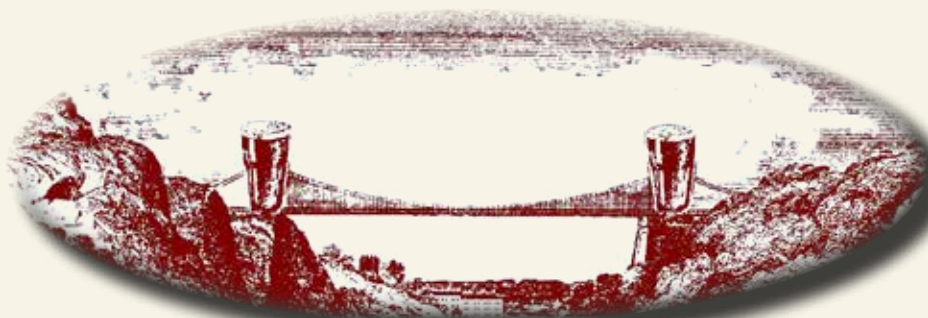




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PINTS WEST

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

The New Bristol Brewers



Champion Beer of Britain 2013

Elland 1872 Porter crowned Champion Beer of Britain at the Great British Beer Festival

Awards too for our local Cotswold Spring and Butcombe Breweries

After a year of local tasting panels and regional heats leading up to the finals, CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale, was proud to announce that Elland 1872 Porter is crowned the 'Best Beer' in Britain at the Great British Beer Festival, Olympia, London.

The West Yorkshire-brewed real ale was judged the Supreme Champion over a host of other finalists in seven different beer categories (Bitters, Best Bitters, Strong Bitters, Golden Ales, Milds, Winter Beers, and the Speciality class), including beers from both small microbrewers and large regional brewers.

Colin Valentine, Chair of the competition and CAMRA Chairman, spoke in praise of the winner. He said: "It was a really tough decision but Elland 1872 Porter is a fantastic beer and a well deserved winner. A 6.5% ABV, rich and strongly flavoured porter with flavours of coffee and dark chocolate, this result makes it two years in a row that

our Champion Winter Beer has gone on to win the Champion Beer of Britain competition."

Michael Wynnyczuk, Head Brewer at Elland, had this to say: "I'm utterly shocked. It's a great beer but after we won the Winter Ales competition you wonder about it in the summer Great British Beer Festival competition, as people may prefer different styles of beer in warmer weather. But we know it's a great beer and we're really proud to be crowned Champion Beer of Britain."

This year's Silver went to Buntingford Twitchell, whilst the Bronze award went Fyne Ales Jarl.

And congratulations to two of our local breweries, Cotswold Spring who won Silver in the Mild category for their Old Sodbury Mild (or OSM), and Butcombe who won Bronze in the Bitter category for their Bitter.

The results in full

Overall winners

Gold: Elland – 1872 Porter (West Yorkshire)

Silver: Buntingford – Twitchell (Hertfordshire)

Bronze: Fyne Ales – Jarl (Argyll)

Category winners

Mild category

Gold: Great Orme – Welsh Black (Conwy)

Silver: Cotswold Spring – Old Sodbury Mild (Gloucestershire)

Bronze: Fernandes – Malt Shovel Mild (West Yorkshire)

Bitter category

Gold: Buntingford – Twitchell (Hertfordshire)

Silver: Moor – Revival (Somerset)

Joint Bronze: Butcombe – Bitter (Somerset)

Joint Bronze: Surrey Hills – Ranmore Ale (Surrey)

Best Bitter category

Gold: Mordue – Workie Ticket (North Shields)

Silver: Surrey Hills – Shere Drop (Surrey)

Joint Bronze: Purple Moose – Glaslyn (Gwynedd)

Joint Bronze: Woodfordes – Nelsons Revenge (Norfolk)

Golden Ale category

Gold: Fyne Ales – Jarl (Argyll)

Silver: Buntingford – Polar Star (Hertfordshire)

Bronze: St Austell – Proper Job (Cornwall)

Strong Bitter category

Gold: Beeston – On the Huh (Norfolk)

Silver: Marble – Dobber (Greater Manchester)

Bronze: Castle Rock – Screech Owl (Nottingham)

Speciality Beer category

Gold: Growler Brewery, Nethergate – Umbel Magna (Suffolk)

Silver: Saltaire – Triple Chocolate (West Yorkshire)

Bronze: Conwy – Honey Fayre (Conwy)

Champion Winter Beer of Britain (from category winners announced in January 2013)

Elland – 1872 Porter (West Yorkshire)

Bartram's – Comrade Bill Bartram's EAIS Stout (Suffolk)

Kelburn – Dark Moor (Old Ale/Strong Mild) (Glasgow)

Hog's Back – A over T (Barley Wine/Strong Old Ale) (Surrey)

Champion Bottled Beer of Britain winners

Gold: Molson Coor's – Worthington White Shield (Burton on Trent)

Joint silver: St Austell – Proper Job (Cornwall)

Bronze: Harvey's – Imperial Extra Double Stout (East Sussex)



Wanted: people to taste beer!

Do you enjoy tasting beer? Of course you do, you're reading Pints West! But do you really enjoy tasting beer: savouring the different malts, understanding the different hops and seeing how it all blends into the wonderful variety of ales we all enjoy? If you do, you might be interested in getting involved with the Bristol and District CAMRA tasting panel.

The tasting panel don't only drink for fun; we taste and discuss the ales before we write the beer descriptions for the Good Beer Guide. As with the rest of the Good Beer Guide, and lots of CAMRA's other activities, the tasting panel are all volunteers with a passion for sampling ale.

The Bristol and District Branch is well served with 11 breweries and the tasting panel sample and describe over 45 beers that are produced between all 11 breweries. So that we give an accurate description we aim to have each beer tasted by at least three tasting panel members and to have had reports on the beer throughout the year. So as you can see we need a healthy number of volunteers.

Being on the tasting panel is fun and full training is provided (we'll be running a workshop for newcomers in the Autumn). We meet regularly to sample beers and write the descriptions, often having lively discussions about brewing processes, flavour balances and beer history as we try to reach agreement. Before you know it you'll be talking about mouthfeel, noting the difference between East Kent Goldings and Sorachi hops and enthusing about the pale or roasted malt. If you think you might be interested in joining the tasting panel then please get in touch with Chris Rogers by emailing chrisofbristol@ymail.com or via Twitter (@CAMRABristol).

Helen Featherstone

Meet the New Bristol Brewers



"We luv's what we does!"

There is a new brewery in town – and it's called the **New Bristol Brewery!** Brothers Noel and Tom James (and the brewery dog Joss) set up their modest five-barrel brewery – crammed into a tiny industrial unit in St Pauls, near Portland Square – just a few months ago.

Noel's background in brewing started in Cornwall, where he enjoyed designing his beers on a 100-litre set-up. But being from Bristol, he was thrilled when he was offered the position of assistant brewer with the Great Western Brewing Company in Hambrook. Having honed his skills there, he decided it was time, with brother Tom, to start a brewery of their own. Their New Bristol Brewery has allowed the brothers to work together producing a product they love. Tom's background in cabinet making has absolutely nothing to do with brewing, but Noel says he has learnt fast and was responsible for producing their recent beer *Angry Tom*, a



dry-hopped IPA at 5.9%.

It's not all been plain sailing – no new venture ever is – but it has been rewarding. As Noel said: "It's been a struggle to find time to brew, market and deliver all at once, but it's a nice problem to have!"

When asked about their beer styles, Noel commented: "We don't see ourselves as maverick brewers, but we do like to tease the boundaries of traditional brewing sometimes."

"Our *Super Deluxe Stout* or our India red ale *Flame* would not be classed as true to style by purists but we think they're awesome."

"In the same breath we also understand that sometimes you may just want a tasty traditional beer like our 365, an everyday standing-up beer."

New Bristol Brewery beers have made appearances, and are likely to do so again, at such Bristol pubs as the Cornubia, the Seven Stars, the Volunteer Tavern, the Full Moon, the Shakespeare Tavern and the Barley Mow, to name but a few.

Their beer line up (as described by Noel) includes:

- *365* – an everyday standing-up bitter brewed to a strength of 4.0%.
- *Flame* – India red ale brewed to 5.2%.
- *Beer du Jour* – a pale ale at 4.6%.
- *Super Deluxe Stout* – caramelised dark sugar, vanilla pods, cold pressed coffee, lactose, 7.0%.
- *Angry Tom* – a dry-hopped 'Dr Rudi IPA' at 5.9%.
- *Oolala* – an amber ale with French Aramis hops, 4.0%.

At the time of writing, their beer labels are being designed, which Noel says they are very excited about, "not least because it means we can finally start bottling."

Noel finished by saying: "We've been welcome with open arms by customers and brewers alike and that's a great feeling. It's a great industry to be involved in and one which is unique."

SP

New Bristol Brewery, 20a Wilson Street, Bristol BS2 9HH
Mobile: 07837 976 871 Web: www.newbristolbrewery.co.uk

WYE'S WORDS No. 12



**“PINT OF BUTTY AT NIGHT,”
DRINKER'S DELIGHT**


Butty Bach is a Welsh term for **little friend** – and this smooth and satisfying premium ale has certainly made a few friends in its time. Brewed using locally grown Fuggles, Goldings and Bramling Cross hops, Butty continues to delight new fans and old followers in equal measure. **4.5% ABV**

www.WyeValleyBrewery.co.uk





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AMBER ALERT



Otter Amber. One to watch out for from the Good Pub Guide's 2013 Brewery of the Year

OTTER BREWERY
www.otterbrewery.com

New openings: While threat of closure still hangs over many pubs, Bristol has recently seen several new openings or re-openings in the city centre, Clifton and Cotham, each with a distinct focus and all making real ale and real cider a key feature.



The Beer Emporium

One of two new openings on King Street, the Beer Emporium is reached via an unassuming entrance opposite the Bristol Old Vic theatre. The brainchild of owner Andy Holian, the Beer Emporium is a freehouse occupying three underground vaulted brick cellar 'tunnels', with a long bar and plenty of comfortable seating in two of them, and a full kitchen in the third. The intention is to offer around eight real ales during the week, with capacity for up to twelve at weekends. Regulars include beers from local brewers Arbor Ales and the Bristol Beer Factory. The house beer – Bristol Milk – a 4.1% pale ale, is from George Wright Brewery in St Helen's. On my last visit, ales included Otley Thai-Bo, Grain Best Bitter and Aldgates Gin Pit. Orchard Pig cider is also available on handpump.

This is Andy's first venture into the pub trade; with partners Steve and Paul, he is focusing on featuring independent breweries from the UK and overseas. Twelve keg taps include Belgian favourites such as Chimay, and Andy intends to expand the bottled range from the current 120!

The pub is open until 2am every day except Sundays (open until midnight), with food served until 11pm. Pre-theatre set menus are served from 4pm to 7pm, such as two courses and a pint for £12, and roasts feature on Sundays. The lunch and dinner menus are extensive and include British tapas (very tasty on our visit). Vegetarian options are available. Cornish fish and seafood also feature. After 11pm, you can still accompany your drinks with one of the bar snack boards.

Access to the cellars is via a richly carved staircase or the lift. Inside the upstairs entrance, a small tasting bar and off-license for bottled beers is nearing completion. Wifi is free and there is a quiz on Monday nights, with 15% off all drinks. Tuesday is open mic night and live music happens on various dates. Check out the website at thebeeremporium.net for regularly updated beer lists and other news; better still, call into this welcoming, stylish addition to the Bristol real ale scene and sample all it has to offer.

Lesly Huxley

The Famous Royal Navy Volunteer

The Volley on King Street has re-opened as a freehouse with a fresh new look both on the bar and in the décor. The lack of clips on the gleaming new handpumps may initially suggest that no real ale is served. However, a look to the boards on the right of the bar will confirm the availability of up to eight real ales, plus keg beers and real cider.

Strength (ABV), style and dispense are all listed together with price. The focus here is specifically on British microbreweries, both on the bar and in bottles. On my last visit, ales included offerings from Thornbridge, Arbor and Dark Star, three of my favourite breweries. Even the spirits have a UK touch, with even a Welsh single malt – Penderley – available. Real ciders are sourced from the Bristol Cider Shop on Christmas Steps, with keg versions from further afield.

The large, grade II listed building dates from the 1600s. Any refurbishment was therefore unlikely to involve any major structural change and the pub retains its attractive front windows, long front bar area, and rear sitting rooms. The right-hand side

should be up and running as a restaurant by early October. A fresh coat of white and pale grey paint on the walls and woodwork, and a new wood floor throughout, pull it all together, although the wonky ceilings, iron supports and slightly incongruous snob screens of old are still in evidence.

The pub is managed by Alex Major and assistant Alex Evans. Open from noon to midnight Sunday to Thursday, and noon to 1am Fridays and Saturdays, there is live music in the front bar area Fridays and Saturdays, and food is available noon to 3pm and 6pm to 9.30pm.

The Volley went through a sad period of decline before being closed for several months. It is now a much refreshed and welcome addition to the real ale scene in King Street, and the city centre in general. Their fledgling website at www.navyvolunteer.co.uk provides bottled beer list and sample menus, but the best way to support the Alexes' good start is to pay a visit in person.

Lesly Huxley



The large, grade II listed building dates from the 1600s. Any refurbishment was therefore unlikely to involve any major structural change and the pub retains its attractive front windows, long front bar area, and rear sitting rooms. The right-hand side



The Somerset House

July and August were clearly good months for pub re-openings. The Somerset House on Princess Victoria Street, Clifton, joins recent additions in the city centre. It has undergone a serious and much-needed makeover from dark and tired boozer to elegant and airy pub and kitchen. There are generally four cask ales on the bar, sourced mainly from Caledonian and including XPA and Deuchars. The 'Somerset' house beer is Cally 80 Shilling.

The place feels far more welcoming and relaxing: the façade is freshly painted, the arched windows are retained but now double-glazed and a wall of glass has replaced the dark entrance corridor. The front bar area still has wooden floors, but is now furnished with an eclectic mix of leather armchairs, what look like old draughtsman stools and wooden chairs and tables. The whole place features more different styles of ceiling, wall and free-standing lights than many lighting shops offer but they contribute to the light (but not too bright) atmosphere. Although there is a lot of wood and not much in the way of soft furnishings,



the noise levels are somehow much lower than in similar places.

The rear area features Marc's open kitchen and is set out for dining. Reports on the food are good. Further restaurant space is planned upstairs (the toilets are now upstairs too).

The Somerset House is now a place to while away a couple of hours of pleasant conversation in relaxed surroundings, with a small but quality range of ales or as a venue for interesting menus. Their website at somersethouseclifton.com is pretty and features a sample menu, but requires the latest in java-doings which makes mobile viewing annoying. Forget the internet and experience it in person!

Lesly Huxley

The Cotham Porter Stores

The Cotham Porter Stores had been standing closed for most of the time since before last Christmas, with prospects looking bleak, but has now been rescued by Wickwar Brewery. They have acquired the pub and, following some sympathetic remedial work, reopened it towards the end of August. The pub's layout remains unaltered, but there is now a brand new smart-looking bar back, and the redecoration gives the place a much brighter atmosphere.

Running the pub is Simon Angus (with daughter Emilie) who people may recognise from Wickwar's other Bristol pub, the White Lion on the Centre. Simon talked about how Wickwar intends to keep the pub as a traditional boozer. "We're very keen to promote the traditional public house. A lot of people were relieved that we reopened as a pub and not as a shop or restaurant."

The pub used to be famous for its cider, and cider lovers need not worry as they will still be catered for. Alongside the real ales are two handpumps dedicated to cider, namely Thatcher's Traditional and Cheddar Valley. These may change though depending on demand. As for the ales, there are three Wickwar beers on the bar, Bob (£3.30 a pint), Real Stout (£3.10) and Coopers (£2.80). The Stout and Coopers are dispensed from handpumps and also, from the same cask, chilled and via tall fonts.

There is also a cool cabinet accommodating four casks for gravity-fed beer. On opening night these were mostly Wickwar seasonals, but in future will also feature guest beers from other breweries. Planned ones include Crouch Vale, Titanic and Burton Bridge, though with more of an emphasis on local breweries later on.

There is limited room for food preparation, but simple fayre such as soup, chilli and rolls may soon make an appearance. Opening hours are 11 to 11 Mondays to Thursdays, 11 to 11.30 Fridays and Saturdays, and 12 to 10.30 or 11 Sundays.

SP



The Stable (new real cider and perry venue)

The Stable opened next to the Watershed in July, the third in the Dorset-based company's 'cathedrals of cider' promising 'ciders, pizzas, pies'. On a recent visit, we counted 24 real ciders and two perries in boxes on the purpose-built stillage behind the bar. Mostly from medium- and large-scale producers, all are priced at £3.80 a pint. There's a drinks list on the long bench tables, but at least on our visit this didn't entirely reflect what was available. You therefore need good eyesight to read the often quite small box labels for maker, name and strength, or ask one of the 'stablehands' for advice. An alternative is the taster board, a pre-set menu of five small glasses in a wooden stand for £7.50, three of them real still ciders, two fizzy keg, including one 'pear cider' [sic]. There are several keg taps on the bar, alongside St Austell's Proper Job real ale on handpump.

We stuck to halves of the real stuff: Lyme Bay Jack Ratt Vintage, at 7.4%, was a strong starter (I don't have good enough eyesight!), clear, on the slightly medium side of dry, it was very drinkable. Everything else we tried was 6%. Thatcher's Cheddar Valley was cloudy, but not quite the familiar bright orange with natural sparkle and tasted more like a medium-sweet apple juice of the non-fermented kind, though pleasant enough. Our second and third courses matched our thin and crispy Avonmouth

Angler pizzas very well. The Orchard Pig Navelgazer is another clear, dry cider. I'd not come across the Sandford Orchards' Old Kirton from Devon before.

Pressed through straw, this is cloudy and with a really nice dry finish. The Fosseyway Somerset Glory Dry (clear) and Oliver's Dry (pale and cloudy) cut through the oily smoked mackerel and smoked salmon on our (very tasty) pizzas very nicely.

The Stable is a large and open space with original cast iron pillars, long glass frontage and lots of wood furnishings and décor. A pleasant place to while away a few hours sampling a good range of real cider and perry, and a welcome contrast to the many national chain bars along the waterfront.

Lesly Huxley



The Red Lion

While too many pubs a week are calling “last orders” and shutting down, one of Bristol’s oldest has kicked the trend and re-opened. The Red Lion off Blackboy Hill, which first opened in 1865, is a pub again after a period as a wine bar. The pub is located in Worrall Road not far from the Clifton Downs, and is part of a terrace looking down on the city. For licensee Nick Russell, who ran it previously for eight years and has returned to take charge again, it’s a dream come true.

Nick explained how things had come about for him. “The smoking ban, and breweries selling to supermarkets at far under the prices they were charging landlords, was killing the trade,” he claimed. “When I left there simply wasn’t a way those of us in an average community pub could make a living. We were losing money every week and the local was at risk of disappearing. Times have changed and old customers have come to realise how much they have missed having somewhere to drop in for a drink and a chat.”

The pub was part of the life of this part of Bristol for so many years, with a meeting room on the first floor for concerts, and somewhere local people could meet and discuss what was happening to their neighbourhood. It was the heart of the Victorian community here and that was still the case for subsequent generations.

Nick went on to say, “Coming back into the trade is a gamble but I’ve been looking for the right opportunity for some time and when my old pub became available I couldn’t resist. It’s an area very much with its own community and we have a fairly tight-knit group of bars in walking distance of each other.”

Nick views on the smoking ban – now several years on – are philosophical: “Attitudes have changed too. There was a lot of opposition to the smoking ban. I don’t smoke but always thought there was room for the old smokers’ bar with proper ventilation but the ban is now generally accepted – and is beneficial.

“For me the pub is a natural institution and the rebirth of local breweries with their distinctive flavours is the way ahead. We are surviving and will flourish despite lack of support from Westminster.”

There have been some changes at the Red Lion to help make the pub more viable. The upstairs is now private accommodation, but the bar



is back in business as the local. It’s no longer tied into a pub company but is now a free house enabling Nick to seek out interesting beers and wines of his and his customers’ choosing.

Beers featured since reopening include Jail Ale (4.8%) and Legend (4.4%), both from the Dartmoor Brewery; Sharpe’s Cornish Coaster, a tasty 3.6% session beer; and Lion (4%) from the Hook Norton brewery in Oxfordshire.

The pub has a flagged stoned floor in the bar and has an area at the back which is quite intimate. There are a couple of TVs which feature big sporting events but generally do not impact on the ambiance. This is a good pub to go to for a social chat and a few beers. It is great to see it open again and Nick must be congratulated in making this move. Let’s hope that the people of BS8 and beyond support it so that it can remain as a pub for the future.

Pete Bridle

The Red Lion is in an area with the good fortune to still have several pubs. So, why not join the Bristol Pubs Group who are leading a pub crawl in the area? See the Branch diary inside the back page for details.

The Crofters Rights

Around the beginning of August, the venue that was formerly known as the Croft Bar on Stokes Croft reopened as the Crofter’s Rights. This is most welcome for an area that in recent years has lost pubs such as the Bristol Tavern and the Magic Box.

For those with a bit of memory, the Crofters Rights is situated in the building that has gone through many changes including being known as Mozart’s (although I am not aware that much music from the maestro having been played there), Ross Brew House and, for the last 10 years or so, the Croft, which has been a popular music venue.

The people behind the Crofters Rights are also responsible for the Lanes in central Bristol, and the Euston Tap and the Holborn Whippet, both in London.

The place has had something of a transformation and, as well as many alterations to the building, the emphasis is very much on beer – adding to the burgeoning beer scene in the Bristol area.

The pub is quite spacious with wooden floorboards, stone and brick walls, and a spiral metal staircase down to the loos that is akin to the White Lion on the centre – although not quite as narrow!

