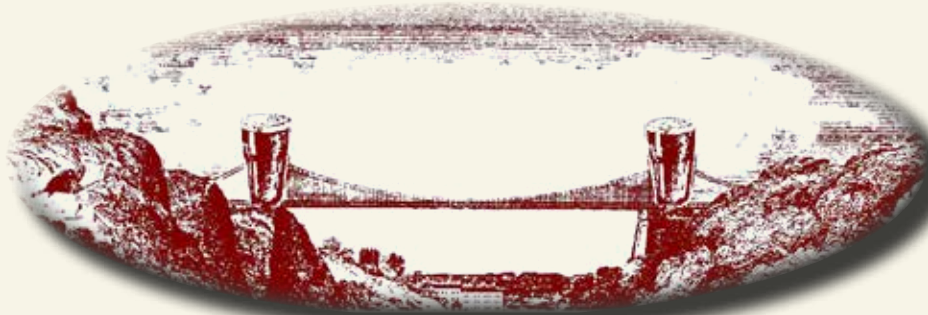




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# PINTS WEST

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



# Pints West reaches 100



**W**elcome to the 100th edition of Pints West, the magazine of the Bristol & District and Bath & Borders branches of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale.

To help mark this special edition of Pints West, we are celebrating all the breweries that we are now fortunate enough to have within our area. As Alison Bridle reports on page 48, at the time of the first edition of Pints West's predecessor, Avon Drinker, in 1989, the beer scene was somewhat different. The number of breweries, locally and nationally, was small compared with now, and the range of beers on most bars very limited.

So just how many breweries do we now have? At the last count it was 27 (though at the current rate, expect more to come soon). Throughout the following pages we intend to bring you a flavour of them all. In alphabetical order, these are:

1. **Abbey Ales**, Camden Row, Bath – page 25.
2. **Arbor Ales**, Kingswood, Bristol – page 19.
3. **Ashley Down**, St Andrews, Bristol – page 18.
4. **Bath Ales**, Warmley, Bristol – page 28.
5. **Beerd**, an offshoot of Bath Ales – pages 28, 39.
6. **Blindmans**, Leighton, Frome, Somerset – page 37.
7. **Box Steam**, The Midlands, Holt, Wiltshire – page 11.
8. **Bristol Beer Factory**, Bedminster, Bristol – page 29.
9. **Butcombe**, Cox's Green, Wrington – page 9.
10. **Cheddar Ales**, Cheddar, Somerset – page 36.
11. **Cotswold Spring**, Doddington Ash, Chipping Sodbury – page 43.
12. **Dawkins**, Timsbury, Bath – page 41.
13. **Great Western Brewing (GWB)**, Hambrook, Bristol – page 10.
14. **James Street**, Bath's newest brewery – pages 8, 26.
15. **Kenet & Avon**, temporarily at Wessex Brewery – page 45.
16. **Milk Street**, Frome, Somerset – page 36.
17. **New Bristol Brewery**, St Paul's, Bristol – page 18.
18. **Plain Ales**, Sutton Veny, Wiltshire – page 44.
19. **RCH**, West Hewish, near Weston-super-Mare – pages 32, 42.
20. **Rocket Science**, Yate, Bristol – page 22.
21. **Three Daggers**, Edington, Bristol – page 39.
22. **Towles**, Easton, Bristol – page 22.
23. **Twisted Oak**, Wrington, Somerset – pages 39, 42.
24. **Wessex**, Longbridge Deverill, Wiltshire – page 44.
25. **Willy Good Ale**, Winsley, Wiltshire – page 22.
26. **Wiper & True**, "gypsy brewers" – page 18.
27. **Zerodegrees**, Bristol city centre – page 23.

It's worth mentioning that, in the period between 1989 and now, some breweries sprang up and then sadly joined Ross and Courage (brewed elsewhere) in the list of former breweries. Newmans began in Weston-super-Mare but later moved to Wales (becoming Celt). The Avon Brewing Company launched in Bristol with beers such as Gurt Lush, but closed down a few years ago. Then there was Devilfish Brewery, short-lived but producing some wonderfully innovative beers – much lamented. You may remember others.

Pints West is not just about breweries though. The battle is clearly not over and there is still plenty of campaigning to do. There are a wealth of other articles in Pints West 100 to tempt your tastebuds. These include:

- A Round With Robin** – page 33.
- BADRAG** – Bristol & District Rare Ales Group – page 24.
- Bath & Borders branch pub news** – page 26.
- Bristol Beer Festival** – dates and ticket sales – page 5.
- Bristol Pubs Group** – page 14.
- CAMRA membership form** – page 46.
- Cask Ale Report** – page 7.
- Cider I Up!** – page 20.
- Cider making at Goldney House** – page 21.
- Diary and contact details** – page 47.
- Good Beer Guide launch** – page 17.
- Cryptic crossword** – page 42.
- Hop picking in Herefordshire** – page 6.
- Inn and Around Portishead** – page 40.
- Readers' letters and emails** – page 34.
- Severn Vale sub-branch** – page 35.
- Shine on ... The Strip** – page 16.
- Super Nova** – the historic Nova Scotia – page 12.
- Watering Holes in the Desert** – news from WsM – page 30.
- WhatPub?** – CAMRA's new online pub guide – page 3.



One hundred editions under our belt. Let's hope Pints West will still be here in another hundred editions from now flying the flag for our wonderful local breweries, the amazing beers they produce, and some cracking pubs to drink them in.



## Winning Magazine

**Pints West, your local CAMRA branch magazine, has reached the milestone 100<sup>th</sup> edition.**

As Alison Bridle notes on page 48, it would have been hard to imagine 24 years ago, when relaunched as the four-page 'free sheet' Avon Drinker, that our local branch newsletter could have evolved into the informative and attractive magazine you are reading today.

Pints West is put together by volunteers from your local CAMRA branch; they write the articles, get the adverts in (and thanks so much to all of our advertisers) and deal with the distribution of 10,000 copies to hundreds of pubs in and around our branch area.

Pints West keeps members of the public informed about the local pub and brewery scene. It provides information regarding many of our current campaigns and perhaps sometimes also gives readers a bit of a laugh. It is packed with information.

To get the magazine to you that you are reading today takes a lot of effort from many people. But it is the huge effort that Editor Steve Plumridge puts in, since taking over editorship from issue 23, that has made a real difference. Steve collates and edits articles from many fellow volunteers, dealing with artwork and layout, writes articles himself, avoids duplication of news where possible, helps with deliveries and so much more. This effort has quite rightly been recognised at both a local and national level, with Pints West holding the title of national CAMRA



magazine of the year for the last two consecutive years, to add to five other national awards over the years.

Steve is always self-effacing and is never late to thank others for their contributions towards the magazine. However, it is to Steve that we should all say "cheers" for the fantastic efforts that he has put in over recent years to bring you the best CAMRA magazine in the Country.

Well done Ed!!

*Pete Bridle*

# WhatPub?

There is a new online pub guide – totally free to CAMRA members and non-members alike – and written by drinkers like you!

Duncan Shine explains all.

Towards the end of September, CAMRA launched **whatpub.com**, its first ever online pub guide. It is a significant milestone in a two-year project by thousands of CAMRA volunteers; the website gives everyone access to nearly 36,000 real ale pubs, with detailed entries on nearly 24,000 of those and rising.

The website has been designed to work well with desktop PCs, laptops, tablets and other mobile devices. It lets you search for pubs selling real ale (of course), pubs that do food, or show the football, or any of over thirty criteria you might need to know.

Pictures, directions, handy maps, opening hours, the real ales and traditional ciders sold, what bus route it's on ... it's all covered. For those with mobile devices, you can even check what pubs are open and selling good beer near you wherever you may be! No more guess work!

Take a look at the screen capture here – you can see some of the detail that is covered, then if you are online, go to [whatpub.com](http://whatpub.com) and search for your local pub. You can search anywhere in the UK, but we're proud that – at the time of writing – the Bristol & District branch of CAMRA features 579 pubs selling real ale, with full details showing on 566 of those.

## BUT WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Because this website is written by CAMRA volunteers and pub-goers like you, it is only as up to date as the information we receive, and that's where you come in!

## THREE WAYS YOU CAN HELP . . .

### 1. Go to the pub!

Use [whatpub.com](http://whatpub.com), and visit the pubs and clubs you find there. The more people visit the pub, the more successful they will be, and the more these unique pieces of our heritage will be preserved for future generations.

### 2. Update the details!

If you visit a pub and find that some of the details are out of date or wrong, don't just sit there tutting into your pint, tell us! It's easy...

- **LOG IN TO WHATPUB.COM using your CAMRA membership number and password.**

If you don't know your password, just pop to [www.camra.org.uk](http://www.camra.org.uk) and click the 'forgotten password' button at the top.

If you're not a CAMRA member, we'd love you to join (use the membership form in this issue or go to [www.camra.org.uk/join](http://www.camra.org.uk/join)), but in the meantime go straight to [FIND THE PUB](#) below.

- **FIND THE PUB you want to update.**

If you're using a mobile device, just hit the 'nearby pubs' button and the pub you're in should magically appear.

- **HIT 'SUBMIT UPDATES'**

On a mobile device you can just tell us what you want to correct in the box provided, while the desktop version adds some simple instructions to help you. Then confirm the updates and you're done.

For non-members, there's a link to 'Send an email to the branch' at the bottom of the page, so you can update pub details that way.

**Then those updates go to our data monkeys in their basement sweatshop, who will double check the data for you and then upload it.**

This won't be instantaneous as we occasionally allow the data monkeys outside for some exercise, but it shouldn't take more than a day or two for your details to go live.



So remember, if you notice some data that's wrong on [whatpub.com](http://whatpub.com); don't just sit there smugly complaining about it! Send us an update, then smugly tell everyone how [whatpub.com](http://whatpub.com) would be nothing without you... Because that's true!



### 3. Rate the beer!

The new site not only lets you find pubs selling great beer, it also lets you tell us just how great the beers are. For members, on the pub's page you will see a 'Submit Beer Scores' panel (on the mobile site it's a button across the top). Just tell us the date you drank the beer, what beer it was and give it marks out of 5 for the quality of the beer.

We gather all this data, and it feeds directly into the selection process for the Good Beer Guide; so whether the beer you've had is good, poor or average, let us know and we'll make sure only the pubs selling the best beers make it into future editions of the Good Beer Guide.

**This is a great resource for drinkers across Britain, and a really good way to promote all the good real ale pubs in our area, not just the absolute crème de le crème that make the Good Beer Guide. So please, visit [whatpub.com](http://whatpub.com) and make sure we've got the details of your local spot on!**



# The Pints West 100 cover

The front cover is a Pints West version of the Beatles' album cover for Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band. I have tried to include someone or something that represents CAMRA in the South West and Pints West since it started 100 editions ago. My apologies to any one that wasn't included that feel they should be.



**BACK ROW (from left to right):**

1. Isambard Kingdom Brunel / Box Steam Brewery
2. Helen Featherstone, Pints West contributor
3. Wickwar Brewery, B.O.B.
4. Charlotte Leslie MP, involved with Bristol Pubs Group campaigns
5. Hop Back Brewery: Green Man
6. Blindmans Brewery
7. Abbey Ales Brewery
8. Thomas Clarkson, as seen on the Seven Stars pub plaque
9. Robin E Wild, Pints West contributor
10. Milk Street Brewery
11. Jem Ham, head brewer, Cheddar Ales
12. Darth Lager

**MIDDLE ROW:**

13. Wally
14. George Osborne, Chancellor, scrapped Beer Duty Escalator
15. Samuel Adams

16. Jackie Parker, CAMRA national director
17. Tim Martin, founder of JD Wetherspoon
18. Edward Taberner, cartoonist
19. Peter Taberner, Pints West contributor
20. Colin Valentine, CAMRA's national chairman
21. The Landlord, a character from the Barcode cartoon which is intended to represent every landlord, landlady, bar staff and pub worker – there are too many excellent landlords etc in the South West to include you all, so he is there to be your champion
22. Dr Lesly Huxley, Pints West contributor
23. Dawkins Brewery Knight
24. Jerry Fletcher, cider correspondent (in the cider apple tree)

**FRONT ROW:**

25. George Ferguson, Bristol Mayor, Bristol Beer Factory owner
- 26-29. Founders of CAMRA: Graham Lees, Bill Mellor, Michael Hardman and Jim Makin
30. Dick, Barcode character
31. Tom, Barcode character
32. Harry, Barcode character
33. Steve Plumridge, Pints West editor
34. Richard Brooks, chair of the Bristol & District branch of CAMRA
35. Pete Bridle, chair of Bristol Pubs Group

**FOREGROUND TOP:**

36. Old Slug (Porter) from RCH Brewery
37. Otter Brewery
38. Zerodegrees microbrewery (above the 'I' in Pints West)
39. Dominoes from Cotswold Spring Brewery (OSM)
40. Bristol Beer Factory (on the barrel)
41. Moles Brewery
42. Arbor Ales Brewery

**FOREGROUND BOTTOM:**

43. Devilfish Brewery (R.I.P.)
44. Butcombe Brewery
45. Bath Ales Brewery
46. Watering Holes in the Desert cartoon characters
47. Great Western Brewing Company.

*Eddie Taberner*

*Limited edition signed prints of this illustration are available – £25 unframed or £30 framed – from the Coach and Horses pub, Highland Square (just off Blackboy Hill), Clifton. Or send a cheque payable to 'Edward Taberner' for the above amount plus an extra £2 for postage to: Edward Taberner, 131 Lydney Road, Southmead Village, Bristol BS10 5JR.*

## The original Avon Drinker

In June 1977 the Bristol branch of CAMRA launched a publication – also called 'Avon Drinker' – which ran until about 1980, long before the current publication started up. The first editor of that, Neil Harris, looks back.

As Pints West emerges for the one hundredth time, I shudder on recalling its original precursor which first saw light of day over 36 years ago. However amateurish and threadbare, we were proud to launch CAMRA into local pubs and beer drinking circles: publicising the increasing number of outlets and “foreign” British real ales in our patch. The contrast with today – when we are losing pubs but gaining micros at quite a pace – is testimony to the social, economic, taste and production changes which have shaped and will continue to influence the beer-drinking scene over time.

Two common threads from those basic earliest to the latest sophisticated editions catch my eye: quality and variety.

In the 70's we wrestled with the “air pressure” debate and what constituted “real ale”. We fought the good fight to eradicate the curses of “blanket pressure” and “top pressure” which tainted the clean, fresh

taste of cask ale with artificial gasification. Now we agonise over “craft ales”, which harness parallel techniques in cask and bottle to ease handling and extend shelf-life; and over pubs which struggle to preserve too many slow-turnover casks. What price purity? What value purity? I know where I stand.

Also in the 70's we extolled traditional “amber nectars” and their pale and dark lower gravity siblings. Every brewer – of whom there were many fewer! – had its variations on these themes. Now we are faced with – and many are choosing to stay with – myriads of differently-named but similarly tasting gold or blonde ales; to the exclusion of other styles and varying only by hop. What price progress? What value variety? Again I know where I stand.

Whatever, Pints West continues to bring the news, views, and issues to interested – and I hope informed and discerning – beer drinkers across the region: involving the widest public in shaping a trade and an industry which can truly delight and satisfy. More power and longevity to your elbow.

*Neil Harris*

# Bristol Beer Festival 2014

The seventeenth annual CAMRA Bristol Beer Festival will run from Thursday 13th to Saturday 15th March 2014 at Brunel's Old Station, Temple Meads, Bristol. There will be an excellent range of over 130 different real ales on sale over the course of the festival as well as a great selection of cider and perry. There will also be a variety of food available at all sessions.

The session times and ticket prices remain unchanged for 2014 and the details are shown in the table below. However, the rules around the number of tickets that may be purchased have been adjusted and there will be improved online availability of tickets. Please bring the correct cash to the ticket sales sessions as we will not be able to accept cheques or credit cards.

**On Sunday 2nd February tickets will go on sale to CAMRA members at the COMMERCIAL ROOMS in Corn Street, Bristol from 12 noon until 2pm.**

Tickets will only be sold to card-carrying CAMRA members at this session. Anyone who signs up to join CAMRA on Sunday 2nd February will also be able to purchase festival tickets. The following purchasing limits will apply for each valid CAMRA membership card presented:

- For the Friday lunchtime, Friday evening and Saturday lunchtime sessions a maximum of two tickets for any session may be purchased, with an overall maximum of 4 tickets.
- For the Saturday evening session a maximum of 4 tickets may be purchased.
- For the Thursday evening session we do not currently anticipate applying a limit to the number of tickets that can be purchased.

For example you can purchase 2 tickets for Friday lunchtime and 2 tickets for Saturday lunchtime, or 2 tickets for Friday evening and 4 tickets for Saturday evening, or 5 tickets for Thursday evening and 2 tickets for Saturday lunchtime.

From **Tuesday 4th February** some tickets will be available to purchase **ONLINE** for the Thursday evening and Saturday evening sessions. Details of this will appear at [www.camrabristol.org.uk](http://www.camrabristol.org.uk).

**On Sunday 16th February** tickets will go on public sale at the **OLD FISH MARKET** in Baldwin Street, Bristol from 12 noon until 2pm.

All remaining tickets will be on sale to everyone (including CAMRA members) up to a maximum of four tickets per person for the Friday lunchtime, Friday evening, Saturday lunchtime and Saturday evening sessions. For the Thursday evening session we do not currently anticipate applying a limit to the number of tickets that can be purchased. For example if there are tickets remaining for these sessions you can buy 2 tickets for Friday evening and 2 tickets for Saturday evening, or 4 tickets for Saturday evening, or 5 tickets for Thursday evening.

**Simultaneous ticket sales will take place with the same rules at OFF THE RAILS at Weston-super-Mare train station on both Sunday 2nd February and Sunday 16th February.**

If there are any tickets remaining after these sessions they will be put on general sale at the **SEVEN STARS** in Thomas Lane, Bristol from **Wednesday 19th February**.

All ticket prices include £5 worth of beer festival tokens, which customers will receive on entry enabling them to go straight to the bar. Also included are a festival programme and a commemorative half pint glass, marked for third and half-pint measures.

We strongly advise keeping an eye on our website at [www.camrabristol.org.uk](http://www.camrabristol.org.uk) as this will feature further beer festival information including updates about ticket availability (including online sales) and the beer and cider lists as they become available.

*Richard Brooks*



Date	Session	Time	Cost	4th Feb ticket limit
Thursday 13 March	Evening	7pm - 11pm	£10 (incl £5 of tokens)	-
Friday 14 March	Lunchtime	11:30am - 4pm	£10 (incl £5 of tokens)	2
Friday 14 March	Evening	7pm - 11pm	£10 (incl £5 of tokens)	2
Saturday 15 March	Lunchtime	11:30am - 4pm	£10 (incl £5 of tokens)	2
Saturday 15 March	Evening	7pm - 11pm	£9 (incl £5 of tokens)	4

**Barcode Cartoon**  
 Limited edition prints on display and for sale.  
 (prices start at £10)

Grand opening @ the Coach and Horses from Dec 1<sup>st</sup>,  
 Highland Square, Clifton. 0117 9745176  
 (discount on real ale for CAMRA members)

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 Contact the editor, Steve Plumridge  
 Email [Steve.Plumridge.PintsWest@gmail.com](mailto:Steve.Plumridge.PintsWest@gmail.com)

# Hop picking in Herefordshire

Have you ever wondered about the process of turning the fruit of the hop plant into the hops that give the flavour and aroma to beer? Like me, you may know that late summer is a time for hop picking, or have heard family stories about grandparents travelling to Kent for the picking, but not really known what happens after the hops are picked, or what the hop growing industry in the UK is like. Late September saw us visiting SJ Parker's hop yard near Bromyard in Herefordshire to observe the final day of the season's harvest to find out.



Instone Court has been in the Parker family since the turn of the century. In addition to the hops, there are orchards supplying local cider producers, free range eggs, pedigree Ryeland sheep, cob nuts and a growing range of soft fruit produce. We drive from the farm yard down to the family's hop yards. Simon Parker manages these and a number of others distributed around other local farms.

The hop yard worked today is around 10 acres and was originally constructed in 1947 and rebuilt six or seven years ago. The infrastructure for a hop yard costs around £10,000 per acre so it isn't surprising that there haven't been any new hop yards around here for ten years. Parkers grow Pilgrim, Goldings, Target, Progress and, from 2014, Bramling Cross hops.

There are 2,500 acres of hop yards in the UK, which places them the seventh or eighth largest hop producers in the world. Simon explains that English hop producers have access to a unique national collection of hops; growers pay for research to be undertaken to support development of different varieties; it's not only flavour but also disease resistance that is important. Next year Simon intends to grow the snappily titled hop '0Z274' from the national collection.



In the hop yard, Simon's twin nephews are driving a tractor with hop picker up and down the rows of hops, pulling off the hop bines and loading them into a trailer, which is then taken full to the farm where processing starts. The hop bines are loaded into the mouth of 'the machine', built in the 1950s, three storeys high and featuring what is known as 'the Christmas tree', a set of mechanisms for stripping leaves from the bines and further stripping and shaking them through several passes to pro-



duce the hops that will go into the kiln for drying. These are lifted to the kiln floor above by sets of conveyors. The kilns are heated from below by what look like jet engines. Simon's family is joined by workers from Romania who come year after year and are trusted experts in managing and implementing the process.



