is **Ye Olde Inn** at Westerleigh where the lease is for sale through Christie and Co.

In North Somerset the **Bell** (more recently Cromwells) in Congresbury has been demolished and will be replaced by housing and a retail outlet.

## Correction:

In the last Pints West it was reported that the **Darlington Arms** in Redhill was closed and for sale. On the day our informant went there that did appear to be the case. We apologise if we got that wrong. However we can now report that the pub is trading, and is normally open from 7pm until 11pm Wednesday to Monday (it is closed on Tuesdays) and from 12 to 2pm on Sunday lunchtimes. Saturday lunch opening times are unclear so we suggest you check before you travel. Please also note that there is no pub sign.

Mike Jackson



The Golden Heart at Kendleshire

## Solution to the crossword on page 21

Across: 1 Unicorn, 5 Einstein, 9 Navy blue, 10 Viewer, 11 Tissue, 12 Holy city, 14 Yakima valley, 17 Modern ballet, 20 Flurried, 22 Nonage, 23 Wizard, 25 Abernethy, 26 Shipman, 27 Resign. Down: 2 Niacin, 3 Odissey beer, 8 Illex tree, 13 The Colston Arms, 8 Illex tree, 7 & 13 The Colston Arms, 8 Illex tree, 16 Colledge, 18 Ardmore, 19 Egg nog, 21 India, 24 Amp, 15 see 7, 15 see 6, 16 Colledge, 18 Ardmore, 19 Egg nog, 21 India, 24 Amp.

## BRISTOL CIDER HOUSE

CAMRA CIDER & PERRY PUB OF THE YEAR 2010 SOUTH WEST 3<sup>rd</sup>

## EVERY SATURDAY CIDER FESTIVAL

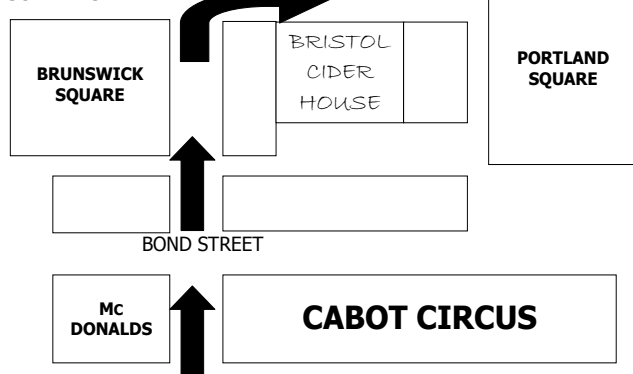
20 LOCAL CIDERS ON DRAUGHT  
LIVE OPEN MIC + HOG ROAST ROLLS  
2PM START - FREE ENTRY-0117 9428196

www.bristolciderhouse.co.uk Facebook- bristolciderhouse

**CIDER TASTING EVENTS-MIN 10 PEOPLE**  
8 HALF PINTS WITH CIDER FOOD  
COMPETITIVE FORMAT-PRIZE FOR WINNER

**CIDER PARTIES-MIN 40 PEOPLE**  
BOOK EXCLUSIVE USE OF OUR UPSTAIRS AREA  
IDEAL FOR BIRTHDAYS-NO HIRE CHARGE

SURREY STREET



## GOOD FOOD & REAL ALE GO TOGETHER AT

# The New Inn Mayshill

BRISTOL & DISTRICT CAMRA  
PUB OF THE YEAR 2009

**MEALS SERVED EVERY DAY**  
**3 Real Ales Including Micros**  
**and a Real Cider**

All Real Ales/Cider £2.10 a Pint on Sunday  
& Monday evenings from 5.30pm  
to CAMRA Members (show card)



Since 2002

Badminton Road, Mayshill,  
Nr Frampton Cotterell, Bristol.  
BS36 2NT

T: 01451 773161

E: dallyinns@aol.com



Associate Member



Some of the people who took part in the South Gloucestershire Mild Trail in May, pictured outside the New Inn at Mayhill (see page 12)

## 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 or traditional cider to card-carrying CAMRA members. Some examples from the Bristol & District branch area:

- **Anchor**, Thornbury    ● **Bank**, John Street, Bristol    ● **Bristol Cider House**, Surrey Street, Bristol
- **Cornubia**, Temple Street, Bristol    ● **Gryphon**, Colston Street, Bristol    ● **Horts**, Broad Street, Bristol
- **New Inn**, Mayhill    ● **Old Stillage**, Redfield    ● **Orchard Inn**, Hanover Place, Bristol
- **Parish Pump**, Worle    ● **Queens Arms**, Bleadon    ● **Raglan Arm**, Upper Church Road, Weston-super-Mare
- **Red Admiral**, Locking Road, Weston-super-Mare    ● **Seven Stars**, Thomas Lane, Bristol
- **Woolpack Inn**, St Georges, Weston-super-Mare

The discounts vary from pub to pub and from time to time. Check with the individual pubs for details.