The place has been stripped back to basics and makes for a decent drinking environment. As well as the main bar area, there is a separate room at the rear that will be used for live music at weekends. There is also a small outside drinking area towards the rear of the pub. One unusual feature of the main bar is a stepped seating arrangement that affords a decent view of the bar area and I am sure will be a popular feature in the pub.

Back to those beers. The Crofters Rights currently has up to five real ales on offer – including one that currently sells for below £3 a pint. The beers are sourced from decent small breweries across the UK including some local representation. They are not generally the “usual suspects” which is good news. All the beers are served from taps behind the counter on the bar back. The real ales can be identified as they are dispensed from wood effect taps. The beer range on offer at any given time is chalked up behind the beer taps and includes details of the brewery, the



beer, its strength and price. A range of keg beer is also on sale as well as cider including an offering from Orchard Pig.

In the words of one of the guys behind the operation, “We aim to provide the best beer in town by selecting the best breweries, serving them at a good price and selling them quickly!”

The pub also aims to provide good entertainment and come September there will be a space for the local community to hire out mid-week to be used for events such as club nights, theatre, cinema, vintage fairs and more!

With other decent real ale pubs in the area such as the Hare on the Hill, the Hillgrove, the Bell and the Canteen, the prospects for discerning drinkers has possibly never been better in and around Stokes Croft. Why not embark on a little pub crawl?

Pete Bridle

*The Crofter’s Rights, 17-119 Stokes Croft, Bristol BS1 3RW
Opening hours 17:00 till late 7 days a week*

Giving out the awards

On Tuesday 18th June local members joined Bristol & District branch chairman Richard Brooks in the arduous task of taking a tour around four excellent Bristol & District pubs to make a number of presentations to publicans and brewers. These were the winner and runner-up of the branch **Pub of the Year** competition (the **Plough** at Congresbury and the **Seven Stars** respectively) and to the **Three Tuns** and the **Barley Mow** to meet with brewers and present the winner and runner-up of our **LocAle of the Festival** competition (**Arbor Ales** and the **Bristol Beer Factory** respectively).



Presentation at the Seven Stars, Pub of the Year runner-up



Presentation at the Barley Mow (Bristol Beer Factory)



Presentation at the Three Tuns (Arbor Ales)



The evening started off at the **Seven Stars**, where Paul Wratten and Darren Kay received their certificate for being runner-up branch Pub of the Year. Darren commented that "They were grateful that all their hard work had been recognised".

We then moved on to the recently refurbished **Barley Mow**, St Philips where Chris Kay and Simon Bartlett (plus Steve, Bob, Darius and Jonny) from the Bristol Beer Factory received their certificate for **Bristol Beer Factory Southville Hop** being runner-up in the LocAle of the Festival competition at the 2013 Bristol Beer Festival. Simon commented that "We are always proud to feature so highly in the CAMRA Bristol Beer Festival. It's such a great event that to come in the top two so regularly is brilliant news".



Presentation at the Pub of the Year, the Plough in Congresbury

Next we went to the **Three Tuns** where Jon Comer received the certificate for **Arbor Ales Yakima Valley** winning LocAle of the Festival at the 2013 Bristol Beer Festival. Simon Calcraft (manager of the Three Tuns) is also pictured with the certificate for Arbor Ales Oyster Stout winning Bronze in the Speciality category of the South West Regional stage of the Champion Beer of Britain Competition.

Finally we made the journey to the **Plough** at Congresbury where Garry Polledri and his wife Charlotte were very pleased to receive the certificate for winning Bristol & District branch Pub of the Year. Gary said "I'd like to mention all the people at CAMRA that voted for us, I'd like to give a big thanks to all the staff especially my manager Mike Thomson and Tom Griffiths, as well as the head chef Nikki Newhill, Sharon Bailey for making the cake, and the bar staff Micah Searle, Will Poole and my wife Charlotte. We'd also like to thank all of our customers that have helped us to achieve this."

The cake was indeed impressive and we would like to extend our congratulations to all the winners and our thanks for their hospitality on what turned out to be a splendid evening.

Richard Brooks
(Group photos by Tony Durbin)

Cask Ale Week / Bristol Beer Week

Cask Ale Week, supported by CAMRA, is an annual celebration of our national drink (that's beer, not tea!) when we encourage people to go out and try some real ale. This year it runs from 27th September until 6th October 2013 and the theme is the "Great Big Taste Challenge". You can check out the national Cask Ale Week website for details of events: www.caskaleweek.co.uk.

The Bristol & District branch are running a couple of walking pub tours around a selection of central Bristol pubs which will be an excellent opportunity to try a range of cask ales. Please come and join us, or if you're not available you can try the route yourself another day. Incredible though it seems, apparently nearly 50% of adults in the UK have not tried real cask ale. If you know one of these unfortunate people please bring them along, or at least encourage them to give real ale a taste during Cask Ale Week.

● **Thursday 3rd October:** Meet at the **Barley Mow**, St Philips (BS2 0LF) at 7pm, then on to the **Volunteer Tavern** (BS2 9DX), the **Bridge Inn**, Passage Street, the **Cornubia**, and finish at the **Seven Stars**.

● **Sunday 6th October:** Meet at the **Bag of Nails**, St Georges Road (BS1 5UW) at 2pm, then on to the **Three Tuns, No.1 Harbourside**, and then the **Naval Volunteer** and the **Beer Emporium** in King Street.

Bristol Beer Week is a new, independent initiative that runs from 3rd October to 9th October 2013. It is described as "a celebration of everything beery in the West Country" and rather like Cask Ale Week encourages pubs and breweries to organise their own events.

Although Bristol Beer Week is not specifically focused on real ale, CAMRA of course supports activity that promotes our local pubs and breweries. As the dates of Bristol Beer Week overlap with Cask Ale Week we are happy for the pub crawls listed above to be considered as being part of both events. You can find more information about Bristol Beer Week at www.bristolbeerweek.co.uk.

Richard Brooks

News from the Gorge

Jem Ham and his team at the Cheddar Ales brewery were happy to receive yet another award recently, this time the 2012/2013 Bronze award, from CAMRA South West Region, for their Cheddar Potholer in the 'Real Ale in a Bottle' category.

Trade at the brewery continues to be well up on last year despite the hot, cider-drinking weather and as a result a new sales position has been filled. They have also had a student working during the summer holidays helping to keep up with demand.

Some contract brewing and bottling has been undertaken successfully on behalf of two other fledgling breweries as yet without their own equipment or premises. The brewery staff are proud to be able to help other breweries where they can and especially to be able to brew different styles of beer that they wouldn't necessarily brew themselves. They believe this can only have a positive effect for the pubs and their drinkers.

As mentioned in past edition, the big event of the year, the Cheddar Ales Barn Dance and hog roast, will be held on Saturday 5th October from 8pm till midnight, and tickets are available from the brewery. See their website www.cheddarales.co.uk for full details.

Bob Reynolds



Beer is Bristol Best.



The deliciously moreish local pint brewed with all-British malt and hops.

Look out for this and a wide variety of Dawkins beers including a special brew for **Bristol Beer Week 3-9 Oct.**

Our own five pubs will be hosting events during that week. All are listed in the CAMRA Good Beer Guide 2013.

The Miner's Arms, Mina Rd, St Werburghs BS2 9YQ
 The Hillgrove, Dove St, Kingsdown BS2 8LT
 The Victoria, Southleigh Rd, Clifton BS8 2BH
 The Portcullis, Wellington Tce, Clifton Village BS8 4LE
 The Green Man, Alfred Place, Kingsdown BS2 8HD

Publicans! Available to freehouses direct in our area or to many PubCo outlets via SIBA DDS. 01761 472242 sales@dawkins-ales.co.uk
www.dawkinsales.com

News from Dawkins Ales (and pubs)

After much experimentation the Dawkins brewers Dave and Krishna have started bottling. All done on a small scale by hand, and bottle-conditioned, the *Resolution IPA*, *Crystal Gold* and *Alderflower* have reportedly gone down very well in pubs and in stores such as Corks of Cotham. An online store is planned.

Back last year *Jubeerlee* was the Diamond Jubilee celebratory brew, uniquely made with ingredients from across the Commonwealth. Two casks of this 6.0% ABV rum stout were kept back in a dark corner of the brewery. One was released on draught at the Green Man pub in Kingsdown in August where the year's maturation had worked very well; rich, vibrant and fresh tasting but an even greater depth of flavour. The second cask has been bottled, presented in a limited edition wooden box. Just 60 of these have been released for sale from September.

The brewery and pubs will be heavily involved in both 'National Cask Ale Week' and the following 'Bristol Beer Week'. A special ale will be made for the latter event. The Dawkins pubs should be hosting a plethora of events to mark the occasions.

Other Autumn brews include an English IPA, a Peated Rye and a Hefeweizen wheat beer. Dave is also devising a serious Imperial Stout for his first anniversary as Head Brewer with ingredients such as coffee, chocolate and smoked malt, and using Belgian yeast.

And finally, the **Green Man**, the Dawkins pub in Alfred Place, Kingsdown, will be holding an Autumn Beer Festival this year from 19th to 23rd September.

Lots of recognition for Butcombe

More Awards for Butcombe beers

Once again tasting judges have recognised that Butcombe's excellent beers are worthy of special awards. Firstly, Butcombe Bitter won Silver in the Bitter category of the Champion Beer of Britain South West Regional competition 2012/2013. Butcombe Bitter then went on to win again at Great British Beer Festival in London in the Champion Beer of Britain competition; the judge's panel awarded it Bronze in the Bitter category.

The Brewery has also been awarded a Gold medal for Adam Henson's Rare Breed and a Bronze for Butcombe Gold in the International Beer Challenge 2013. This year's challenge was the 17th annual event and saw a record number of entries from 33 countries. Guy Newell, Managing Director of Butcombe Brewery, said: "Each year the competition gets tougher; it's very rewarding to see that we are seen to produce the best beer, not just here in the UK but internationally." Judges include some of the shrewdest beer judges in the land – retailers, importers, publicans, brewers, writers and flavour analysts, plus several highly experienced judges from continental Europe to make sure the judging panel has a wide spread of tasting experience. Any medal from the International Beer Challenge is cause for celebration. Those that claimed Golds are therefore, in the judges' opinion, exceptional beers that really deserve to be sought out. Adam Henson's Rare Breed uses the finest local ingredients, Maris Otter malting barley, aromatic Herefordshire hops and Mendip spring water, to create this distinctive, refreshing and clean-tasting golden ale.

Matthew Pale Ale launched

The new permanent ale from Butcombe named Matthew Pale Ale was launched aboard the Matthew, the full-size replica of John Cabot's ship, which was moored outside the Cottage pub and followed with trips round Bristol harbour on the 12th of June. The beer won a SIBA gold medal in its previous incarnation as Mendip Spring and is now available all year round. Matthew Pale Ale is a tantalizingly fresh beer at 3.8% which now joins the three other permanent ales, Butcombe Bitter, Butcombe Gold and Adam Henson's Rare Breed.

Other beers

Great Grey Owl (3.6%) is an American hopped Pale Ale; it was very popular this summer and, as I write, is now in its final month this August.

In September, October and November, Haka (4.5%) will be available; this is a New Zealand hopped seasonal beer. It is described as 'a ferocious Maori bitter with tropical, peachy and grapey flavours', and these are imparted by the Nelson Sauvignon hops from New Zealand.

The famous ruby-red Christmas Steps (4.2%) will make its usual appearance again in November.

Date fixed for the Butcombe Brewery Open Day

The highly successful Butcombe Brewery Open Day was a great success last year, complete with glorious sunshine. This year the event will be bigger and better with loads of great Butcombe beer and Ashton Press cider, music, Morris dancing, brewery tours, tractor rides and more. There is also a chance to enjoy delicious food, which is being sold by the Story Meat Company. The date is confirmed as Saturday 28th September between 11am until 3pm at the Butcombe brewery in Wrington.

Butcombe and Rugby

Butcombe is proud to announce a new partnership between the brewery and Bristol Rugby as they seek to get back into the Premiership. Bristol Rugby fans will be able to enjoy home games with a pint of Butcombe Bitter in hand, as the beer has recently been installed in the bars of the Memorial Stadium in Bristol. "It's great to have a local company like Butcombe support-

ing Bristol rugby," said Bristol's new Director of Rugby, Andy Robinson. Butcombe Bitter will also be available at Bristol Rovers home games at the memorial stadium.

Butcombe Bytes magazine

The second edition of Butcombe Bytes (the new quarterly E-magazine from Butcombe), is available via their website or alternatively sign up through email. Everyone who signs up is in with a chance to win giveaways such as meals in Butcombe pubs or cases of Butcombe beers.

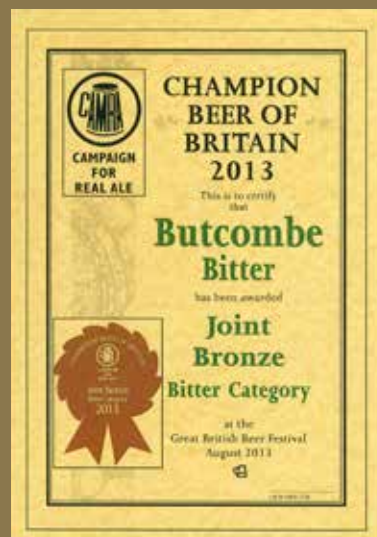
More information

For more information please visit www.butcombe.com or follow Butcombe-Brewery on Facebook or Twitter @ButcombeBrewery.

Nigel Morris



THANK YOU discerning CAMRA!



Celebrating National Cask Ale Week & Made in North Somerset

Why not come along to the annual BUTCOMBE BREWERY OPEN DAY – Saturday 28th September 11am–3pm

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● The Lamb – Ashridge ● Queens Arms – Bladon ● Culston Yard – Bristol ● Malt Shovel – Cannington, nr. Bridgwater ● Ring O' Bells – Hinton Blewett ● The Rose & Crown – Hinton Charterhouse, nr. Bath ● The Old Crown – Kelston, nr. Bath ● Queen Victoria – Priddy ● The Cross Keys – Rode, nr. Frome ● The Swan – Bowberron ● Bell – Stokes Croft, Bristol ● Prince of Wales – Westbury on Trym, Bristol ● Woolpack – Worle, Weston-super-Mare ● Fox and Hounds, Charlton Adam, near Somerton

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CAMRA Young Members



**CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE**

Well it wasn't quite the event that was originally planned, but for the June CAMRA Young Members' social we did manage to get a small gathering on a visit to a few different types of pubs with a variation of beer styles.

Seven of us, including two non-members, started at 7.15 pm on a Wednesday in the heavy metal pub, the **Gryphon** near the Colston Hall, where three milds, a 7% special and loud music were sampled and enjoyed. (I think I was the only one drinking bitter, one of the non-members drank draught Asahi).

Close by we visited **Zerodegrees**, an industrial type brew-pub, where the 'special' was mango fruit beer, i.e. the usual one available. The general consensus was it is a good place to eat, or visit with a large party as there is a lot of space, but those who hadn't been before were not too impressed.

Next, after a bracing walk up St Michael's Hill, we visited the traditional **Highbury Vaults**, which was quiet inside but the outside garden was full. As there were no smokers in the party we stayed in and were able to hold good conversations and sample a range of South West beers including a couple of milds again.

Across the road we went into **Beerd**, the Bath Ales bar loosely styled on a US concept, which sells a range of cask and keg beers. There were a couple of Beerd specials (from Bath Ales' pilot brew kit) and other guests plus about ten keg ales. I don't remember anyone drinking the latter but one guy managed to stay on dark beers. Again we

were able to hold meaningful conversations where the Gryphon came out as top pub for atmosphere, beers and music.

We had only done half the pubs on the list and already it was nearly 11.00 pm. Half the party wanted to return to the centre to be near buses, while a hard core wanted more loud music and suggested the **Hatchet**, so we all went there for a last couple where Doom Bar and Courage Best were available as well as the usual fizzy stuff.

In all it turned out to be an enjoyable evening with a variety of discussions held between different factions, an interesting selection of beers tasted and the general agreement reached that we should do it again to complete the other pubs on our original list.

It appears that it was a bad time for student participation due to exam time and post exam exodus; I also got four apologies from people who said they would join in next time. However the demographics were good: it was a diverse group in terms of gender and ethnicity, locals and people new to the area.

So thanks to Young Members Regional Coordinator Sarah for sowing the seed – at least we can now say Bristol & District CAMRA has a Young Members core prepared to grow the membership.

Roy Sanders, Young Members Contact

If any Young Member has an opinion to share or ideas for the next event please contact me on badyoungmembercontact@gmail.com.

Young Members go to the Barley Mow for the blow by blow!

Helloooooooooooooo Bristol!

I am new to the city, having recently moved here, and I've got to say...I am loving your pubs! And oh boy I have been to a few. The bonus of wandering these lovely streets, searching high and low (literally!) for a humble home, means I have a genuine excuse to sample the delights in each pub that stumbles in my path!

One such pub that fell within that lucrative list was the Barley Mow. Stumble it did but unfortunately at the time I wasn't able to go in. There was a chance that it could have been my local but alas it wasn't meant to be. The Barley Mow, for the time being, was seemingly set to escape my attention.

Well not if the BAD Young Members had anything to do with it as it was the setting for their next social, a 'Brewers Evening' provided by the Bristol Beer Factory, which I was kindly invited to.

So, I guess I better tell you about the night itself then!

After a woeful pint of Brains SA (one of my usual favourites) in a well-known chain pub I was in the mood for a good ale.

As the Young Members were not easily identifiable amongst the youthful crowd of people that had gathered for the evening I went straight to the bar and set about choosing a pint from the eight hand pulls and ten keg lines. I went with the flavour of the evening and settled on Bristol Beer Factory's *Seven* due to its promise of "toffee malt flavours" – right up my street!

The friendly bar staff pointed out the Young Members so, pint in hand, I went to say, "Hiya!"

Introductions over we were ready to start the evening led by brewer Chris. All were handed a sheet with the list of six beers we would be sampling. Each beer came under a heading as to what they were mostly associated with. In the order they were to be discussed they were: Water, Malt, Hops and Yeast.

Out came the samples and I was surprised to find a bottle of Worthington's White Shield and a lager (Bernard from the Czech Republic) in front of me. The explanation for this was how the varying water types in the different regions of the country will affect the types of ale/lager that will be produced. All very interesting and I was pleasantly surprised by the Worthington's which was a dark, amber colour with a malty, creamy flavour. The lager was good but as with these carbonated drinks was extremely gassy.

On to the malt and three little pots ranging from light to dark were placed in front of us accompanied by samples of Bristol Beer Factory's *Seven* and *Milk Stout*. I have to say I was disappointed with the *Seven* of which I had a pint of earlier. The toffee taste wasn't really there for me and the flavour just wasn't robust enough. However the *Milk Stout's*



sweet, smooth creaminess went down a treat with everybody at the table, except me, I'm just not a stout lass I'm afraid (metabolism is still doing its job!). This just wasn't going to be my round and I settled for tucking into the biscuit, caramel flavoured malt instead. Yum!

Hopping (sorry!) on to the next lot then and we are presented with Bristol Beer Factory's *Southville Hop*, a heavily hopped IPA which I would usually steer away from due to finding most hoppy ales lacking in the full bodied strength that I'm after. BAM! This delicious beer hit me for six! BBF have done a great job with balancing its tropical fruitiness with a powerful flavour and likewise with their wheat offering, *Hefe* whose weighty character comes from a whole host of zesty, tanginess such as banana and grapefruit.

This bold beer was the perfect way to culminate an evening of education, fun and gusto! From the knowledgeable brewer, his eager audience and the ales brewed with such passion, this evening was an absolute winner...Well worth missing England vs. Scotland for!

Line of the night from Brewer Chris: "When we started brewing back in Yorkshire..." This earned a hearty "Woouooooooooooooooooop!" from me and led to me being called a hooligan! Guess that's the Leeds in me.

Talisha Mills

(Barley Mow photos by Jo Sanders)

News from the Bristol Beer Factory

Awards galore!

The Bristol Beer Factory have had a great period of being recognised with awards for their beers, including runner-up LocAle of the Festival at the 2013 Bristol Beer Festival, Silver in the Stout category of the CAMRA South West Regional Champion Beer of Britain Competition, a total of six accolades at this year's SIBA South West festival (including best bottled beer for Independence), and six beers featured in CAMRA's Bottled Beer Guide where five were awarded Gold medals.

The grand expansion of the brewery is moving ahead. Three 30-barrel fermentation vessels have been delivered and will soon be followed by a new 30-barrel brew house. This is substantially changing the look of the brewery and will enable them to step up production without putting more of a strain on the kit and staff. They have also taken on some new employees. The Bristol Beer Factory report a continuing rise in bottle sales across the country with a large amount being sent to Yorkshire and London.

On the pub front, they are very pleased with the refurbishment of the Barley Mow in St Phillips and consider it to be Bristol's top 'craft' beer bar featuring eight hand pumps and ten keg taps. The pub holds a monthly 'beer appreciation/tap takeover' event which is free to attend and open to the public.

'Factoberfest' this year will be held from Friday 13th to Sunday 15th September at the Tobacco Factory in Southville, Bristol where the event is aimed at being enjoyable for all the family. There will be a range of what they describe as 40 local and 'craft' beers running from the Friday evening until the Sunday evening. There will also be some cider and a selection of local musicians will be performing on a specially erected outside stage and also inside the Tobacco Factory Café Bar. There will also be food stalls and children's entertainment. Approximate opening times are 5pm to 11pm on the Friday, noon to 11pm of the Saturday, and noon to 10pm on the Sunday.

Richard Brooks



Bristol Beer Factory brewer Chris Kaye (flanked by Darius Darwell and Jonny Mills) stands in front of their new fermentation vessels and proudly holds the certificate for Bristol Stout winning Silver in the Stouts category of the South West Regional Champion Beer of Britain competition.