The kilns, which have open windows to let the moisture out, operate at 140 degrees Fahrenheit. One kiln produces enough dried hops to fill about four hop pockets. If the hops get too hot, they lose alpha acids and/or weight, which affects the quality and the price. The hops will dry



in the kiln for between 9 and 12 hours depending on total weight and moisture. During the drying process, moisture content will drop from 80% to 10%.

The hops are loaded into the kilns to sit on carefully positioned sacks attached to the low walls. This means that when dry, they can be gathered up in the sacks and moved to the space where they'll be dropped from above into hop pockets ready for onward transport.



Having tried this myself, I can confirm that even the smaller sacks are extremely heavy. This isn't a process for the unfit!

The hops are piled high on the first floor next to the kilns. There is a hole in the floor with a machine positioned above, an open hop pocket secured to the mouth of the hole, its body hanging down into a room below. The hops are raked into the pocket and tamped down by the machine until the pocket is full. If not positioned correctly, the pocket



can tear under the pressure from the machine, making sewing it up at the end a tricky affair. Simon uses what looks like a large carpet needle and plastic thread to tie up the corners of the hop pocket and then sew up the top. A heave onto the scales confirms the weight of the pocket before it's stacked up ready to be collected for onward sale.

It was interesting to hear that Marstons are the biggest bulk buyer of aroma hops in the UK, with 70% of the hops they use being British. The yard will produce 8 to 10 tons. With the growth in micro-brewing and interest in speciality beers, brewers typically want English hops, but something different. The majority of hops now go to make hop pellets; few brewers use whole dried hops other than in very small quantities. Some of the Pilgrim hops grown here are exported to Goose Island Brewery in the United States. All of the Target hops go to Fat Tire Brewery.

It's easy to take for granted the ingredients that go to make the wide variety of ales we get to sample in the UK. I now have a much greater appreciation and admiration for those like Simon and his family who produce the hops that give our beers so much flavour and aroma, and somewhat ashamed of my ignorance of this critical part of the beer industry. So next time you lift that pint, pause for a moment to give thanks to the people who work very hard, and in often difficult market circumstances, to think ahead about the future of hops by experimenting with and investing in new varieties and still deliver on the great flavours of today.

*Lesly Huxley*

## The Cask (Ale) Report 2013

People are drinking less and going out less, but when they do go out, they are choosing their beers more carefully. Cask ale is benefiting, according to Pete Brown, author of *The Cask Report*.

The 2013 edition of the Report was launched on Thursday 26th September to coincide with the start of Cask Ale Week, a nationwide celebration of Britain's national drink. The report shows how people are turning increasingly to cask ale in the search of flavour, natural ingredients and traditional methods of production.

Among the report's findings were that:

- Sales of cask ales declined slightly by 1.1% while the total beer market fell by 7.9%, so cask grew as a proportion of sales;
- Cask ales grew in value by 3%;
- More pubs are stocking cask ale (57% compared with 53% in 2009) and each pub stocks on average 3.8 different brands;
- Cask ale plays a major part in keeping pubs open. Cask ale pubs show better results across the beer range and drinkers of cask are more likely to visit the pub.

"There has been a sea-change in attitudes towards cask ale over the past few years," says Pete Brown, "which explains why it's now out-performing the beer market by 6.8%.

"It's completely lost its image as an old man's drink and now appeals to a broad range of drinkers, male and female, young and old. 63% of licensees say it's attracting younger customers into their pub and a similar number say that more women are drinking it. More people see it as a crafted product made from natural British ingredients and like the fact that it's available only in the pub. This is great news for all those who care about the future of the British pub since it helps guarantee a new generation of drinkers who will help keep pubs relevant – and open!"

The report claims that over 10,000 pubs held beer festivals during 2012, and that this encouraged people to try out cask ale and modernised its image. "With all the extra beers on offer in each of those pubs during the festivals, that's not only a lot of sales generated; it's also a good illustration of why the market is fragmenting and new breweries are opening."

184 new breweries opened during the year covered by the report, some microplants in the brewhouses of regional brewers and others in pubs or converted buildings, on industrial estates or in the heart of the countryside.

"People love the opportunity to support local breweries," says Pete, "but aren't looking exclusively for beers from their own region. In fact 70% of drinkers would like to try beers from different parts of the country more often. This provides a great opportunity for pubs to diversify their range, and for the country's 1,150 breweries to sell beyond their own doorstep."

*Norman Spalding*



# James Street Brewery



I always enjoy a trip on the train to visit some of the many wonderful pubs in Bath. Wednesday October 23rd was special though, because I had been invited to the official opening of the Bath Brew House, home to the James Street Brewery. This turned out to be quite an impressive affair with the official ribbon-cutting ceremony being performed by the mayor.

The old Metropolitan has been bought by the Henley Brewing Company – which already has brew pubs in Henley and Cambridge – and completely renovated. The outside is largely unchanged, but the whole place has been completely rebuilt inside with a large ground-floor bar/restaurant and brewery, and a function room upstairs. The look is tasteful and quite distinctive. There is also a bar and barbecue in the large garden. The manager is Lucas Van Rensburg, who has had



experience running pubs across the UK, including two brew pubs. The brewing will be done by Anna Schwaeble, late of Zerodegrees in Bristol.

The drinks offer is led by real ales with a selection of wines, spirits and bottled beers. They had four of their beers on for the opening. **Gladiator** bitter, **Emperor** best bitter, and **Maximus** stout are likely to become regulars, and the **Festivus** wheat beer was a special. Needless to say I tried them all, and I'm told there will be other specials in the future.

They are targeting beer lovers and their families but there was clearly an emphasis on food, which will all be fresh, home-made and locally sourced.

*Chris Rogers*





# Butcombe Brewery

## The story of the Butcombe Brewery

Many years ago, even before the first issue of Pints West, in fact 35 years ago, Simon Whitmore and his wife Maureen changed the tiny village of Butcombe by opening the Butcombe Brewery in an old stone barn attached to their house. Simon was previously a director of Courage West brewery with 20 years experience and he seized the opportunity to produce real ale to satisfy the growing number of drinkers moving away from the gassy keg beers. Only 10 to 20 barrels per week were made to start with but it became an instant success and within a year production had stepped up to 50 barrels a week. By 1990 they had reached full capacity of 10,000 36-gallon casks a year. In 2003 the brewery's ownership transferred to Guy Newell and friends. With a greater range of ales and ever increasing popularity the Butcombe Brewery moved in 2005 from Butcombe to the new larger premises in nearby Wrington.

## Brewery open day 2013

A record number of people came to the Butcombe Brewery open day in September; it was estimated to top 1,000 visitors and circa 3,000 pints were pulled! The 'High and Dry' singers from Burrington provided music to drink ale to with their melodious Sea Shanties. The Mendip Morris Men kept the crowds entertained and surprised small children with a huge hobbyhorse! To provide sustenance the Story Meat Company was barbecuing delicious organic food.

## Launch of Matthew Pale Ale

In June this year the new permanent ale from Butcombe named **Matthew Pale Ale** was launched aboard the Matthew, the full-size replica of John Cabot's ship. The beer had 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% with floral taste from the American Amarillo hops added at the end of the brewing.

## Haka 'Ferocious Maori Bitter' in great demand

During September, October and November **Haka** at 4.5% was available; this is a New Zealand hopped seasonal beer. It is described as 'a ferocious Maori Bitter with tropical, peachy and grapey flavours'; these are imparted by the Nelson Sauvignon hops from New Zealand. Haka has been the most successful Butcombe seasonal beer ever!

## Seasonal ale news

The famous ruby-red **Christmas Steps** at 4.2% will make its usual appearance again this year. Maris Otter is blended with a precise selection of malts that together lend the beer a reddish hue. It contains Challenger and Bramling Cross hops, the latter delivering a distinctive and fruity blackcurrant taste.

In January and February the return of **Old Vic Porter** is expected – a smoky, chocolaty 4.7% porter. Described as a "Dramatically Dark" beer, it is a complex, satisfying porter, smooth, rich and distinctive – made with pale, crystal brown, and chocolate malts, whilst the Fuggles and Golding hops ensure a powerful and satisfying finish; bittersweet with hints of chocolate and toffee.

## Cooking with beer and cider

For those who like to eat as well as drink beer, Butcombe has launched a book titled 'Cooking with Beer and Cider'; a sell-out on the first print run, more copies have now been printed and it is available in Butcombe pubs, the Butcombe on-line shop and the largest supermarket chain. Ian Salisbury and Butcombe Brewery wrote the book with contributions from Josh Eggleton and Adam Henson.

## 2013: a good year of awards for Butcombe beers

Once again tasting judges have recognised that the excellent beers from Butcombe are worthy of special awards.

**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 judges' panel awarded 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.

*Nigel Morris*



Mendip Morris at the Butcombe Brewery open day



Guy Newell (centre right, surrounded by CAMRA members) receiving the latest of a string of awards for Butcombe

**We wish all CAMRA members  
a happy  
Butcombe Christmas**



## CHRISTMAS STEPS

coming to a pub near you, but available all December in the four Butcombe Bristol pubs:

- Colston Yard, Colston Street**
- Bell, Stokes Croft**
- Cottage, Baltic Wharf**
- Prince of Wales, Westbury-on-Trym**



# Great Western Brewery

The latest milestone for Great Western Brewery (GWB) is an American IPA brewed exclusively for Wetherspoons. The **Bristol Belle** (5.0% ABV) is named after the first hot air balloon to be made by Cameron Balloons in Bristol in modern times. Representatives from Wetherspoons and Cameron Balloons tasted the beer during a visit to the brewery on 16<sup>th</sup> October; the reaction to this new brew was one of great enthusiasm.

Brewed with pale and Vienna malts as well as Mount Hood and Chinook hops, the aroma is hoppy and malty. Fruit and hops are prominent on the tongue, with marmalade notes and a tart, dry finish. The beer was successfully launched on 1<sup>st</sup> November at the Van Dyke Forum where customers were encouraged to try free samples, dispensed by the brewer, from a cask prominently positioned in the middle of the floor. Needless to say the hand-pump version of the beer was available, not only at the Van Dyke bar but also simultaneously at over 10 other Wetherspoons pubs in the area, the pub chain having taken a complete



brew of ten brewer's barrels – that is 40 nine-gallon (40 litre) casks – doubtless the first of many such brews.

The GWB premises were purchased by Kevin and Sandra Stone in 2007. The brewery is housed in an 18<sup>th</sup> century bakehouse in Hambrook that I remember, when a child, as Turner's Stream Bakery.

These historic premises were transformed into a ten-barrel brewery, using the best quality equipment to be found; the first beer, appropriately named **Maiden Voyage** (4%), was brewed on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2008. This was quickly followed by **Classic Gold** (4.6%); both beers form the core of the ever expanding portfolio.

**The Rising Sun** pub in Frampton Cotterell has been in the same family since 1982, firstly in the hands of Roger and Pauline Stone and then Kevin and Sandra. It has been the brewery tap for GWB from the outset and they say their own-brewed ales are the best sellers.

In common with many of today's micro-breweries, and not a few long-established regional breweries, GWB is a family concern. Directors Kevin and Sandra Stone, son and head brewer Ashley, daughter and sales manager Leanne all contribute to running the business successfully. Mike Tremlin, in charge of business development, is Kevin and Sandra's brother in-law and Shane is their nephew – he helps around the brewery. The only employees without a family connection are driver Bob ('The Happy Drayman' according to Mike) and Caleb, a brewing assistant. Incidentally, the brewery runs what is claimed to be the smallest motorised dray – a Smart car, used for local deliveries.

The two original ales were soon joined by **The Bees Knees** (4.2%), a premium honey bitter; **Old Higby** (4.8%), a darker beer similar to an old ale; and **Edwin's Ruby Porter** (5.2%), a rich dark and complex porter enriched with ruby port, to name a few. GWB's seasonal ale is **Cock Robin** (4.3%), the popular Christmas ale, which will be on sale as you read this – altogether, a range with something to suit all tastes and occasions.

A recent development was the commissioning of the brewery's own borehole which gives a consistent water supply. Coming from a depth of 200 feet, it is always at a constant temperature of 11.5 degrees C all the year round thus affording considerable savings in the brewing process and resulting in a more consistent product.

All bottling is now done 'in house', including cold filtration. So far Maiden Voyage, Classic Gold and Edwin's Ruby Porter are available in bottles; the whole range will eventually become available in the New Year.

If you've missed the brewery open day (30<sup>th</sup> November), you can always sample ales in the brewery shop and sup a pint in the Rising Sun.

*Henry Davies*

Great Western Brewing Company  
Hambrook, Bristol, BS16 1RF

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www.gwbrewery.co.uk

The Bar Code  
by Eddie Taberner

THE NEW BARMAID: PART 3  
THE NEXT INTERVIEW

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HMM... PROBABLY HONESTY.

...I DON'T THINK HONESTY IS A WEAKNESS.

I DON'T GIVE A CRAP WHAT YOU THINK!

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EDWARD TABERNER 17-06-13

# The Grapes, Chipping Sodbury

## A really moving story

For the last few years, the Grapes in Rounceval Street has well and truly established itself as Chipping Sodbury's premier real ale pub. It has become renowned for offering a choice of six real ales in excellent condition and for stocking beers of all styles and strengths. As a result it has built up a strong crowd of followers, both local and from all around the area, and for the last few years has been rewarded with a precious place in CAMRA's Good Beer Guide. It is unusual in that, having previously been absorbed into the adjoining Indian restaurant, it re-emerged as a pub in its own right a few years ago. Until recently it seemed to enjoy an excellent symbiotic relationship with the restaurant to the point that you were welcome to order a curry to eat in the pub, or better still take a pint of real ale next door to enjoy with your curry. I really enjoyed this as I like a curry but don't enjoy lager at all. Sadly all this is about to end.

I was advised a few months ago that the restaurant was no longer allowing diners to take beer in from the pub – I thought this strange as for me it was a unique selling point when deciding where to choose for a curry. It now transpires that the pub lessees (Dave and Gilly) and the restaurant have failed to agree on a future rent level, so it is with great sadness that Dave and Gilly have announced their intention to close the pub on Boxing Day 2013. This is truly a really saddening event given the great work that has gone before.

However ... all is not completely lost! Dave and Gilly intend to move the pub a short distance and reopen just a few days later! Yes, you did read that right! They own the lease on a wine bar a few doors down on the opposite side of the street and intend to recreate the essence and spirit of the Grapes in there. The wine bar is located at number 2 High



Street (postcode BS376AS, phone 01454 880333 or 07833 204771) and is currently known as Gilly's. Look for the tall yellow side wall. The intention is to start with four real ales and hopefully increase to five as soon as possible. The current CAMRA discount of 20p off per pint will also continue. The aim is to open the doors on New Year's Eve. Dave and Gilly seem both sad to have to leave the Grapes and genuinely excited to be starting this new venture. We surely all wish them every success and I for one intend to visit as soon as possible.

It is not clear what will become of the current Grapes, but I would be surprised if most or all of the customers didn't swiftly move to Gilly's and I suspect that the restaurant owners may have cause to regret allowing the situation to reach this point.

Vince Murray  
(photo by Mike Lawrence)



# Box Steam Brewery



Box Steam Brewery was, as its logo shows, established in 2004, in Wiltshire. To accommodate demand, the brewery re-located to Holt, near Bradford-on-Avon, in 2011 and continues to experience considerable levels of growth. In the summer, the brewery racked up its first series of consecutive 50-barrel brews, enough beer to fill around 2,000 casks of ale each month.

And it's not just quantity that reflects the brewery's success. **Evening Star**, a 7.5% strong dark porter, recently won a Gold at the Taste of the West awards. The name comes from the last steam locomotive to be built by British Railways. The beer is described as "alive with subtle coffee and chocolate aromas, the gentle vanilla sweetness contrasts with the full bitterness of roasted barley and coloured malts." Not content with award-winning beers, the brewery's recent new design packaging and pump clips for **Funnel Blower** (a 4.5% dark brown porter) won bronze at the International Beer Challenge.

Another dark brown porter has been brewed to mark a partnership with prog rock band Big Big Train. The ale of the same name involves a contrast of the bitterness of roasted barley and malts with a subtle vanilla sweetness. The beer is selling well at Big Big Train gigs as well as through the brewery shop.

With the colder months in mind, Box Steam have released two ales that are perfect for the festive period. These are **Christmas Dark Box** (5.0%), a dark and warming Christmas ale, and **Christmas Blonde Box** (5.2%), full of hoppy and citrus character. Both are available in cask and bottles, and will be available in pubs and shops nationwide. The seasonal trend is likely to continue into 2014, with a seasonal ale range planned, so watch this space (or their website)!

Lesley Howley

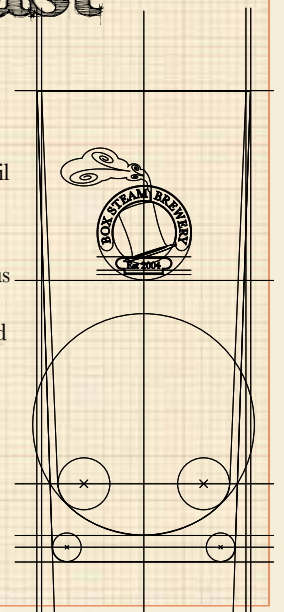
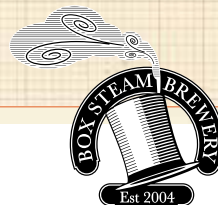
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www.boxsteambrewery.com

# Dockside Delight – the Super Nova



Anyone interested in Bristol's old hostelries should seek out C.F. Denning's *Old Inns of Bristol* and Helena Eason's *Bristol's Historic Inns* which I can't recommend more highly. The Nova Scotia is featured in both books and bears testimony to the pub's attractions and longevity.

Coincidentally, when visiting the pub with photographer Tim Belsten and bearing said tomes, manager Mark Walter stated that at one time or another he had stayed in most of the pubs featured.

The Scotia itself was built just two years after Jessop completed his masterpiece, the Floating Harbour, in 1809 and luckily for us most of the original features remain. Conceived initially as a series of individual public buildings, the Nova Scotia absorbed the Docks Hotel next to it in 1899, all the while keeping the arched entrance to its yard, and thriving on the huge export cattle trade from Ireland.

At the time of its major refit with the glorious Parnall's bar fitting, the pub was in the hands of Bristol United Breweries and one of their featured ales was Oakhill Stout, all emblazoned on the front of the pub in large letters – a bit different from now but the pub shows it's still well looked after.

↑ Above the left-hand entrance to the pub is a Georgian led light that would grace any stately home and to cap it, and to celebrate the pub's name, are the flags of Nova Scotia in Canada and Great Britain.

After the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, at the end of the Spanish War of Succession, France ceded Nova Scotia to Britain and according to Helena, Nova Scotia Place in which the inn sits, was named in honour of Dr John Robinson, Bishop of Bristol, who helped negotiate the Treaty.

Incidentally, it was during the Spanish War of Succession that Bristol Privateers had their most successful voyage, not only bringing home a Spanish Treasure Ship but also marooned mariner Alexander Selkirk, rescued after four years and four months of solitude, who became the prototype of Robinson Crusoe.



↑ The engine room of any pub, this mahogany back bar and server sets the tone for this remarkable dockside inn. The Parnall's maker's plate is normally hidden behind the pub clock.



↑ Trying to decipher the age of the back bar is tricky, but bearing in mind that Parnall's moved to Fishponds from Narrow Wine Street in 1923, and that most of the original furniture is Edwardian, in all likelihood it's probably early 1900's. It's amazing to have such an original and historical piece still in its original location and still doing the job it was intended to do.

Parnall's were founded in 1820 and became the pre-eminent shop-fitting company in the land; in fact by the 1890's it was said "there is hardly a city or town in Great Britain where their productions are not know or appreciated." Come the First World War, their highly skilled workforce turned its attention to war production and over 600 aero and sea planes were produced.

Local legend states that the back bar was originally intended for



↑ Both Denning and Eason dwelt on this feature, a glorious cast iron lamp bracket that remains a fixture to this day. As good as any in town, the light has been a beacon for 'Scotia regulars.

an ocean liner and it's easy to see how this came about as Parnall's did indeed work for the great ship builders, their last ever commission being for the QE2.



↑ An internal partition is a major feature of the Nova Scotia and a few years ago, as in so many venerable pubs, it was at risk of being removed until a campaign was mounted by regulars to save it. The frosted glass panels on the door denote 'Private Bar' and the partition screens off an intimate area.



↑ This tiny room has two entrances and its own section of servery for those on secret assignments.

As well as the nautical knick-knacks on display, the pub features a gas regulator *à la* King's Head in Victoria Street, which was used to adjust the pressure within when the street lamps were lit without. The window shutters are also original and feature throughout the ground floor of the pub.



↑ The pub must have one of the greatest collections of Edwardian cast iron tables in the country, let alone Bristol. Edward VII features

along with a well-known Bristolian cricketer of international repute.

Some of the more unusual have the head of Baden Powell emblazoned on them, not to mark his founding of the Scout movement but his role as British commander at the siege of Mafeking in 1899 where he was one of the few British heroes during the second Boer war.



↑ This scissor-leg table is another table of note. Its two-plank top is bounded by iron and its leg design makes it easier to get in and out when sliding along the wall seating backed by Wainscot panelling.

This panelling and seating is a feature throughout the pub along with the unique wall coverings of old sea charts and maps of Bristol. There are also pictures of Bristol's maritime heart augmented by locally themed murals.