**CAMPAIGN  
FOR  
REAL ALE**

## Wear Pints West



|                    |                    |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| <b>T-shirt</b>     | <b>£13.50 each</b> |
| <b>Polo shirt</b>  | <b>£16.50 each</b> |
| <b>Sweat shirt</b> | <b>£18.50 each</b> |
| <b>Fleece</b>      | <b>£21.00 each</b> |

Postage & packing is £3 for a single item, plus £1 for each additional garment ordered.

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

Email enquiries to [badrag@camrabristol.org.uk](mailto:badrag@camrabristol.org.uk).

Please allow up to 4 weeks for delivery.

### PINTS WEST CLOTHING ORDER FORM

|             | Price each | Quantity | Size  | Colour |
|-------------|------------|----------|-------|--------|
| T-SHIRT     | £13.50     | .....    | ..... | .....  |
| POLO SHIRT  | £16.50     | .....    | ..... | .....  |
| SWEAT SHIRT | £18.50     | .....    | ..... | .....  |
| FLEECE      | £21.00     | .....    | ..... | .....  |

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

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

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

.....

.....

POSTCODE .....

EMAIL ADDRESS (in case of queries)

.....

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

# Branch diary

## Diary of the Bristol & District branch of CAMRA

- **Tues June 7th** – First explorer trip of the season. East Bristol area, including Kelston. Swineford. Doynton. Bridgegate. Coach dep Cornubia 6.45pm, cost £6.
- **Wed June 15th** – Committee meeting, 8pm Cornubia. NOTE NEW DATE.
- **Sat June 11th** – Regional meeting, Horts, 12.30.
- **Thurs June 16th** – BADRAG gathering, Cornubia 7.30pm
- **Sat June 18th** – Proposed trip to Cheddar Ales 3rd annual Beer Festival. Coach departs Cornubia 11am (NOTE REVISED TIME) and returns at 7pm. Coach price TBC, beer festival entry free to card carrying CAMRA members.
- **Wed June 22nd** – Branch meeting upstairs at the Gryphon 8pm. Guest speaker TBC.
- **Sun June 26th** – A joint cycle ride with CAMRA and Bristol Cycling Campaign to explore two dozen of Bristol's best pubs (not going in them all, only a few!). Starts Knights Templar 11am sharp. Finishes Seven Stars around 4.30pm.
- **Tues June 28th** – Explorer to Mid Mendips, Coach dep 6.45pm from Cornubia to pubs in the East Harptree, Compton Martin, Hinton Blewitt, Chew Valley areas. Cost £6.
- **Tues July 5th** – Pubs Group social (open to all), visiting pubs in the Totterdown area, all within an easy walking distance, starting at the Oxford at 7pm.
- **Wed July 6th** – Explorer to N Somerset. Coach dep 6.45pm from Cornubia to pubs in the Gordano, Wraxall, Portishead, Clapton areas. Cost £6.
- **Wed July 13th** – Committee meeting, 8pm Cornubia.
- **Sat July 16th** – Proposed cider event. By coach to Hecks and Wilkins, dep Cornubia 12.30. Return by 9pm. Cost estimated at £12, details TBC.
- **Wed July 20th** – Explorer to Frampton area, coach dep 6.45pm from Cornubia, to pubs in the Iron Acton, Mayshill, Frampton, Coalpit Heath areas. Cost £6.
- **Thurs July 21st** – BADRAG gathering, Portcullis, Clifton, 7.30pm.
- **Wed July 27th** – Branch meeting (AGM) upstairs at Horts, 7.45 for 8pm sharp. All members must show valid CAMRA membership card to gain entry and vote.
- **Thurs July 28th** – Pubs Group meeting, Cornubia 7pm.
- **Sat July 30th** – North Wilts/Oxon brew pub tour by coach from Cornubia. Full details TBC.
- **Thurs Aug 4th** – Great British Beer Festival, Earls Court – Bristol Beer Festival helpers trip, details TBC.
- **Sat Aug 6th** – Annual Severn Beach pub crawl. Meet Temple Meads at 11.45 for 12.03 train to Avonmouth. Full details to follow.
- **Wed Aug 10th** – Committee meeting, 8pm Cornubia.
- **Wed Aug 17th** – City Centre Saunter. Meet Shakespeare, Prince Street at 7 for 7.30pm for walking tour of local pubs.
- **Thurs Aug 18th** – BADRAG gathering, Staple Hill Oak, 7.30pm.
- **Wed Aug 24th** – Branch meeting, venue TBC, 7.45 for 8pm.

Please check our website ([www.camrabristol.org.uk](http://www.camrabristol.org.uk)) or sign up to our yahoo group for the latest information and more details on any of the above events, as sometimes events can change after press date – or 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.

## Twitter

You can now follow Bristol & District CAMRA on Twitter. Use @CAMRABristol to get the latest tweets about branch news and activities. Coming soon ... Facebook!