A glowing Chris (well, it was hot in the brewery) commented that the Bristol Beer Factory are renowned for their stouts and the brewery team are always pleased for their hard work to be recognised.

Bristol Beer Festival 2014

The first planning meeting for the 2014 CAMRA Bristol Beer Festival will take place at the Gryphon (Colston Street, Bristol, BS1 5AP) on Tuesday 1st October at 8pm.

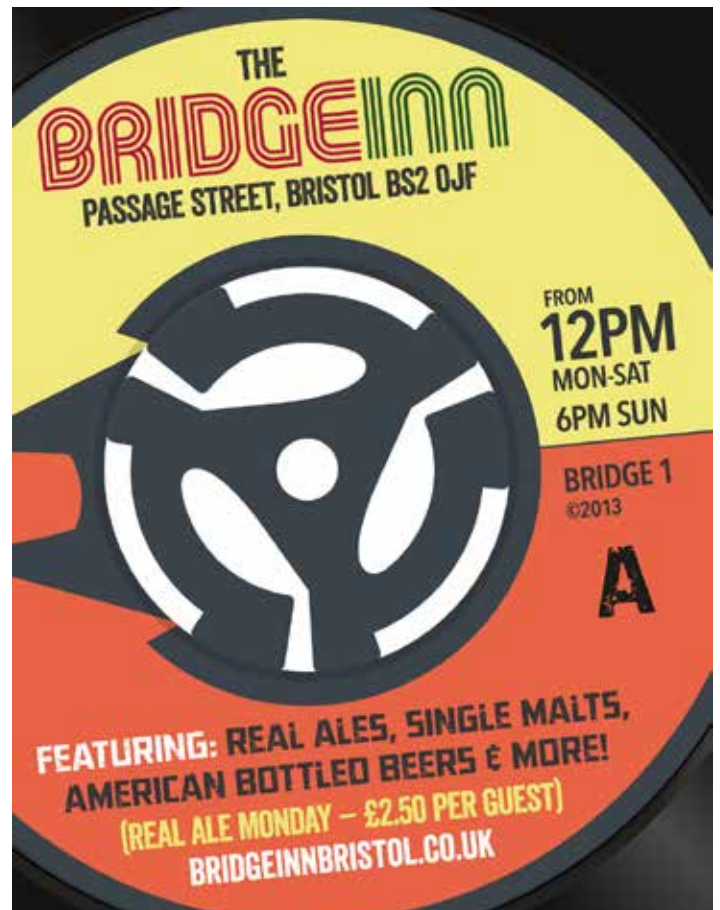
We would very much like to see any CAMRA volunteers that are interested in helping out with organising the festival, which is proposed to happen around the weekend of 15th March 2014 at Brunel's Old Station.



The Bristol Beer Factory brews a wide and diverse range of Craft Beers.

Beers available from
www.bristolbeerfactory.co.uk
- The Brewery Shop, North St
- The Brewery, Durnford St

or from our outlets at the
- Tobacco Factory
- Grain Barge
- Barley Mow



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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.

web: www.camrabristol.org.uk/pubsgroup
email: bristolpubsgroup@yahoo.co.uk

*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.**



The Lamb at Cadbury Heath

Regular readers of Pints West may recall an article in issue 85 (Spring 2010) expressing concern about a threat to the future of the Lamb at Cadbury Heath. Owners Punch Taverns had put it up for sale and there were rumours that it might become a supermarket.

A public meeting took place at the pub in August 2010. Local MP Chris Skidmore and the new owner property developer Paul Pressland were present, together with a substantial number of local people and a small delegation from Bristol Pubs Group. Mr Pressland described in broad outline his plans for the site and invited comment and ideas from those present. There was strong support for retaining a pub as part of whatever was done.

Three years on the development is almost finished and Mr. Pressland has been true to his word. The larger of the pub's two gardens was to the left at the rear as you looked at the pub from Banjo Island. This is now occupied by a Co-op shop which appears to be complete except for internal fitting out, with its main entrance from the side road. The smaller garden at the rear and to the right has been concreted over for use as car parking for the pub employees and residents of the new flats above.

The main drinking areas that were in use in 2010 are still part of the

pub; it has traded continuously since then except for about six weeks of closure during the building works.

The Lamb has been repainted externally, including new signage, and the toilets have been refurbished. The previously lawned area in front of the pub has been paved to create the a smart outside drinking area. The same landlord is still there, and appears to live somewhere upstairs. The function room seems to have been incorporated in the new development though, and so will be lost to pub uses such as wedding receptions.

Since 2010 the nearest alternative on-licensed premises, the Barrs Court, has become an Indian restaurant. This makes the continued existence of the Lamb even more critical to local drinkers, and may of course help its viability.

During a recent visit two real ales were on sale (Cotswold Spring Reveller and Wells Bombardier), plus a real cider.

All in all this looks like an increasingly rare thing – a good news story about a pub which was once under threat. If only the big supermarket chains could follow the example of the Lamb and incorporate full on-licensed premises in all their schemes to convert pub buildings to retail outlets!

Norman Spalding

The Long Cross Inn

The Long Cross Inn, situated on the Long Cross road in Lawrence Weston, has been closed and re-opened only to close a second time in the past two years. Since then, the property has been sold; a planning application (Ref 13/02849/F) to replace it with nine houses has been submitted to the council.

If this goes ahead, there will be no pubs left in its ward (Kingsweston). In recent years, the Penpole Inn has been lost, to be replaced by houses (also nine). The Iron Bridge (previously the Progress Inn) has been converted into a day nursery. The Mason's Arms has been demolished for, again, nine houses to be erected.

Before any of these, the English Rose had been demolished for housing. With no pub left in Kingsweston, the nearest will be the Blaise Inn near Blaise House. That is up for sale. The next is the Giant Gorum. Each is a very long walk away. I have that read the latter is also under threat of being replaced by housing. The ease of the changes is like dominoes!

Now, I am not going to praise the Long Cross as having been the best pub around in the past. On no occasion I visited it was it selling real ale. (Nor was the Giant Gorum.) If an enthusiast took on this pub though, that could change – and attract different clientele in higher numbers!



Local people have shown concern by objecting to the application, over the practicality of car parking if nine houses replace the pub. Bristol Pubs Group has submitted an objection to the loss of this last pub in the local area. Lawrence Weston Planning Group has also objected, stating, "Lawrence Weston has been identified as having a shortfall of community facilities and many of those we have are under threat." (Pubs are classed as community facilities' in planning terms.)

Where will local people be able to drink and meet if this pub is lost – particularly if the Blaise Inn is sold for other use and the Giant Gorum then follows the other pubs being changed to housing? Outside the Co-op's off-licence?

Tim Belsten

Pub news

Following nine months of closure the **Famous Royal Navy Volunteer** on King's Street in central Bristol, perhaps better known as the Volley, has been re-opened by Alex Major previously of the Bristol Ram and the Hop House. The well-appointed traditional interior is complemented with a wide choice of cask ales and keg beers. This is a very welcome return for this much loved Bristol pub. Next door to the Volley the **Beer Emporium** opened in July and is serving ale from up to 12 handpumps from breweries such as Arbor, Bristol Beer Factory, Castle Rock and Thornbridge along with many others. Also offered is a wide selection of bottled beers.

The **Volunteer Tavern** in St. Jude's has increased its real ale hand-pumps from four to six and now has up to two real ciders available. Watch out for the regular beer festivals at this top-notch pub. A real ale is now available at the **Palace Hotel** in Old Market, St. Austell Tribute was there on a recent visit. This diverse, gay-friendly pub has an interior to die for and is not short of good entertainment, so support their real ale and treat yourself to a cultural experience at the same time. The freehold for this magnificent pub is, by the way, for sale but trade is not affected.

Following months of speculation and fears the Wickwar Brewing Company have bought the **Cotham Porter Stores** in Cotham from Enterprise. This should secure the future for this popular pub that has always been very characterful. In Clifton the **Red Lion** on Worrell Road has re-opened as a freehouse pub after a year spent as a wine bar. It is just off of Blackboy Hill and close to the bottom of Highland Square. Please support it if you're in that neck of the woods. The **Adam and Eve** on Hopechapel Hill Clifton, near the boundaries of Hotwells and Cliftonwood, looks like its fortunes are on the up. This friendly pub is serving three real ales and is well capable of building itself a good trade in this end of the floating harbour.

The **Fire Engine** in Redfield has its lease for sale, the **Hop Pole** has an application pending to convert into four flats, and the **Chequers** in Kingswood continues closed and seems to be going nowhere while owners Enterprise keep saying that pub use will return.

In Easton the **Greenbank Hotel's** saga continues where the owner wants to demolish the pub building and replace it with a three-storey structure containing a combination of nine flats and maisonettes. The Bristol Pubs Group and the local community are vigorously resisting the loss of this important community asset. The **Cross Keys** in Fishponds is closed and under new ownership and recently displayed some 'bargain furniture' signage having been stripped of the pub signs, though no bargain furniture or otherwise has been seen in the place. Planning permission to convert from a pub has been rejected by Bristol City Council so it will be interesting to see what direction this process takes.

How many pubs does Lawrence Weston have? One is the answer but a proposal to demolish the **Long Cross** awaits a decision which could see an entire suburb of the city wiped clear of pubs having lost around a handful in recent times.

In the south of the city the **Bloomfield** in Brislington is closed and has attracted a lot of scaffolding. Future unknown. Similarly at the **Ropewalk** in Bedminster – closed and future intent not known.

In South Gloucestershire the **Lamb** in Cadbury Heath remains open while completion of a brand new Co-op store takes place on the same site. It was decided that this would be the way forward for this large pub when ownership changed around 18 months ago. So the pub remains on a smaller plot and with presumably resultant lower running costs. In Coalpit Heath we have just received a similar story in connection with the **Badminton Arms**. One of only two pubs in the village, owners Wadworth are reported to be in conversation with a supermarket agent for development of part of the site but say that the pub and its remaining car park will not be affected. Just around the corner in Frampton Cotterell the **Star's** new owners have declared that they intend to convert the pub into low-income rented accommodation. The bad news continues at the Good Beer Guide-listed **Cross House** in Doynton where the pub suddenly closed. Owners Enterprise says that they are in discussions with the tenant to get the pub re-opened. Let us hope for a positive resolve for this sole Doynton village pub. Though it has appeared that work had slowed right down on getting the **Hollybush** in Bridgegate into a larger food led pub we are informed that work will recommence to achieve a re-opening in the near future. The **Barr's Court** at Barr's Court is now an Indian restaurant. North of our branch area the freehold of the **Barrel** at Thornbury remains for sale.

There has been a lot of noise lately about the future of the **Bulldog** in Filton. Rumours have circulated for a while but the latest are pointing



Free-of-tie top tip ... the King George VI



Plenty of speculation here - the Bulldog



Coming to a pub near you? Let's hope not. The Parkway Tavern.

at Indian restaurant or just plain closed. As this pub is close to the ex-Fellowship which is now a shop its importance to the area is increased. Along the Filton Avenue but the other way from the ex-Fellowship the **King George VI** has its freehold on the market open to offers. This is a large pub with letting rooms and a car park and is amongst plenty of housing, the University of the West of England, a large aerospace industry and on the door step of the MoD at Abbey Wood. Letting rooms, restaurant, public bar – sounds like a gold mine in the right hands. And if the Bristol Rovers supporters wanted a watering hole on match days in a couple of season's time then this could surely be the one? Another ¼ mile along the road the **Parkway** in Stoke Gifford is being changed into a Co-op shop. No corner has been left on this site to facilitate a pub on this occasion.

In our southern counties the **Somerset Inn** at Paulton is closed and is now for sale, and we have been informed that Enterprise intend to sell the popular **Campbell's Landing** in Clevedon.

Next time you are in your regular supermarket and you reach for a selection of bottled beer to sup at home in front of the telly, think of your local pub and consider that they may need the trade more than the giant you are standing in....go on, go to the pub, you may enjoy it! And if you already go the pub regularly then great, keep up the good work (and play). 'Til next time, happy pubbin'...cheers!

Mike Jackson, for the Bristol Pubs Group

Is it checkmate for the Chequers?

The Enterprise Inns-owned Chequers public house in Kingswood was last featured in the Spring 2013 edition of *Pints West* (number 97). The pub located at the junction of Ingleside Road and Lodge Road is close to Cossham Hospital and a large concentration of local housing so it should be possible to attract a strong local customer base. However, the building which dates to the 1930's (of red brick construction with timber cladding and a red clay tiled pitch roof with timber window frames) has been closed for a considerable time.

There was a temporary re-opening a couple of years ago but since then the building has started to suffer from neglect despite it being plated up. There was an arson attack a while ago and the flower tray holders located around the pub at first-floor level have become overgrown with weeds and there is also well established weed growth around the outside of the building to complete this downward spiral of decay. A couple of signs on the building saying "Don't worry your nearest local is the Jolly Cobbler, Chiphouse Road" do little to give any reassurance that the pub has a long-term future.

The longer that this state of neglect is allowed to continue, the more the risk of further vandalism increases, so it is imperative that Enterprise Inns carries out some immediate care and maintenance on the pub and find a suitable tenant for it as soon as possible. The local residents have been fighting to get the pub re-opened for some time but due to its location you wonder if the site could end up as a Sainsbury's Local or Tesco Metro or something similar.

To highlight this tale of neglect you can contact the local Labour councillors for St. George East, Fabian Breckels and Steve Pearce, the St. George Neighbourhood Partnership, and Enterprise Inns head office asking for this pub to be re-opened. If you want this pub saved for the future "it's your move".

Ian Beckey



The Cross Keys at Fishponds: a bedtime story

The ongoing saga over the various planning applications for flat conversions to the Cross Keys public house at 627 Fishponds Road, Fishponds, was highlighted in the Summer 2013 *Pints West Extra*.*

After the initial planning application to convert the pub into flats and ground floor retail (12/05726/F) was refused on the grounds of loss of community pub and parking issues amongst others, the owner ignored the decision and carried on with internal alterations to the building without planning permission. Subsequently an enforcement notice (13/30253/COU) was issued and the outcome of the planning enforcement inquiry is awaited.

Because of the enforcement notice, the owner submitted a new planning application (13/02070/F) to convert the pub into flats and ground-floor retail, but on 28th June 2013 it was again refused on similar grounds to the previous plans by a delegated decision. Having gone this far, Bristol Pubs Group knew that it was unlikely to be the end of the matter and, sure enough, yet another planning application (13/03183/F) was submitted to convert the pub into flats and ground-floor retail in late July 2013. What made this application different was the fact that the pub was now being described as an existing shop and flats when it was clearly not, as planning permission had not yet been given to convert the building into flats/retail. As if to emphasise the point, on 2nd August 2013 the owner suddenly opened a second-hand shop at the pub premises, covering the Cross Keys pub signage with a banner saying "Bristol Furniture Bargains". The shop was selling mattresses among other things but was operating without planning permission being obtained for a change of use.

As you can see this story does not make good bedtime reading, so in order to send this application to bed with the previous ones, members of the public and ex pub users are invited to object to planning application 13/03183/F on the grounds of loss of community pub as per Core Strategy Policy BCS12, lack of parking and poor access, loss of potential pub jobs, loss of active high street retail frontage, etc. It's your choice if you want to save the pub and have the opportunity to drink a pint at the Cross Keys in the future.



**Pints West Extra is an occasional on-line publication containing articles that could not be accommodated in the printed version of Pints West – available from the web site at www.camrabristol.org.uk.*

Ian Beckey

Are you concerned about the loss of pubs?

Has the loss of a pub in your area irritated you? Do you feel the increasing loss of these social yet relaxing places make you worried your favourite could be at risk? Do you agree such places need more protection? Does the growing number of supermarkets and flats replacing these public meeting places wind you up?

If so, maybe you would like to consider joining Bristol Pubs Group to campaign against this. If a regular reader of *Pints West*, you will have seen our news section and articles in past editions – some positive, some negative. We are part of Bristol & District CAMRA. You don't have to be a member of CAMRA to join us, though. Bristol Pubs Group is a voluntary group of people who spare some time to act against pubs being lost where their retention is viewed as a need. We determine which pubs case by case. We particularly need more members from rural areas.

We work in many ways. We have carried out surveys with publicans on occasions. Ongoing practices include monitoring the closure of pubs, estate agents adverts and planning applications; liaising with various councils and other CAMRA branches; and we lobby councillors and MPs when appropriate. Our area is not just in Bristol, but generally the old Avon area.

Helping us to gather and compile information, writing or proof-reading press releases and statements for the public domain, helping with our website, debating at bi-monthly meetings and by email – these are things you might be good at. The outcome can often be very satisfying. Other times it can be helpful in improving our skills for the next battle. We just need more people to help out! Consider joining in with us. We also have some social events on separate dates. If interested, please contact us by emailing bpgcommittee@yahoo.co.uk.

Tim Belsten

The pubs of Long Ashton

A small group of Long Ashton resident CAMRA members embarked on a tour of the pubs that are within walking distance of our homes. We thought it might be a good idea to share our experience with Pints West readers!

We started our tour at the Bristol end of Long Ashton by visiting the **Dovecote**, a Vintage Inns establishment, formerly the Smythe Arms. Despite being very much an eatery in the “take your granny to lunch” style, we were pleasantly surprised by a good selection of well-kept beers (all served in correctly branded glasses), helpful, friendly staff and a pleasant, though small, bar



The Dovecote

area. The beers on offer were St Austell's Tribute and Proper Job (5.5%), and Butcombe Bitter. One of our number was quick to declare that he had never had a better pint of Proper Job, served at just the right temperature! The Tribute and Butcombe were also excellent. We can't comment on the food offering at the Dovecote, but if you are in Ashton Court one day and looking for a decent pint of beer, we can recommend you call in at the Dovecote.

Our next port of call was the **Angel**, a well-known and long-established family-run country pub, frequented by locals and Bristol residents alike. The beers on offer here were Bass, Butcombe Bitter, Sharp's Doom Bar and Otter Ale. The Doom Bar was very good, if a little cooler than it should have been, the Bass not quite so enjoyable, but the Otter Ale was the best of the beers we



The Angel

tasted, being well-balanced and full of flavour. We decided to eat here and found the food to be good value, decent pub grub. Outside, the Angel has a pleasant courtyard area (for all those hot and sunny afternoons we enjoy in this country), complete with resident house martins. There is a recently added covered smoking area adjacent to the toilets which, curiously, has decking over the top of flagstones. The Angel also offers bed and breakfast accommodation.

We then ventured into the heart of the village and to the **Bird in Hand**, a Forage Inns freehouse, sister to the Pumphouse on the docks. We were immediately struck by the excellent ambience in the welcoming and friendly bar.

This establishment has been tastefully refurbished and caters excellently for drinkers and diners alike, generally attracting those LA residents who would normally head into Clifton to socialise, rather than frequent their local. The fresh, well kept and well presented beers on offer when we visited were Box Steam Brewery's Piston Broke (4.5%, full-bodied, deep golden with hoppy palate), St Austell's Tribute and Bath Ales' Gem. The Gem was unsurprisingly excellent! The atmosphere in the Bird was friendly, convivial and happy and the staff made every effort to be helpful. There is a separate dining area and the imaginative cuisine is a cut above normal pub food. To one side of the



The Bird in Hand

pub there is an area for sitting outside together with a covered smoking area.

Our final stop was the **Miners Rest**, a short hike up the steep hill on Providence Lane. This is our local, a small, unpretentious, traditional boozer with flagstone floors, real fire, tables inside and out, and a fantastic view from the rarely used top garden. Food is served at lunchtimes only. Because of the nature of the building, there is little conventional cellarage which means they specialise in gravity-fed beer. Butcombe Bitter was the one beer on hand pump, while Fuller's London Pride was served from barrels behind the bar. The beer was, as it invariably is, in peak condition, served in branded glasses and not over-cooled. There was a warm and friendly welcome from Carol the landlady and Chris the regular barmaid, and the ambience that of a very



The Miners Rest

popular locals' local.

All in all, a pleasant way to spend a Friday night (despite the choice of beer being somewhat limited). Now, just a short stagger downhill to home!

● On September 28th, Long Ashton will be hosting its very first Beer and Cider Festival at the Village Hall, from 4pm to 10pm (or until the beer runs out). Held in aid of the Long Ashton Community Association, there will be a selection of around 12 local beers and ciders on offer, as well as food and entertainment. Tickets will be available from the LA Post Office or direct from LACA – see website for further information: www.longashtoncommunitycentre.org.

Jo Vansittart

A Bristol Pubs Group trip to sunny Kingswood

For my third organised Bristol Pubs Group social crawl I chose the Kingswood area. With several pubs having closed recently, some lost to supermarkets, I thought it a good time to venture to an area I did not know that well. I do however have memories of a few pubs from when I played darts a lot back in the 80's.

As he was a Kingswood resident, I prompted my friend Rich Walters to come up with a list of pubs suitable for a Saturday afternoon out. This crawl, like my Bedminster one, was about pubs and community and not the choice of beers and ciders on sale; my idea was to start at the Tennis Court and work back through the High Street with some deviations. It was planned to meet at the aforementioned Tennis Court for 1pm. Weather was very hot in high twenties so liquid was definitely on the menu.

The **Tennis Court** has recently had a make-over and is now a pub combined with a Thai restaurant. It has not changed in layout from the

old days when I visited but is now very tidy and smart inside. Beer choice was Moles Tennis Court Bitter at 3.5% and Bass. Nearly all of us went for the Moles which we agreed was very good for a low-gravity ale. One of our party was hungry and tried the Thai Quickie lunch at £6, which he gave the thumbs up. By



The Tennis Court

1.30pm about 20 had arrived so it was looking like a very good turnout indeed, bearing in mind that several who wanted to come could not make it that day.