*Mark Steeds  
(Bristol Pubs Group member  
and publican)  
Photos by Tim Belsten*



## Congratulations to Pints West on their 100th issue!

CAMRA award winning

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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](http://www.camrabristol.org.uk/pubsgroup)  
 email: [bristolpubsgroup@yahoo.co.uk](mailto: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.**



## Restoring the pride of the Foresters Arms

There has been much uncertainty over the future of the Enterprise Inns-owned Foresters Arms in Salisbury Road, Downend, Bristol since the departure of the previous landlord about a year ago. Since then the building had been plated up, scaffolded around and fenced off, which had given it a somewhat rundown appearance. This was a source of great concern among local residents and also members of Bristol Pubs Group who became aware of the situation. Fears about the pub company's intentions for the pub resulted in it becoming a regular agenda item at several Bristol Pub Group meetings.

Before long rumours began circulating that the pub might be sold off to a developer and of plans being submitted for it to be converted into flats, so in early October I decided to make a site visit to the premises to investigate what the current situation was and feed this information back to Bristol Pubs Group. When I arrived, I was surprised to see that the exterior of the building was being repainted in a light stone colour



with an apple tree decoration around the front entrance which certainly brightened up the frontage. I then noticed that refurbishment work was well underway inside and I was allowed to take a look at the work being done. The bar area was being painted in a mid-blue and white scheme with crimson padded seating, frosted glass front windows and a low beamed bar ceiling. Of particular interest in the bar area was a multi-coloured leaded glass partition screen with the name "FORESTERS" written in the middle in white letters. Also of interest was an Art Deco "sunrise" coloured glass decorated fanlight panel above the patio doors leading out to the grass and timber-decked rear beer garden, and there were also original-looking wooden fittings around the bar area itself. All in all these interior features looked set to add to the welcoming ambience of the pub. I was also quite surprised by the amount of interest there was from local residents who were curious to know when the pub was reopening and most of them seemed quite supportive.

The pub has now reopened, still under the ownership of Enterprise Inns, but with an experienced tenant couple running it. In order to make this reopening a success in the long term, both CAMRA members and local residents are encouraged to see what the Foresters Arms has to offer by visiting the pub in the near future.

*Ian Beckey*

## Wear Pints West

YOU can now wear Pints West!

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

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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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EMAIL ADDRESS (in case of queries) .....

# Pub news

In Bristol's old city **Horts** has had a major investment in a brand new concept. It has been arranged to accommodate a 26-seat cinema at the rear of the ground floor therefore making use of space that was previously lightly used. Diners can qualify for complementary entry. It is always good to see diversification of pubs in order to gain new or increased custom so we wish the team at Horts the best with this imaginative offering. A new pub has opened in Clare Street: named **Copper Jack's Crafthouse**, it is smartly decorated and furnished in a modern stylish tone and is presenting five keg beers and a lager as well as a range of bottles and cocktails; no real ale though. The **Looking Glass** (formerly the Rummer in High Street – not to be confused with the Rummer in All Saints Lane which is open) is set for closure at any time after a spell supporting the performing arts group that was temporarily occupying it. It was great to see it trading again after 13 years closed; there must be someone out there that can continue its good fortunes? Again diversification for pubs has worked here. On King Street the former Sublime is to re-open as the **Small Bar** with a plan of offering up to 12 keg beers, six real ales and two ciders – impressive stuff!

Regrettably the **Grapes** in Clifton is still closed and owners Wadworth are seeking to sell. In Easton the campaign to save the **Greenbank** continues and in Redfield the **Redfield Inn** has a planning application pending to add a two-storey extension and make alterations to the public house trading area, though the pub will remain. Nearby the **Fire Engine** has closed and the lease is for sale. The **Cross Keys** at Fishponds is a pub no more; permission has been granted to convert it into a shop. The **Chequers** on Lodge Road has been closed for over a year but we understand that owners Enterprise Inns will align a tenant to it at some point.

In the south of Bristol we have been reliably informed that the **Rope Walk** on Bedminster parade has an interested party working to re-open it as a pub but not before Christmas. Brislington's new pub, the **Lodekka Hungry Horse** is reported as doing well while the **King's Arms** has closed following the departure of the tenants but again Enterprise Inns are hopefully ensuring the continuation of its use under a new operator, and the closed **Man In Space** in Stockwood has been bought by a property developer.

The **King George VI** in Filton is undergoing some major works but we are not certain of the likelihood that it will come out of it as a pub. The **Forester's** in Downend has re-opened as a community pub with a sports theme and has enjoyed a tidy make-over. As reported in Pints West 99 the **Badminton Arms** in Coalpit Heath, or more specifically part of its car park, will be the subject of a planning application by Box Properties to build a Sainsbury's shop. The pub would remain open but the remaining car park would be shared with the new store. An application to convert the **Star** in Frampton Cotterell into housing has been withdrawn by the applicant but another application has been made for a less housing-dense arrangement. In Chipping Sodbury the **Portcullis Hotel** has closed and the **Grapes** is due to close after Christmas due to continually rising rent. The tenants will be transferring the real ale offerings across the road to their wine bar **Gilly's**.

Congratulations go to Ally and Dave McKillop for completing ten years at the **New Inn** at Mayshill. They have elevated this pub to a high level by offering good food, unusual real ales and real cider, winning the local branch of CAMRA's *Pub of the Year* award in 2009. Another long-standing licensee Yvonne Hulbert at the **Rose and Crown** at Rangeworthy has bought the freehold of the pub from Punch Taverns and is putting on some more interesting beers including brews from Cotswold Spring. In Thornbury the **Barrel** has been bought from Enterprise Inns by

James Murray and Simon Extance and has re-opened as **Hawkes House**. In its position in Thornbury's shopping street this 'neighbourhood café-bar' caters for shoppers seeking refuge and in need of refreshment and sustenance where three real ales are available amongst other alcoholic and soft drinks. The long-closed **Hollybush** at Bridgegate appears to be nearing the completion of its enlargement and refurbishment but we are told that it won't re-open until March 2014! The **Cross House** at Doynton has reopened and is being run by a holding company at the moment. The plan is apparently to find a longer term lessee.

It is always sad to see the end of pubs that occupy attractive historic buildings so the cull of the **White Hart** at The Folly, Cold Ashton is sad news. This pub in the Grade II-listed building struggled on in its latter years but finally closed around three years ago. It will become a mixed retail showroom with office space.

Down in Somerset the planning application to convert the **Yew Tree** at Chew Stoke into residential has been withdrawn following a barrage of objections. The withdrawal may well be followed up with a revised application – keep your eyes open. In Keynsham the **Pioneer** is closed and is advertised with its tenure to let.

Thanks to our friend Laurie Gibney we have a comprehensive account of goings-on in North Somerset. The **Star** at Tickenham has re-opened under new management after a refurbishment while the **Dew Drop Inn** at Backwell has been re-opened by Cardiff brewer Brains, and the nearby **Rising Sun** continues under new management. The **Waggon & Horses** at Clevedon is under the temporary management of well-known local licensees Harry and Nikki Turner pending a new lessee being found by owner Enterprise Inns. Another Enterprise Inn, the **Poacher** in Portishead has closed. We understand that a temporary management team will re-open the pub until a long-term tenant can be found. The **White Hart Inn** at Weston in Gordano has been listed as an Asset of Community Value which should give some protection to anyone wishing to change its use. The **Friendship Inn** Nailsea was a Punch Tavern until it was sold in July. North Somerset Council is processing/has processed a planning application for conversion of the pub to two housing units with three new houses in the car park. It remains open at this time. Also in Nailsea the freehold for the **Queen's Head** is for sale at £325,000 with James A. Baker.

The festive season is upon us but don't forget to get into your local outside of the season and support it as best you can. Merry Christmas!

*Mike Jackson, for Bristol Pubs Group*

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## 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](mailto:camra@camrabristol.org.uk)) and we will be delighted to bring materials to your pub. We will also update the material as required.

# Shine on ... The Strip

When someone mentions 'The Strip', what springs to mind? Is it the main thoroughfare through the centre of Las Vegas, with its gaudy lights, fountains and short-term loan establishments? Or maybe it's that long road in Mallia, Greece, beloved of young holidaying adults with a penchant for cheap shots, skimpy outfits and roadside vomiting. Or maybe 'The Strip' to you means something else entirely, in which case that is between you and your partner and frankly nobody else's business (but there ARE support groups...).

However, to Bristolians 'The Strip' can only mean that 100-yard long stretch of bars, pubs and eateries just down from the station in Clifton Down. It's known as the place to be seen, more upmarket than Park Street, and with more life than Clifton Village. Cocktails? They got 'em! Dancing? Check! Food with exotic names? Step this way! But what about a decent pint of real ale? Well, it's not the barren wasteland one might imagine.

My stroll took me from one traditional pub bidding farewell, to another traditional pub faring well, with an eclectic mix of hostelries in between.

First off for me was the **Vittoria**. Now this is a lovely old pub with one narrow bar, bare wood flooring, and red leather seating. I ordered a pint of Theakston Lightfoot, and was just about to start scribbling notes about beer taste, décor, ambience when the guy behind the bar dropped a bombshell. Truth is, by the time you read this the Vittoria will have ceased to be a pub. Nick Warner (for it was he) informed me the Vittoria was to become a cocktail/wine bar. Just my opinion of course, but I think this is a crying shame.

The Strip is not (as we will see) devoid of good beer, but the Vittoria is a traditional pub in a lovely building and the area will be the worse for its conversion. Of course I wish the new proprietors well, as at least it is remaining as a licensed premises rather than converting to Bristol's 893<sup>rd</sup> Tesco Express, but surely there's still a market for a good old fashioned pub among the more 'hip' joints? (Seems irrelevant now, but the Lightfoot was in very good nick, a 4.1% ABV fruity golden pale ale that the brewery reckons goes well with 'a light curry'.)

Next door, in what used to be 'The Ranch' and before that 'The Fine Line', is now a bar called, ahem, '**Be.In Bristol**'. Now, weird name aside, this is a very interesting establishment, and a really good example

of how it's possible to sell and promote real ale in a trendy modern environment. A huge open space, with bare floorboards, sparse furniture dotted about the place, some modern art work on the walls. There's a commitment to local sourcing of pretty much everything (furniture, beer, food, live bands, you name it) and, at the back, there is a 'living wall' (indoor space with climbing plants and shrubs). On my visit, four handpumps offered Bristol Beer Factory Nova, Tribute and Trelawney's Pride from St Austell, and Dark Star Hophead. At the back of the bar were two barrels dispensing guest beers including BBF Southville Hop and Butcombe Haka. This is a fascinating concept, and gets very busy at weekends, with a clientele that bizarrely combines the bohemian with the affluent professional. Personal viewing essential.

Next to the **WG Grace**, JD Wetherspoon's first foray into the area.

You will doubtless already have your own view of Wetherspoon's – as a chain it tends to polarise opinion – but for what it's worth this is a light and airy pub that uses cavernous interior very well. Dining is to the rear, but there are lots of places to sit and chat, read or play Candy Crush Saga (yes, they have Wifi). In general terms you can expect resident beers from the Greene King stable, plus a few guests from smaller breweries. I visited at the tail-end of the 'Halloween Beer Fest', so there was a panoply of less familiar beers, including a series of 'American' collaboration brews. They also had Cotleigh Lemon Ale, a seasonal brew from the Wiveliscombe brewery. Apparently the hops come from New Zealand; I wouldn't know but I can confirm the 'lemon' isn't just a name; sharp and zesty and refreshing.

Across the road in what used to be the Picture House (but before that was the Dog & Duck) is '**The Cowshed**', expanded from next door, and bringing 'the taste of the countryside to the city'. Emphasis here is definitely on the food, but you can just sit and sup the Butcombe Rare Breed should the fancy take you.

Then, as you move towards the station, you pass any number of bars, bar-cafés, café-bars, eateries, drinkeries, eatanddrinkeries and such like. I would tell you all about them except there wasn't a real ale between them that I could see, and anyway by the time you read this they will probably have changed their name, theme and furniture so let's just leave it that if any start serving decent beer, I'll text you...

Final, and honourable, mention then to the 'traditional' pub opposite the station entrance, stretching behind the bank from Whiteladies Road to Cotham Hill. The **Penny Farthing** was actually converted from a bank relatively recently, but nonetheless has the feel of a proper pub, with dark-wood furniture, and a long bar showcasing the full range of Wadworth beers.

Although they do a good selection of seasonal ales, I think you have to go a long way to beat a really good pint of 6X. There's something reassuring about that mid-brown colouring, and malty-fruity flavour.

With apologies to pubs just off the Strip, that leaves us with three establishments where you can get a good choice of quality ales. It's easy to get down about the number of bars not selling real ale, but three decent places within 100 yards is not exactly a beer desert.

*Duncan Shine*

*All the real ale bars and pubs mentioned here are featured in [Whatpub.com](http://Whatpub.com). CAMRA's free online pub guide written and updated by CAMRA members and drinkers such as your good self, thanking you kindly.*



WG Grace



The Vittoria



The Cowshed



The Penny Farthing

# CAMRA's Good Beer Guide 2014 launched

Not being the superstitious type, I thought nothing of setting the local launch date for the 2014 Good Beer Guide for Friday 13<sup>th</sup> September this year. As it turned out to be arguably the worst day this year for bad weather, maybe I should take more note of these things? It rained cats and dogs all day, but that didn't stop many hardy souls from battling their way to the Volunteer Tavern in New Street near Cabot Circus. Their mission was to get their hands on a fresh-off-the-printer copy of the good book. As is our local tradition, we launched the book at one of our new entry pubs. Pete Gibbs at the Volunteer was delighted to oblige and to receive his licensee pack and precious window sticker (see picture – Pete is the young one on the right).

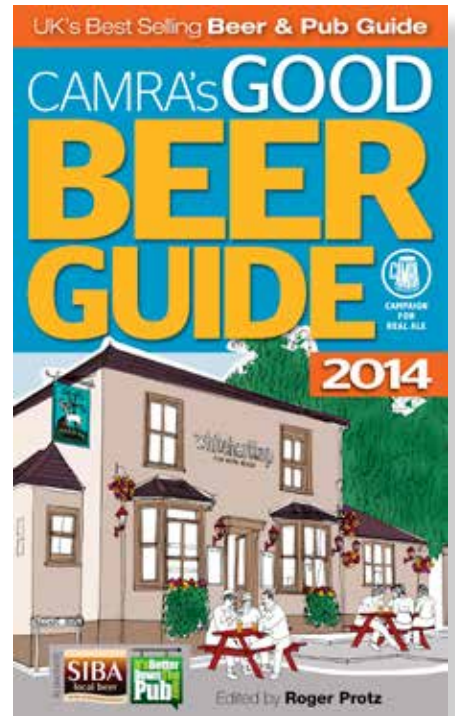
Winning a place in the Guide around these parts is extremely difficult for, as you are will all be aware, the real ale scene locally has undergone a tremendous period of boom. Within our branch area we have established that over 670 pubs and bars currently regularly sell real ale. This puts us amongst the top two or three CAMRA branches in the country in that respect, and possibly top. Despite that incredible number, we are restricted to putting only 63 pubs into the guide, 24 of which have to be in Somerset. That means that being voted in – especially in the Gloucestershire and Bristol section – is truly a great achievement. Many excellent pubs had to be left out, including several long-standing entries. With the likes of the Beer Emporium, Crofters Rights and the Naval Volunteer opening or reopening this year it can only get tougher next year.

Of our 63 entries no fewer than 16 were new entries this year. The Volunteer Tavern was joined by the Horse & Groom just behind College Green. Westbury-on-Trym did well with two new entries, the Prince of Wales and the White Lion. We were particularly pleased to confirm the revival of two South Bristol pubs that now have a strong emphasis on real ale and good food, the Star & Dove and the Victoria Park. The Hophouse in Clifton, Globe at Frampton Cotterrell and Fox at Old Down also made the cut. The St George's Hall in Redfield can boast of being the only Wetherspoon in Bristol to be in too. Down in Somerset we took on a large area from our colleagues in Bath and Somerset branches – and it yielded three more new entries, the Hunters Rest at Clutton Hill, Old Station at Hallatrow and Lamb at Lower Wear. The brand new Cabot Court on Weston seafront (Wetherspoon) also made it after only one year in existence.

If the weather put you off the launch this year and you have not yet got your copy, or if you fancy buying one as a Christmas present, all is not lost. At the time of writing the Volunteer Tavern still had a small supply. If you want to get one on a branch social event or meeting, let us know a few days in advance and it should be possible. You can of course also get them direct from CAMRA HQ via the

website. In all cases the members' rate represents a big saving on cover price which is £15.99. We can supply members at just £10 locally.

*Vince Murray,  
GBG Co-ordinator  
(photo by Phil Cummings)*



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# Ashley Down Brewery



Ashley Down Brewery came into being towards the end of 2010 when Vince Crocker still had a day job. Vince, a self-taught brewer, started with a small collection of home-made and bought brewery equipment and developed his own recipes.

A 3.5-barrel plant was squeezed into part of his double garage during 2010, and February 2011 saw 'Gyle number 1' brewed to coincide with CAMRA Bristol Beer Festival.

Vince started to supply pubs local to St Andrew's with his **Vanguard**, a 3.9% dark ale, brewed with stacks of roast malt, complemented with loads of residual sweetness, and **Ashley Down Best** (now called **Landlord's Best**), a well-balanced 4.2% hazelnut-coloured best bitter, hopped with plenty of Goldings, Fuggles and Bodicea. Another mainstream beer **Pale Ale**, 4.3%, was introduced. Not the palest but good balance between malt and hoppy bitterness.

Brewing became a full time occupation for Vince in July 2012 when he was made redundant. To expand production when he added a five-barrel fermentation vessel and purchased more casks, taking over the whole of the garage. Last winter Vince brewed **December**, a 4.6% malty best bitter, and **Ported Porter**, a full bodied, full flavoured porter at 5.8%, both of which sold out quickly.

Vince has also brewed a couple of one off's, **Walloon Wheat** being particularly well received. He has also been bottle conditioning his mainstream beers and has been successfully selling them at local off licenses and restaurants. Vince now regularly supplies his beers to over thirty established real ale pubs in Bristol. Two more semi-regular beers have been added to the range, **Remedy**, a 4.0% bitter, single hopped, chestnut coloured bitter, with good malt up front followed by the spicy flavours and bitterness from Pilgrim hops. Also proving very popular a hoppy session bitter **Sideways** at 3.7%, light amber in colour, which starts with delicate caramel sweetness, quickly leading to tropical fruit and a big bitter finish. This Christmas Vince is brewing **December** again and a **Plum Porter** at 5.2%.

Vince says that in order to pay the mortgage he will have to expand and is currently in discussion with **Wiper and True** about sharing a larger premises in St Werburgh's, possibly in the new year.

*Vince Murray & Tony Durbin.*

# Wiper and True



Wiper & True is a new Bristol-based brewing company which was launched in December 2012. As home brewers, Michael Wiper and William True were curious as to whether their beer would sell, so persuaded a few breweries to let them use their equipment to make their own recipes and sold it at the Nails Christmas Market. The response was overwhelming and they ended up with their first trade customers and a small following.

The thriving and thirsty Bristol beer scene welcomed them with open arms and the beer soon found its way into a few key pubs, bars and restaurants. They haven't stopped since. W&T have continued to rent other people's breweries to make their own beer, earning the nickname "gypsy brewers".

Their batch sizes are always changing, ranging from 3.5 barrels right up to 20 barrels. They have now made beer at: Ashley Down Brewery, Cheddar Ales, Dominion, Devilfish, Abbey Ales, Cotswold Brewery and collaborated with Arbor Ales, Beard and Gloucester Brewery. Their beer is mainly bottled – unfiltered, unfinned, unpasteurised and bottle-conditioned. They have also started using 'KeyKegs' and do a few small runs in cask. More cask beers will be added as their range of styles expands in 2014.

W&T have become well known for very hoppy pale ales and amber ales but are keen to expand on this as they grow. In homage to their brewing history, W&T like to play with ingredients, adding blackberries to their seasonal porter or packing their first beer of 2013 with 13 different hops. So far each batch of beer they have made has been different, changing recipes and techniques. This will continue to be their inclination, pushing the boundaries and experimenting, much to the nervous laughter of some of the brewery owners they work with.

Michael Wiper explained what it had been like: "It has been a wonderful first year in the beer world. We have met some lovely people and learnt vast amounts. The brewing industry has to be one of the friendliest and most open places to work, and it never ceases to amaze me that competitors will go out for pints together, share ideas and let people like us into their precious breweries. One of those breweries is the Bristol favourite Ashley Down. Vince Crocker has been kind enough to let us use his equipment for several beers and is so accommodating he has even brought out homemade cakes and fresh coffee while brewing. The companies have developed a close relationship, whether he likes it or not."

In 2014 Wiper & True and Ashley Down are hoping to shack up together and continue to share the brewery at a larger location in St Werburghs. This will give W&T a home and a place to experiment. Michael told us: "It will be a welcoming place for you to come and see the brewery in action and enjoy the freshest pints in town. Once we are in and set up, we'll be sure to invite CAMRA round for a pint or two."

*Emily Larrad and Tony Durbin*

# New Bristol Brewery



The New Bristol Brewery (indeed the newest in town) came about when brothers Noel and Tom James started brewing in early 2013 on a modest self-built five-barrel kit close to Portland Square in central Bristol. The emphasis, they say, is on hands-on brewing. They also say: "We don't see ourselves as maverick brewers, but we do like to tease the boundaries of traditional brewing sometimes."

As well as their beers, they've also been working on their image, one result of which is some striking pump clips made from beer bottles. With design work on said pump clips and their bottle labels completed, creating a nice strong brand image, a suitable 'launch event' was needed.