## Thanks to this issue's contributors

|                     |                  |                 |
|---------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Alan Sibley         | Kirsten Elliott  | Robin E Wild    |
| Alison Bridle       | Margaret Evett   | Steve Hunt      |
| Andrew Swift        | Mark Steeds      | Steve Matthews  |
| Colin Postlethwaite | Martin Farrimond | Tim Proudman    |
| Duncan Shine        | Mike Jackson     | Tony Durbin     |
| Eddie Taberner      | Neil Ravenscroft | Editor:         |
| Henry Davies        | Pete Taberner    | Steve Plumridge |
| John MacRae         | Richard Brooks   |                 |



## brought to you entirely by unpaid volunteers

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:

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

or post it to:

**Pints West Editor, Steve Plumridge,  
Garden Flat, 6 Royal York Villas,  
Clifton, Bristol BS8 4JR.**

**Published by** the Bristol & District Branch of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale, end of May 2011 ©

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

**Spread the word:** any article in this publication may be reproduced *provided the source (Pints West), including the contributor's name where applicable, is stated.* (No using logos without prior permission.)

**Subscriptions:** to be put on a mailing list (for UK addresses) send ten 1st class stamps to the editor.

**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...

Bristol: 0117 9223444 / S. Glos: 01454 624000

Glos: 01452 426201 / N. Somerset: 01934 632026

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

or visit [www.tradingstandards.gov.uk](http://www.tradingstandards.gov.uk)

**Design & Layout:** Steve Plumridge.

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



## Bath & Borders diary

- **Thursday 9th June, 8:30pm.** An evening at the George in Croscombe to award them our Rural Pub of the Year certificate. The second time they've won and no wonder!
- **Tuesday 14th June, 8pm.** An evening at the Fox and Hounds in Warminster to award them our Community Pub of the Year certificate. Another award and a well deserved one.
- **Thursday 23rd June, 8:30pm.** A social at the Farmhouse, Lansdown Rd, Bath. This pubs recently been through turbulent times and deserves a revisit.
- **Tuesday 28th June, 8:30pm.** The Branch Meeting to be held at the Prince of Wales, Dilton Marsh, Wilts.

## 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.

## Weston diary and contact

See page 28

## Severn Vale diary and contacts

See page 26

Views expressed in Pints West are those of the individual authors and not necessarily supported by CAMRA.

Inclusion of an advertisement does not imply endorsement by CAMRA.



# A Campaign

# of Two Halves

## Join CAMRA Today

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

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

### Your Details

Title \_\_\_\_\_ Surname \_\_\_\_\_

Forename(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Tel No(s) \_\_\_\_\_

### Partner's Details (if Joint Membership)

Title \_\_\_\_\_ Surname \_\_\_\_\_

Forename(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy) \_\_\_\_\_

|                             | Direct Debit                 | Non DD                       |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Single Membership (UK & EU) | £20 <input type="checkbox"/> | £22 <input type="checkbox"/> |

|                                                |                              |                              |
|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Joint Membership (Partner at the same address) | £25 <input type="checkbox"/> | £27 <input type="checkbox"/> |
|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|

For Young Member and concessionary rates please visit [www.camra.org.uk](http://www.camra.org.uk) or call **01727 867201**.

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

I enclose a cheque for \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Applications will be processed within 21 days

*PINTS WEST (Bristol & District) - edition 90*

12/10

**Campaigning for Pub Goers  
& Beer Drinkers**

**Enjoying Real Ale  
& Pubs**

## Join CAMRA today – [www.camra.org.uk/joinus](http://www.camra.org.uk/joinus)



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

Please fill in the whole form using a ball point pen and send to:  
**Campaign for Real Ale Ltd, 230 Hatfield Road, St. Albans, Herts AL1 4LW**

#### Name and full postal address of your Bank or Building Society Service User Number

To the Manager \_\_\_\_\_ Bank or Building Society

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

#### Name(s) of Account Holder

\_\_\_\_\_

#### Branch Sort Code

\_\_\_\_

#### Bank or Building Society Account Number

\_\_\_\_

#### Reference

\_\_\_\_



**This Guarantee should be detached and retained by the payer.**

### The Direct Debit Guarantee

- This Guarantee is offered by all banks and building societies that accept instructions to pay by Direct Debits.
- If there are any changes to the amount, date or frequency of your Direct Debit The Campaign for Real Ale Ltd will notify you 10 working days in advance of your account being debited or as otherwise agreed. If you request The Campaign for Real Ale Ltd to collect a payment, confirmation of the amount and date will be given to you at the time of the request
- If an error is made in the payment of your Direct Debit by The Campaign for Real Ale Ltd or your bank or building society, you are entitled to a full and immediate refund of the amount paid from your bank or building society
  - If you receive a refund you are not entitled to, you must pay it back when The Campaign For Real Ale Ltd asks you to
- You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by simply contacting your bank or building society. Written confirmation may be required. Please also notify us.

#### FOR CAMRA OFFICIAL USE ONLY

This is not part of the instruction to your Bank or Building Society

Membership Number

Name

Postcode

#### Instructions to your Bank or Building Society

Please pay Campaign For Real Ale Limited Direct Debits from the account detailed on this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with Campaign For Real Ale Limited and, if so will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.

Signature(s)

Date