Our next venue was to be the **Old Flowerpot** but we were told by a local that the landlord Graham Day (ex Bristol Rovers player) did not

open until 4pm. So with a change of plan we headed to the **Old Plough** in Westons Way. This is a large modernish family friendly Marston's pub which was quite busy when we got there. A few more turned up here and our party had swelled to 25, the best turnout yet for a Pubs Group social. Ales on draught



The Old Plough

were Pedigree and Hobgoblin, both in good nick. Since our visit I understand a new landlord has just taken over.

There was a rumour that the Flowerpot was now open and so half of the group decided to walk up and find out. The rest of us walked up Courtney Road towards the **Star**. This is a Greene King pub and has had a few managers of late. On entering were faced with the usual Greene King IPA and Old Speckled Hen pumps plus a draught cider. Sadly none of them

were on. The barmaid told us that there was a new manager who had only been there four weeks after previous manager left and was still trying to sort the place out. Since the visit I would like add that the beer situation is back on track. Rich Walters has been back since and I went back to the Star again myself and both



The Star

beers were on. I had an excellent pint of Old Speckled Hen at the bargain price of only £2.59 a pint. The pub was busy too on a Thursday evening.

The group that went to the Flowerpot found it was still shut so they moved on to the next venue which was the **Kings Arms** in the High Street, where the rest of us subsequently joined them. This pub has had some good things said about it ale-wise and the choice was his stock ale Cheddar Ales Gorge Best and the classic Dark Star Hophead, which is one of my absolute favourite beers. Both were in excellent condition and £2.90 a pint. Rich was on the cider and had Thatcher's Heritage. We all sat out in

the large rear garden area supping our ale in the sun. A few from our group went down to the **Old Flowerpot** as it was now open and reported that it was very good with a big garden. Ales on were Fuller's London Pride and Sharp's Doom Bar, both in good nick. I have now been back myself and had a nice pint of St Austell Tribute and also met and chatted with Graham, the friendly landlord.

With most of the group back together again we moved on to the **Kingswood Colliers**. This large pub is a JD Wetherspoon establishment and, as expected, was busy. Amongst the beers on sale were Mordue Belma Red, Jennings' Snecklifter and Titanic White Liner. I went for the Titanic which was very much to my taste as a superb hoppy pale beer at 4.7%. We even managed to find room in the large outside garden to sit down. I must say I found the staff very friendly and helpful there.

Next down the same side of the road was the **Black Horse**. A large pub with a front bar and the large open back bar where they have live music, it is run by a lover of psychobilly music. The only beer on draught was Courage Best, and a very good pint it was, and at the right temperature on a hot day. I talked to the landlady on leaving and she said they like to sell just one beer in good condition. Certainly works there.

Next we were going to the **Kings Head** which is mainly a cider drinkers' pub – I had heard that it was affectionately known as 'The Swamp'. It is in fact a nice compact pub with a single bar, which I was told has recently been given a make-over. We had lost a few of our group by then as some had got behind and hung around a bit longer in pubs we had been in. Most of us plumped for the classic Black Rat and at only £2.30 a lot for your money. Feeling a bit peckish by now a few of us had a lovely crusty strong cheese and onion roll for a pound, which went down well with the cider.

It was a short trip across the road now for the **Essex Arms**. A small-fronted but good old pub, it was quite busy with I guess regulars. Taunton Traditional cider seemed a good idea after the last drink. The beer choice was Courage Best which was only on keg. A few of us ventured out to the rear garden of fake turf with several tables. We spotted that they kept chickens at the bottom of it too.



The Kings Arms



The Old Flowerpot



The Kingswood Colliers



The Black Horse



The Kings Head

Jerry says: "Real cider, it's gert tasty"

Last year's cider apple crop was fairly disastrous because of the consistently bad weather. Jerry, our roving cider reporter, decided to find out whether 2013 would be a good or bad year by visiting a well-known local cidemaker, **Ben Crossman**. Catching an X1 from Bristol, he travelled to Mayfield Farm, in Hewish, on the left-hand side of the A370 in the Weston-super-Mare direction. Jerry found that, whilst it was probably too early to give an overall verdict, "Ben thought last year's bad weather could still have an affect. His standard trees were not faring as well as he would like, although the bushes are doing slightly better, though still under some stress. Although the impact of last year's weather will vary from area to area, 2013 is likely to be a better year than 2012. And the current good weather isn't doing any harm for sales."

Jerry couldn't visit without having a sample: "The Dry was very good, and I bought two small flasks of that to take home, another of Sweet and a Medium. Trying them all on the following evening, they were very good and I can thoroughly recommend a visit to the farm."

We are fortunate in Bristol that there is a growing number of places to buy and drink real cider and perry, if not on handpump, then served from a 'bag in a box', the **Bristol Cider Shop**, the **Stable** and the reopened **Cotham Porter Stores** being the most recent examples. But that has not always been the case: 25 years ago a group called APPLE was formed under CAMRA's banner to support real cider and perry. Like CAMRA, its aim was to promote 'the real thing' rather than the fizzy keg drinks then appearing on many bars. Today, the market is awash with even more new 'sparkling' products trading on tradition,

but actually produced by industrial processes, or featuring a range of additional fruit flavours. CAMRA does not officially recognise any cider or perry which has any fruit or flavouring, other than the apples or pears that made it, as being real. APPLE's Gillian Williams advises us to "be careful out there as sometime things aren't as 'friendly' or 'local' as they seem. Look beyond the branding, the glassware and sundry other gimmicks and support your local producers, go visit them," just like Jerry. Closer to home, look out for 'we sell real cider and perry' window stickers in pubs issued by APPLE, to make sure you're not confused by the big brands.

And if you can't get to a cider farm, or are looking for a wider range than your local offers, keep an eye out for festivals with cider and perry bars. As Jerry says: "It's been a busy summer with festivals at Ashton Gate and the Passenger Shed at Temple Meads, to name just a couple. A cider I really liked is the St George Dry (6.5%), a really dry drink sampled at the Three Tuns Festival a month or so ago. The real thing, it's gert tasty!"



Jerry Fletcher, as told to Lesly Huxley

Resurfacing in Baydon

Many readers may know Mark Farrel who worked in a number pubs in Bristol mainly in the BS1 and BS8 postcode areas, including the Greyhound in Clifton, the Merchants Arms in Hotwells, and the Three Tuns.

After finishing at the Three Tuns, Mark turned his back on the pub trade ... until now that is. On the 1st of June, Mark together with his partner reopened the Red Lion in Baydon, Wiltshire, a village approximately 10 miles south east of Swindon.

The Red Lion, Baydon's only pub, had been closed since February. Mark fittingly reopened the pub with a small beer and cider festival, dividing barrels between the bar and a marquee in the pub garden.

And the beers sampled? Well I began with a Phipps IPA, a golden coloured beer at 4.2% ABV, followed by Broad Gauge, one of my favourites from the Box Steam brewery at 4.8% ABV. Next for me was Maharajas IPA from the West Berkshire brewery at 4.5 %, and Dr Hexter's Healer at 5.0% (great name for a beer, don't you think?), a suitably well hopped beer for my taste and from the same brewery, before finally finishing with a, old favourite, Crop Circle from the Hop Back brewery.

Best wishes to Mark in his new venture.

Jerry Fletcher



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The Essex Arms

several people outside in the large garden. There was no obvious hand pump serving draught beer, but there was a massive Courage Best font amongst the usual lagers and ciders on sale. At the rear of the pub is a small garden and gazebo. I managed a half of Thatcher's Gold as it was now the end of a long day hot day out and time to get the bus back into

Surprisingly it was quite big considering the narrow frontage to the pub.

Last port of call was the **Rose and Crown**. We were down to about 10 by now as several had gone home. This nice looking pub has a large single bar area and a large garden too. The pub itself was empty on arriving but there were

town. The feedback I had since from the people on the crawl was very good, everyone enjoyed it and I can recommend a similar crawl to anyone who goes that way.

I have done a map showing the Kingswood area pubs including the ones now closed. You can find it in the Bristol Pubs Group section of the Bristol CAMRA website (www.camrabristol.org.uk/pubsgroup/Downloads.shtml).

Keith Shapland



The Rose and Crown

Festival round-up

A few of the beer festivals to look out for in the coming months:

- September 7th & 8th – Somerset CAMRA and WSR Real Ale Festival, Minehead, www.west-somerset-railway.co.uk/section.php/23/1/camra_real_ale_festival
- September 13th & 14th – Chew Valley Beer Festival, Ubley Parish Hall, www.chewvalleybeerfestival.co.uk
- September 13th & 14th – Beese's Beer, Cider and Music Festival, Beese's Riverside Bar and Tea Gardens, www.beeses.co.uk
- September 19th to 23rd – Green Man Autumn Beer Festival, the Green Man, Alfred Place, Kingsdown, www.dawkinsales.com
- September 20th to 22nd – Wedmore Real Ale Festival, Wedmore Village Hall, www.wedmorerealale.com
- September 22nd & 23rd – Redcliffe Bay Beer Festival, Redcliffe Bay Hall, Portishead (tickets will be £5 each to include a commemorative glass and programme and will be on sale from 7.30 to 9.30pm on Tuesday, 24th September at the Windmill Inn, Portishead and Thursday, 26th September at the Ship, Portishead, and may also be bought by phoning Ian Looker on 07741419926)
- September 28th – Long Ashton Beer and Cider Festival, Long Ashton Village Hall, www.longashtoncommunitycentre.org

News from Cotswold Spring

Following their success at local and national SIBA beer festivals, Cotswold Spring Brewing Company have had two beers participating in the Punch Finest Cask rotation during July and August. OSM (aka Old Sodbury Mild) and Stunner have both been travelling by the pallet load up to Birmingham and into the Punch supply chain. Master brewer Nik Milo has been overseeing the production and is very happy with the commissioning of two new vessels for the purpose. Both of those beers did well at the Gloucestershire CAMRA beer festival at Postlip Hall in July – Stunner was best Best Bitter, and OSM won beer of the festival. Nik said the Aviator wasn't bad either! Even better, OSM recently won Silver in the Mild category in the Champion Beer of Britain competition at the Great British Beer Festival, having previously won category Gold in the South West regional finals. Keep and eye out for some new beers coming from the brewery in the Autumn. They've been working on the taste profiles for a brown ale and a pale ale on the style of Aston Ale.

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A Sunday surveying trip

As many readers will know pub survey trips form an important part of the CAMRA branch social calendar. They are run from July until February of the following year and provide valuable input from members into the selection process for entries into the CAMRA Good Beer Guide.

Normally these trips are by coach on midweek evenings and usually only allow time for a short stop in each pub within the four-hour time slot. A number of members have suggested that a more leisurely Sunday afternoon surveying trip a couple of times a year would be a good idea, allowing a little more time in each pub as well as providing a pleasant social "afternoon out" during the summer.

The first of these Sunday trips took place early in August and was quite well supported with a total of eighteen members involved for the whole afternoon, with a few others joining in for part of the trip.

On a pleasant Sunday afternoon the coach left the centre of Bristol at 2.30 and returned at 8.30 in the evening. A total of seven pubs were visited on the eastern fringes of Bristol and the participants welcomed the slightly longer stay in each pub, and an opportunity to eat at the final pub on the trip.

The first pub visited was the **King's Arms** in Kingswood, a genuine free house, which was featured in a pub profile in issue 97 of *Pints West*. The coach then made the short trip to the **Queen's Head** in Hanham (a Wadworth's tied house) and then on the **White Harte** in Bridgegate. From here the party ventured onwards to a selection of pubs further towards Bath and took advantage of the rising temperatures to relax in very pleasant pub gardens in picturesque settings. The next pub was the **Old Crown** at Kelston, a Butcombe tied house followed by the **Lock Keeper**, a Wells & Youngs tied house, by the river at Keynsham. From here it was on to Saltford – firstly to the **Jolly Sailor** adjacent to Saltford Lock and finally to the **Bird in Hand**, next to the Bristol to Bath cycle track and close to Avon Riverside station on the preserved Avon Valley railway line.

As well as the regular ales for the area, such as Butcombe Bitter, Sharp's Doom Bar and Courage Best Bitter, the party enjoyed sampling some beers not normally available in the eastern suburbs. These included Otter Ale and Abbey Ales Bellringer (Bird in Hand), Black Sheep Best Bitter (Jolly Sailor), Cheddar Valley Gorge Best and GWB Bees Knees (King's Arms) and Rudgate Ruby Mild (Old Crown).

The afternoon trip was deemed to be a success by those involved and thought is now being put into arranging another Sunday afternoon surveying trip later in the summer or early autumn. Whilst support for the early August trip was good a few more participants would be welcomed, so please try to "sign up" when a date is announced.

Martin Gray

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CAMRA Good Beer Guide 2014 launch

First chance to buy

■ 2014 is not as far away as you think, and as normal we at CAMRA will be launching the latest edition of our ever popular Good Beer Guide in September – the only properly and independently researched guide to the best pubs for real ale and cider in the Britain.

As local co-ordinator for many years I can vouch for the amount of legwork and dedication put in by our local unpaid volunteers in making sure that only the best ale pubs make it into this prestigious Guide. It was hard work but we were thirsty enough to do it! The book aims to identify the best 4,500 pubs in Britain, including 63 chosen by our local branch, covering Bristol and parts of South Gloucestershire and North Somerset. Those 63 were the subject of many visits and much debate amongst us over the last 12 months, and many more were nominated than we have space for. Bristol has seen a massive increase in the number of quality beer outlets in recent years which means that some very good ones had to be left out. A place in the Guide is much sought after by all licensees who are serious about keeping real ale.

The Good Beer Guide 2014 will be launched locally on **Friday September 13th** at the **Volunteer Tavern** in New Street, central Bristol (BS2 9DX). The event will run from noon to 7pm and copies of the Guide will be on hand. Last year we sold around 90 copies. The team at the Volunteer relaunched the pub as a real ale, good food and live music venue just two years ago. In fact the event almost coincides with their second anniversary of reopening. Pete Gibbs and his friendly team have made a great success of transforming this small historic pub into one of the best eating and drinking venues in central Bristol.

The Volunteer can be slightly tricky to find the first time you visit but is actually extremely close to both Cabot Circus and the Old Market area. From the Old Market roundabout, walk past the bus interchange stops with the Old Market Tavern on your left, turn left at the Palace Hotel (affectionately known as the 'Gin Palace'), then walk about 60 metres – as the road bends to the right you walk straight on and the Volunteer is 100 metres ahead. You can enter the pub via the front door in New Street or their beer garden in St Mathias Park. Alternatively, opposite Cabot Circus, look for the Future Inn and Chophouse restaurant – the pub is just behind and off to the right.

At the time that the Good Beer Guide went to press the pub was offering four changing real ales. The recent addition of two new handpumps means that up to six beers are now served at once. These are mostly from fairly local independent brewers. The only permanent beer is Caledonian Deuchars IPA. In general the plan is to always include a light and hoppy beer, one or two bitter/copper-coloured beers, and one or two dark beers all year round. (A very generous discount on beers is given to all CAMRA members showing their membership card.) Two local traditional ciders and a good selection of bottled beers complete the drinks picture. The Volunteer has developed a very good name for quality home-cooked food at very fair prices, served lunchtime and evenings. Sunday roasts served from 12 to 6pm are hugely popular so booking is advised.

Whether you make it to the launch or not, a date for your diaries should be the weekend of Thursday 26th to Monday 30th September when the Volunteer will be holding the latest of their popular beer festivals in the beer garden. This is to celebrate their second anniversary. There are likely to be around 20 to 25 beers on offer all at the same time.

Nobody who enjoys a quality pint of ale should be without this book – especially if you plan to travel around the UK on business or leisure. With the price of a pint nowadays, why risk drinking poor beer, when the book can steer you towards the best pubs wherever you are?

Even if you bought the Guide last year, the ever-changing pub industry means that a significant amount of it will now be out of date. In our own area around 20% of the pubs featured this year will be different from last year, and a similar story will be true in most other areas too.

In addition the Good Beer Guide aims to list all known real ale breweries and their regular beers (many thousands). The majority of these will also have tasting notes supplied to steer you towards your style of beer – it can be bewildering to see a large bank of handpumps and have no idea which one is for you. This list also comes in handy at

beer festivals or when buying beers in an off license or supermarket. There are also always numerous interesting beer-related articles to read.

The book will be available in main book shops, or online from CAMRA from mid September, and makes an ideal Christmas or birthday present for anyone who enjoys a pint. However, we are offering the chance to buy it in person from some of the volunteers who helped write it at our annual launch event.

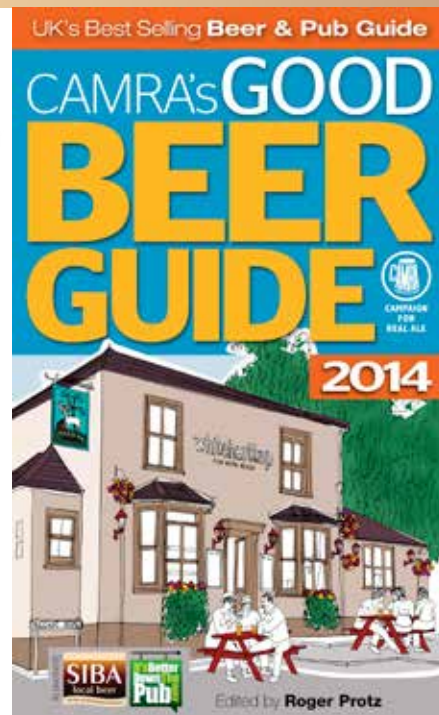
The cover price is £15.99 but for this day only it will be available at the bargain price of £12.50, or just £10 to card-carrying CAMRA members.

More details of the Volunteer's location and offerings are available on their very good website volunteertavern.co.uk or by phone on 01179558498.

We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at the event.

Vince Murray

GBG Co-ordinator, Bristol & District



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Shine on . . . Pubs by the Lakes

In the late 19th century, the then Bristol Waterworks Company undertook an eight year project to dam the River Yeo, and thus create an artificial fresh water lake in the valley below the village of Blagdon. This was to provide drinking water for Bristol and much of North Somerset. Some fifty years later the local demand for clean drinking water was so great that a second, much larger artificial reservoir was created at Chew and opened in 1956 by HRH Queen Elizabeth II.

Both Blagdon and Chew Valley lakes still provide fresh water to Bristol today, but both have also become nationally important wildlife havens for birds, animals and plants. There are numerous nature walks, tea shops and at Chew a particularly informative visitor centre. Add to this a limited amount of water sport activity permitted, and you have two beauty spots of which Somerset is rightly proud.

If you are visiting one or both of these lakes, it is worth checking out some of the surrounding hamlets and villages in search of a decent pint with which to toast the foresight of the Bristol Waterworks Company (now Bristol Water) in creating two such practical yet utterly beautiful attractions so close to the city.

Less than a kilometer west of the northern tip of Chew Valley lake is the village of Chew Stoke, and its one remaining operational pub, the **Stoke Inn**, an imposing stone-built two-bar pub with car park and garden with children's play equipment. The right-hand 'lounge' bar looks to me very much like someone's living room, with an overwhelmingly informal, almost haphazard set up. The public bar on the left houses the TV screens for watching sport. On my visit there was Sharp's Doom Bar, Otter Bitter, Palmer's and a very nice pint of Cottage Clifton Ale, a ruby red ale with an aftertaste halfway between bitter and sweet.

Sadly, the Stoke Inn is the only pub in Chew Stoke now that the Yew Tree

Inn, a popular former Usher's house up the hill, has closed. The Yew Tree looked in a state of some disrepair when I snooped around the car park, and we can only hope that the pub can be rescued and restored to something approaching its former charm.

On the other side of the northern end of the lake, you will find the **Pony & Trap**, in what counts as Newtown or Knowle Hill depending on which map you consult. Whatever you call it, it's worth seeking out though, as this is one of the most immaculately presented pubs in the entire area. The long sloping gardens have beautiful views of the valley – though not actually of the lake. Inside you will find a gastro-pub, with a real emphasis on the innovative food menu. Closed on Mondays, and offering Sharp's Doom Bar and Butcombe Bitter as the unsurprising but perfectly well-maintained beers.

To the east of an imaginary equatorial line across Chew Valley lake or, as geography students might have it, halfway down the right hand side, is the town/village of Bishop Sutton where, prominent by the roadside, you will find the **Red Lion**. Stone-built in a locally typical style, with the pub name etched into the windows, and a very well kept garden to the right as you look. If the sun is shining, this is lovely place to relax. It says something about the changing landscape of real ale availability that I was pleasantly surprised, almost nostalgic, to see a Courage Best handpump on the bar. Courage Best used to have the same reputation as Sharp's Doom Bar does among some real ale drinkers today. Omnipresent but uninspiring. I had a pint for old times' sake and found it a crisper more refreshing pint than I remember. Other beers on offer were Fuller's London Pride, Doom Bar and Butcombe Bitter.



The Stoke Inn

an imposing stone-built two-bar pub with car park and garden with children's play equipment. The right-hand 'lounge' bar looks to me very



The Pony and Trap



The Red Lion



The Waldergrave Arms

The New Inn with its magnificent view over the lake



Round beneath the southern tip of the Chew Valley lake is East Harptree where, tucked in among the narrow and hilly streets, you will find the **Waldegrave Arms**. There is something altogether more *substantial* about the Waldegrave, a 14th century inn with beamed ceilings, mysterious corridors and a hotchpotch of drinking and dining rooms. There is a large sun-trap garden, and a covered smoking area for the nicotine-dependent. My own visit was enhanced by a friendly

cat who popped onto my lap as I sat in a comfortable sofa enjoying the Otter Ale that was on offer alongside the ubiquitous Butcombe Bitter.

A smidge to the north west, on a road that will take us towards Blagdon lake, are two delightful pubs in West Harptree.