During the inaugural 'Bristol Beer Week' in early October a 'tap takeover' at the Bag of Nails in Hotwells was planned. New Bristol Brewery had available a beer they brewed specially for Bristol Beer Week, a 4% 'Boy's Porter' called Smudger, alongside a number of their other beers.

The full range of beers we saw that evening were as follows:

- **Smudger** (4%) a "boy's porter"
- **Thrill of Hope** (5.2%) an IPA
- **365** (4%) a best bitter (for 365 days a year drinking)
- **Beer du Jour** (4.6%) a pale ale



- **Oolala** (4.2%) an amber ale with French Aramis hops
- **Flame** (5.2%) an India red ale
- **Super Deluxe Stout** (7%) a strong stout, and a personal favourite.

New Bristol Brewery beers are certainly worth looking out for.

*Roger Parry*



# Arbor Ales

A watershed is rapidly approaching for Arbor Ales. The currently increasing level of demand means that production is approaching the limit for full progressive beer duty relief (the rate reduces above 5,000 hectolitres a year), says Arbor Ales director Jon Comer. Growth beyond this point leads, initially at any rate, to diminishing returns; only when a brewery achieves a considerable size do worthwhile profits return.

As Jon has no wish to cross this boundary, 2014 will see a consolidation of the brewery with the growth rate levelling off and the range of products stabilised. The 20 or so core recipes will be retained with five or six regular beers and the others on demand. There will be fewer “one-offs”. The current regulars (available seven to eleven months a year) are **Motueka** (3.8% ABV), **Triple Hop** (4.0%), **Blue Sky Drinking** (4.4%), **Tasmanian Devil** (4.6%), **Oyster Stout** (4.6%), **Beech Blonde** (4.9%) and **Yakima Valley IPA** (7.0%).

The past few months have seen an additional fermenter commissioned, the plant ‘tweaked’ to allow a 19 to 20 barrel brew length – the practical limit for an electrically fired copper – the acquisition of a small van for local deliveries, and the delivery of 100 extra casks, bringing the total on the books to 950. Here it should be mentioned that the brewery supplies national distributors using ‘E-casks’ (single use one trip rental casks), which keeps their own cask estate at manageable levels. Perhaps the most visible change at the brewery is the leasing of the next-door unit, now in the process of being equipped as a cold store.

Two awards were made recently. **Breakfast Stout** (7.4%) gained a Gold Medal in the International Beer Challenge. Arbor’s entry to this competition was sponsored by SIBA as a result of the bottled version of the beer winning gold at the National SIBA festival at Sheffield last year. Just recently **Blue Sky Drinking** was awarded Gold in the Best Bitter category at CAMRA’s Norwich and Norfolk Beer Festival.

Jon Comer made a highly successful visit to the Toronto Cask Ale Festival to which Arbor Ales and several other UK brewers, including Moor and Beavertown, were invited. Not only was cask ale successfully promoted but lots of “samples”, in the shape of pints, were enjoyed by what is rapidly becoming a sizeable proportion of the beer drinkers of the New World. They’ve had years to get used to “craft” keg ales of quality and now seem ready for the real stuff. Arbor Ales have been invited to attend next year too.

A complete brew (18½ barrels) of **Yakima Valley IPA** has been shipped, in the form of bottles and kegs, to Italy and there is the chance of supplying some beer to a Spanish customer.

Current, or imminent, creations include **Triple Hop Number 15**



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(featuring Bullion, Centennial and Eldorado hops) and, in collaboration with brewers Wiper & True, an ale in the Saison style. Following the brewing of the winning beer in last year’s Bristol Craft Brewers Club Competition – Roger Perry’s **Coal Scuttle Porter** – this year’s winner, Steve Wilcox, has brewed a 7.0% ABV Porter. Containing Maris Otter, brown, Carafa III and chocolate malts and hopped with Bramling Cross, Chinook and Progress, this brew is at present undergoing ageing with oak chips and will be this year’s Christmas ale.

Arbor’s original pub, the **Old Stillage** in Church Road, Redfield, has recently added a café next door. The pub’s new manager Jenna Graves and her assistant Claire Hetherington extend a warm welcome to you all.

*Henry Davies*

## Pay Tribute to the Gin Palace

Just under three months ago, I was walking from the Barley Mow in the Dings to visit a few pubs over in St Judes. Approaching the Palace Hotel (also known as the Gin Palace) in Old Market, I decided to drop in and appreciate the interior of this beautifully preserved Regional Inventory pub (once on CAMRA’s National Inventory).

Approaching the bar counter, much to my surprise I discovered they had a real ale – the first time I had seen a beer pump there since it reopened at the end of 2008. They had St Austell’s Tribute. Now, this style of beer is not one I have a strong craving for, being more appreciative of porters, stouts and dark milds, but I felt very positive over their having a real ale – it’s a step in the right direction! I had one which I was very pleased with – especially at the price they sell it.

I have dropped in a few times since to relax and enjoy a beer. The price has been £1.20 per half or £2.00 per pint – a right bargain for a beer in good condition! More recently I had a chat with the manager, James, who is keen on their selling real ale. He told me the Tribute has been very popular with their customers. He said, “We would rather make a small amount on each pint and have a good turnover of high quality beer.” As for the pub’s theme and atmosphere, he went on to describe it as “a welcoming, attitude-free zone – a family-like pub but without the kids.” This is certainly true, as you can feel comfortable having a chat with the staff. One member of the bar staff was keen to mention their sister pub the Pineapple in St George’s Road selling Reverend James, which also sounds promising.

A small group of CAMRA members appropriately chose to hold a



meeting about historic pubs in the Gin Palaces. This pub is worth a visit just to admire its unusual but very smart interior, so why not drop in for a good beer as well? Give it a go!

*Tim Belsten*



# Cider I up!



Well Christmas is coming, Pints West proudly presents its one hundredth issue, and I'm in the mood for celebrating with cider. What better time could there be to stock up on some local cider blends both for your own seasonal consumption and gift giving requirements (I, for one can think of no better stocking filler, guaranteed to get the day off to a good start).

There will be plenty of opportunities to stock up at some of the regions Christmas/farmers markets. Open your advent door on December 1st and get down to Frome Super Market where I know there will be wares on sale from Marshwood Vale Dorset cider ([www.marshwoodvalecider.com](http://www.marshwoodvalecider.com)) alongside local, award-winning producers Handmade Cider ([www.handmadecider.co.uk](http://www.handmadecider.co.uk)) and Worleys Cider ([www.worleyscider.co.uk](http://www.worleyscider.co.uk)).

A guaranteed cider presence will be found at Axbridge Farmers Market on 7th December, Cheltenham Farmers Market on the 8th, Keynsham on the 14th and for that last minute panic buy (if there's any left by then of course) Malmesbury on the 23rd. It's worth checking out your local areas for other events as there's loads going on.

Producers like Handmade and Worleys also do online sales as do many other local makers. Denis from Handmade cider extends his usual 10 miles from Slaughterford radius for delivery to include Bristol in the lead up to Christmas, so you don't even have to leave the house to get a drop or several of the good stuff. There really is no excuse.

City cider slickers don't have to venture too far as there will also be purchases to be made at Corn Street Christmas Market in Bristol throughout December and Walcot Christmas Bazaar in Bath between the 9th and 15th December.

Bristol Cider Shop ([www.bristolcidershop.co.uk](http://www.bristolcidershop.co.uk)) will also be having a festive presence at Bath Christmas Market 28th November to 15th December and at Whiteladies Road, Bristol on 7th and 21st December. You could do far worse than a visit to the shop itself of course (and its location on Christmas Steps could hardly be more appropriate) to take your pick from the fantastic selection that they have on offer.

Having a pre-Christmas outing to a producer is always a lovely thing to do and personally the trip that really gets me singing 'Ding Dong Merrily on High' is the one to the Somerset Cider Brandy/Burrow Hill Cider Company's HQ at Martock ([www.ciderbrandy.co.uk](http://www.ciderbrandy.co.uk)). The journey across the Somerset Levels on a dark winter's afternoon to be greeted by the twinkling lights from the lone sycamore that identifies without fail the iconic Burrow Hill would knock the Bah Humbug out of even the most cynical Scrooge. Although not exactly cider, I would highly recommend their Morello cherries in Somerset Apple eau de vie, they really do pack a punch. Much like my good intentions with multiple purchases of Handmade Cider's Hedgerow Port last year, many's the jar of these cherries that have gone not to the deserving friends for which they were intended, but no further than the well concealed 'special shelf' tucked away in my pantry.

In that vein why not treat yourself or a lucky loved one to Bristol Farm Shop's ([bristolfarmshop.com](http://bristolfarmshop.com)) cider tasting experience on the 21st December at 1pm, based at Windmill Hill City Farm? 15 ciders will be provided including ones from Severn Cider, Wilcox and Days Cottage. Try as I might to persuade my (admittedly seven-year-old) daughter that it would be an ideal way to spend her birthday, she has other ideas, so I'll have to put my name down for the next one.

So that pretty much takes us up to Christmas and I really hope you all have a good one. If the January blues are already preying on your mind though, why not give yourself something to look forward to and think about attending a Wassail or two? The traditional orchard ceremony blesses the trees for a good crop in the year to come and wards off evil spirits (think Gaymers, think Bulmers!) and several events in the region are open to the public. My cider brother and partner in making always holds a lively one for the precious four trees on his allotment, but a capacity crowd is reached quite easily there, so I'll mention a couple of others that might take your fancy. Saturday 11th January sees events at Rich's Farmhouse Cider in Taunton ([richscider.co.uk](http://richscider.co.uk)) and Glastonbury Abbey Orchard ([glastonburyabbey.com](http://glastonburyabbey.com)). Roger Wilkins and crew also host a pretty legendary Wassail hootenanny every year, generally the 3rd Saturday in January ([www.wilkinscider.com](http://www.wilkinscider.com)). The date for 2014 has not been confirmed at time of writing though so keep your eyes peeled for that.

All that leaves me now is to wish you all a very happy Christmas and cider fuelled New Year. I would like to congratulate Steve Plumridge on this 100th issue of the wonderful Pints West and thank him for his commitment and enthusiasm towards real cider and perry. His encouragement is no small beer (pun woefully intended) to us apple-based enthusiasts. Keep up the good work and cider I up.

*Froya MacLuchie  
(of Cider Sisters fame)*

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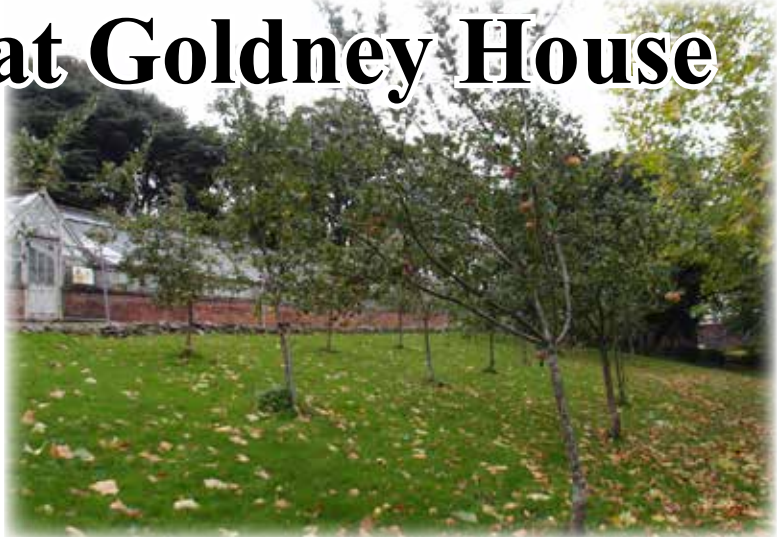
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# Five make cider at Goldney House

I like a drop of cider, preferably very dry and a bit cloudy. I've visited a number of cider producers locally over the years, to taste their wares and participate in the annual Wassail in January. I was aware of pressing to turn the apples into cider, but had never actually seen the whole process. With permission, five of us spent a day at Goldney House gardens picking apples and processing them to become cider.

Although I'd visited Goldney House in Clifton Village (and its gardens – famed for the grotto) several times on open days, I had no idea that at the bottom of the gardens are two walled orchards. One features varieties originally planted in the orchards of Goldney House towards the end of the 1700s (although of course these are not the original stock). The second has trees transplanted/grafted from the orchards at Long Ashton Research Station, formerly the National Fruit and Cider Institute which became part of the University of Bristol's Department of Agricultural and Horticultural Research in 1912.

*Lesley Howley*



Pressing the apple pulp to extract the juice

Testing the juice for sugar levels



The apples are harvested and washed



Almost ready for fermentation – on this occasion sulphite is added to kill off the wild yeast, allowing a special cultivated yeast originally used at the Long Ashton Research Station to be added later



Making apple pulp: feeding whole apples into the 'scratter'



Leftover pulp after pressing, for composting

# Willy Good Ale



**W**illy Good Ale was set up by head brewer Will Southward in 2010 after visiting New York, where he discovered a taste for the very hoppy, often strong beers that were emerging in the States. This inspired him to set up his own brewery with the help of his family at Hartley Farm, Winsley, near Bradford-on-Avon.

The beers are brewed to recipes created using a combination of American, English and Belgian recipes. The popularity of the beers has meant that the brewery quickly reached maximum production levels and upgraded to a six-barrel plant in 2011.

They are now supplying shops, pubs, cafes and restaurants in the local area as well as beer festivals, parties and weddings around the country. Examples of Bradford-on-Avon pubs where their beers make appearances are the Bear Inn in Silver Street, the Lock Inn and the Three Horseshoes in Frome Road, and the George in Woolley Street.

Special edition beers are produced from time to time. Beers brewed on a regular basis are as follows, all available as cask or bottle-conditioned:

**Willy Hop** (4% ABV) - This is a dry-hopped amber ale. The beer is left to develop a rich hop flavour, with a medium body and rich toasted/caramel overtones.

**Beerier Beer** (4.2%) - A light, single hop English amber ale with a medium body and vanilla overtones.

**Wheat a Second** (5%) - A wheat beer, blending customary tastes of orange and coriander with the fresh flavours of American hops, creating a super refreshing beer with less of an after taste than its traditional wheat beer counterparts.

**High Fives** (5%) - A light, but hoppy pale ale, with hints of grapefruit. This was one of their first recipes and one of their best-sellers.

**Willy Brown** (5%) - A rich, malty nut brown ale, dedicated to legendary blues singer Robert Johnson.

**Hopadelic** (5%)

This is an American IPA, using Centennial hops, with a citrus taste and floral aroma. It was originally brewed as a special edition beer and is now incorporated into the main portfolio due to its popularity.

A late piece of news is that Willy Good Ale has won the Bath Food Award for Best Local Beer. Madelaine Ryan, their marketing and sales person, said: "We were up against some stiff competition, and some of the prestigious judges in the blind tasting included Sam Moody



Will Southward, head brewer, & Julie Southward, assistant brewer



Will with Madelaine Ryan (marketing and sales) and dog Olive

(head chef of Bath Priory), Martin Blunos (two-starred Michelin chef and food presenter), Xanthe Clay (food writer for the Telegraph), Dhruv Baker (Master Chef winner 2010) and Angela Mount (renowned wine Critic)." We offer our sincere congratulations.

*Graham Walker*

*Willy Good Ale, The Old Forge, Hartley Farm, Winsley, Bradford-On-Avon, Wiltshire, BA15 2JB. www.willygoodale.com*



# Rocket Science

**T**his must surely have been – and perhaps still is – one of the smallest commercial breweries in the country. When Richard Poole started Rocket Science Craft Ales in his garage in Yate last October, it was too small even to call a micro-brewery. He has recently upgraded to a bigger mash tun – now with about twice the capacity at 150 litres – so that he can make more of his 'bigger' beers.

Richard does all his own brewing, bottling and distribution, and even grows some of his hops in his back garden. His beers all have a 'space' theme reflecting his scientific background, named after planets, moons, etc.

He has just made a second batch of **Io**, a 6.7% American pale ale. On track for December is another batch of **Comet Tail Hefe** at 5.2%.

After Christmas he has planned a 6% porter, followed by a 9% imperial stout, ready for January or February – his 'winter warmers' for the coldest months.

His beers are available in bottles from Raisin Fine Wines in Bath, Corks in Cotham and Fiona's Kitchen in Thornbury, and occasionally on draught from the **Hare on the Hill**, **Lanes** and **Crofter's Rights** in Bristol. If you can't wait that long, he will be at Chipping Sodbury Farmers' Market on December 14th.

*Keith Harvey*



# Towles' Fine Ales

**T**owles' Fine Ales was set up by Andrew and Anna Towle in part of the old Bristol Wagon & Carriage Works Company buildings in Easton, Bristol, with brewing commencing in early 2012. Andrew is an experienced brewer, having honed his skills with Archers, Smiles, Wickwar and Newmans breweries.

The equipment was purchased from Berrow brewery when owner James Johnstone retired from brewing. This included the recipes and brand name and several of the Berrow beers continue to be brewed alongside Towles' own.

A recent addition to the Towles' portfolio is **For Whom the Bell** (4.5% ABV) which was launched at the Beese's Tea Gardens annual beer festival at the end of August. It is selling very well and looks likely to become a regular brew. Customer feedback on the bottled version at farmers' markets has been 100% positive.

Chandos Deli in Henleaze are going to be stocking Towles' bottled beers and hosting a 'meet the brewer' event, while the **Bank Tavern** in central Bristol will be adding chocolate stout cake made with Towles' stout to their menu.

Towles' brewery continues to be a very busy place.

*Norman Spalding*

# A period of transition for Zerodegrees



I recently visited the bar/restaurant/microbrewery at the top of Colston Street, Bristol, to introduce myself as the new CAMRA 'brewery liaison officer' (BLO). Chris Rogers, who wrote the illuminating 'Clicks and Whirs' article in issue 99 of Pints West, has moved on.

I met boss man Max who told me that they were still in a 'period of transition' and were awaiting the arrival of new brewer Alex from their Cardiff Zerodegrees, as previous brewer Anna had left the establishment. He told me that when Alex appeared they would be brewing some special ales and that he was keen for the brewery to win more awards (Zerodegrees Pale Ale shared a 'beer of the festival' award at the 2012 Bristol Beer Festival).

I visited again the other day and was fortunate to be able to speak to Alex himself who was working on the kit in the upstairs brewery. He said that he was still managing the two breweries and this might continue for a couple more months. Also they had a technical problem with the kit in Bristol which meant they were not brewing at present, although beer was being transferred from Cardiff. However the issues should be resolved in a week or two and he would be brewing again soon.

He confirmed that with some help he would be brewing some



special beers in the near future. Hopefully there will soon be a speciality beer to go with the Christmas dinners in the restaurant.

*Roy Sanders (photo by Jo Sanders)*

# Prince's Motto, Barrow Gurney

The B3130 in North Somerset will be fully open again by the time you read this article. What is the significance of this you may ask?

Maybe not much to the average reader, but it is very important to Dave Dinham, the landlord of the Prince's Motto pub in the village of Barrow Gurney, close to Bristol Airport. Earlier this year Bristol Water commenced work on essential repairs to the cast-iron water mains in the area, which resulted in the B3130 being totally closed as a through route between the A370 and A38 from 1 August. Initially the road was due to close for 4 months, but it re-opened ahead of schedule on 9 November.

Dave, who runs the traditional Wadworth's pub with his daughter Kate, is very relieved that the B3130 is fully re-opening, as he has suffered a huge fall in trade of over 50% since August. Dave was used to a significant passing trade from customers who used the road as short-cut to Bristol Airport from the A370, and from customers in the Nailsea and Backwell area, where the road closure meant a long detour to get to the Prince's Motto. The airport is only a short drive away down the A38 and the Prince's Motto provides a convenient stopping off point for lunch or a beer or two before or after flying. Dave did receive some compensation from Bristol Water, but this was significantly lower than the loss of income caused by the reduction in passing trade and former regular customers who found it difficult to get to the pub.

Whilst the pub's income is mainly driven from wet sales, Dave and his staff do provide excellent value lunchtime meals and bar snacks, and this area of the business has been badly hit. In the first week alone of the road closure the pub's food takings were down by 70%. In addition,



whereas Dave normally served five or six real ales, he has been forced to reduce this to four recently due to the dip in trade. However, Dave is now planning to increase the number of real ales on offer in the run up to Christmas. When I visited the emphasis was understandably on Wadworth's ales, with Henry's IPA, 6X and Swordfish on offer, plus Butcombe Bitter as a regular guest ale. Thatcher's Heritage cider is also available on handpump. Dave would normally also serve Bishop's Tingle and sometimes another real ale, and hopefully this should again be the case in the near future.

As well as serving excellent food and beer the pub is set in a picturesque village location, with a sun-trap garden. It is stone built and has an interesting historic interior. At the front of the pub there is a traditional public bar where locals congregate, although visitors are made very welcome. Up two steps from the public bar is a long narrow two-part dining room containing vintage photographs and various farming implements hanging from the ceiling. One of the two dartboards is at the far end of the dining room, with a second dartboard in a hidden room behind the main bar.

The Prince's Motto is well worth a visit, not only for its excellent beer, but also for good value food, the welcoming atmosphere and to see its historic features. The pub is open all day every day, with food available at lunchtimes (except Saturday) until 2.30pm. So next time you are on your way to or from the airport, or just fancy trying out a traditional village local near Bristol, call in and see Dave. He will make you very welcome and will be pleased to see you.

*Martin Gray*

# BADRAG - Bristol And District Rare Ales Group

## BADRAG ... what's that?

Firstly, let me convey our congratulations to *Pints West* for reaching its 100<sup>th</sup> edition. BADRAG was first mentioned in the 74<sup>th</sup> edition in May 2007, where it was introduced as a new campaigning group within CAMRA: "The Bristol and District Rare Ale *Styles* Group, or BADRAG for short, was launched during the 2007 Bristol Beer Festival, in the unique setting of the Brunel Passenger Train Shed at Temple Meads."

BADRAG was formed to promote the national CAMRA 'Beer Styles' campaign. There are many different styles of real ale, varying from malty, lightly hopped milds to dark and bitter stouts and porters. With over 1,000 breweries producing over 5,500 ales on a regular basis, it can truly be said that British real ale is an incredibly diverse product. Whatever your taste preference you can be sure that there is a beer to suit almost everyone! (To find out more about individual beer styles please go to [www.camra.org.uk/beerstyles](http://www.camra.org.uk/beerstyles).)

BADRAG seeks to campaign for bar and cellar space to be given to real ales (beers which are still undergoing secondary fermentation in casks or bottles) and this originally included stouts, porters, mild ales, old ales, barley wines and low ABV bitters, but has been extended to include wheat beers, strong IPAs and 'real' lagers. Often such ale styles are only found at beer festivals where they sell very quickly, but are all too rarely found in the majority of bars. Most local brewers and some bars in and near the centre of Bristol have supported the BADRAG campaign. Occasionally you will find BADRAG style ales elsewhere in the area, but more support would be appreciated.

Before BADRAG was launched, the Bristol & District branch supported Mild Month in May each year, particularly on for National Mild Day, more often than not at the Cornubia and a few other pubs. BADRAG has subsequently developed Mild Month into a series of five mild trails led by group members plus DIY trails that drinkers are able to undertake in their own time, in all covering about fifty pubs, mostly on foot but also a very successful trail in South Gloucestershire by coach.

**BADRAG, the Bristol & District Rare Ales Group, is a campaigning group within the local branch of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale. Its aim is to promote the rarer styles of ale such as stouts, porters, old ales, strong milds, barley wines, milds, low-alcohol session ales, wheat beers, brown ales and traditional strength IPAs.**  
[www.camrabristol.org.uk](http://www.camrabristol.org.uk) [BADRAG@camrabristol.org.uk](mailto:BADRAG@camrabristol.org.uk)

Eight other events are organised each year, often at pubs that don't usually support BADRAG style ales so that members of BADRAG are able to demonstrate to regulars and licensees of those pubs that there is demand for those ales!

What not ask your local to stock some BADRAG style ales? Even if it is 'real ale in a bottle' that can be a good way of measuring demand – but make sure the staff know how to pour it!

## BADRAG events

Apologies that our very small BADRAG team (volunteers to help are always welcome) missed the last *Pints West*. In the previous edition the East Bristol Mild Trail was reported in detail. Since then the Bedminster and Harbourside Mild Trail reversed the route of previous trails ending in the City Centre and starting in Bedminster, which was well received. The Thursday evening Kingsdown and Saturday afternoon Clifton Mild Trails were well supported and the South Gloucester Mild Trail by coach was oversubscribed and went very well.

Back in June we visited the **Kings Arms** at Kingswood where our BADRAG supporter Mike Evans did us proud with our style of both cask and bottled ales before we went onto the **Kingswood Collier**. In July a select few caught the train to Weston-super-Mare visiting the Lions Beer Festival and enjoying BADRAG style ales and a few pubs. In August members are encouraged to support the Great British Beer Festival.

Denise Swain reports a small but perfectly formed group of 'Badraggers' visited the **Downend Tavern** in Fishponds on Thursday 19th September. We received a warm welcome from Danny Barker and his team, and enjoyed Wickwar's 4% Stout, which was in excellent condition. Also on offer were Bob, Coopers, Courage Best and Screech Cider. It was a busy night in the pub with a skittles match on. It's worth a visit if you're in the area or passing (Downend Tavern, 125 Downend Road, Bristol BS16 5BE).

On Saturday the 19th October, Steve Wilcox reports that thirteen 'Badraggers', some stalwarts from many a mild trail, met at the **Volunteer Tavern** in St. Judes, just next to Cabot Circus, for an autumnal Stout and Porter Trail on a warm if wet Saturday afternoon. We had chosen our starting point well as the landlord had three porters on for us to sample. We had Box Steam's Funnel Blower (4.5%); Glastonbury Ales Thriller Porter, the strongest of the three at 5% ABV and a very interesting beer with flavours of coffee and chocolate; and finally Wickwar's Real Stout (4%).

Dodging showers, we made our way to the **Bridge Inn** on Passage Street. This is billed as Bristol's smallest, and friendliest, pub. I found it to be both of these; certainly there were very few seats left after we arrived! Here we sampled two porters, firstly a very hoppy beer from Dark Star, called Darkness with a surprising amount of hop bitterness and flavour in spite of its low ABV of just 3.5%, then a very good No Escape (5.2%) from the Black Hole Brewery in Burton-on-Trent. This pub has much improved over the years into a pub with a constantly changing range of real ales. Just to show how things have changed, amongst the pump clips on display behind the bar indicating which beers were in the cellar and going on next, were a few from Tiny Rebel of Newport – one of my favourite local breweries that stuck in my mind for their single batch stouts aged in oak barrels from Scottish whisky, but I digress!

All too soon, it was time to move on. It was at this point that I started to lead the trail from the rear! Crossing the bridge, past the site of, for me, the much mourned Courage brewery, we made our way to the **Cornubia**, noted for its collection of flags fluttering in the breeze. Even though this pub is tucked away, it was very busy and buzzing with drinkers, some CAMRA members, from far and wide. There was as ever quite wide a choice of real ale available, but as we were on a stout



and porter trail, I stuck to the two porters on offer. These were another Box Steam beer, Steam Porter (4.4%), a well rounded porter with light smokiness and roast maltiness and faint chocolate like flavours; and Glastonbury Ales Black As Yer 'At (4.3%). After sampling these and chatting with the friendly landlady we moved on to our next port of call.

This was the **Seven Stars**, another pub tucked away on a side street, and also very busy. This pub, famous for its 'beeriocicals', was host to beers from Gloucester and Somerset, so we had two local beers to enjoy: Yeovil Ales Stout Hearted at a low ABV for a stout, in my opinion, of 4.3%, and Goff's Black Knight (5.3%) – both good, drinkable beers but maybe lacking in distinctiveness. Conversation was a little more strained here due to a musician playing an acoustic set via an amplifier.

In a change to the published route, as we wanted to end at the Wetherspoon beer festival, we next made our way to the **Bank**. Although a pub very much in the centre of town, it is so tucked away that it is almost impossible to direct the uninitiated to it! This pub always looks after its beers well and we were not disappointed with a dark ruby porter from Abbey Ales called Oh Mr. Porter! (4.9%).

Finally a short walk to the most central of the Wetherspoons pubs in Bristol, the **Commercial Rooms**. Their 'United States meets United Kingdom' real ale festival was in full swing with lots of stillage in the main bar area. Unfortunately, not much thought had been given to keeping the beer at near cellar temperatures, so most of the beers were far too warm. In spite of this we enjoyed Caledonians' Poltergeist Porter (4.0%), a dark brown beer with a mixture of smoky, chocolate and biscuit flavours. As it was the end of the trail we went a little off message and sampled some IPAs and old ales, but all BADRAG beer styles you understand!

Overall a very pleasant afternoon sampling a couple of under-represented beer styles not always available in our pubs with other like minded drinkers. Do join us on one or more of our future trails.

**Future events will be:**

Thursday January 16th 7.30pm at the Three Tuns (BS1 5UR)

Saturday February 15th at the Hophouse (BS8 4AB)

Thursday 13th March – come along to the Bristol Beer Festival and enjoy BADRAG style ales in the company of other BADRAG supporters.

*Laurie Gibney*

**Abbey Ales**



**A**bbey Ales, based in Camden Row, Bath, began brewing sixteen years ago with its well-known **Bellringer**, which to this day remains the only beer brewed continuously all year round. Launched at the 1997 Bath CAMRA beer festival, Bellringer is made using malt from Warminster Maltings (mainly lightly kilned Maris Otter) and hops from Worcester.

Over the years, Abbey Ales has also added a range of seasonal beers and recently launched two new beers: **Bath Best**, brewed to a strength of 4.0% ABV using crystal and pale malts and finished with challenger hops; and **Oh Mr Porter**, a 4.9% beer brewed with pale, crystal and chocolate malts, and Brambling and Challenger hops. Both beers will be marketed with oval pump clips as opposed to the usual bishop's hat style pump clip used on the brewery's flagship bitter, Bellringer.

Alan Morgan, managing director of Abbey Ales, said: "We have been brewing in Bath since 1997 and our unique selling point is that outlets have to be within a 15-mile radius of Bath to have Abbey Ales beer. We had regularly been asked to extend our delivery area and have now decided to travel further but not lose our unique local selling point, so we have introduced the new oval clip. We have used the oval clip previously with our Somerset Ale."

Sales manager Simon Morgan, who runs the brewery, is a great fan of Will Hay and added: "The name Oh Mr Porter comes from the 1937 film. It's a British comedy starring Will Hay with Moore Marriott and former Bath landlord Graham Moffatt who was licensee at the Englishcombe Inn in Bath."

This Christmas two popular seasonal beers will also be available: **Abbey Christmas** (3.8% ABV) and **Twelfth Night**, a ruby winter warmer at 5% ABV. Both Bellringer and Twelfth Night will be available in 18-pint and 36-pint boxes which can be ordered online at [www.abbeyales.co.uk](http://www.abbeyales.co.uk).

The brewery operates four pubs in Bath city centre, the **Trinity**, the **Coeur de Lion**, the **Assembly Inn** and the National Heritage Inventory-listed **Star Inn** on the Paragon.

*Trevor Cromie*

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# BATH & BORDERS BRANCH

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

### Bath and Surrounding Villages



#### Bath Brew House & James Street Brewery (formerly Metropolitan, previously Midland Hotel), 14 James Street West, Bath

This large pub has undergone a major refurbishment and re-opened as a brew-pub on Monday 30th September 2013. The pub's owners are 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. The on-site micro is called the James Street Brewery and produces two regular house beers, the refreshing and malty Gladiator (3.9%) and the hoppy, citrusy Emperor (4.4%) and a rotating seasonal beer which, on the pub's re-opening, was Maximus (4.9%), a strong, dark beer. Guest beers are sourced mainly from nearby micros such as Arbor Ales, Bristol Beer Factory, Milk Street, Braydon Ales and Wild Beer. The bar also boasts a four-tap keg beer font from which are dispensed artisan beers from both the UK and around the world. The heart of the pub is a large L-shaped bar. The James Street Brewery vessels can be seen, behind a glass frontage, to the rear of the bar and more or less opposite the main entrance. Beyond the main bar is a dining area with open kitchen, among whose features are a rotisserie and smoke house, and a very large garden and patio, which, in the summer makes an excellent sun trap and in winter is enclosed by a heated marquee. Upstairs is the 'Tank Room', where can be seen live TV sports, and which hosts quizzes, movie nights and comedy. This room, which has its own bar, can be hired as a function room.

#### Boater, 9 Argyle Street, Bath

The Boater is one of three city centre pubs receiving a combined £7.5 million refurbishment following a takeover in the summer by Fuller, Smith and Turner. The Boater is due to be re-launched later in the year, once the refurbishment has been completed.

#### Crystal Palace, 10-11 Abbey Green, Bath

The Crystal Palace is one of three city centre pubs receiving a combined £7.5 million refurbishment following a takeover in the summer by Fuller, Smith and Turner. The other two pubs are the Boater and the Huntsman. At the time of writing the Grade II-listed Crystal Palace was due to re-open on Tuesday 5th November following a major refurbishment of its interior, including log fires, and the creation of a large patio garden to the rear of the pub. The Crystal Palace took its name in commemoration of the Great Exhibition of 1851. It was at that time that the building was converted from a boarding lodge, believed previously to have been frequented by Admiral Nelson, to a pub.

#### Graze Brewery, Bar & Chophouse, 9 Brunel Square, Bath

Graze, Bath's newest pub, is now selling beer brewed on the premises. Called *Platform no. 3*, it is described as an IPA with an ABV of 5.7% and a strong and distinctive taste, and is available both on hand-

pump and as a keg beer. Graze, situated in the new Vaults development adjacent to Bath Spa station, is Bath Ales' latest venue in Bath and, at 5,000 square feet, its biggest outlet to date. It opened in December 2012. The new bar and restaurant is part of a new food quarter in and around the arches of the station. Graze takes up the entire first floor and includes two large outside areas for *al fresco* drinking and dining. The beer range encompasses much of the Bath Ales portfolio and includes local cider and 'craft' beers from around the world. The fully functional in-house micro-brewery will be producing beers unique to the venue as well as small runs of one-off specialist beers. Among the pub's other features are an open-plan kitchen with dining counter, a striking island bar and a meat-hanging room visible to guests.

#### Green Park Tavern, Lower Bristol Road, Bath

This pub closed during the first weekend in August. At the time of writing it was undergoing a re-vamp and is due to re-open as the GPT on Friday 6 December.

#### Huntsman, 1 Terrace Walk, Bath

The Huntsman is one of three city centre pubs receiving a combined £7.5 million refurbishment following a takeover in the summer by Fuller, Smith and Turner. The other two pubs are the Crystal Palace and the Boater. The refurbishment of the Huntsman was, at the time of writing, nearing completion and the pub was due to re-open on Wednesday 27th November. A fully revamped restaurant, to be known as the Elder Room (taking its name from the eighteenth century Bath architect John Wood the Elder) will offer fine dining. Meanwhile the pub will host a Fuller's brewery shop during the Bath Christmas Market.

#### King's Arms, 1 Monmouth Place, Bath

This Enterprise Inns-owned pub closed in around May. At the time of writing it was expected to re-open on Friday 29 November.

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

Please see entry under Bath Brew House above.

#### Ye Olde Farmhouse, 1 Lansdown Road, Bath

This pub was closed at the time of writing and the freehold up for sale for £450,000. The selling agent is Sidney Phillips.

#### Packhorse, Southstoke, near Bath

The freehold of this much-loved pub, which closed eighteen months ago, is once again on the market. Local campaigners, who have been eager to see the Packhorse re-open, now have an opportunity to go for a community buy-out. The pub, which was one of the first properties to be entered in Bath & Northeast Somerset's Register of Assets of Community Value, is being offered to villagers by the current owner. Members of the Save the Packhorse action group have resolved to do what they can to re-instate the pub as a going concern. A public meeting was held at Southstoke parish hall on Monday 18 November. This was very well attended. Meanwhile the Save the Packhorse group



# BATH & BORDERS BRANCH

has already formed an IPS co-operative, similar to the one used for the successful community buy out of the Bell on Walcot Street, and are seeking investors to buy shares. The minimum investment would be £500 and the maximum £20,000, whilst the target to reach is £550,000 by around mid-April 2014. To keep track of the latest developments please see [www.southstoke.net](http://www.southstoke.net).

## Richmond Arms, 7 Richmond Place, Bath

The freehold of this pub, one of the very few in northern Bath, is up for sale again. The freehold had been taken off the market a few months ago following the refusal by Bath & Northeast Somerset of a planning application to convert the Punch Taverns-owned pub into a private house and the launch of a major campaign by local residents to buy the Richmond which, earlier this year, had been added to the council's Register of Assets of Community Value. (A party was held on August Bank Holiday to celebrate the withdrawal of the sale.)

Local residents had already created the Richmond Arms (Bath) Community Benefit Society Limited for the purposes of acting as a potential bidder for the pub. The society has until around the end of the year to draw up a plan to buy the pub and then until 20 May 2014 to raise the money. A public meeting is to be held at the pub on Monday 9 December at 7pm with the aim of briefing people interested in supporting the proposed community buy-out. There will be an opportunity for people to ask questions and pledge financial support. The campaign here follows tight on the heels of a similar campaign by the residents of Southstoke, south of Bath, being mounted to buy the Packhorse (please see above entry) and the successful community buy-out, earlier this year, of the Bell in Walcot Street, central Bath.

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

This recently refurbished pub – the latest hostelry to be acquired by Abbey Ales – is now under new management. Michelle Spence, who also runs the Coeur de Lion, another Abbey Ales pub, has now taken control of the Trinity, which is proving to be a very popular pub with locals and tourists. Alongside the range of traditional beers, including Abbey's Bellringer, British pub food classics such as fish and chips and Bath's famous Lovett pies are also available. Michelle, who is an avid sports fan, has started taking the pub in a new direction and has already installed Sky Sports and BT Sports and will be also featuring live music from local and touring bands. Meanwhile Michelle, who has been awarded the Cask Marque for both the Trinity and the Coeur de Lion, will be adding further local and national beers to the range of beers at the Trinity.

## East Somerset

### Lamb Inn, Chapel Road, Clandown, near Radstock

The freehold of this pub, which was closed at the time of writing, is on the market for £280,000. The selling agent is Sidney Phillips.

### White Hart, Lane End, Corsley, near Frome

This roadside pub, which is near to the Longleat Estate and ultimately owned by Lord Bath, has been closed for a while. By the end of August it had been stripped of its bar equipment. The future of

this pub is uncertain although it is thought unlikely that it would close permanently as a pub.

## Jolliffe Arms, Kilmersdon, near Radstock

The previous landlord of this pub left suddenly after being made insolvent. The pub remains open, however, and is now being run by the landlord of the Bell at Leigh-on-Mendip, who will be looking after both pubs. He is revamping the Jolliffe Arms to bring it back to its previous fine form.

## West Wiltshire

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

This town centre pub has recently closed for a second time this year. It closed briefly during late July and early August following the departure of the previous landlords and staff to the nearby Bear. The pub then re-opened on Friday 16th August under a new experienced landlord. The interior remained relatively unchanged. Meanwhile the beer range of Young's Bitter, Charles Wells Bombardier and Bath Ales Gem was in keeping with the previous management. The new management did make endeavours to attract a wider clientele by opening at 9am for coffee. At the time of writing it was not clear why the Grapes had closed again. We understand, however, that the owners of the Grapes, Wells & Young, are actively seeking a new landlord. The pub is now on the market for £300,000 freehold or £15,000 leasehold. The selling agent is Sidney Phillips.

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

This pub closed in early May. The future of this pub remains uncertain. Planning permission has been sought to demolish the side buildings for redevelopment

## George, High Street, Codford, near Warminster

The freehold of this pub was acquired by local company Four County Inns in the summer. (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.) A planning application has been submitted to re-locate the front entrance, split the bar area into a smaller bar area and turn part of it into residential accommodation and re-locate the toilets whilst a separate application has been submitted to build a house at the very top of the garden. The new landlord had been planning to re-open in time for Christmas.

## Bath Arms, 41 Market Place, Warminster

This is expected to be refurbished and re-open as a Wetherspoon pub. According to the local newspaper planning permission has been granted for an extensive refurbishment and it is anticipated that work will begin shortly.

## White Lion, Market Place, Westbury

This town centre pub, which closed some years ago, received planning permission in May of last year to be converted into flats. These are now being advertised.

Steve Hunt



# A full-on year for Bath Ales



Not only is it a good year for Pints West: reaching the centenary issue and again winning CAMRA Branch Magazine of the Year. Life has been good for Bath Ales as they have progressed steadily over the last 18 years, but this year they have really hit their stride. The installation and commissioning of the new brewing vessels and the opening of **Graze Bath** last year have contributed to a 25% increase in business, and the ensuing benefits are the opening of the **Beerd** brewery with an exciting and ever-changing range of new beers, the operational start-up of the microbrewery in Graze Bath, many collaborations, and a number of events ranging from a Young Members' tasting session to a local author book launch (see 'One Hundred for a Moment' article elsewhere).

Added to this: Bath Ales is going to sell bottle-conditioned beer, produced its 10 millionth bottled beer for its own and around twenty five other breweries, relocated the brewery shop to larger, improved premises in the headquarters building, installed a training cellar and bar in the same location, continued to sponsor local festivals such as the Bristol Balloon Fiesta and Harbour Festival, WOMAD in the Zoo, and events at Bath Racecourse, and again contributed a significant sum to charity through the annual Biking Bonanza. Not a bad effort for a local regional brewer!

## Bath Ales appoint new MD

Bath Ales have appointed Robin Couling as managing director with immediate effect. Current managing director Roger Jones transfers into the new role of executive chairman to oversee running of the business and the board. Robin has been promoted from within Bath Ales where he has worked since 2008 as retail director. As well as taking on the role of managing director, Robin will remain actively involved in the direction and strategy of the retail division, supported by retail area manager Phil Brown and the senior retail team.

Roger Jones, one of the original founders, said: "In the last year alone we grew the business by around 25%, which was driven by our retail success as well as strong beer sales. We're making this shift to meet the demands of the business and strengthen the team at the top. Robin has done a fantastic job for Bath Ales over the past five years in the retail division and I have every confidence that he's up to the challenge

of leading the business and inspiring the staff. We have a great team at Bath Ales and we are very excited about what we can achieve."

## Seasonal ales and specials

Bath Ales' winter seasonal, **Festivity**, is back for its sixth year and will be available on draught in pubs and bars across the South West, including Wetherspoons. It usually lasts into December but it is a very popular seasonal so get it while you can. It will also be available in bottles, including from Tesco and Waitrose stores, though not bottle-conditioned.

The microbrewery in the **Graze Bar, Brewery & Chop House** in Bath is now in full production and **Platform 3**, a 5.7% USA-style IPA will be available all year round. Initial reaction to this hoppy, complex ale is very positive.