The first is the **Crown**. It is a proper old rural village pub so, as with many pubs that double up as a community hub, there are likely to be one or more traditional pub games being played. The real ales on offer during my visit were, no go on, you guess! Pick two beers you think are likely to be on offer... Wow, you must be psychic! Yes, Butcombe Bitter and Sharp's Doom Bar. Now, while a broader choice of beers around this area would be very welcome, the Butcombe Bitter in particular is as good an example of a 'best bitter' as you will find.

To the north of the village, back towards the lakes, is the **Blue Bowl**. A stone-built, fairly traditional country pub with large car

park and meticulously coiffured gardens. There are four en-suite rooms if you are staying overnight. Another Sharp's Doom Bar stockist, the Blue Bowl also offers Fuller's London Pride. There is also sometimes a guest beer from a local brewery, though not at the time of my visit earlier this summer. Free wifi is available here if you need to check share prices, the result of the 4:30 at Kempton or simply watch an online video of a skateboarding squirrel.

If you leave the village of West Harptree and head west north west along the A368 you will find, in a village mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1089, the **Ring O' Bells** in Compton Martin. Bought by local villagers in 2012, the Ring makes a great play of its history. Flagstone floors, inglenook fire place, old leather chairs: it's like a very pleasant step back in time. As a former Butcombe pub, the Ring O' Bells still proudly features one or two from that brewery. Bitter is a regular, but



The Ring O' Bells



The Queen Adelaide



The Seymour Arms

garden from which there is a gorgeous panoramic view of the very best of English countryside. The lake stretches across your view, topped and tailed by the lush Somerset countryside. Perch yourself on one of the many bench table sets, tuck it into a well-prepared lunch, with your pick of Wadworth's family of beers (6X, Henry's IPA, Bishop's Tipple all likely to be available, plus a seasonal offering), and bask in a little piece of the very best that England has to offer.

Rare Breed and Gold both make frequent appearances, alongside a varying guest ale.

Final village to visit on this meandering 'lap' around the lakes is Blagdon. The **Queen Adelaide** on the High Street, is a good old-fashioned unpretentious pub with the wonderful advantage of having the second best view of any of the pubs featured here. (Well, that's my opinion. See below for the best). Good food offered here, as well as Butcombe Bitter and a guest beer.

Just up the road and the hill is the charming black and white exterior of the **Seymour Arms**. The Seymour makes the most of its idyllic location, and invites B&B guests to use it as a base from which to explore the lakes and hills that surround it. Butcombe Bitter again the real ale on offer.

However, atop the hill in Park Lane sits the pub with arguably the best view in the South West. The **New Inn** is a sprawling Wadworth house with an extensive

Duncan Shine



BATH & BORDERS BRANCH

Pub and brewery news from the CAMRA Bath & Borders branch

Bath and Surrounding Villages

Abbey Ales, Camden Row, Bath

Abbey Ales, founded in Bath in 1997, is at odds with Warmley-based Bath Ales over the use of the word *Bath* and whether the former can launch a subsidiary brand called the Bath Brewing Company. Abbey Ales manager Alan Morgan feels that the brewery needs to create the new identity because some customers did not realise it was based in Bath, despite his beers having brewed at Lansdown for almost sixteen years. Abbey Ales has registered the name with Companies House and now wants to use it as a trademark, but Roger Jones, managing director of Bath Ales, says the new name could lead to further confusion. Mr Morgan has argued for some time that the use of the word *Bath* in a company name should be reserved for businesses that are based in the city. Bath Ales was launched in 1995 with the intention of being based in the city but, after attempts to find premises to brew in the city fell through at the eleventh hour, the brewery was instead set up on the southern outskirts of Bristol. Meanwhile Abbey Ales is now seeking legal advice on whether it can use the Bath Brewing Company name.

Belvoir Castle, 32-33 Victoria Buildings, Lower Bristol Road, Bath

The historically named Belvoir Castle is once again the Belvoir Castle! It was renamed the Victoria Works following a previous refurbishment around three years ago but the name never really caught on. New landlords Steve Birchall and Claire Buhr acquired the pub in March following the sudden departure of the previous licensee and have recently completed a full revamp of the venue. The couple are hoping to turn it into a live music hotspot and a home to local sports teams. Their first act was to change the name from the controversial Victoria Works. Recently retired from the army, Mr Birchall said that many of the regulars had helped with the refurbishment and have shown a lot of goodwill and practical support to the new landlords. During the refurbishment the live music bookings diary disappeared so the couple are calling on any bands expecting to play at the venue in the coming months to contact the pub and confirm their gigs. Sport teams are also being encouraged to

get in touch with the pub, particularly those who would like to use the skittle alley, which is the longest in Bath. Ms Buhr, who also runs the city-centre restaurant Le Petit Flamma, says that she wants the pub to be at the heart of the local community. We wish Claire and Steve well for the future.

Coeur de Lion, 17 Northumberland Place, Bath

The freehold of this tiny city centre pub is on the market for £395,000. The Punch Taverns-owned pub is a three-storey eighteenth century Grade II listed Georgian property and is famous for its stained glassed window. It has one main bar with seating across two floors and a pavement licence of three tables outside. The Coeur is one of the city's gems and is currently managed by Bath brewery Abbey Ales, which also operates three other pubs in the city: the Trinity, the Star and the Assembly Inn. Abbey's lease has 13 years left to run and it is believed that this will not be affected by any sale. The selling agent is James A Baker.

Green Park Tavern, Lower Bristol Road, Bath

This pub closed during the first weekend in August. The future of the pub is uncertain but a FaceBook post from its owner says "... tomorrow is the last night the tavern will be open for a while...", which suggests that this might only be a temporary closure.

King's Arms, 1 Monmouth Place, Bath

This Enterprise Inns-owned pub closed in around May. The lease is up for sale. At the time of writing, around early August, the pub was still closed.

Metropolitan (formerly Midland), 14 James Street West, Bath

A major transformation of this pub is underway. The City Pub Company (West), which was founded in 2011 by established industry entrepreneurs David Bruce and Clive Watson, and John Roberts, former managing director of the Fuller's Beer Company, has acquired the pub, which had closed earlier this year. The company is planning to re-open the pub at the end of September, very likely under a new name, and with

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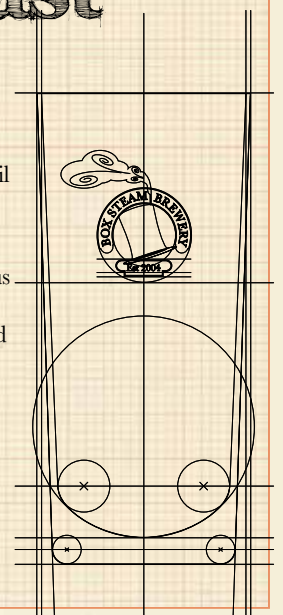
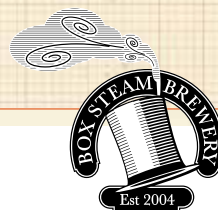
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BATH & BORDERS BRANCH

very much the intention on giving the pub a brand new start. The most exciting part of the development is the plan to establish a fully functioning micro-brewery on the premises. The company already has two brew-pubs, the Henley Brew House and the Cambridge Brew House, and is aiming to create a similarly successful venture in Bath. Meanwhile chief executive Alex Derrick has been in contact with the local branch of CAMRA to see if we would be willing guinea pigs to try out the new beers.

Raven, 7 Queen Street, Bath

Bath & Borders Branch Overall Pub of the Year 2013

At a well attended branch social held on Tuesday 11 June landlord Tim Perry and his crew were presented with the Bath & Borders branch overall Branch Pub of the Year 2013 certificate. This is the second time that the Queen Street pub has taken the title. It won the award in 2006 and also won the branch's *City* pub of the year award in 2010. The free-house, renowned for its pies, monthly seminars and story-telling, has an ever-changing range of guest beers, which it serves alongside two beers, Raven Ale and Raven Gold, brewed exclusively for the pub by the local Blindman's brewery. The Raven also runs three-monthly beer festivals. Landlord Tim Perry says, "We are delighted to win this award again. It is a testament to the hard work that we all put in. We are always grateful for all the support that Bath has given us."

Richmond Arms, 7 Richmond Place, Bath

Plans to convert the Richmond Arms in northern Bath into a private home have been rejected and a community buy-out has been launched. Please see main article.

Rising Sun, 3-4 Grove Street, Bath

The freehold of this eighteenth century Grade II listed pub is on the market for £500,000. The pub, which has two bar areas, a commercial kitchen and seven rooms for accommodation, is situated just outside the city centre, near to the rugby ground. The selling agent is James A Baker.

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

This Wadworth's pub, which closed earlier in the year, re-opened in around May under a temporary landlord. A new permanent landlord is expected to take over at the pub around the end of August.

Victoria Works (formerly and once again the Belvoir Castle), 32-33 Victoria Buildings, Lower Bristol Road, Bath

Please see under entry for the Belvoir Castle above.

White Horse, 42 Shophouse Road, Twerton, Bath

This former branch Pub of the Year has re-opened under new management. It closed in around April or early May following the departure of former landlord Jason Clark and his mother. A couple who used to run the Dolphin Inn nearby have now taken on the Enterprise Inns-owned pub. We wish them well and hope they can continue to run the White Horse, as did Jason and his mother, as a successful and welcoming community pub.

East Somerset

Bell, High Street, Buckland Dinham, near Frome

Long-serving landlords Jeremy and Lucy Westcott left this pub on 15 July to run a traditional English pub in Goa. Meanwhile new landlords Nick Taylor and Karen Kerriman have taken over and we wish them well for the future.

Bull Terrier, Croscombe, near Wells

This ancient village pub, well run by long-serving landlords Barry and Ruth Vidler, closed towards the end of June. The building had already been given planning consent to be converted to a private use. In fact it is not certain what the future of the building will be and one rumour has it that it will become a guest house and coffee shop.

Jolliffe Arms, Kilmersdon, near Radstock

The previous landlord of this pub left suddenly and in mysterious circumstances. The pub remains open, however, and is being managed for the time being by the landlord of the Bell at Leigh-on-Mendip.

Knatchbull Arms, Stoke St Michael, near Shepton Mallet

This traditional village pub, which closed in the early part of the year, re-opened in the spring under an experienced landlord and seems to be doing well.

Seymour Arms, Witham Friary, near Frome

John Douel, the longstanding landlord of this completely unspoilt rural pub, sadly died in April. Our condolences go to his widow Jean and their two children. Son Peter and his sister have been running the pub for the last year and are intending to continue to do so with the intention of keeping it exactly as it is whilst keeping the ownership of the pub within the family. The Seymour Arms is a remarkably unspoilt gem. The pub is on the National Inventory of Historic Pub Interiors and walking into it is like walking into a scene from the 1950s. Even the cider prices seem to hark back to a bygone age!

West Wiltshire

Bear, 26 Silver Street, Bradford-on-Avon

This town-centre pub has recently been taken over by the now former landlords of the nearby Bunch of Grapes (see entry below). All the staff, including the chef, have de-camped to the Bear, which has more room inside than the Grapes and, at the rear of the pub, an outside courtyard area. The pub was briefly closed for a minor revamp and, in a bid to establish the pub as a brand, re-opened as an *Ale, Pie and Cider House*.

Bunch of Grapes, 14 Silver Street, Bradford-on-Avon

This pub closed briefly during late July and early August following the departure of the previous landlords and staff to the nearby Bear (please see above). At the time of writing the pub was expected to re-open on Friday 16 August under a new experienced landlord.

Riverside Inn, 49 St Margaret's Street, Bradford-on-Avon

This pub closed in early May. At the time of writing it had not re-opened. The future of this pub remains uncertain.

George, High Street, Codford, near Warminster

We understand that the freehold of this pub has just been acquired by local company Four County Inns. (This is the same company that owns the Royal Oak on Lower Bristol Road in Bath, the Stallards in Trowbridge, the Prince of Wales in Dilton Marsh, and the Organ Inn in Warminster.) This should be good news as the company has an excellent track record on saving and refurbishing pubs and allowing its landlords a high level of freedom in how its pubs are managed and run.

(Continued overleaf)



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BATH & BORDERS BRANCH

Pub and brewery news from the CAMRA Bath & Borders branch

(Continued from previous page)

Prince of Wales, 94 High Street, Dilton Marsh

An extensive refurbishment of this community pub is mostly complete. The whole building has been much smartened up, both externally and internally, whilst the interior has been re-modelled so that the area to the left of the main entrance has become a distinct dining area, whilst the re-floored area to the right now serves as the main drinking area. Meanwhile the skittle alley now doubles as a function room. Finally a new beer garden has been opened. New landlords Stephen and Kamil are determined to make a success of the Prince which, above all, remains a focus of the community.

Fox & Hounds, 6 Deverill Road, Warminster Bath & Border Branch Rural Pub of the Year 2013

Landlords Chris and Marion Pitcher were presented with their third award in three years at a well attended Branch AGM on the evening of Tuesday 25 June. This year it was for Bath & Borders CAMRA Rural Pub of the Year (although owing to a small clerical error the certificate actually said *Community* Pub of the Year). The Fox & Hounds was in fact Community Pub of the Year in 2011, before going on to become overall branch Pub of the Year in 2012. A freehouse, this very popular pub is well supported by the local community and caters for all walks of life and all ages. The pub stocks at least three well kept beers, two of which are from the nearby Wessex Brewery, and a range of up to seven real ciders, all at very reasonable prices.

Three Daggers, Westbury Road, Edington, near Westbury

An official opening ceremony for the pub's new micro-brewery and farm shop was held on Saturday 27 July. The Mayor of the nearby town of Westbury cut the ribbon in a day that included brewery tours and beer sampling, food tastings and demonstrations, and music from the local Steeple Rocks choir.

Axe & Cleaver, Frome Road, Southwick, near Trowbridge

This large village pub, which closed for the last time around a year ago, has been granted planning permission to be demolished and the land used for car sales, including the possible erection of a showroom and sales office. Demolition of the building began in early August. The pub had had a chequered history. In the early nineties it became a sort of out-of-town, youth-orientated, night-club-style pub. In the late nineties it was acquired by the local Ushers brewery, who re-named the pub the Wych, and tried to make it a venue equally attractive to locals and a passing food trade. In 1999, however, the brewery itself closed and, from then onwards, the pub seems to have struggled. Finally it closed and was subsequently converted into an Indian restaurant. As such the venue fared little better and, by around early 2011, the building was again closed and boarded up. In around the spring of 2011 the venue suddenly opened again as a pub under its original name. It seemed that the Axe

& Cleaver might have had a new lease of life. The freehold of the pub, however, went on the market last year and was sold. The pub then closed again around a year ago and has since been boarded up. Planning permission for the pub's demolition was approved by Southwick parish council and met with no material local objections. This leaves Southwick with one pub, the Wadworth's owned Farmhouse.

Horse & Groom, 18 Alfred Street, Westbury

This large handsome pub on the outskirts of Westbury, which had been closed in the early part of the year, re-opened on Good Friday under new landlord Bob Musker. The Horse & Groom, which has very much a village feel, has retained the traditional layout of public bar and lounge. Bob, who has spent most of his life in the pub trade, aims to concentrate on offering simple, affordable, but good restaurant food. The Horse & Groom has a large lawned garden bordered on one edge by a babbling brook with its own kingfisher. The pub also has a pleasant seated area at the front of the building, an extensive car park and a separate skittle alley and function room.


Steve Hunt

Rucking Mole joins the pack!

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The Bar Code
by Eddie Taberner

EDDIE TABERNER 26/06/11

BATH & BORDERS BRANCH

The Richmond Arms: Community buyout launched

Regulars of the Richmond Arms (in Richmond Place, Bath) and the local community have been battling hard to keep their much loved local open. In the last couple of months not only have they successfully fought off a planning application for change of use to a residential home, but have also succeeded in getting the pub registered as an asset of community value and are now preparing to buy the pub for the community. It's a great example of what well organised, determined local communities can achieve. As Mike Akin, member of the *Save The Richmond Arms* committee said, "The affection for this beautiful little pub, nestled in the hills of Bath, and the steely determination against the odds to keep it open, is overwhelming!"

The Richmond Arms is located in a residential area on the northern outskirts of the city and is part of a Georgian terrace. It has been a pub since 1876 and is the only remaining local pub. It had gained a reputation in recent years for good food but has always had strong local community support which came to the fore when the owners Punch Taverns made an application for change of use to residential. Bath and North East Somerset Council's reason for turning down the planning application was that the proposed change of use would represent the loss of a community facility and that the property had not been effectively marketed as a public house. Insufficient evidence had been provided to demonstrate that the public house is unviable as a business and that the proposal, because it was not for an alternative facility of equivalent or greater benefit to the local community, ran counter to policy CF7 of the council's local plan. (Pub owner, Punch, had argued that the pub was no longer financially viable and that it had tried and failed to find a buyer willing to keep it open.)

More than 300 objections were made against the application and the *Save the Richmond Arms* campaign group, set up at the time the planning application was made, has been encouraging people from the community to 'use it or lose it'. Angela MacAusland, a regular at the pub and secretary of the *Save The Richmond Arms* committee said, "Since the start of the campaign to save the pub, the community have definitely voted with their feet – the pub is as busy as I have seen it for years."

Since then the *Save the Richmond Arms* campaign group succeeded in getting the pub entered on to the Bath and North East Somerset Council's 'List of Assets of Community Value' – being only the second pub to do this in Bath. The 'Localism Act' requires local authorities to maintain such a list of assets that have been nominated by the local community, and when such listed assets come up for sale or change of ownership, the Act gives community groups six months to raise the money and bid to buy the asset when it comes onto the open market. This means that the *Save the Richmond Arms* group has a six month window from 22nd July 2013 to raise the funds from the local community to buy the asset. Richard Wilkinson, member of the *Save the Richmond Arms* committee said, "Getting the change-of-use planning application refused was great news, and even better is the opportunity for a community purchase. This could preserve the pub as an amenity for all in the long term."

A business plan and prospectus are currently being prepared, along similar lines to the model used to successfully buy out the Bell in Walcot Street, with the minimum investment starting at £500. Anyone who is interested in becoming part of the community buyout should email richmondarmsbath@yahoo.co.uk for more information. At the time of writing, a 'Party At The



Colin MacAusland and Bill Clarke, both members of the 'Save the Richmond Arms' committee, fly the flag to help 'Save Our Local'



Richmond Arms celebrations: committee members and pub regulars celebrate the 'Asset of Community Value and refused planning application' including committee members Colin and Angela MacAusland, Mike Akin, Kim Watkins, Bill Clarke and George Hipperson

Pub' event is planned to raise funds and kick off the buyout campaign on Bank Holiday Monday, August 26th (while Pints West is at the printers).

Steve Hunt and Tom Chapman

Campaign contact:

Email: richmondarmsbath@yahoo.co.uk

Facebook page: www.Facebook.com/SaveTheRichmondArms

Newsletter sign up: <http://bit.ly/RANews>

Phone: 07733 105 412 (Colin), 07760 191 251 (Angela)

Useful Links:

CAMRA local pubs campaign: www.camra.org.uk/pubs

New Plunkett Foundation website: www.pubs.coop

Community Right To Bid: www.mycommunityrights.org.uk/community-right-to-bid

The Bar Code
by Eddie Taberner



News from Bath Ales

Bath Ales is brewing in Bath

Bath Ales is 'delighted' to be meeting its original objective to brew in the city of Bath. When they first started out in 1995 they were all set to move into premises in the city when at the last minute the arrangements fell through. In order to maintain brewing dates, the most suitable brewing premises available at the time were just across the Bristol border.

However their new flagship bar/restaurant **Graze Bar, Brewery & Chop House** includes a microbrewery, and by the time you read this it will be selling **Platform 3**, a 5.7% IPA. Read more about these new developments in the separate review of Graze Bath.

Seasonal ales

If you are lucky you may just catch the last few pints of **Summer's Hare**, the light, hoppy, 3.9% ABV summer seasonal.

Come September **Forest Hare** will make its reappearance. This is the 3.9% copper-coloured, hoppy, autumn ale with hints of kiwi fruit and gooseberry. Forest Hare is brewed with wheat and barley malts and New Zealand Sauvignon hops.

Golden Hare, Bath Ales' spring 4.4% seasonal brewed with floor-malted Maris Otter barley and Goldings hops, has achieved the Bronze award in the Golden Ale category of the CAMRA South West Regional Champion Beer of Britain competition.

News from the Beerd Brewery

Already a number of Beerd beers have been brewed in the pilot brewery located in Hare House, and last month *Pints West* mentioned a few of the more exotic flavours concocted by (now not so) new brewer Shane O'Beirne.

As a preview of things to come, the following tasting notes give an idea of what might be expected in the future.

● **Monterey 3.9% Californian Pale Ale**: a West Coast style pale ale brewed with American-sourced hops. Pine and tropical fruits on the nose, more pine on the tongue followed by a quick, sharp, bitter finish.

Razor 5.9% IPA: a full bodied IPA with an aroma of passion fruit and subtle honey flavours mingled with the hoppiness, then a long, bitter, orange-tinged finish.

Sasquatch 5.9% American Pale Ale: a malty American pale ale, with a slight sweetness under its hoppy overtone. It has hints of lemon and wintergreen aroma on the nose and a quick, dry finish.



Bath Ales head brewer Gerry Condell receiving the certificate for the Bronze award in the Golden Ale category of the CAMRA South West Regional Champion Beer of Britain competition

Pendulum 5.3% American Amber Ale: a balanced rich-coloured American amber Ale, with initial blackcurrant notes and a slight pepper-like tingle; a rose and lychee fragrance accompanies a lingering dry bitterness.

Mantis 5.5% American Pale Ale: a dry-hopped American pale ale with a balanced hoppy aroma, an abundance of citrus and tropical fruit flavours, and a long, dry finish.

Silvertip 4.7% New Zealand Pale Ale: a refreshing pale ale using the popular Nelson Sauvignon hop to give it a fruity aroma and a flavour that has hints of white wine. Easy to drink with a fresh quick bitter finish. I have tried this one at the Hop Pole in Bath and it does what it says.

Kobalt 5.2% Munich Dunkel: an intriguing dark Munich dunkel with a biscuity aroma and a smooth body, initially malty with hints of vanilla with a pleasant bitterness to finish.

These beers will only be available in small quantities and are changing constantly, so if you see one in a Bath Ales pub or outlet try it while you can, you may not be so fortunate next time..

On a final note, this year's Bath Ales Biking Bonanza charity event raised a grand total of £3658.31. This commendable amount will be handed over to the Frenchay Hospital After Burns Children's Club (FAB).

Roy Sanders

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Fair Deal for your Local - support from local MPs

All the MPs within the branch area were contacted about CAMRA's 'Fair Deal for your Local' campaign. I had replies from five MPs across the political spectrum. On the whole we had a supportive and positive response. MPs Leslie, Skidmore, Lopresti, Foster and Primarolo were all aware of the problems that tenants of pub companies are under. There were no replies from seven MPs, including Tessa Munt (Wells) who has failed to respond to any enquiries over the last two years.

All of the above MPs reiterated the importance of local pubs and their place as community assets. They also understand the need for

regulation. They are aware of the problems for tenants to be treated fairly by pub companies and a curb on high rents and beer prices.

Most agree that the introduction of a statutory code of practice and independent adjudicator to protect licensees is necessary, if pub companies do not get their house in order. Consultation ended in June. We keenly await the outcome and the government proposals.

To keep up the momentum of the Fair Deal for your Local campaign, I would encourage all branch members to write to your MP at House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA.

Ray Holmes (Public Affairs Officer)

Graze in Bath

Review of visit to Graze Bar, Brewery & Chophouse

Graze Bath is very conveniently located just to the side of Bath Spa station building. The premises are part of the new Vaults 'food quarter' built in and around the arches of the 19th century railway station, originally built by Isambard Kingdom Brunel.

The bar/restaurant takes up the entire first floor of the building and has two large outside areas for al fresco drinking and dining. The downstairs entrance is guarded by four old-style telephone boxes but once inside the door you are soon climbing the stairs (there is a lift) to reach the 5000-square-foot eating/drinking area. It really is quite impressive on first sight: a room that will take 140 diners with neat tables and seating areas and a very large island bar, designed and furnished in a clean, sharp, modern style with a lot of wood and polished copper, apparently influenced by New York and London trends.

Depending on the position of the sun there are two outside terraces to choose from, separated from the room by glass walls. The morning edition overlooks the street, and the afternoon version is right next to one of the platforms of the station, although you can't actually nip into it without climbing a fence. This 'post-industrial garden' features a number of stylised animal sculptures to keep you company while you eat and drink and indulge in a bit of trainspotting.

Back inside, the open-plan kitchen is on view at the far wall and next to it is a meat locker where slabs of beef are hung to cure. For the foodies among you Graze sources high-quality British meat, cooked in a Josper charcoal oven. There is a particular emphasis on dry-aged steak, but there is also a selection of small plates, fish, shellfish dishes and vegetarian options as well as seasonal specials.

The huge bar serves the usual Bath Ales regulars and seasonals as well as a selection of keg beers, fine wines and spirits. The day I was there a Beerd special was also on sale.



Graze Bath brewer Shane O'Beirne at work brewing batch three of Platform 3
(photo by Jo Sanders)



Trainspotting in the post-industrial garden of Graze Bath

Best of all, and again on full view to all, is the microbrewery whose vessels gleam in matching copper with shiny wood cladding. This one-and-a-half-barrel plant comprises four fermenters, a hot liquor tank, one copper and a mash tun. The microbrewery will be used to brew beers unique to Graze Bath and the first brew from the plant is Platform 3, a 5.7% IPA. This will be brewed every two weeks for the foreseeable future but in the winter months a darker type of beer may be considered. An unfiltered keg version will be brewed on the pilot kit in Hare House and served only in Graze Bath.

Platform 3 is brewed with Cascade, Chinook, Columbus and Summit hops. The first batch had already been casked and put on stillage for conditioning, and will have been on sale by the time you read this. In fact the day of the review I was lucky enough to be present as the second batch of Platform 3 was being casked and I was able to taste a pre-conditioning snifter. Already the sample displayed some tropical fruit aromas, hints of citrus flavours, and a decidedly long bitter finish from those US hops, giving it a typical West Coast IPA flavour.

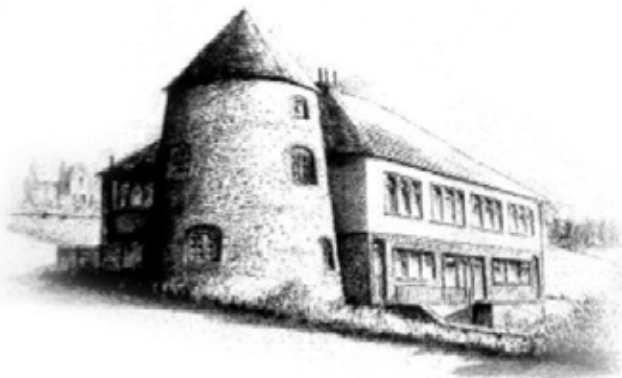
According to Bath Ales this Graze is a resounding success, and it has certainly been pretty full every time I have dropped in. The good weather in July has seen the terraces packed on both sides and there are usually queues for tables at peak times. Bath Ales have also been pleasantly surprised at the bar-only trade, which I guess is one bonus of being in just the right place for a last drink before catching a train.

Bath Ales has come home to Bath in a big way.

Roy Sanders

The Windmill Inn

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A personal plea to pub landlords

Memo to pub landlords: Turn it down! The music that is. Something that increasingly bugs me (and I know I am not alone) is the way people running pubs seem to believe that their customers want to be blasted with loud music at all hours of the day.

Obviously if you visit a music-themed pub, such as the wonderful Gryphon in Bristol, or are in a town centre pub on a Friday/Saturday night, you would expect loud music as this is what a sizeable chunk of the customer base at those times wants. However, why do even our local community pubs seem to be convinced that being deafened is part of what their customers are looking for? On two occasions recently I have gone to one of my local pubs for a few quiet drinks and a chat after a hard day's work and have left after one drink due to not being able to have a conversation without shouting. Similarly, I have twice asked for the volume to be turned down at a nearby pub when trying to have a meal with friends and getting fed up with shouting across the table.

A seafront pub was recently advertising that they were showing the Ashes. Great, I thought, but for the duration of the two hours that a friend and I suffered there, we had to put up no volume on the TV and being blasted with music instead. That is a really interesting piece of management. The pub has decided that it wants to attract cricket fans into the pub but has then decided that those customers couldn't possibly want to hear the cricket commentary but would rather have a backdrop of the latest nightclub classics. Bizarre or what?

A friend of mine says that all this is simply bar staff putting on what they want without giving a thought for what the customers might want. I suspect he is right. Pub owners need to consider whether they are alienating a part of the local community who would be good customers.

If I want to drink to the accompaniment of loud music I might as well stay at home and drink listening to my own stuff. Some of us still want to go to the pub to talk to people!

Rant over.

Tim Nickolls



Pub Quiz

Q. Why do prospective parents choose the name 'George', beyond the fact that if they did not ask for a scan or it was wrong they can change it to 'Georgy Girl'?

A. Because:

G is for golf and the lady is in the club.
E is the enharmonic of the F-Flat they will stammeringly acquire.
O is the verb describing their future financial position.
R is for Romeo, half the cause of the situation.
G is for the good marks each will get for night feeding duties.
E is what comes before the 'by gum' teething troubles.

Dr John

Cryptic Crossword

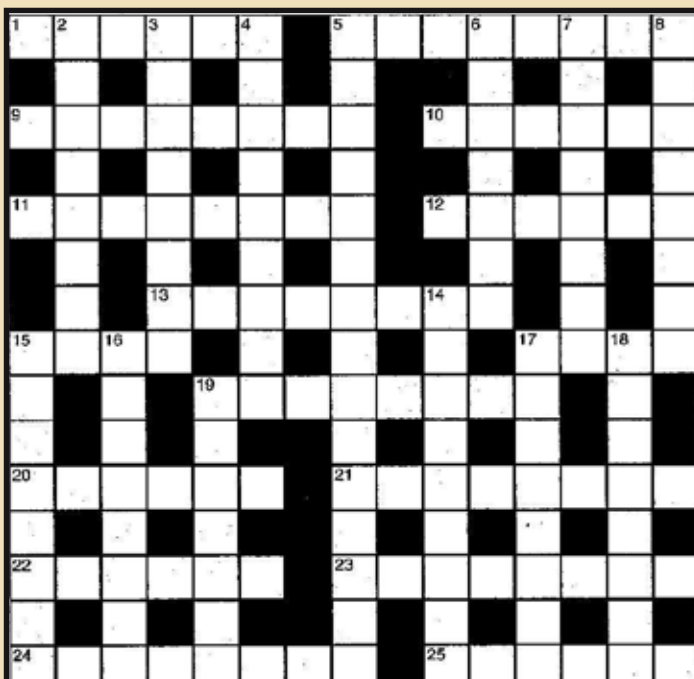
Compiled by Pete and Eddie Taberner

CLUES ACROSS

1. Outsize victim of Cotleigh strong ale (6)
5. Local Bristol pub where David Cameron might feel at home (8)
9. Colourless and peculiar drink (5, 3)
10. First sip should be sufficient when you taste beer (6)
11. Love some cat brew in this state after toomuch Exmoor Beast (8)
12. Quarrel arising when Ray has a Felin Foel for starters (6)
13. Dress code for The Green Man or the Adam & Eve (4-4)
15. Release house – for pub use? (4)
17. Some would bar Abu Dhabi drinking man (4)
19. Try hitchhiking – this might happen after 20 ac! (3, 1, 4)
20. Distributing Old English cider initially on tap will provide a kick! (6)
21. Clifton pub that could spring to mind in Surrey (8)
22. CIA men turn pale on a weak beer (6)
23. "Love a bit of a song by Queen". The view of the bar manager (8)
24. Cash only change for beer from Kingfishers (8)
25. Very slurred in the French capital community (6)

CLUES DOWN

2. Sherry sipper, or shipper? (8)
3. Endlessly berate ale served up with VAT to be paid (8)
4. Could be a deaf Royal drunk this (4, 2, 3)
5. Wetherspoons' advert accommodated here in Bristol (10, 5)
6. Swallowed a very loud university brew. QED. (7)
7. International businessman delivers strong ale to the Queen (8)
8. Could the Wheatsheaf have become a rough watering hole? (5, 3)



14. Cut-price mushy pea following a troublesome hot dog (1, 3, 5)
15. High speed pub-crawl when there's no food. Bother! (4, 4)
16. When found in a bottle the real ale is heavenly (8)
17. A moister cocktail for one who's a smasher (8)
18. Steed or Purdy for example rave about southern Nag's Head (8)
19. How strong is this beer? Be specific (7)

Solution on page 34

CCC II (Three Centuries Part 2)

Those readers who followed me through the first part of the *nonus decimus* Century in the multi-award-winning *Pinctæ Occidēns* XCIV may now wish to do something more exciting, perhaps by observing paint or grass pursuing their natural processes. I would certainly not wish to further try the patience of those of you who may have already been disappointed that this *Pinctæ Occidēns* XCIX, although being the *numerus undecimtus*, does not have a nubilely illustrated page three. It should be noted that this would have been *Pinctæ Occidēns* IC if Romulus and Remus had lived in colder climes, as one might have expected. After all, they were the sons of Mars, from Slough presumably, were suckled by a she-wolf, probably when they wandered up to Wolverhampton, and were fed by a woodpecker, possibly in Hereford. If you are still reading on, please take care as your ice cream with its XCIX chocolate flake may melt before you finish this ongoing piece of purple prose about Weston-super-Mare's three centuries of ale-filled watering holes. An IC flake would obviously keep it frozen for longer.

Last time, we left the story of our first serious century alewise most appropriately at the *Strand Hotel*, if you follow my thread. Now we come to the third quarter of the *nonus decimus* Century, when the town grew apace and many more watering holes appeared. A good thing, one might well say, as in those days the townsfolk did not have to fear that hydraulic fracturing might be involved, the Otto cycle having only just started to threaten the development of the penny-farthing, or modern half pence, bicycle. Petroleum production was in its infancy and the drills would have been of less than one year of age and a minor novelty for the locals.

But getting back to our story, the *Globe Hotel* appeared in St James' Street and could have been built earlier if Atlas had not held things up as he preferred planes to spheres. The *Britannia Inn* on the High Street may have originally only accepted payment for a round in the form of farthings, halfpennies and pennies with the inn's image on the reverse. That image also appeared on the white five pound note, printed in black and white in those days before colour television was introduced on BBC Two for Wimbledon coverage in 1967, but ale prices were somewhat lower then and if a white fiver were proffered one would probably receive in exchange a bunch of fives, as mentioned in Pierce Egan's *Boxiana*. Later, one might have been told to get on one's penny-farthing. Food would presumably also have to be purchased with pennies, probably the ones showing on their obverse the young Queen Victoria's head with her hair in a bun. Obviously, Food Standards Agency regulations and legislation were not a problem at that time, when the bun penny could buy a penny bun.

It was plane to see that the *Britannia's* High Street neighbour, the *London Inn*, was also needed for the thirsty market traders just along the High Street. Those two watering holes seem to have been content with their given names but the *New Market House* on the other side of the High Street has changed its name several times, although it has now gone back to being the *New Market*. In a couple of words, it was not the birthplace of thoroughbred horse racing but it is said that a landlord named Heath was often a little horse from shouting at some of the noisier patrons to get them to put a sock in it or, if not, to leave their plates and hoof it. Not really what you might call a shoo-in for them. Incidentally, a 'cockle to a penny bun' is odds of 10-1.

The other end of the present High Street was at the time known as Union Street. The New Model trades unions of the day may have represented those on page three of the broadsheet newspapers. The *Swan Inn* on the corner of Union Street joined the *Railway Hotel* in Regent Street, if you are keeping track of all this. The *Swan* probably had swansdown pillows for a better night's sleep than the *Railway* sleepers achieved. At the other end of Union Street was the *Three Queens* on Oxford Street, another watering hole that has kept changing its name, possibly to blend in with its changing surroundings as it was most appropriately named the *Kameleon* in its last incarnation. The petrified *White Lion* joined the *Globe* in St James' St, long before Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer and Universal Studios films were shown in public houses.

As the town's population approached 8,000 souls, some of whom were probably in fact heels, the *Claremont Hotel* appeared and acquired a *Tap*, possibly to promote its hot and cold running water, which did not become a common feature until the end of the Century. Another possibility is that it wished to attract dancers to stay there, although the area offered for their gyrations would seem a little small and likely to cause some early baths to be taken. The *Bristol Arms* or *Bristol Hotel*, possibly in the Locking Road for room security reasons, was perhaps the most shipshape of the fashionable local hostelrys. The *Elm Tree Inn*, which may not have welcomed infirm Dutchmen, was on the corner of Meadow Street and Orchard Street and may have had hay for horses and five pieces of fruit a day for their riders. It is another name-changer, having more recently become the *Corner House*, possibly serving plum pie to the Horner boys, and the *Orchard*, possibly serving more cultivated clients. The *White Hart* also claimed at one stage to be in Orchard Street but it then skipped or jumped to Hopkins Street before settling in Palmer Row. One might say that that just about takes the topographical biscuit.

With that idiomatic expression for an absolute limit and not wishing to incur the Editor's wrath, I will stop there until next time.

Dr John (exactly 1,000 words)

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In summer the Pride of Weymouth Yachtsman pale
By Dorset Brewing Co or crafty Old Thumper by Ringwood
Greene King golden Ale Fresco and Abbot smoothly good
Dorset Piddle's Cocky Hop punchily golden bright
Blindmans Golden Spring with fresh aroma light
Malty Dolphin Amber by Sunny Republic Brewing Company
Courage rugby Best Bitter and Marston's oaked Pedigree

The William Henry at the other end of the street 'No 1' says
Not for Lloyds but the Frederick Place of Georgian days
When the thus-named Duke of Gloucester nearby stayed
And Weymouth a fashionable watering hole was made
Here Everards Original smooth and Arundel Black Stallion dark
With pale Butcombe Gold and Ringwood Old Thumper park
Beside Courage Directors pale and as in The Swan we do see
Courage Best Bitter pale, Abbot and Marston's Pedigree

Dr John

Weston diary and contact

● **Friday 13th September:** Yatton Crawl. Meet at Weston train station in time to catch the 7.49 train. Arrives Yatton 8.00. Visits to the Railway, Butchers Arms, Prince of Orange, Yatton Social Club and Market Inn. Train back from Yatton at 11.26, arriving back in Weston at 11.40 (there is an earlier train at 10.13 for those needing to get back earlier).

● **Friday 25th October:** 'Not The Usual Town Centre Pub Crawl'. An evening visiting pubs that rarely get visited on CAMRA socials. Meet at the Red Admiral between 8.00 and 8.30. Then visiting the George and Dragon, the Orchard and various others to be decided on the night.

● **Friday 15th November:** Visit to Congresbury. Catch the 7.35 route 353 from Weston town centre. Visit to Bristol & District CAMRA Pub of the Year 2013, the Plough. Also the nearby Old Inn and Ship & Castle.

Non-members are welcome at all socials.

Contact

Tim Nickolls: email bellavistahotelwsm@live.co.uk or phone 01934 631931.

A Round with Robin

The **Orchard** in Weston-super-Mare has recently opened at the corner of Meadow Street and Orchard Street. This pub was, for 100 years, known as the Elm Tree, but then became the Cornerhouse, and closed two years ago. We all believed it was going to become flats, like the Queen Alexandra did further along Meadow Street. However, it has been beautifully refurbished with new panelling, a selection of interesting local photos and some interesting old and new enamel adverts. The beer is always good at £2.50 a pint.

Over in Bristol, the **Seven Stars** in Redcliff has monthly 'beeriodicals' that consist of beers from counties or regions of the country, all bought together by manager Paul Wratten. These are normally held from the first Monday in the month. In May they were beers from Essex and Herts where many rarely seen brews were to be found; the tried and trusted *Green Jack* beers were my favourites. The June beeriodical starred beers from Cumbria: the *Hardknott* brewery provided the best of the ales for me, but many other fine examples from *Kirby Lonsdale*, *Stringer*, *Tirrel*, *Eden* and *Kendal*. In July, a week later than usual, there were beers from Leicester and Northants (with one or two from slightly over the border); a few worth a mention – *Frog Island Croak and Stagger*, *Shardlows Cavendish Stout* and *Great Oakley Gobble* were all very good, and thankfully a good temperature in the heat, without being chill. They have music on weekend afternoons; the excellent Whisky Headed Buddies blues band are firm favourites with the visitors from Weston-super-Mare, and another time I drank *By The Horns Hopslinger American PA* with Cascade and Chinook hops majoring for this limited edition ale, and the amazing *New Bristol Brewery Super Deluxe Stout* there. In August they had ales from Scotland and they were very good indeed, and *Tempest Long White Cloud* from Kelso was the highlight of that beeriodical for me. In September, they will be from Staffordshire.

I get to go to pubs in Somerset quite often, so when in Wells for a day in mid May, I went to the **Full Moon** where, as it was a fine day, I was able to appreciate the large garden and the *Full Moon Bitter (Moles)* at £2.30 a pint. On a wet Thursday evening in June the **Fountain Inn** in Bridgwater hosted the Chalice Morris men, who I dance with, and they

let us dance inside the pub to a receptive audience; the beers are well kept and the house ale *Moles St Elmo's Fire* was £2.00 a pint, *Doom Bar* and *Butcombe* £2.20 a pint, and the *Wadworth's Bishop's Tipple* £2.50 a pint. I went on Max's Burnham-on-Sea crawl on the 5th July, meeting at **Pier Tavern**, then **Reeds**, followed by **Dunstan House**, **Royal Clarence Hotel**, and finally the **George** at Highbridge where the best beer was *Dartmoor Jail Ale*.

I went to the May beer festival of the **Volunteer Tavern** (St Jude's, Bristol) where I met the brewer from the *New Bristol Brewery*, Noel, and his bearded collie Joss. I tried both beers from that brewery, *Fiery Flame IPA* and *365*, an everyday beer. Also all the cask ales I tried there were excellent including brews from *Tiny Rebel* (South Wales), *Wild Beer Co* (Somerset), *Harbour* (Cornwall) and *Wiper and True* (Bristol). I have been to the **Cider Press** in Gloucester Road and I find I like the pub, the beer, the pricing, the loyalty card, and subsequently have been back four times. The **Eastfield Inn** has been extensively made over, and with good quality beer; this pub too does a loyalty card scheme and, as well as *Holts* and *Butcombe* beers, had *Caledonian Flying Scotsman*, and I had *Caledonian XPA*. The pub has a big garden and areas for smokers and children. The **Horse and Groom** (behind the Council House, aka City Hall) continues to give very good value, especially with the CAMRA discount, and in June I had a lovely pint of *Hunters Devon Dreamer* there. The boule season started in earnest at the **Cornubia** pitch in mid June with the onset of fine weather. What could be better than a game of boule with friends in a beautiful garden with a few jars of fine ale such as *Black Iris White Fang* and *Waen Wicker Man* (which had a predictably smoky flavour) which I drank there recently? I always have a soft spot for *Celt* beers, so I was pleased when the **Gryphon** (near the Colston Hall) had *Cat Scratched Celt* on at £2.50 on the last Tuesday in June. This was so hoppy that I was about to have a second,



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but the barrel was empty so I made do with *Wentworth's Krieke* which fortunately for me was nothing like a Belgian lambic beer, not overly hopped but with still plenty of fruitiness

I went with others from Bristol CAMRA to Nottingham, firstly to the **Plough** at Radford, where they had laid on food for us, then to the Nottingham brewery, just across the yard, and the back end of a beer festival that provided a further six casks to the eight hand pumps on the bar. We stayed there for at least two hours, before the coach took most of us to the city centre where we all split up to visit pubs of our choice. Phill the Pint and I chose to visit the Derby Road area pubs, and were pleased with the **Hand and Heart** (which we went to twice, the best beer being *North Star Endeavour*) and the **Organ Grinder** (*Blue Monkey* ales and guest beers notably *Abbeylea Ascension*) before making our way to a few of the centre pubs. I was impressed by the **Malt Cross**, a rescued music hall, with a good selection of beers.