2013 has been the year of collaboration for brewers and Bath Ales have not been left out. They have teamed up with Bristol art and entertainment centre, the **Watershed**, to create a new **Pale Ale** especially for autumn. This unique, limited-edition ale has been crafted in a partnership between the Watershed's head chef, Oliver Pratt, and Shane O'Beirne, experimental brewer at Bath Ales. Brewed using locally sourced Herefordshire hops, the beer has been available exclusively at the Watershed from September.

Bath Ales have unveiled five limited edition premium beers for Christmas. Forming part of the **Sulis Collection**, named after the local goddess of the thermal springs that flow through Bath Spa, they will be bottle-conditioned. Four of the new brews, **Imperial Stouts**, have been maturing in Scottish whisky casks for the last eight months, they are: **Speyside** (10.8%), **Islay no. 1** (11.0%), **Islay no. 2** (11.1%) and **Highland** (11.4%). A **Barley Wine** (9.1%) completes the collection.

## Another new venture

Bath Ales and the Bristol Colston Hall will be joining forces to create a new café bar and restaurant located in this leading music and entertainment venue. Having been successful with a competitive bid, Bath Ales took over Colston Hall's existing café bar in the new foyer area on 14 November and will reopen the 40-seater restaurant on the upper ground floor in the New Year. Both venues will undergo a refurbishment at the beginning of 2014, presumably based on the experience gained from the Graze concept.



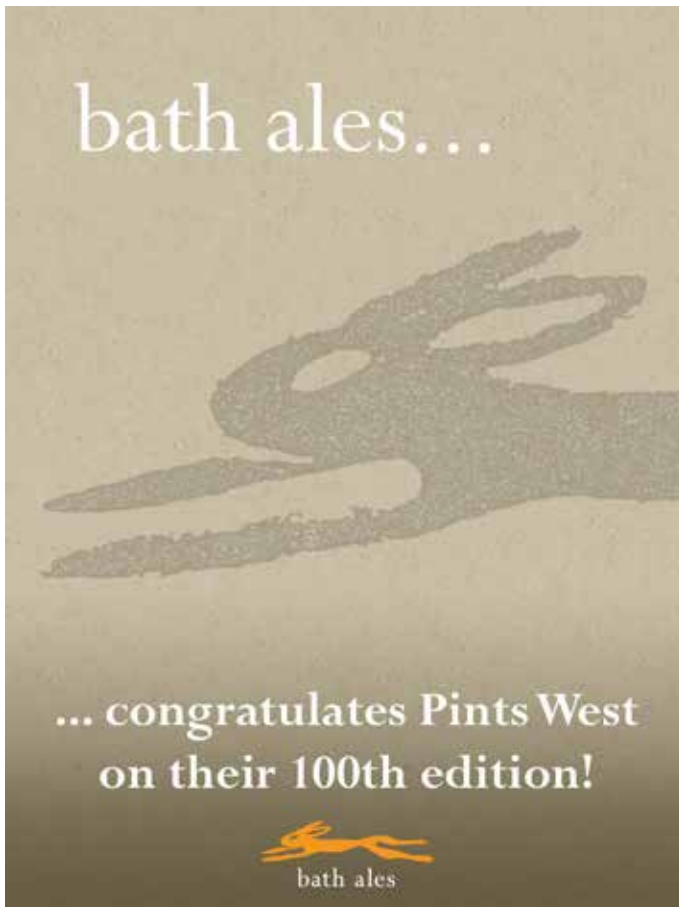
## Beerd Brewery

Not to be outdone by their parent company, Beerd joined forces with **Wiper and True** for a special collaboration beer to celebrate Bristol Beer Week. The 4% ABV brew, **Bristol Cream Stout**, was launched at the **Hare on the Hill** in Kingsdown and had a creamy taste with hints of vanilla and sherry. The brewers behind the beer were Shane O'Beirne from Beerd, and Michael Wiper from new artisan brewery Wiper and True. The Bristol Cream Stout was produced in the Beerd brewery at Hare House, and brewed with a range of dark malts, and lactose sugar to give it a sweet edge.

Another collaboration involved local home-brewing author, Andy Hamilton, with a special ale to launch the publication of his book '**Brewing Britain, the Quest for the Perfect Pint**'. Samples of the beer and copies of the book were available at the launch in the **Beerd** bar on St Michael's Hill, Bristol. The beer is a deep red 4.8% **Scotch Ale**, brewed using juniper-smoked malt, giving a smoky flavour complemented by sweet roasted chocolate notes.

Following this event Beerd (the brewery) held a launch event in **Beerd** (the 'Craft Ale and Pizza Bar') at the beginning of November. Although brewing started in August, Beerd brewer Shane felt that the brewery was now fully up and running, and to celebrate and prove it seven new Beerd brews were behind the bar. Of these Scotch Ale (see above), **Monterey California Pale Ale** (3.9% West Coast pale ale brewed with US hops) and **Silvertip** (4.7% pale ale brewed with New Zealand hops including Sauvignon) were on hand pumps, the other four ales being keg. (See separate report elsewhere.)

Roy Sanders



# Community pub five year success story

CAMRA makes much of the role of the pub as a hub of the community and the role of the 'Community Pub' is often cited at a time of increasing pub closures and in campaigns against beer duty, pub companies and the rest. It is encouraging therefore to find a success story in the heart of Cliftonwood that supports just these arguments.

Under the careful stewardship of the family team of David Waddilove, Fiona Vincent and Kieran Garvey, the Lion in Cliftonwood has just marked five years of growing success as a pub serving real ale and meals as well as being a hub for a wide range of local community activities.



Tied to the Enterprise Inns stable, 'Lion' bitter by Hook Norton, Doom Bar and Bath Gem are served as standard with occasional guest ales, and the Lion is looking to have 'festive ales' available for Christmas.

Taking it over in August 2008, the pub had a history of random hours and for a variety of reasons was just not working, but hard work and lots of support from the community has been at the back of the success said Fiona.

Moving to regular opening hours to attract regular visitors was an early



step, as was opening seven days a week. There was a history of food and wine and these formed a foundation for development. The food is all made on the premises and comes from known and trusted suppliers. A key factor has been to encourage families and many of today's customers first came in as children with their parents.

Fiona says that their attitude is that of inviting guests into their front room and making them feel welcome, a strategy that seems to be paying off. But its not all one way and the Lion is also heavily involved with local activities including supporting the local community garden and being a sponsor of the Cliftonwood open-air cinema and annual street party. As a result the Lion attracts a broad base of customers of all ages from across the local community. 'There are a lot of chimney pots around this pub' and the message seems to be getting across.

*Derek Reid*

## Bristol Beer Factory



The Bristol Beer Factory are located on the site originally occupied by the Ashton Gate Brewery, who were at one time renowned for their Milk Stout until they were taken over by George's and it was re-named accordingly. The building dates back to 1904, although it had a break from brewing use for around 70 years from 1933. Current Bristol Mayor George Ferguson was behind both the Bristol Beer Factory and the Tobacco Factory, which is located just over the road from the brewery and of course stocks their beer. The brewery also owns the Grain Barge at Mardyke Wharf and the Barely Mow pub on Barton Road, which they consider to be their own craft and world beer bar with eight hand pulls for real ale. Over the last decade the Bristol Beer Factory have expanded their beer range and won numerous awards, including for their version of Milk Stout and their mighty 6.5% abv Southville Hop IPA. They have also received recognition for their marketing material and won 'Best

Drinks Producer' in the BBC Food and Farming Awards. The Bristol Beer Factory usually hold a number of events during the year including a Facterfest beer festival at the Tobacco Factory and a Christmas open day, this year on 30 November.

The Bristol Beer Factory have also steadily increased their brewing capacity as demand has grown over the years and they are pleased to report that they have now fully installed their new 30 barrel brewing kit. They have been very busy frantically brewing away on it to catch up on the shut down period, which as is always the case was longer than expected. Unfortunately they have had to stop brewing their hoppy 3.8% session beer Acer, due to unning out of the key Sorachi Hops until the new harvest arrives in March.

Acer has been replaced with Nova, which they say has been very well received. It is the same strength as Acer at 3.8% and described as being "a mouth watering citrusy little number!". Sadly for extreme stout fans, the brewery is not producing their "12 stouts of Christmas" bottled selection this year. However, their festive ale Bristletoe has been brewed and is now on general release for Christmas- weighing in at 5.5% and offering the promise of spicy Belgian yeast and raisins.

*Richard Brooks*



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

Beers available from [www.bristolbeerfactory.co.uk](http://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

# Watering Holes in the Desert

## brought to you from Weston-super-Mare

The 100<sup>th</sup> edition of Pints West coincides with this being my final contribution as collator of the Weston-super-Mare section of the magazine. Therefore, I felt that it would be good to reflect on how the real ale scene in Weston has changed over the 14 years that I have been writing this column.

Not surprisingly, the local scene has pretty much reflected what has been happening nationally, with a real upsurge in interest in real ale set against a major shrinking of the area's pub estate. There have been numerous closures over the years – the **Ashcombe**, **Raglan Arms**, **Chalice Bar**, **Long John Silver** in Kewstoke and **Whistling Duck** in Banwell are among the once-loved that are now empty, converted or flattened. Many other pubs have had periods of temporary closure. The **Captain's Cabin** is now shut for the second time this year, as is the **Bristol House** which has the Tesco axe hanging over it. Closures have often been driven by decreasing sales, caused in no small part by the policies of successive Governments that have made drinking in pubs prohibitive for many. Our friends the pub companies have also been a major hindrance to the pubs they own over the years (or as Greg Mulholland, Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Save The Pub Group describes them, "one of the worst examples of reckless, irresponsible capitalism this country has ever seen – a get-rich-quick scheme for a greedy few that has marred lives and closed thousands of pubs"). Many of our locals have suffered as a result and some good quality people driven out of the sector.

But, hey, it's not all bad. On the positive side, there are probably more real ales available now in Weston than at any time for decades. I would wager that between 30 and 40 different real ales can be found in the town centre at any point in time. More pubs seem to be offering real ale and, just as important, they seem to realise that quality is important. I get poor quality beer much less frequently than 14 years ago – Cask Marque and



CAMRA have, I believe, had a part to play in this.

In spite of the closures we have seen some spirited re-openings of pubs – the **Criterion**, **Brit Bar**, the **Bear** (ex Balmoral) and the **Bell** in Banwell are all pubs that appear to be thriving under new ownership with new ideas after periods of closure. We now have a second Wetherspoon in town, with the company investing a large amount acquiring and refurbishing the seafront **Cabot Court Hotel**. 14 years ago we only had one Good Beer Guide entry in Weston – six different pubs will have featured in the 2013 and/or the 2014 editions, with a couple of others knocking on the door. There are then the dependable pubs run by people that I regard as "the professionals" who just seem to know what it takes to run a great community pub year in, year out. I am thinking here of the likes of John Hayes, Dave Gough and Mark Short who run the **Old Inn**, Hutton, the **Windsor Castle**, Milton and the **Regency** respectively. Even pubs that are perhaps not normally visited much by local CAMRA members can throw up nice surprises. The Weston CAMRA branch undertook a six-pub crawl towards the end of the summer and visited **Sam's Bar & Grill** (run by the wondrous Collette) on Upper Church Road, the first visit as a branch for some time, and many felt that the beer quality was the best of the evening. On Halloween the **Tavern Inn The Town** had three great beers on in fine condition – Otter Head and Witch alongside Box Steam Tunnel Vision.

Looking forward, the main challenge for CAMRA and everyone else who cares about the survival of pubs is to somehow get more people to use them. Over the past 20 to 30 years people have become less inclined to visit their local pub. There are many reasons for this – a major one is the ability to drink at home at hugely-reduced cost due to the supermarkets and the politics behind their pricing policies. Another is the fact that many people are less inclined to interact with each other face-to-face in their free time anymore. This was already a problem before people were able to spend their evenings in their armchairs engaging with friends and the wider world on Skype, Facebook, tweeting, texting, etc. One for the philosophers among you to sort out – but no pubs equals no real ale.

If pubs are to survive they need great-quality operators who have the hard-to-find mix of being genuine pub-lovers with a sound business head, great people skills and the imagination to try new ideas and connect with customers – the ones they have got now and the ones they would like to have. For an excellent example of a well-run community pub, highly-valued and supported by its local community please see the adjacent article on the **Nightjar** and the lady at the helm, Di Bradley.

*Tim Nicholls*

## Tony Wilcox RIP

I first met Tony Wilcox, I think, in Off The Rails at Weston-super-Mare railway station, where he'd drink Somerset cider, or dark beer if he could get it. He was a smoker then, but when he gave it up he developed a habit for snuff instead. He was a familiar sight in the Seven Stars and Cornubia in Bristol, and in the last year or so the trio of pubs in St Georges Road, the Horse and Groom, the Three Tuns and the Bag Of Nails, plus the Bridge Inn on Mondays, with his little tins of snuff in front of him, copiously making notes on the beer he drank.

He was born in Wellington, Somerset, named Anthony John but preferred Tony. He grew up on Buckland Farm – a mile from the village of West Buckland where he went to school. Later Tony went to Wellington School where his musical interests were encouraged – David Suchet was beginning his drama career at the same period in the school. Music (classical music, 20<sup>th</sup> century or earlier) was important to him. As well as playing the organ and piano he was a good tenor and sang in many choirs over the years. He spoke several languages too, always learning the language of any country where he worked (or holidayed) – so Spanish, French, German, Italian and Dutch; and of course he learnt Latin at school.

He went to Imperial College in London to study physics. After he graduated he went on to study computer science and worked in computer programming as a systems analyst all his working life, within the specialised field of telecommunication systems. When Tony was living in London he drove a MG Midget sports car.

Mostly he worked abroad – Rome, Antwerp, Geneva, Strasbourg and lastly in Munich. He had to come back from Munich when work dried up as the digital age began and he has lived in Weston since 2002, when he joined CAMRA, and enjoyed using the bus pass and travelling Somerset on the Pub Trail. As in all things he did it thoroughly and kept wonderfully detailed notes and the names every beer he drank! He very much appreciated the friendship of the CAMRA members and the publicans in those pubs he frequented the most.

*Robin E Wild*

## Weston diary and contact

● **Thursday 19th December:** 15th Annual Seasonal Ales Crawl. Visiting pubs in town offering a Christmas or Winter beer. This will start at the Criterion, Upper Church Road, departing from there at 8.15. Contact number on night 07947 538390.

**Non-members welcome.**

### Contact

**Robin E Wild: Email [robinwild42@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:robinwild42@yahoo.co.uk)  
Mobile 07857602293**

# A pub at the heart of its community

Most people agree that if town and city centre pubs are to survive in the future they need to connect with the communities in which they operate. The term “community pub” gets bandied around quite a lot these days but what does it really mean? What does a pub have to do to be regarded as a genuine asset to its local community? The answers to these questions can be found on the Mead Vale estate in the suburbs of Weston-super-Mare. The **Nightjar**, a Hall & Woodhouse-owned pub at the centre of the estate, is run by a rather remarkable lady called Di Bradley. Di had contacted me to tell me that she had been awarded the British Empire Medal for her services to the community. I felt that for the 100<sup>th</sup> edition of Pints West it would be fitting to publicise to a wider audience just how Di has made her pub an undisputed community asset.

As soon as you arrive at the Nightjar you are struck by the community focus, not least by the large mural with “Community” in large letters on its exterior (see the photo below). When I arrived shortly after midday, about a dozen elderly people were sitting at tables in the lounge bar doing various crafts. This was at the tail-end of the regular Wednesday morning social club. Di was about to serve everyone lunch. The Nightjar does not ordinarily do food but Di provides this for the Wednesday club. Whilst waiting for Di I ordered a pint of Tanglefoot and took the opportunity to have a look around the two-room pub. The public bar has two pool tables (which are free on Thursday evenings and Sunday afternoons), table football and bar billiards (both very rare nowadays). In the hallway there are notice boards advertising events at the pub such as live music, the Friday night meat raffles and the regular Sunday quiz nights as well as wider community news and events in Mead Vale. Past events at the pub have included church services and a Christmas party ... in August, naturally – this is Di Bradley’s pub.



from the Cabinet Office and realised that it was genuine. The medal was presented to her by Lady Gass, the Lord Lieutenant of Somerset at County Hall in Taunton in October and Di will be meeting the Queen at a Royal Garden Party next summer. Di is a bit disconcerted at the idea of having to wear a dress and I am sure that her customers will be very much looking forward to seeing the photos!

Di talked about some of the other features of the pub. Aside from the Seashore Centre she is a keen supporter of Weston Hospicecare and the British Legion for which she raises money. She is also proud of her computer club. This started as a Government-organised course several years ago when the Government was keen to encourage more people to engage with computers. When the course ended, Di decided to continue running the club, with the help of a couple of her customers. Di says that the average age of the members is about 80, so they tailor it to the areas of most relevance to this age group, such as emailing, using Skype, uploading photographs, etc. This runs on a Monday morning.

Di has been running the pub for just over 10 years. Interestingly, she doesn't think any of her ideas on how to run a pub are new. She says, “I just use ideas that are 50 years old – it's the way pubs used to be.” One idea that she says she has pinched from the past (her dad ran a pub when she was young which has clearly been an influence) is to keep a directory of known and trusted local tradesmen behind the bar that she can give to elderly people who have a problem with something. Di says that there are plenty of people who are willing to give help to other people in their community, they just don't know how to go about it. She sees it as part of the role of the pubs to provide this type of community service.

Di is also proud of the number of young bar and cleaning staff she has had who she has encouraged and nagged to work hard and better themselves. Partly as a result of her efforts, five have gone on to university – two becoming teachers and one a nurse. Di says that they all took a lot of pushing but her motto is: “Never take no for an answer.”

On the beer front at the Nightjar, Tanglefoot is a permanent cask offering, with a wide range of Badger bottled beers always available.

Finishing my drink and admiring the vast range of Laurel and Hardy figurines and photographs behind the bar, I could not help but be struck by the thought of how much the person running a pub sets the whole tone and atmosphere. In less able hands, the Nightjar is just the kind of pub that would have failed and been closed over the past 10 years. A few more Di Bradley's and we would have had many fewer community pub closures in recent years. No wonder Hall & Woodhouse refer to it as their flagship community pub.

I will close with a comment from an on-line reviewer, which sums up the Nightjar and Di perfectly: “**Fantastic family-run pub. Offers not just a place for a drink, but a place for the community to get together. Landlady is one of the most amazing people I've ever met. Wholeheartedly recommend this hidden gem.**”



The lounge bar is the main area for the various clubs and community events that are held at the pub. There is quite a large lending library, a table with newspapers and magazines and a notice board showcasing the Weston Seashore Centre, which is a unit for under-16s at Weston General Hospital. Di has organised lots of events to raise money for the Centre and the proceeds have been used to purchase TV/DVD players, bladeless fans for safe cooling, digital thermometers for babies and small children, portable oxygen monitors, special scales for children unable to stand and much more. On the board are pictures of all these items (a good idea so people can actually see what it is that they have contributed to) and a letter from the hospital thanking the pub for £4,200 paid to them in January this year.

Di had by now finished her waitressing duties (“These people would be at home on their own if they weren't here,” says Di) and joined me at the bar. She proudly showed me her medal – getting the award had been a great surprise to her as she had no idea that she had been nominated. She initially thought that it was one of her customers getting their own back on her with a practical joke, until she got halfway down the letter

# CCC III (Three Centuries Part 3)

To celebrate the *centēsimum* edition of the multi-award-winning *Pinctæ Occidēns* we enter our second serious Century alewise in the style in this illustrious organ *decem* years ago. With the beerhouse-brewer almost extinct and a gallon of beer costing 6p, Alexandrina Victoria, our longest-reigning monarch, died in 1901 and new 1902 and 1904 Licensing Acts required plans, and possibly elevations, of watering holes to be submitted just after seven o'clock.

In Weston, one could Park for free by the now-departed *Cardiff Arms* in Meadow Street or *Hope & Anchor* in Orchard Street, if coming by sea. The Meadow Street *Alexandra Hotel* commemorated the queen-empress consort Danish princess who may have played hamlet if things went wrong when using the *Hole in the Wall* in Old Post Office Lane for the Imperial Penny Post to her Empire. If her *Criterion* was not met, it was fifty years too late to call upon the Field Marshal after whom the *Raglan Arms* was named to save her bacon and she may have had a chip on her shoulder until it burned down in the next Century.

The railway station was in modern-day *Off the Rails* territory but only ranked as a General. The *Bristol and Exeter Inn* was still delivering the Goods, surviving thus until Tesco and the late lamented 'Pluto' Venn rang *The Town Crier* changes and *Bonds Wine Bar* caused a stir in Martiniland. The *Waggon & Horses Inn* communicated by 2G in Regent Street.

Out in Worle, the *Village Club* started handling early motorists' orders before the appropriately-named *Worle Century Club* became a big hit. The *Lamb Inn* celebrated its own three Centuries purveying 'Noted Ales & Stout'. The *Old Inn* in Hutton was rebuilt but still blacksmithed. Despite its name, Banwell had some of our earliest watering holes, the equally muscular *Smith's Arms* being where the *Whistling Duck* later landed. The *Brewers Arms* stormed on Marvellously. The *White Hart* lasted in Banwell until 1932, a local *Ship's* cobbler tolled me sheepishly in *The Bell*, and *The George* closed even later despite restrictive licensing laws. The unrelated Georges & Co delivered gallons of beer to Axbridge in 1921 at 2½p, compared to 6p in 1901, but midwifery may have been extra.