The **Claverham beer festival**, about eight miles south of Bristol, had a nautical theme this year. All the beers were priced at £2.40 a pint and, with 35 beers on, I couldn't do justice to them all so tried some new ones including a festival favourite in the shape of *Coastal Golden Hinde*.

Bristol CAMRA members came to Weston-super-Mare for a "surprise" visit to the Good Beer Guide (GBG) pubs and other good ones too; I met them in the **Cabot** after they'd visited the **Criterion** and took two of them to see the **Orchard**. They also visited the **Brit Bar**, **Regency**, **Bear Inn** and **Waverley**, concluding at **Off the Rails**.

On a friend's birthday a group of us from Weston-super-Mare, Bristol and Berrow went to Dartmouth from Paignton by steam train, thence by coal-fired paddle steamer to Totnes, for a pub crawl. Before leaving Dartmouth we had time for a quick visit to the **Cherub**, an ancient pub with GBG accreditation, and I drank the *South Hams Eddystone* ale from the five on offer. In Totnes we started at the **Albert Inn** in Bridgetown, home of the *Bridgetown Brewery*, which has an image of Albert Einstein on the pub sign and a secluded garden; then to the **Dartmouth Inn** for big screen cricket and *Otter Ales*, the **Steam Packet Inn** where we sat by the river and drank *Bay's Howzat*, then up the steep hill to the **Bay Horse Inn** and aptly drank *Bay's Devon Dumpling*, and finally to the **White Hart** for the *Church End What the Foxes Hat*.

On my 65th birthday I spent the greater part of the day with friends at one of my favourite pubs, the **Lock Keeper**, shown in the GBG as

being in Keynsham, but erroneously as it is in Bitton, situated between the canal and the river in Gloucestershire! A very hot day where we managed to drink the pub dry of their *Youngs Hummingbird bitter*, and also consumed quantities of wine and cider. In the evening I attended the Weston sub-branch social meeting at the Weston-super-Mare **Lion's Beer Festival** which had 35 beers on, mostly local but with a sprinkling from the rest of England. It was good to see the organisers had listened to the complaints from last year and had portaloos! I also visited the same festival on Saturday afternoon, before progressing to the **Bear Inn** for Weston Delta blues band and *Titanic Plum Porter* that co-owner Adam had arranged to get for my party that evening. On the Sunday afternoon there were only about six casks left by 3pm at the Lion's Beer Festival but I found two that I liked and hadn't tried before, hidden away in a corner, being *Ilkley Summer 4%5* and *Marston Moor Ballet of Swans 3.7%*.

Having written an article 'An Introduction to Croydon Pubs' in Pints West last year, my friends and I visited Croydon almost exactly a year on, and were met by seven of the Croydon CAMRA branch who took us around their favourite selection of pubs, only three of which I visited last year. We met in the **George** where I was able to have the *Cronx Nectar* (from a new brewery based in New Addington, where the people call Croydon Cronx). We were then taken to the **Dog and Bull**, Croydon's oldest pub, and enjoyed the city-centre garden; thence to the **Spread Eagle**, a former Nat West bank now owned by Fuller's, where they give 50p off a pint for CAMRA members. Then to the **Green Dragon**, local Pub of the Year for two years running, where I had the *Dark Star Festival* (15% discount for CAMRA here) then back to Old Town and to the **Royal Standard** with a shady garden almost under the flyover, and to the **Bulls Head**, the outside of which is garishly painted in Crystal Palace FC colours, but both pubs with good beers. We caught a tram to Addiscombe and visited **Claret** (many times a winner of local Pub of the Year) for *Titanic Chocolate Vanilla Stout*, and finally to the **Cricketers** where we played very bad darts whilst drinking *Harveys Sussex Ale*. Locals John and Dave made sure we got back to East Croydon station by bus and after a half pint of *Fuller's ESB* in the **Mad Bishop** at Paddington, we returned to Bristol, Weston-super-Mare and Berrow.

Robin E Wild


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Readers' Letters

Readers are welcome to send letters to the Pints West Editor

Steve.Plumridge.PintsWest@gmail.com

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

Your ideas count

Yeo Valley Lions Claverham Beer Festival is already looking forward to 2014 which will be its twelfth year.

The theme proposed is "The Glorious Twelfth" which relates to the August date when the grouse-shooting season opens. We will enlarge this to encompass "Huntin Shootin and Fishin". If any members or readers have suggestions of appropriate beers they would like to see featured the committee would be very grateful. It may also be the case that any of our local breweries and micro-breweries would consider an appropriate name for new beers they are considering. In which case we would love to feature them if between us we can manage the logistics.

We can be contacted easily through the website www.claverham-beer-festival.org.uk and would be very grateful for suggestions.

Nigel Carson.

Customers

Fellow drinkers, if any of you should have read my previous letters (I hope at least two or three of you have) you know that I have opinions on various topics on the aspects of beer drinking, and of the ambience of pubs, i.e. children, music, sport, etc, the last being my view on landlords.

If the Editor still feels inclined to carrying on printing a further diatribe from my good self, I would like to give you my views on us, yes us, the customers, clientele, drinkers, imbibers, whatever you like to be known as, bearing in mind, I am one of you.

We come in various shapes and sizes. Myself? I think I am rotund, but I believe to some of my friends (yes I do have a few – I think) I'm a 'fat git', which I think is more appropriate.

Any rate I think the ideal sight when entering a pub is to see one or two blokes standing at the bar, with plenty of room to see the 'wares' the landlord has on display, by viewing the hand pumps. This is fine of a weekday lunch time visit, but, go in there of a Friday evening and you will confronted with a group of youngsters, perhaps late teens or early twenties, stood in a group in front of the bar, supping lager, who do not have the slightest intention of moving so as one can view the hand pumps on display. One would then be greeted by some sarcastic comment when requesting a taste of a particular ale. This after pushing and elbowing your way to the bar, then trying to extricate yourself away from the bar to sup your chosen beverage. As soon as you leave a space behind you, it's like the tide coming in, the space is filled.

When entering a pub of an evening, when it is more of a beer drinkers' establishment, what is likely to greet you then? Two or three groups of beer drinkers, leaning on the bar chatting, and for some unknown reason, to me at least, the topic of conservation is golf. Once

again it is difficult to have a look at the hand pumps to see what is on, which takes a lot of ducking and diving to see what ale you fancy. I must say this about this selection of drinkers, there is no comment, when requesting a taster. It usually takes a bit of stomach pushing to reach the bar.

Right, you have obtained your pint, and being the gentleman that you are, you withdraw from the bar, and settle yourself in a seat to enjoy a pint of the landlord's finest. Sitting quietly supping away, you cannot but overhear one of the assembled drinkers because he has a voice that could shatter glass, as Professor Henry Higgins would say. Perhaps not as loud as Sergeant Major Britton (look him up) but overpowering all other conversation in the pub. The guy is your 'barrack room lawyer' who has an opinion on everything, which is usually rubbish. Just a thought – why do these guys wear gaudy shirts?

Now for a classic – the pub has the usual hubbub of conversation, when in walks a gang of girls out on a hen night. It's like sitting in the parrot house in the zoo, and all the old men's eyes are out like organ stops, looking at the young ladies' figures, bringing back memories, with the girls drinking the latest concoction which is the 'in drink'.

Now I tend to do some of my drinking of a lunch time. Picture the scene – two old biddies come in to eat who remind me of Gert & Daisy (Elsie & Doris Walters) (look them up too). The conversation goes something like this: "What would you like to drink?" "Oh I don't know, I used to like a half of Red Barrel, see if they have any of that?" "No!" "Well I would have a wine, but it goes to my head. I tell you what, as we are eating I'll have a small Guinness, that's supposed to be good for you."

As I already said, I like to enter a bar with a few beer drinkers, leaning on the bar, but who move to one side to allow me to view the pump clips, with one old fellow saying, "The Grudingtons is good today."

So there you have it, how I view a lot of you fellow drinkers. If you see yourself as one of them, do not be afraid to come up to me in a pub, buy me a pint, and say, "You've got me down to fine art." Or if you so wish, solve the two mysteries I gave you, buy me a pint and, if you have them right, I will congratulate you.

Cheers one and all, may all your problems be solved over a pint.

John Gatty,
Thornbury.

Save the Greenbank campaign and Bristol Pubs Group's help

In June 2009 I was nearing the end of a period of house hunting in Easton. I came across a lovely house which had a pub (the Greenbank) at the end of road and so, over a pint with my wife, we decided that this was the clincher for us and bought the house. I didn't think that, after two years, it would close and I would be campaigning to stop it from being demolished to make way for a new three-storey building comprising six three-bedroom flats and three three-bedroom maisonettes.

I am glad I got involved in the campaign to save it. I feel strongly that a local pub can make a real difference to a community – and the community in Easton have come out in support of the Greenbank pub.

The loss of the pub has brought about

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lots of strong feelings from residents nearby. After I went knocking on doors for a press release for *The Post* last month, I came across two Facebook sites and a Yahoo group set up in defence of the retention of the pub set up by locals. More than 130 objections have now been submitted to Bristol City Council opposing plans to demolish the 110-year-old pub to make way for housing.

The pub was a place that offered somewhere for music, art, performances, groups like the WI to meet, and a local football club. There isn't another local pub that offers this, nor is there a local pub that offers a family-friendly environment that also offers food. At a recent community meeting people expressed strongly the desire to have a pub that offered food and a place that family would feel able to bring their children. Tony Philips, the owner of the pub, attended the meeting and explained that, though he had planned to serve food and in fact fitted an expensive kitchen, he had never got it running because the recession hit and it was no longer viable. He did however accept that had he run the kitchen this may have seen the pub kept afloat. Mr Philips went on to back up what he had said in the article in *The Post*, that he would consider talking to parties interested in leasing the pub, and had himself spoken to breweries about taking on the pub. However, in a recent meeting with an interested party, it seems as though the meeting hasn't produced a clear decision and this situation is likely to be ongoing whilst planning application is still sought.

Ward councillor Afzal Shah (Labour, Easton) has also been involved in the campaign and spoken of there being "few community focal points these days" and supporting people who would love to see their local restored. He went on to say, "Pubs are having a difficult time at the moment but the old Greenbank pub was more than just a brick building – it had its own life and that's what we want to breathe new life into."

A spokesman from the Bristol Pubs Group told us: "We feel that the true value of the pub to the community must be considered. We also question if this has been fairly marketed for use as a pub, at a realistic price, which we believe should be the first step. We have not noticed advertisements on websites where we may expect to see it offered for sale as a pub. The Greenbank Hotel is the only pub in Greenbank and is situated in one of many backstreets in this very densely populated area. We understand that there are parties who would consider taking over the pub if it was offered at a realistic figure. Either way, we support the local community in their hope that the Greenbank Hotel will reopen as a pub and, in light of the strong local opposition, the hope the planning application will be rejected."

The Bristol Pubs Group have been instrumental in being able to understand how one

News from the Great Western Brewing Company



The Great Western Brewery is an independent brewing company founded by the Stone family in 2007 and located in Hambrook. The Stones also have the Rising Sun pub in nearby Frampton Cotterell.

News of the brews is that, in addition to the brewery's permanent range of cask beers – Maiden Voyage, Classic Gold and Old Higby – a new beer has been brewed to coincide with the commissioning of their new bore hole. Now using their own spring water, plus the best of English hops and malts, they have produced Exhibitionist. This 4.5 % amber ale utilises Challenger and Fuggles hops to give a rich flavour.

Kevin Stone explained the benefits of their own water supply: "With the best summer for a number of years, the spring water has been a blessing. Consistent hot weather can cause problems for us smaller brewers as we have to use the mains water to cool the wort while being transferred to the fermenter. We have recorded incoming mains water temperatures of 19.5 degrees. When trying to cool the wort to 18 degrees, it becomes an impossible task. Our water comes from a depth of 200 feet and is a constant 11.5 degrees. This gives us the same transfer times all year round, resulting in a more consistent product."

Also at the brewery they have installed a new bottling machine. At the time of writing it had yet burst into action, even though the beer had been brewed and was sitting in a conditioning tank. By now though they should have beers available bottled by themselves.

Over at the Rising Sun (which is effectively the brewery tap), the pub recently held its annual 'Beer & Music Festival' at the beginning of July. Kevin said: "For the first time in four years the sun came out – and so did the beer lovers. Twenty ales and twenty ciders left a few people with a weekend to remember! A great time was had by all concerned, culminating in a surprise performance on stage by Beverly Knight. Wow, one week performing in the car park of the Rising Sun, the following week performing at Buckingham Palace for the Queen! Roll on next year."

The next 'open day' at the brewery shop (located at the brewery, naturally) will be Saturday 30th November, in time to pop along and try some Christmas tipples.

SP

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goes about making a stand against the building plans and putting this into action. The fact that people who don't live in the local area would put so much time and effort into the campaign helps raise the spirits of others and enables us to realise that there can be hope in a desperate situation.

The situation remains one in which we have to ensure planning permission doesn't go through, which will be decided in a month

or two, whilst trying to see if the Mr Philips would consider leasing the pub, or looking at other ways of acquiring the pub such as with a bridging loan from the council with potential input from the community. All possibilities are considered. This could be a great business for any potential buyer or leaser. It is in a thriving area of Easton with businesses such as a bakery, deli and café recently opened and doing well. A big focus should be on food as

requested by the community. With the Sweet-mart continental supermarket and Maitreya Social (award-winning vegetarian restaurant) nearby one can see how a revised Greenbank pub could fit in to the area and be hugely successful.

To view the application visit Bristol City Council's website and enter planning application number 13/02017/P.

Nick Murphy, Easton.

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Prices include postage & packing. 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.

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ADDRESS

..... POSTCODE

EMAIL ADDRESS (in case of queries)

Severn Vale CAMRA

‘Meet the Brewer’ Jon Comer of Arbor Ales

I just happened to drop in to the Salutation, Ham – just outside of Berkeley – one evening recently. Amongst other beers on the bar were Arbor’s Triple Hop (version 10, no less) and Oyster Stout. Sadly, not beers you’d normally expect to find in the Severn Vale area (the Salutation is outside of Severn Vale’s official area). Pete, the landlord (apologies for calling him Paul in the last edition), mentioned that Jon Comer would be doing a “Meet the Brewer” session, hosted at the Salutation, on Tuesday, 13th August. Well – it would have been rude to not go.

Unfortunately, I arrived slightly late – my transport (aka bike) seemingly taking forever to negotiate the seven miles or so of well-manured back roads between Thornbury and Ham. This meant I initially had to perch slightly outside of optimal earshot of Jon’s talk due to the number of folk already gathered. Great to see so many turn up.

Jon covered all manner of subjects from the price of hops over the years to brewing collaborations with other brewers, and modern kegs (i.e. not casks). Did you know that many modern kegs are disposable (cries of “shame”)? We know that Arbor Ales “kegs” a number of their beers (Jon doesn’t use the term “craft beer” for Arbor Ales any more since its meaning has been polluted by big brewers and American micros): there is definite demand for some beers to last longer than the usual three or four days of a broached cask beer. Many publicans can’t shift speciality beers, strong beers, etc. within that time-frame. What I didn’t know is that the beer that Arbor kegs are not filtered, fined or pasteurised like the keg beers of old and modern-day mass-produced beers. We were told it’s basically the same beer that goes into casks, though it does get a shot of conditioning yeast. The keg itself has a liner (aka bag) that contains the beer. The pressure needed to get the beer out of the keg is then applied between the keg and liner – and so never comes into contact with the

Severn 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.

beer. This means that the beer is naturally conditioned and compressed air can be used rather than carbon dioxide (CO₂ bottles are expensive and CO₂ in contact with beer can turn it into a fizzfest). OK – not real ale, according to CAMRA’s definition, but an answer to beer/condition/storage problems? It should be pointed out though that many breweries that keg their beers do not do so in the same manner as Arbor Ales do, and you cannot beat a good cask-conditioned beer.

Arbor beers on the bar that night were (among others, once again) Tasmanian Devil, a 4.6% amber ale made with Australian hops, and the interestingly named Twigs in Space, a one-off, 4.9% ultra-hopped brown ale product of “Freestyle Friday”, Fridays being the brewer’s “Let’s do something new and unusual” day. Needless to say, samples of these were served to all.

Jon also brought several bottled beers to sample. Although I’ve forgotten most (must remember to be more geeky and make more notes!), the ones I do remember are:

- Artisan – wonderfully hoppy and malty;
- A French style Saison – lots of coriander and cardamom, and a French yeast;
- De Rokji (with apologies if I spelled that wrongly) – Belgian style beer using smoked hops (that’s a new one to me);
- Quad Dark Alliance (I think this name is wrong) – based on a previous alliance brew with Moor Beer but with four times the quantity of ingredients (except the water, of course!).

In Jon’s own words, some of these are “Marmite beers”. You either love ’em or hate ’em. They certainly provoked some serious reactions and comments! Great evening – thanks to Jon Comer of Arbor Ales, and Pete and Claire of the Salutation. Today, I need to de-manure my bike.

Martin Farrimond

Severn Vale diary and contact

- **Fri 6th Sept** – Pub survey trip, Thornbury.
- **Fri 13th Sept** – Regular monthly lunch at Old Spot, Dursley.
- **Wed 18th Sept** – Sub-branch meeting, Bowl Almondsbury, 8:30pm.
- **Fri 4th Oct** – Pub survey trip, pubs tba.
- **Fri 11th Oct** – Regular monthly lunch at Old Spot, Dursley.
- **Thurs 17th Oct** – Sub-branch meeting, Anchor, Oldbury on Severn, 8:30pm.
- **Fri 18th - Sun 20th Oct** – Beer festival, Wheatsheaf, Thornbury (tbc).
- **Fri 25th - Sat 26th Oct** – Beer festival, Christ the King Catholic club, Thornbury (tbc).
- **Fri 1st Nov** – Pub survey trip, pubs tba.
- **Fri 8th Nov** – Regular monthly lunch at Old Spot, Dursley.
- **Wed 20th Nov** – Sub-branch meeting, venue tbc, 8:30pm.

All are welcome to attend any of the pub visits and meetings.

For the most up-to-date details, please check our diary page at severnval.camrabristol.org.uk (you can also follow us on Twitter and Facebook by clicking the links at the bottom of the diary page) or contact us directly by email to SevernValeCAMRA@gmail.com or ainsdeng@blueyonder.co.uk.



Solution to the crossword on page 28

Across: 1. Osprey, 5. Chequers, 9. White rum, 10. Sample, 11. Comatose, 12. Affray, 13. Leaf-clad, 15. Free, 17. Arab, 19. Get a lift, 20. Toecap, 21. Richmond, 22. Anemic, 23. Overseer, 24. Halcyons, 25. Parish. Down: 2. Schooner, 3. Rateable, 4. Yard of ale, 5. Commercial Rooms, 6. Quaffed, 7. Exporter, 8. Seedy pub, 14. A bit cheap, 15. Fast dash, 16. Etheral, 17. Atomiser, 18. Avengers.



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Clicks and whirs – and lots of water

As CAMRA's 'brewery liaison officer' for Zerodegrees, I have been invited by Anna Schwaeble, the brewster, to watch a morning's brewing. A delivery arrives shortly after she starts brewing, and at the precise moment that the grist mill gets clogged up. If it's left, the computer will stop the water supply and the computer program won't be able to cope – on the other hand the driver can't be left standing outside... This is not a big brewery with staff running around doing different jobs, if it needs doing you have to do it yourself.

It's a computer-controlled brewing kit, a very compact set-up; the brewer stands on a raised platform between two brewing vessels and in front of a control panel. The British terms mash tun and copper don't really apply to these vessels, as the wort is transferred back and forth between them. The panel looks very complicated, but after I had spent a while staring at all the symbols trying to understand it, I realised that the majority of the symbols were valves and most of the pipe lines were cold water lines. Anyone who has done any home brewing will understand why – most of the work is in cleaning the equipment. In this case the computer takes care of the inside by pumping water around, but there is still plenty of cleaning to do on the outside.

Another distraction – because of an order at very short notice 50 minicasks have to be filled – at least I can help with this.

There are sensors all over the equipment which feed information to the computer, which in turn controls the heating of the wort and its flow by opening and closing valves and switching pumps on and off. The program is chosen to suit the particular beer being brewed. From the control stand it's possible to hear everything going on and it helps to be familiar with the various clicks and whirs which prove that the correct valve or pump has operated. When a warning sounded, Anna knew that this temperature alarm could safely be ignored, because the sudden inflow of hot wort had misled the sensor – it righted itself as soon as the vessel was full.

More trouble! The engineers have arrived and need to be shown what has gone wrong with the plumbing. They open a few hatches and poke around a bit then disappear back to their van. A quick check shows that it hasn't been fixed, so I run down to their van to try to persuade them to come back. Later they suggest that the problem might require shifting one of the brewing vessels – luckily it won't, but it will take until the next day to sort out.



Anna Schwaeble at Zerodegrees when she received an award for Pale Ale (from branch chairman Richard Brooks) last year

The last stage is to transfer the wort to a fermenting vessel, this is done manually with a large diameter hose and pump, then the yeast is added. The processing has taken about five hours altogether. It will take a week to brew and then it will be left to mature for another three. After that it will be transferred to a serving tank above and behind the bar, from where it will be dispensed by gravity.

All the beers served in the brew house are real ale; there are five regulars – Pale Ale, Pilsner, Mango Wheat Ale, Wheat Ale and Black Lager. I particularly like the Wheat Ale and Black Lager. Specials are brewed about once a quarter; recent ones include a pink fruit beer, a smoky mild and a Bock beer.

A most interesting and enjoyable morning – and the beer? The prize-winning Pale Ale.

Chris Rogers

Chipping Sodbury real ale news

One hot evening in July a few local CAMRA members from the Thornbury and Yate area got together for a social visit to the **Portcullis Hotel** in Chipping Sodbury and to taste the real ales on offer from Andy, the new landlord who's been there since March.

Apparently, Andy has future plans to turn around the Portcullis by introducing six new real ale hand pumps in the front bar. He has previous experience of running a successful pub listed in the CAMRA Good Beer Guide, the Black Horse in Preston, Lancashire.

Beers sampled on the night from the local Wickwar Brewery were Cotswold Way, a traditional bitter at 4.2%, and BOB at 4.0%. And from the Great Western Brewery there was Classic Gold at 4.5%, a very nicely balanced golden ale. All were served at a pleasantly cool cellar temperature on a hot night.

With Andy's experience of Robinson's Lancashire beers he could be introducing something quite different to the Portcullis in the near future.

Andy has signed up with South Gloucestershire Local Authority and Chipping Sodbury Chamber of Commerce to take an active part in the Chipping Sodbury Festival of Food and Drink on Saturday September 28th with samples of beer, cider and food available from 12 noon until 6pm.

The group then moved on to the **George Hotel** across the road to sample the selection of real ales on offer from Mark and Christine, who are also new landlords at this freehouse.

Mark and Christine are very enthusiastic CAMRA members and they also have previous experience of running a pub listed in the Good Beer Guide, namely the Barn near Llantrisant, South Wales. Beers sampled on the night were Box Steam Tunnel Vision at 4.2%, a nice traditional amber bitter; Moles Gold at 3.8%, a very light pleasant beer, plus ales from Wickwar – all again served at a very pleasantly cool cellar temperature.

At the time of writing, they were planning their first beer and cider festival at the George Hotel, to be held during the August Bank Holiday weekend. Over by the time you read this, we trust it will have gone well.

Mike Lawrence



The Portcullis Hotel



The George Hotel

CAMRA membership passes 150,000!

Amere four years after membership of CAMRA, the Campaign for real Ale, topped the 100,000 figure for the first time since its formation in the early 1970's, the figure has now risen dramatically to exceed 150,000 members.

It is astonishing to think that it took 38 years to get to the 100k mark yet it took a mere four additional years to increase its membership by a further 50k. In fact, at the time of writing, membership now stands in excess of 152,000 members.

A brief history of CAMRA's membership growth:
On March 16th 1971, the date of its formation, CAMRA had just 4 members.

By 1973, CAMRA had 5,000 members.

1974 . 9,000 members.

1976 . . 30,000 members.

1997 . . . 50,000 members.

2005 75,000 members.

2009 100,000 members.

2013 150,000+ members and growing fast!

CAMRA campaigns for the consumer in many ways and has had some notable achievements. CAMRA undoubtedly saved real ale as a result of its formation. In fact CAMRA coined the phrase "real ale".

There are now around 1,100 breweries in the UK – the highest number for well over 70 years. The demand for real ale has been prompted by CAMRA's campaigning and these breweries produce many thousands of different real ales between them.

CAMRA branches hold beer festivals across the country throughout the year. They are organised and run by volunteers, who give up their own time to promote real ale and real cider to the public. The Bristol & District branch holds a beer festival at Brunel's Old Station, Temple Meads, Bristol each year. And the Bath & Borders branch holds one annually in Bath, though with changing venues of late.

Then there is CAMRA's flagship publication, the best selling Good Beer Guide. This is the leading guide to the real ale pubs in the country and points readers in the direction of great beer both locally and when you are on your travels. CAMRA also produces a whole range of other first-class books such as guides to real cider and perry, pubs walks of our major towns and cities, beers to "try before you die", the Good Bottled Beer Guide, etc.

CAMRA campaigned to save historic breweries such as Wolverhampton & Dudley, Batemans brewery and Cains for example.

CAMRA was at the forefront in achieving licensing hours reform, a move giving licensees unrivalled flexibility, and the first such reforms since the First World War.

CAMRA campaigned tirelessly to break up the Big Six Brewers' monopoly of the UK beer market, with the Monopolies and Mergers Report spelling the end of market domination for the global brewers.

CAMRA also played a major part in lobbying for the introduction of Progressive Beer Duty, excise duty relief which acted as the catalyst for substantial microbrewery growth. Between 2002 and 2010 the number of breweries in the UK more than doubled.

CAMRA successfully lobbied for the mandatory rate relief for shops and post offices to be extended to pubs.

In 2007 CAMRA was a lead member of the Local Works Coalition when the Sustainable Communities Act became law.

In 2009, CAMRA first exercised its status as a 'super complainant' and challenged the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) to examine anti-competitive practices in the UK pub market. Although the OFT ruled against the complaint, CAMRA did secure from the Government a commitment to deal with the pub companies if they did not introduce clear codes of practice by June 2011.

This year, following lots of lobbying of MPs by many of our members and an e-petition which reached over 109,000 signatures, plus over 1,000 members descending on Parliament, CAMRA was successful in getting the dreaded beer duty escalator scrapped.

CAMRA campaigns for diverse beer styles – the results of this can be seen on the bars of pubs selling real milds, stouts, blond beers, porters, barley wines, wheat beers and even ales with fruit and other flavours.

CAMRA campaigns for real cider and perry.

CAMRA branches produce around 100 newsletters or magazines – the one you are reading now has won a number of national awards and is the current CAMRA magazine of the year. These all promote real ale and also inform the public of what is happening locally to pubs and breweries, and contain other news and features.

CAMRA campaigns to promote and save pubs.

There are many other ways in which CAMRA campaigns but far too many to mention here.

Oh – we also have a lot of fun on the way with a whole range of socials, pub tours, brewery visits and trips to other parts of the country.

The Bristol & District branch is fast approaching 3,000 members. Most people join CAMRA because they support our aims and also love good pubs and beer. However, there are also benefits to joining which include:

- 10% off prices at toprooms.com;
- 15% off National Express prices;
- £20 pounds of beer vouchers for use in Weatherspoon pubs;
- 15% off UK Boat Hire;
- 10% off all non-sale/non-offer products with Cotswold Outdoor;
- 10% off with Cottages4you.

Then of course there are the many pubs that give CAMRA members discount upon production of a valid membership card. Being a member you can be as active as you want or simply enjoy the fact that by being a member you are supporting what has been called "Europe's most successful consumer movement".

So, if you haven't joined yet or, if for some reason you are a lapsed member, why not join today? There is a membership form in this magazine or you can join on line at www.camra.org.uk/join.

Membership rates are very reasonable and, as a member, you will also receive a monthly newspaper *What's Brewing* and a quarterly magazine *Beer*.

So many people say, "I meant to do this ages ago" when joining. So, no time like the present!

Pete Bridle

CAMRA pub discounts

An extra benefit of CAMRA membership is that a number of pubs offer discounts on the price of real ale or traditional cider to card-carrying members. Some examples in the Bristol & District area:

- **Anchor**, Thornbury
- **Bank**, John Street, Bristol
- **Barrel**, Thornbury
- **Black Swan (Dirty Duck)**, Westbury-on-Trym
- **Bristol Cider House**, Surrey Street, Bristol
- **Bristol Cider Shop**, Christmas Steps, Bristol
- **Brit Bar**, High Street, Weston-super-Mare
- **Cider Press**, Gloucester Road, Bristol
- **Coach & Horses**, Braggs Lane, Old Market
- **Coach & Horses**, Highland Square, Clifton
- **Cornubia**, Temple Street, Bristol
- **Drawbridge**, St Augustines Parade, Bristol
- **Globe**, Frampton Cotterell
- **Grapes**, Chipping Sodbury
- **Gryphon**, Colston Street, Bristol
- **Hope & Anchor**, Jacobs Wells Road, Bristol
- **Horse & Groom**, St George's Road, Bristol
- **Horts**, Broad Street, Bristol
- **New Inn**, Mayhill
- **Old Stillage**, Redfield
- **Orchard Inn**, Hanover Place, Bristol
- **Queens Arms**, Bleaden
- **Robert Fitzharding**, Bedminster
- **Royal Oak**, Lower Bristol Road, Twerton, Bath
- **Seven Stars**, Thomas Lane, Redcliffe, Bristol
- **Three Tuns**, St George's Road, Hotwells, Bristol
- **Volunteer Tavern**, New Street, St Judes, Bristol
- **Westbury Park Tavern**, Henleaze
- **Woolpack Inn**, St Georges, Weston-super-Mare



**CAMPAIGN
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The actual details of the discounts vary from pub to pub and from time to time. The discount is at the discretion of the pub and can be as little or as large as the pub feels suits their business, or may be withdrawn at any time without notice.



Real Ale on the increase at the Cider Press

One might think twice about popping into a pub named the “Cider Press” in search of a decent pint of real ale, but since taking over at this pub 18 months ago, Marc Casey has seen real ale sales increase dramatically. No surprise, though, as Marc has managed a number of pubs around Bristol including the Cat & Wheel, the Hobgoblin, the Jersey Lily on Blackboy Hill, and both Hogsheads. Remember them? There was one in the City Centre and one on Gloucester Road.

Marc has always been an advocate of real ale and at the Cider Press, which is located near to the old Baths in Bishopston, he has pretty much a free rein when it comes to what real ales he can sell. When he took over there were three real ales on sale; this has now increased to four. Interesting choice too – on a recent visit there was Edelweiss from Dorset Brewing Company, Dorothy Goodbody’s Summertime Ale from Wye Valley, and Village Idiot from White Horse. His biggest seller, though, is Proper Job from St Austell. The Dorothy Goodbody range from Wye Valley also goes down very well with his customers. Mark’s philosophy is that he’ll try anything and, if it goes well, he’ll have it back. In fact, if there’s a real ale you’d like to see on the bar, let him know and he’ll try and get it.

In addition to the real ales, there is of course also real cider and perry, with up to twelve on at any one time. These include Wyld Wood, Explorer, Black Rat, Old Rosie, Cheddar Valley, Orchard Pig’s Navel Gazer and ciders from Newtons.

Although the target market for the Cider Press is geared towards students (it used to be “It’s A Scream” and, for those of us who go back a bit further, the “Sun Valley Restaurant and Bar”!),

Marc is keen to get the pub on the real ale map in Bristol and encourages real ale fans, young and not so young, to give it a try. Food and drink is keenly priced. Customers can join a ‘Yellow Card’ loyalty scheme which provides discounts and offers, and CAMRA members also benefit from a generous 10% off a pint. Example food offerings include two meals for £7.50 or a burger and a pint for £4.95.

And there’s plenty to do whilst you’re there – you can partake of a game of air hockey, table football or pool. It’s also a great place to watch your favourite sports on one of the numerous TVs around the place. Free wi-fi too. There is an outdoor drinking area and the pub offers disabled facilities. Pictures of famous Bristolians adorning the walls include Carey Grant, Keith Floyd, Gary Mabbutt and WG Grace.

So, next time you’re on the lookout for a decent pint of real ale in Bishopston, check out the Cider Press.

Ali Bridle

Dartmoor’s finest



Dartmoor Brewery is England’s highest brewery sited at 1400 feet in the heart of Devon’s beautiful Dartmoor National Park. The brewery was founded in 1994 and moved into a much larger purpose built premises in 2005. Expansion has been led by its most famous brand Jail Ale which over the years has found a large following of dedicated drinkers who like its exceptional balance of flavour and aroma.

This is a full bodied mid-brown beer with a well rounded flavour and a sweet Moorish aftertaste.



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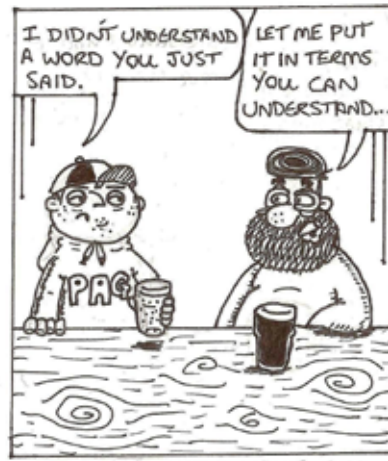
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The Bar Code
by Eddie Taberner





Steve Comer visits a new real ale brewery in Cyprus

Real ale comes to the island of Aphrodite!

Ahhh, summer holidays in the Mediterranean. Sun, sand, sea, and temperatures pushing 30 degrees C. Time to relax with family and friends and have a drink or two, but for most of us real ale lovers that's the problem. We have to endure days and days of nothing but fizzy tasteless keg lagers, or boring bottled beers (which in most bars are merely the same as those on tap).

Wouldn't it be nice to go on holiday in the sun, and have some decent ales to drink at the same time? Well now you can – on the island of Cyprus, just over four hours' flying time from Bristol. The new **Aphrodites Rock Brewing Company** on the island is brewing a range of fine real ales available on draught or in the bottle. The brewery launched its products to the public at the end of May this year and is now busy picking up outlets in bars in the west of Cyprus. They also sell their beer direct from the brewery in bottle-conditioned form, and in 10-litre 'mini polypin' boxes.

The brewery is on the main road between the tourist resorts of Paphos and Polis near the village of Tsada. It is in a beautiful location tucked away in the hills, and was previously used to produce wine. It's a family business, the brainchild of Bill and Jean Ginn who come from Yorkshire. Their daughter Melanie is one of the brewers along with Chris Richards, an American head brewer formerly of the St. George Brewery Co. in Virginia. When Aphrodite's Rock was being set up they advertised for an American brewer, and Chris saw the advert and met Melanie while they were both attending a Brewlab course.



At the time of my visit (late June) the following beers were available:

Yorkshire Rose (3.8% abv) a medium-body session bitter;
Stratford Gold (3.8% abv) a straw coloured pale ale made from a blend of English and new world hops;
Linn Shee (4.5% abv) a sweetish Irish style red ale made with crystal malt;

Hobnob (4.5% abv) an English style nut brown ale with an oaty flavour;
London Porter (4.5% abv) a ruby black porter with a roasted malt finish.

By the time you read this it is likely that the brewery will also be brewing a German style kellerbier, and **West Coast**, an American-style IPA which will weigh in at 6.0% abv.

Something for most tastes there, with more than a nod to the mix of beer styles brewed by many beer cafes in the USA. Aphrodite's Rock are also looking to brew special ales in addition to the main range, and an experimental brew was on the stove when I visited.

Of course the big challenge for real ale in a hot climate is keeping the beer cool enough to stay drinkable. The 10-litre boxes are ideal for that, as they can fit easily in a bar's upright fridge, and the beer can stay fresh. *(And as the author can testify, they also fit well in a fridge in a holiday apartment!)* All the beers are also bottled at the brewery and sold in bottle-conditioned format (or 'real ale in a bottle' as CAMRA likes to promote it).

You can buy beer direct from the brewery, and there is a small bar set up for sampling halves or pints. You can sit on a terrace in the sun or the shade and admire the mountain views whilst deciding which beer (or beers) you'll take back to your holiday accommodation. The brewery tap is open on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 11am to 3pm and prices start from €2.95 per pint. When I visited there was a steady stream of customers calling in for supplies, a good sign for such a new venture.

Future plans include a members' club which will run social events, and entitle card holders to a discount, and they will be running their first beer festival at the brewery on **Saturday 5th October**.

The owners of Aphrodite's Rock are to be congratulated on getting this venture up and running. It wasn't easy, the wheels of Cypriot bureaucracy can turn very slowly, and it took them over three years to get the necessary permits to begin operation. Many might have given up and walked away, but they stuck it out, and we can now taste the results.

For further information on the brewery check out their website: www.aphroditesrock.com.cy.

You can fly direct to Paphos from Bristol with Easyjet from less than £100 return, and with three package tour operators.

Steve Comer

Attention licensees!

Would you be happy to have a dedicated area in your pub to promote CAMRA? CAMRA has a range of posters and leaflets (for which we can provide holders). These promote our campaigns and inform the public.

Promotional material includes posters and leaflets such as "It's better down the pub", beer style posters, cider & perry promotions, membership, fair deal for your local, etc.

If you want to have a "CAMRA corner", please get in touch (email camra@camrabristol.org.uk) and we will be delighted to bring materials to your pub. We will also update the material as required.

Can't get enough?

Not every article submitted could be accommodated in this printed edition of Pints West. To read more, follow the links to **Pints West & Pints West Extra** from www.bristolcamra.org.uk.

Need more Pints Wests?

If your pub requires more copies of Pints West (subject to availability), please contact Chris Rogers: email chrisofbristol@gmail.com.

Branch diary

Diary of the Bristol & District branch of CAMRA

- **Sat 7 Sept:** Minehead Beer Festival, dep Cornubia 9.15am, return 8.30pm.
- **Tues 10 Sept:** Committee Meeting, Gryphon 8pm.
- **Wed 11 Sept:** Butcombe Meet the Brewer, Commercial Rooms 6.30pm.
- **Thurs 12 Sept:** Event Timetable Planning Meeting, Gryphon 8pm.
- **Fri 13 Sept:** GBG Launch, Volunteer Tavern, St Judes, 12noon-6pm.
- **Tues 17 Sept:** Surveying/Explorer Trip, dep 6.45pm Cornubia, East Mendips.
- **Thurs 19 Sept:** BADRAG gathering, Downend Tavern, Fishponds, with possibility of 'meet the brewer', 7.30 pm.
- **Sat 21 Sept:** RCH Brewery for CBOB awards and Survey Trip, dep Cornubia 9.45pm, return 6pm.
- **Wed 25 Sept:** Branch Meeting, Waverley, Weston-super-Mare, 8pm, coach dep Cornubia 6.45pm.
- **Thurs 26 Sept:** Bristol Pubs Group meeting, Bundy's Bar, Clifton, 7pm.
- **Fri 27 Sept:** Tasting Panel, 8pm Ashley Down Brewery (tbc).
- **27 Sept to 6 Oct:** Cask Ale Week...
- **Tues 1 Oct:** The first planning meeting for the 2014 CAMRA Bristol Beer Festival, Gryphon, Colston Street (BS1 5AP), 8pm. We would very much like to see any CAMRA volunteers that are interested in helping out with organising the festival, which is proposed to happen around the weekend of 15 March 2014 at Brunel's Old Station.
- **3 Oct:** Cask Ale Week Crawl, start Barley Mow 7pm then Volunteer Tavern, Bridge Inn, Cornubia and Seven Stars.
- **6 Oct:** Cask Ale Week Crawl, start Bag of Nails 2pm then Three Tuns, No 1 Harbourside, Naval Volunteer and Beer Emporium.
- **Wed 9 Oct:** Committee Meeting, Gryphon 8pm.
- **Tues 15 Oct:** Surveying/Explorer Trip, Severn Vale area, dep Cornubia 6.45pm.
- **Sat 19 Oct:** BADRAG Porter Trail in city centre pubs, likely to be an early afternoon start, tbc.
- **Sun 20 Oct:** Surveying/Explorer Trip, Winterbourne, Frampton, Sodbury area, dep Cornubia 1.30pm, return 8pm.
- **Wed 23 Oct:** Branch Meeting, 7.30pm, venue tbc.
- **2 Nov:** Bristol Pubs Group social crawl, starting 1pm at the Port of Call, Clifton, then Beaufort, Coach & Horses, Red Lion, Jersey Lily, Blackboy, Penny Farthing, Alma Tavern, WG Grace, Vittoria.
- **6 Nov:** Survey/Explorer Trip, East Mendips, Hallatrow, Clutton, etc, dep Cornubia 6.45pm.
- **12 Nov:** Committee Meeting, Gryphon 8pm.
- **Tues 19 Nov:** Surveying/Explorer Trip, West Mendips, Cheddar, Cross, etc, dep Cornubia 6.45pm.
- **Thurs 21 Nov:** BADRAG tutored bottled beer tasting, Kings Arms, Kingswood, 7.30 pm, tbc.
- **Wed 27 Nov:** Quarterly Branch Meeting, 7.30pm, venue tbc.
- **Thurs 28 Nov:** Bristol Pubs Group meeting, Robin Hood, St Michael's Hill, Kingsdown, 7pm.

Please check our website (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 Andy Gray at camrasocials@btinternet.com 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.

Andy Gray (Social Secretary)

Twitter & Facebook

You can follow Bristol & District CAMRA on Twitter. Use [@CAMRABristol](https://twitter.com/CAMRABristol) to get the latest tweets about branch news and activities. The branch is also on Facebook as [Camra-Bristol-District](https://www.facebook.com/Camra-Bristol-District).

Thanks to this issue's contributors

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Jerry Fletcher	Pete Taberner	Vince Murray
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CAMRA Good Beer Guide: suggestions for future entries, and comments on existing ones, can be made to our GBG co-ordinator, Vince Murray: vincent.murray@blueyonder.co.uk.

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

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Bath & Borders diary

- **Thurs 5th Sept, 8:30pm:** A social at the Salamander, Bath, then maybe the Raven.
 - **Tues 10th Sept, 8:30pm:** A social at the Plough at Bradford Leigh, just north of Bradford on Avon.
 - **Thurs 19th Sept, 8:30pm:** A social at the Tuckers Grave Inn, Faulkland.
 - **Tues 24th Sept, 8:30pm:** The Branch Meeting at the Fox and Hounds, Warminster.
 - **Tues 1st Oct, 8:30pm:** A social at the Three Daggers, Edington.
- See www.bathandbordercamra.org.uk/events for further diary dates.

Bath & Borders contacts

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

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

Weston diary and contact

See page 29

Severn Vale diary and contact

See page 34

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