"We shall fight on the beaches" floated across Commons benches as the *Cabot Hotel*, served by *Hansom Cab*, entered pre-JD service well before the *Clipper* became *The Dragon Inn*. The *Coronation* was celebrated up the road and the *Borough Arms* served large grey birds. Whilst Wolves were winning the FA Cup for the third time, *Dauncey's* and the *York* were also pulling in the crowds. Later came the *Windwhistle Inn*, its rails possibly painted in GWR Chocolate & Cream, and the *Ancaster* for those in the *Doghouse*. The High Street *Puffin* may also have had steam railway connections. The *Regency* opened as the *Top Hat*, so the tails go, and then became the possibly steamy *Silver Jubilee*. The *Walnut Tree* met the needs of a growing market, including in 1977 the 50 Weston CAMRA members who had a beer festival with 20 on at *The Grand Atlantic*. It could not extend to three days because of Sunday licensing.

The *New Inn* was serving Kewstoke and the *Commodore* and *Long John Silver* came alongside. In Worle, the *Nut Tree Inn* occupied Nut Tree Farm and duck pond and later became the Saturday morning home of we *Nutty Quills* of poetry infamy. The Nightjar, possibly for late drinkers, was next on the scene and by CAMRA's 2012 Community Pubs Month was claimed to be: "at Knowle, near Weston-super-Mare", the

*Waverley* also paddling into the same Top Ten. The dapper *Parish Pump* and traditional *Old Manor Inn* followed next. Then the *Summerhouse* for mathematicians and *Observatory* for Royals. With the opening of the *Bucket & Spade* for Brigadiers in 1999, at the end of our second Century Worle, where it all started in the town, had 12 watering holes.

Our third Century saw an *Ashcombe Hotel* Beer Festival but without Colonel Stephens that local's leafy days were numbered. The *London Inn* launched on gravity planely the first ale from Banwell for almost a Century, Newman's Brewery's Wolver's Ale then brewed in a garage. As my good lady wife received the first free half, I will permit myself a passing reference that only one reader may understand to MASH's Trapper John and the Pros from Dover. The day went down in the annals of a different ball game and England winning the Rugby World Cup may have been celebrated in the *Back Bar*. New watering holes have arrived slowly but an exceptional one was the *Ebdon Arms* in Wick St Lawrence, which is rumoured to have served to river boatmen by candlelight a number of local Meads, including those from the *Farm Shop* at Puxton Park. As in other Centuries, names have changed but The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards in their *Bear* skins are still served under cover at the ex-*Balmoral*. The *Phoenix* rose from the Ashes, igniting new cricketing interest as the *Apple* cider house when groups of eleven bowled in. The *Orchard* bobbed up again in the *Corner House* that once had its own *Elm Tree* and may have served Sheriff Woody in one of its storeys. The *Three Queens* deserted its old name and flew different colours as a *Kameleon*, possibly the local *Trioceros jacksonii*. The *Pier* reappeared, serving holidaymakers and possibly visitors from Ambridge and Cotter pin manufacturers. The *Premier Inn Hotel* was a Major development serving Thatchers to Cameron Highlanders from Churchill in Brown Derbys and Wellingtons in town to see the Blair Witch Project. *The Major from Glengarry* became *Sam's Bar & Grill* in the wrong Century, as Time Goes By, for White House Ilsa to be famously misquoted there to the *Cheers* of the crowd.

Well, as again they say around watering holes, that may not have been *Charles Dickens* but they have certainly been two more most interesting Centuries, surpassed only by *Pinctæ Occidēns*' current Century.

*Dr John (exactly 1,000 words)*

## Wider Wetherspoon Wander

In September to Minehead I did go in the sun  
To see Wetherspoon's Duke of Wellington  
Flying then to The Amy Johnson in Doncaster  
With Gate House, Red Lion and Old Angel fair  
All there for roving race goers to relish as well  
Next were the Ice Barque and Yarborough Hotel  
In Grimsby and Scunthorpe's Blue Bell Inn too  
The Joseph Bramah and Silkstone Inn Barnsley blue  
And Bowling Green Otley were others to see  
With The Winter Gardens Harrogate and in Ilkley  
The Lister Arms before the Devonshire in Skipton  
With The Six Chimneys in Wakefield all were done

*Dr John*

## Pub Quiz

Q. Why is Pints West the best?

A. Because:

P is for professionalism

I is for interest

N is for news

T is for Taberner's Bar Code

S is for Sanders' Young Members

W is for Weston's Robin E Wild

E is for excellence one hundred times over

S is for Steve Plumridge, our Editor

T is also for Weston's Tim Nickolls

*Dr John*

## RCH Brewery



RCH began nearly three decades ago in a hotel.

The Davey family started brewing at their Royal Clarence Hotel on the seafront at Burnham on Sea in 1984. Two brews were regularly produced – Clarence Pride (a best bitter) and the darker Regent. A few years later Graham Dunbavan, a one-time chairman of the Somerset CAMRA branch, left his engineering job to take over as the full time brewer. Almost immediately, the beers became much more impressive and consistent. The old beers were dropped and new ones produced. In 1993 the hotel was sold and the brewery was moved to an old cider mill near West Hewish in Somerset. Brewing now became the main focus of the business, along with a distribution business created to bring beers from all over the country and supply them to pubs, clubs and beer festivals.

With the move came new beers that were to become well known throughout the land – names such as *Pitchfork*, *Old Slug Porter*, *Hewish IPA*, *PG Steam*, *Firebox*, *Santa Fé* and *East Street Cream* were born. *Double Header* and the *Steam Special* series came later.

Since those early days there has been no looking back. Both the brewery and the distribution business have gone from strength to strength ever since, and RCH have become no strangers to awards for their beers, both on a local and a national level.

*Vince Murray*

# A Round with Robin

I feel I need to start by congratulating the Bristol Branch on reaching edition 100. Thanks go to Steve Plumridge, editor since number 23, the previous editors Pete and Ali Bridle, and all the contributors since its inception. The earliest copy I own is number 16 but I'm sure I started reading it from about edition 5.

Whilst congratulating people, I should add the team at the **Cornubia** for their wonderful garden in the centre of Bristol and the quirky petanque pitch of which I have been a regular user this summer and autumn. Also not least Paul Wratten of the **Seven Stars** for inventing and continuing the amazing 'beeriocicals' (a term used to describe the monthly collection of beers from one area of the country collected at the pub for the first four days in every month).

Since I wrote in the last issue, so much seems to have happened and so many great beers have passed over my tongue that it seems an impossible job to narrow it down to one article. Three beer festivals, all in Somerset, excluding the excellent beer festivals at the **Volunteer Tavern** in St Judes, and the three 'beeriocicals' (September from Staffordshire, October from Bristol and Somerset, and November from East and West Sussex), along with an ever changing selection of beers at the **Bank**, the **Gryphon**, the **Three Tuns** and the **Horse and Groom**, and the autumn **Wetherspoons** national beer festival make up the majority of my round this quarter.

Along with that I've been able to try the first bottled beer from the **Bridges Brewery**, *Aspen American Pale Ale* (5.8%), which for bottle-conditioned brown ale could have been from Arbor as it was so packed with hops. I'm looking forward to their next brew *Mocha Not So*, but also bottled as *Milli Vanilli*, which is obviously a coffee vanilla beer.

With friends I have played boule in Queens Park in Bath, under the auspices of the Harrington Club (a good pint of *Cottage Duchess* before and after the game in the club), and a pint of the new *Robinson's Trooper* (4.8%) at the **Hobgoblin** to round of the afternoon.

I visited (on my own) the **RCH** brewery for their open day, and got invited on to the Bristol coach that then visited the **Plough Inn**, Congresbury (with a few making the detour to the **Old Inn** on Pauls Causeway too) followed by a visit to the **Twisted Oak Brewery** near Wrington. We then went to the **New Inn** at Cross, the **Swan** at Rowberrow and the **Crown Inn** at Churchill – all the pubs visited receiving their Good Beer Guide accreditation certificates that day.

Going back to the Somerset beer festivals, two were on over the August Bank Holiday weekend and it was a case of having to sandwich the **King Alfred** at Burrow Bridge (20 ales of which *Kirkstall Dissolution IPA* at 5% was my favourite) on the Saturday, between the Friday and the Monday at the **Crossways** at West Huntspill (Somerset CAMRA pub of the year), where the *Downton Calypso Collaspso* was my out-and-out best beer – a 5.3% single hop pale IPA, although the *Arbor Why Kick a Moo Cow* was a close runner up. The strange name comes from the hop used in this 5.5% IPA as it sounds like the Maori name – try saying it quickly and you have it! The third was the Minehead Railway Station

CAMRA beer festival in September, where again I worked for most of the day session, missing Tony Wilcox from this branch who used to work there (his obituary is in the Weston sub-branch section). With nearly 120 beers on, it was a relief this year to have the ciders and perries in a separate bar on one of the stationary coaches. I'm not sure what the beer of the festival was but the *Sarah Hughes Ruby Mild* was the first to run out, whereas I contented myself with the *Arbor Hop Delusion*.

I try to mention the live music I hear at pubs as I make a point of going to enjoy real ale and music together (I know some people don't) and so it was great to be at the celebration of the sixth birthday of acoustic music at the **Seven Stars** on the 27<sup>th</sup> October. It was also good to hear the new line up of The Cherry Pickers there on Remembrance Sunday. The **Bear Inn** at Weston-super-Mare continues to host good bands and has come-all-ye on Sunday afternoons.

I'm sure the **Gryphon** is trying to have the beer with the longest name on a pump clip as one Tuesday evening in October I went there to find two with eight words, and one named *Arbor and Moor Collaboration Clifton Coffee Company Double Dark Alliance* of which I tried a half pint.

The **Cornubia** has had two outstanding beers from *The Black Iris Brewery*, well worth a mention in this column: the first being *Ella* (4.5%) using hops called Ella from Australia, and a week later *Iron Gate*, a black hoppy beer of IPA proportions.

To finish this 'Round' I have to say that Sussex beers have long been my favourite (along with Bristol brews), so for the first time I visited the November 'beeriocical' on every day so as not to miss a single item. It is extremely difficult to pick a favourite, but mention should be made of the *Gold Mark Classic Bitter*, an old fashioned brown bitter but with a 21<sup>st</sup> century hop taste. *Burning Sky*, *1648*, *Kissinggate*, *Downlands* and *Dark Star* all had beers here of exceptional quality, which is as it should be!

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

### Wonderful tonight

As an East Kent CAMRA man, I have to write to your esteemed publication to tell of a wonderful experience had in a Bristol pub.

Last Tuesday (letter dated 15th September) I was invited to the Chelsea Inn in Easton to sample their beers. It turned out to be their jazz night featuring 'Henry's Hot Six'. The atmosphere was close to a 'speak-easy' and the jazz matched the mood perfectly. Even during their break a pianist played stride piano to maintain the mood. The audience was a splendid mix of age and styles. I drank some very good Arbor ales from a well-kept cellar – in fact too many – and thoroughly enjoyed myself.

Surely this is one of the best kept secrets in Bristol?

Keep up the good work.  
Anthony Smith, Sandwich, Kent.

### Beer

On the assumption the Editor (bless his cotton socks) is still prepared to publish another of my letters, I would like to write about the subject which unites CAMRA members – BEER; the thing that draws us into the pub, and is usually the topic of conversation within the real ale community.

Now, my likes in beer are very fluid (apt description when discussing the liquid we all crave for). I do like dark beers, but I also like light beers. I do NOT like lager, wines and spirits, as well as keg bitter. I guess you would call me a "sad old man", because my alcohol preference is purely 'cask-conditioned ale'.

As I have already stated, I like all types of this liquid. Yes, during a hot spell of weather, I look for a light, fruity beer, and during the

colder winter months, I look for a dark beer which has body to it.

I am also a lover of Belgian fruit beers, which my eldest son usually buys me a crate of every Christmas (a hint, Roger!). I am not going to endeavour to list the beers that I like to sup, as it all depends on what is on display on the pump clips on the bar.

Now to be a bit contentious: in my opinion, beer in Cask Marque accredited pubs is served just a bit too cold. I accept, if you see the Cask Marque on a pump clip, you know that the landlord complies with a strict routine when looking after his beer, so you will not get a cloudy pint, and the pipes will be kept clean. But for the life of me, why do they insist on the temperature being so low? Alright, this is my view, and guess I shall get a lot of criticism, from some landlords and fellow imbibers. That's if anyone reads this (on the assumption the Editor prints it).

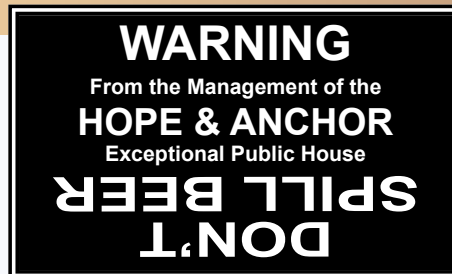
I must add that the pubs in the area I live in tend to shy away from dark beers, and when questioning the landlords the reason is usually "it doesn't sell." I cannot dispute this, I would not dare, but it is good to see a dark beer on the bar occasionally. Note, this phenomenon seems to cover the whole of the South West. I know when one of my locals has a dark beer, word soon gets round, and I also know that my local Severn Vale sub-branch of CAMRA is always willing to send this information out on its web page.

As always, I shall end with an invitation to anyone who reads this to buy me a pint of light or dark beer, and I will discuss my opinions on any subject with you.

CHEERS to you all.  
John Gatty, Thornbury.

### Festivals raise over £100,000

Thanks to the generosity of our sponsors, our wonderful volunteers and all those that attended, drank, bid, danced, raffled, ate and made merry at the 13<sup>th</sup> Wedmore Real Ale Festival, we're delighted to announce that the festival generated a whopping sum of £13,000 for local worthy causes.



Representatives from no less than 14 local beneficiaries gathered at our annual presentation night on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> November held at the Swan Hotel, Wedmore and picked up cheques ranging from £200 to £2,000, that will in turn provide welcome assistance to a wide and varied cross section of our community.

The concept of the WRAF from its infancy to the present day has always been about promoting and championing real ale. It's a fantastic coincidence for one and all that in doing so we've donated £103,571 in the last 13 years and enjoyed every minute of doing so!

In 2013 our beneficiaries are: St Johns £200, Wedmore WI £200, Wedmore Day Centre £200, Wedmore in Bloom £350, Wedmore WW1 Project £450, Cheddar Valley Food Bank £500, Wedmore Junior Football Club £600, Weston Hospicecare £800, Wedmore Scout Group £900, Wedmore Preschool £1300, Friends of Wedmore 1st School £1500, Wedmore Village Hall £2000, Wedmore Play Project £2000, Wedmore Playing Fields £2000. Total £13,000.

The dates for the 14<sup>th</sup> Wedmore Real Ale Festival are 19-21 September 2014.


Trevor Prideaux, Wedmore.

### Maps



I love reading your magazine and many times I spot a pub that I would like to visit. Sadly when I have the time and I'm in the area, I will have forgotten the name and can't find it. It would be a great help if you include a small map with your reviews. I think if you have a mental picture of the location, then you don't forget it.

John Craven (by email).

# Rucking Mole joins the pack!



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<p><b>ALL YEAR ROUND</b></p> <p><b>Tap Bitter</b> 3.5%<i>abv</i> Smooth malty flavour &amp; clean bitter finish</p> <p><b>Best Bitter</b> 4.0%<i>abv</i> Well balanced, copper coloured bitter</p> <p><b>Molennium</b> 4.5%<i>abv</i> Deep amber coloured premium ale</p> <p><b>Rucking Mole</b> 4.5%<i>abv</i> Clean, dry &amp; malty golden bitter</p> <p><b>Landlord's Choice</b> 4.5%<i>abv</i> Dark, strong and smooth hoppy bitter</p> <p><b>Molecatcher</b> 5.0%<i>abv</i> Copper coloured ale with spicy hop aroma</p>	<p><b>IN SEASON</b></p> <p><b>Holy Moley</b> 4.7%<i>abv</i> Spring beer that's heaven 'scent'</p> <p><b>Barleymole</b> 4.2%<i>abv</i> Straw coloured Summer ale</p> <p><b>Molegrip</b> 4.3%<i>abv</i> Rich ruby red, Autumn brew</p> <p><b>Moel Moel</b> 6.0%<i>abv</i> Warming Winter ale</p>	<p><b>Scrumptious</b> 6.0%<i>abv</i> <b>Sparkling</b> 6.0/4.8%<i>abv</i> <b>Bottle</b> 4.7%<i>abv</i></p>  
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[www.molesbrewery.com](http://www.molesbrewery.com)

## Goodbye to Steve Pass

We were very sad to hear of the death, in November 2013, at the young age of 55, of Steve Pass. Steve was a long-standing member of Bristol & District branch of CAMRA.

He had worked at the Council before moving to the University of Bristol in the late 1990s as a senior systems developer. He was a keen long-distance cyclist (an active member Cyclebag East), blue-grass music fan and lover of real ales, a regular volunteer at the Bristol Beer Festival and enthusiastic participant at many other festivals.

Steve's cheery grin and larger-than-life presence will be much missed by close friends and fellow CAMRA members. Our sympathy goes to his wife Lynn and his wider family.

Lesley Huxley

# Severn Vale CAMRA

## The Hawkes House, Thornbury

Back in April of 2013, one of our Thornbury pubs succumbed to the swathe of closures sweeping the country – this time, as a result of a sell-off by Enterprise Inns. The Barrel, located in the pedestrian area in Thornbury's town centre, has certainly had a mixed past, but the last tenant had tried really hard to keep the place going as a live music (predominantly heavy rock) venue. It was also one of the few pubs in the area where a dark beer was often on offer. Feeling squeezed out by Enterprise, the landlady emigrated to the US and the pub was put up for sale. With five other pubs close by in the town centre, there was little hope that it would be bought as a pub once again.

Then in July or August I noticed the "For Sale" sign changed to "Sold", though there were no signs of any activity, nor any hints as to what the premises would become. Then at the end of September I saw a posting on Facebook for Hawkes House – a new café/bar for Thornbury. Hmm – not entirely certain Thornbury needs yet another café/eatery. A few Facebook conversations with the new owners, however, and I became ever more optimistic: tales of all-day opening – breakfast to late evening; availability of three real ales at any one time. My attention was well and truly caught. It's also the intention of the owners that one of the three real ales should be a dark beer, and that they will mostly be 'LocAle' beers (i.e. from breweries within a 20-mile radius of the town).

The grand opening was on 30th October. Following the story of the refurbishment on their Facebook page was fascinating, and was a great way for them to build up interest and anticipation. The boss and I made it to the opening evening, and we even ate there (possibly amongst the hotter variations on the themes of nachos and chicken tikka, but pretty good for all that). Thirsts were quenched with excellent pints of Gloucester brewery's Gloucester Gold and Severn Vale's Severn Sins. Wickwar brewery's Banker's Draft was also available.

In a further great use of Facebook, they're currently posting the beers to appear next (Wickwar Gold, Cotswold Lion's Best in Show, and Goff's Black Knight at the time of writing). You'll need to "Like" their page to receive these updates ([www.facebook.com/HawkesHouseBar](http://www.facebook.com/HawkesHouseBar)). They're also on Twitter (@HawkesHouse) and their website address is [www.hawkeshouse.co.uk](http://www.hawkeshouse.co.uk).

The danger is, it's possibly the closest real ale outlet to my house. Could be catching...

*Martin Farrimond*

## The Swan, Thornbury

Sandra Davies took over the Swan on Thornbury High Street back in September 2012. This is another Enterprise pub that had been sadly lacking in investment, was very run-down, and had been closed for the previous six months. When Sandra took over, and with the needed investment from Enterprise, a lot of effort was made to turn this into a really attractive and interesting pub interior.

Beyond this, the place has become a real community pub and has just won the regional Enterprise Inns Community Pub Award – thanks to the hard work of Sandra and her customers. They hold regular charity events throughout the year, including craft fairs for Meningitis Research Foundation and even a 24-hour Knittathon for Comic Relief – resulting in the largest sum raised in Thornbury for that event. The £5,000 prize money from the Enterprise Inns award has been donated to the New Siblands School (primary school for children with learning difficulties and disabilities – [www.newsiblands.org.uk](http://www.newsiblands.org.uk)).

The pub nominates a different charity each month, most of which are Thornbury-based (Thornbury Volunteer Centre, Thornbury Light Associations, Thornbury in Bloom, etc.). These charities benefit from the quizzes and raffles held at the pub.

There is also live music every Friday and Saturday.

There are currently three handpumps serving Sharp's Doom Bar and Butcombe Bitter as regular beers plus a weekly-changing guest beer. This has grown from a limited selection of one often poorly-kept real ale before Sandra's tenure. There are even plans to install a fourth pump if



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.

### Severn Vale diary and contact

- **6th Dec:** Explorer trip: Wotton Under Edge, Charfield and Cromhall.
- **13th Dec:** Old Spot lunch, Dursley.
- **18th Dec:** Christmas sub-branch meeting, Anchor, Thornbury.
- **3rd Jan:** Pub survey trip: Stokes Croft and Cheltenham Road areas.
- **10th Jan:** Old Spot lunch, Dursley.
- **15th Jan:** Sub-branch meeting, Black Horse, Thornbury.
- **31st Jan:** Meet & Greet (with Bristol Branch), George Hotel, Chipping Sodbury.
- **7th February:** Pub survey trip, Hawkes House, Thornbury.
- **14th February:** Old Spot lunch, Dursley.
- **19th February:** Sub-branch meeting, Fox, Old Down.

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

For up-to-the-minute details and any changes, please check our diary page at [www.severnval.camrabristol.org.uk](http://www.severnval.camrabristol.org.uk) and/or email us at [SevernValeCAMRA@gmail.com](mailto:SevernValeCAMRA@gmail.com).



the cask ale demand continues to grow.

Check their Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/TheSwanThornbury](http://www.facebook.com/TheSwanThornbury) for details of all their events.

*Martin Farrimond*

# Milk Street Brewery



Congratulations to Rick Lyall and the team at Milk Street brewery for winning a bronze medal in the Stouts and Porters category in the South West regional heats of CAMRA's Champion Beer of Britain competition. The award, which was for **Zig Zag Stout**, is well deserved.

Zig Zag (4.5%), which also had won a bronze medal at the 2012 Peterborough beer festival, is a delicious, luxurious and velvety milk stout and has recently been trialled as the brewery's first vegan beer. The beer is a mainstay of Milk Street's range of five regular beers and around nine seasonal.

A presentation was held at the **Griffin** during a well attended Bath & Borders branch visit to the pub and brewery one evening at the end of August. Assistant brewer Dave Richards gave the branch a thorough tour of the brewery and talked about some of the brewery's latest investments, which include a new van, cask washer, and a bulk container, which had to be craned in, to store casks ready for delivery. (Previously they had to be stored in the pub's cellar.)

Milk Street brewery was founded in 1999 by Rik Lyall, who had previously worked as head brewer at Cotleigh, and had been involved in developing beers for Cotleigh, Stonehenge and Hop Back before branching out on his own. The eight-barrel plant, which is production six days a week, is housed within a former cinema behind the Griffin pub. Malt is sourced from the nearby Warminster Maltings and the hops come from Charles Faram, whilst the brewery has developed its own yeast. The Griffin has always been the show-case for Milk Street's carefully crafted beers, but the brewery's small estate also consists of the **Brewhouse** in Poole and the **Red Lion** in Whitehall Road, Bristol.

The brewery has won numerous awards over the years, including the Best Drinks Producer in the Taste of Somerset Awards 2011, and SIBA Gold and Silver awards for **Funky Monkey**. Meanwhile the Griffin was the Bath & Borders branch Pub of the Year in 2010.

*Steve Hunt*



Milk Street brewery staff: back row from left: Sam Kyle, Emily Culverhouse, Heidi Philimore, Peter Carr and David Richards; front row from left: Kial Swift, Jackie Monk, Cathy Lyall and Rik Lyall

# Cheddar Ales



Cheddar Ales was established in 2006 by experienced brewer Jem Ham at Winchester Farm in Cheddar. It is now an 80-barrel brewery with a production split of approximately 85% cask-conditioned beer with the remainder bottle conditioned. Their best-known beers include **Potholer** and the well-named **Gorge Best** (many people mis-read that).

In the seven years since they first started brewing, their beers have scooped many awards. The most recent was at the Great Taste awards for their **Crown and Glory** bottled beer. Great Taste is organised by the Guild of Fine Food, and is an acknowledged benchmark for speciality food and drink. Crown and Glory was awarded two stars along with only fifteen others nationally, while only three beers nationally won three stars.

Additionally, the brewery won gold medals at the Taste of the West awards with **Crown and Glory** and **Goat's Leap IPA**, and a bronze medal for **Bitter Bully** pale ale. Taste of the West is the largest independent regional food group in the country, promoting quality food and drink from the West Country.

Aside from gathering awards, the brewery have been busy brewing their seasonal ale. Look out for Cheddar Ales' annual Christmas beer, **Festive Totty**, a dark porter enriched with ruby port with hints of chocolate and fruit! It's available in November and December from a range of pubs in the south west and also direct from the brewery. Sounds like the perfect brew to keep out the winter cold!

*Jan Deverell*



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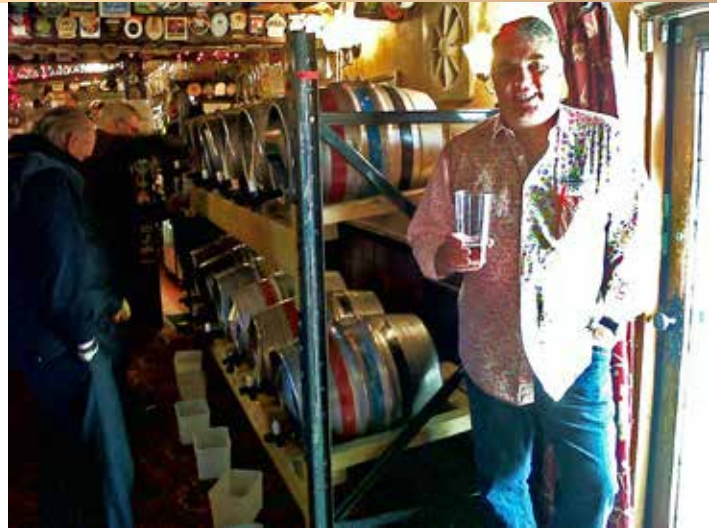
# 10 @ The Inn

Congratulations to Dave and Ally McKillop for ten successful years running the New Inn at Mayshill, near Frampton Cotterell. This delightful historic coaching inn serves excellent food and a wide range of quality real ales, has been a regular feature in the Good Beer Guide and was Bristol & District CAMRA pub of the year 2009.

Late November 2013 saw Dave (pictured) and Ally host a tenth anniversary beer festival for friends and supporters, featuring 23 real ales, many sourced directly by Dave from his native Scotland in his distinctive Austin 7 van. Scottish breweries represented were Kelburn, Tryst and Harviestoun, with local brewers Arbor and Cotswold Spring also featuring strongly. Beer of the Festival announced on 24th November was Arbor's Simcoe IPA, a 7.2% full strength IPA made with Simcoe hops (the clue's in the name, perhaps!). My personal favourite was Tryst's Raj IPA, at 5.5% a slightly easier drink than the Simcoe; the latter was certainly full of flavour and well-suited to a cold November day.

Many thanks to Dave and Ally for their kind hospitality and warm welcome over the years, and all good wishes for another ten years at the New Inn, Mayshill!

*Lesley Huxley (photos by Richard Brooks)*



## Blindmans Brewery

Situated in a former milking parlour, just off the A361 mid-way between Frome and Shepton Mallet, Blindmans is one of the most successfully established of the micro-breweries in the area south of Bath. The brewery was started in 2002 by retired naval officer David Capps-Tunwell MBE. For David, brewing was a completely new venture and, although the brewery was named after the house where he lived at the time in nearby Wanstrow, it also reflects that he was going into brewing very much as novice, figuratively "blind". Despite this, the fledgling brewery quickly established a good reputation in the local area, with the brand reaching a wide audience for the first time at the 2002 Bath beer festival.

In early 2004 David moved to France and sold the brewery. The new owners, Paul Edney and Lloyd Chamberlain, were both friends and experienced brewers from the local area. Paul had previously been the head brewer at Ash Vine Brewery, based at the White Hart pub in the nearby village of Trudoxhill, where he established, unusually for such a small brewery, a national level of recognition for beers such as Challenger and Hop & Glory.

Paul and Lloyd set about a programme of investment and expansion. New beers were added to the range, which now encompasses four year-long regular beers, namely the smooth amber session beer **Buff** (3.6%), the aromatic straw-coloured **Golden Spring** (4.0%), which uses selected lager malt, the fuller-bodied malty **Mine Beer** (4.2%), and the fruitier, darker, ruby **Icarus** (4.5%); and two annual seasonal beers, namely the chocolate-flavoured porter **Eclipse** (4.2%) and the mid-brown and full-bodied **Siberia** (4.7%); and a series of monthly specials. Blindmans also produces exclusive beers for some of its regular outlets, including the **Raven** and **Old Green Tree** in Bath. Meanwhile the brewery has also branched out into the bottled beer market with its range of three *Buff* beers: **Buff Amber** (3.6%), **Buff Gold** (4.0%) and **Buff Dark** (4.5%).

The brewery has always recognised the importance of using local and traditional ingredients. Malt is procured from the local Warminster Maltings, one of the few maltings where the grain is germinated in the traditional way on open floors, but, perhaps most unusually, the five-barrel plant has, in the form a local spring, its own exclusive water supply.

*Steve Hunt*

### Solution to the crossword on page 42

Across: 1 Brains, 5 Guinness, 9 Acid rain, 10 Icebox, 11 Penpal, 12 Exhibits, 14 Needlessness, 17 Desegregated, 20 Hostelry, 22 Rocker, 23 Stupor, 25 Examinee, 26 Marston's, 27 Spewer, Down: 2 Racked, 3 Independent, 4 Small beer, 5 Gentle, 6 Irish, 7 Nee, 8 Scottish, 13 Benedictine, 15 Saturdays, 16 Lemon tea, 18 Gaymers, 19 Red eye, 21 Largo, 24 Pus.

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# One Hundred for a Moment

**H**undred seconds  
**A**nd I'm upon the  
**P**erfect partnership of our Si and  
**P**leasing on the eye  
**Y**oung Rich, manager of W.G. Grace...

**O**ur table is ready,  
**N**ot for food but for our Meet the Brewer  
**E**vent. I know it will be an evening well spent.

**H**undred minutes since I left the office  
**U**h-oh. Oh my.  
**N**ot many Young Members to sample the  
 auspicious  
**D**elights brought by  
**R**ich, Alex and Paul from Bath Ales who were  
 undoubtedly  
**E**xpecting bigger numbers than what have  
 turned up today.  
**D**ing Dong!  
**T**he clock strikes siete!  
**H**allelujah!

**P**unctual to the last  
**I**n walk our YMs...  
**N**ow it is time to get  
**T**his event  
**S**tarted!!!

**W**ith one hundred minutes gone after  
**E**ntering the W.G. Grace's care  
**S**amples are providing discussion and laughter  
**T**he Gem, The Forest Hare

**A**nd The Ginger one too.  
**N**ot forgetting The Special Pale Ale and  
**D**ark Side to name but a few of

**M**any Bath Ale lovelies.  
**E**ight o'clock, the hands go tick  
**R**esulting in it being one hundred hours  
**R**ight before my 26th.  
**Y**oung Members of ours

**C**AMRA, Brewer, one and all  
**H**elp me count down with  
**R**uby ale making malt  
**L**ucky tasting Goldings hops pellets  
**S**cience, sugar, salt and spice  
**T**asting, talking  
**M**embers Young are pleased with this night.  
**A**nd so it ended on a high  
**S**ix and half a dozen – we want more of you  
 next time!

**A**nd to October 24th  
**N**ot another Young Members event  
**D**ear Reader, but a Book Launch

**H**undred seconds on arrival at Beerd  
**A**ndy Hamilton's 'Brewing Britain' is the  
 reason I'm here  
**P**erfect Pint is The Quest  
**P**artake I shall in a hunt for the best.  
**Y**ummy Southville Hop that I've had before

**N**ot so good but I don't head for the door  
**E**ye on that 'Beerd Scotch Ale' I take a seat to  
**W**ait and see what the night ahead has in store  
 for me.

**Y**ay!  
**E**xcellent Scotch Ale finally in hand  
**A** true taste of autumn  
**R**eally flavoursome, the opposite of bland.

**F**ruity and spicy,  
**R**oaming for the ingredients which produced  
 this  
**O**ne of a kind  
**M**ust make Andy Hamilton's work so worth-  
 while.

**T**hat Scotch Ale is absolutely divine.  
**H**undred minutes after work and with this  
 happy little sample the  
**E**vening is working out just fine!

**B**ar – I'm at the end of it.  
**R**eading the Press Release for the book.  
**I** usually chop and change my pints in my  
 own quest for the best but  
**S**amples are done and I'm still on the Scotch  
 Ale  
**T**hat is an ode to this fine beer  
**O**n my own I must look a little queer  
**L**etting my pen do the talking as I prepare for  
 this article here.

**A**h well. One hundred minutes in the room  
**N**oting down my fabulous experience in this  
**D**elightful venue.

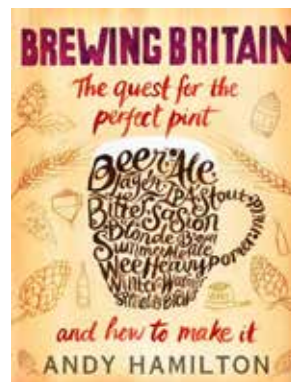
**D**rafting and drinking is great yet  
**I** must take a look at the book.  
**S**kipping through  
**T**hen I turn back to page 100.  
**R**ead I do about the 'Brewing The Perfect  
 Pint'  
**I**t's poetic justice that this is the title of  
**C**hapter 5.  
**T**rademarks are mentioned but the ultimate  
 message is:

If you are interested in becoming a CAMRA Young Member and what to find out about  
 your upcoming events then please follow us on Twitter [@youngBADales](#) or email  
[badyoungmembercontact@gmail.com](mailto:badyoungmembercontact@gmail.com) and we will add you to our mailing list. We look  
 forward to seeing you!

**Y**ou should give it a go!  
**O**n such a positive note I decided to end my  
**U**nique night.  
**N**ow it is time to look forward to next year and  
 the future  
**G**atherings of people,

**M**embers young and old  
**E**ven arrange a brewing workshop with Andy  
 for us to see if  
**M**aking a perfect pint comes naturally to you  
 or me.  
**B**ut for now it is goodbye to 2013  
**E**xcellent campaigning from everyone and  
**R**emember there's no need for rest at this  
 festive time  
**S**up away on the Seasonals and perhaps giving  
 something new a try!

*Talisha Mills*



## A trip to East Mendips

**W**hat better way to spend an evening than with fourteen other discerning beer drinkers visiting  
 some great character pubs in the Mendips? This, without having to worry about navigating  
 the single-track roads to find them, parking and of course driving home afterwards.

But the surveying/explorer trips that the local CAMRA branch conducts have a more useful  
 function as well. They enable members to experience the pubs and the beer first hand, so that when  
 it comes to voting for the Good Beer Guide (GBG) and branch awards it's based on experience  
 and fact. We also get to meet the landlords, maybe hand out Pints West, and on this particular  
 occasion distribute the GBG and the licensee packs to some of the pubs. Although it can be a bit of  
 a surprise when a thirsty bus load of us show up unannounced, they do welcome our business.

On this East Mendips trip on Tuesday 17th September, due to the distances involved, we took  
 in four pubs; on closer trips we are able to cover more. The first stop was the **Ploughboy Inn** in  
 Green Ore, back into this year's GBG. Then on to the **Wookey Hole Inn** in Wookey Hole, quite  
 busy for a Tuesday night. Around to the **Queen Victoria** in Priddy, a rustic Butcombe house. The  
**Hunters Lodge** in Priddy was last stop where the Tuesday night folk jam session was in progress.

Between the four pubs we had the opportunity to sample nine different beers although, as ex-  
 pected, we found three of them stocking Butcombe ales. Of note was the Hunters Lodge which had  
 all ales dispensed straight out of the barrel.

A very unscientific show of hands on the coach showed the 'best pub' to be the Hunters Lodge  
 with the Queen Victoria as runner up, although all were greatly enjoyed. A further poll for the 'best  
 beer' was a dead heat between the Butcombe Rare Breed and Butcombe Haka, but with some vote  
 re-allocation the Haka came out on top.

The coach which had picked us up in Bristol at the Cornubia at the start of the evening depos-  
 ited us back in the Centre just before 11pm in time for a last drink at the White Lion.

Thanks to Andy Gray for organising and Vince Murray for leading. Although fifteen is a good  
 number, we are always happy to have more on these trips, so give some thought to coming on the  
 next one. Hope to see you then!

*Michael Bestagne*

# Three Daggers Brewery



The Three Daggers brewery was started in April 2013 with a 2.5-barrel brew length and is based in the ground floor of a farm shop in the pretty Wiltshire village of Edington on the edge of Salisbury Plain. It is next door to the **Three Daggers** pub, which some readers may remember as the Paulet Arms or the Lamb.

Two traditional beers are produced, **Daggers Ale** (4.1%) and **Daggers Edge** (4.7%), using local malt from Warminster and First Gold hops from Hereford. Both are available in the pub and the farm shop. Others beers are planned in the future.

The shop also carries a selection of bottled beers and a guest beer. Take-outs can be purchased in the usual plastic containers and a 'growler', a rather stylish large glass bottle with a flip top lid.

The beers are now being sold in a number of local free trade pubs and even in restaurants in Chelsea, if you know where to look!

*James Honey*



Head brewer Michael Andrews in the Three Daggers

# It's official: Beerd Brewery is truly launched!



This 100<sup>th</sup> issue of Pints West is full of celebrations and significant events and here comes one more. Although Beerd ales have been seen around Bristol, Bath and surrounding areas over the last few months, now it can be said to be truly on the map.

At a special launch event in the **Beerd Craft Beer and Pizza Bar** (where else?) on St Michael's Hill, Bristol, a number of Bath Ales customers, guests and staff, and yours truly, were invited to celebrate the 'entry into service' (to use an aviation term) of this new offshoot of Bath Ales.

As mentioned before in Pints West, Beerd brews tend to use unusual ingredients and styles to ensure a pint of something very different, dare I say it, crafted by Galway-born experimental brewer, Shane O'Beirne. These short-run, unique beers are already proving to be a big success and are stocked in some 30 locations in the South West: not only in the new larger bars in Bristol, but also in some of the smaller more traditional pubs. Twenty Beerd beers have been brewed so far, interestingly most of them using the Bath Ales' house yeast. Only special varieties, such as wheat beers or saisons, require different strains.

Shane welcomed everybody to the event and said: "Beerd Brewery exists to push the boundaries of quality beer as we know it. By combining international influences and flavours with traditional British brewing techniques we're offering drinkers something unique with each brew – and they are enjoying the discovery." He also emphasised the need for quality ingredients and stringent brewing techniques and cleanliness in the brewery.

To help get the message across, samples of seven new brews were available from the bar in third-pint glasses, supported by tasty snacks from the Beerd (bar) menu. Four of these beers were described in the last edition of Pints West: Monterey California Pale Ale and Silvertip New Zealand Pale Ale, both available in cask, and Kobalt Munich Dunkel and Razor IPA, both in keg only. Of the three others the Scotch Ale is described elsewhere in this issue (News from Beerd Brewery) and was available in cask; the Phantom Deutsche Pilsner (5.3% ABV) and the Superweizen! wheat beer (5.4% ABV) were in keg.

For those who preferred a more traditional beer a nice pint of Festivity was also available. However the piece de resistance had to be the sneak preview taster of one of the Sulis range of Imperial Stouts (see Bath Ales Seasonal Ales and Specials) straight from a whisky barrel. A full dark stout with amazing complexity added by the eight months conditioning in the barrel; and at around 11% ABV packing quite a punch!

Judging by the conversation around, Beerd in its short life has gained a lot of enthusiastic followers. The concept is working well and the five-barrel plant in Hare House is earning its keep. At the same time Bath Ales has not compromised on its core business, with its traditional annual and seasonal beers, under the steady stewardship of head brewer Gerry Conde, increasing sales in a competitive market. Long may both breweries continue.

*Roy Sanders*



At the launch event: on the right founder member and director of Bath Ales Richard, with Karin and Moussa from marketing, brewers Gerry and Shane lurking in the background, and yours truly

# Twisted Oak Brewery



The Twisted Oak Brewery has recently celebrated its first anniversary and things are really looking up for Keith and Deb Hayles, the husband and wife team who own and run the brewery business which is located in a part of a barn on a working farm between Congresbury and Wrington.

At the end of September, an open day was held at the brewery and members of the public were invited to see the brewery in operation and sample the cask ales, which proved popular. They also participated in the 'Made in North Somerset' annual market at the National Trust's Tyntesfield house over the weekend of 5th and 6th October. This event is part of the festival celebrating of food, drink, arts and crafts produced in the North Somerset area, of which brewing is an important element. Twisted Oak's three ales were available for sale in bottle-conditioned form.

Meanwhile the brewery has established a sound base of local outlets in the Bristol and North Somerset area. They also have two new outlets further south, these being the **Swan** at Wedmore and the **Sheppey** at Godney near Glastonbury.

Up to now the brewery has been a part-time business but such is the success that Keith intends to run the brewery on a full-time basis from mid-December.

In the meantime keep a look out for Twisted Oak's brews: **Fallen Tree**, a 3.8% amber ale; **Spun Gold**, a 4.5% golden ale; and **Old Barn**, a 4.5% ruby ale. They are certainly worth a try.

*Richard Harman*

# Inn and Around Portishead

It's a while since I reported on the pub scene here in Portishead and there is a lot to report, so here we go. Taking a look first at Enterprise Inn's estate, there have been significant changes. Beginning with the **Royal Oak** in the West Hill end of town which has been open as a Tesco Express since February 2013, I have to admit that the finished building has been fairly sympathetic to the original. However, parking seems to be a problem, with the building being on a bend in the road and some of its customers preferring to park on the double yellow-lined road directly in front of the supermarket.

Then we have a couple of pieces of good news. Another of Enterprise's properties is the **White Lion**, on the end of the High Street closest to the Marina. This historic pub had been closed for more than a year when it reopened in July 2013 as part of the now six-strong Mezzé Restaurants group. The work was reported to have cost £1.6 million and represents a massive investment by the Mezzé Group in this interesting and historic listed building which had been known to be in a sorry state. The new venture is expected to be food led with the food being based on a mezza/tapas style menu. The drinks offering is extensive but more restricted on the real ale side of things. When I visited recently and enjoyed the food, I tried both the ales available and found the Doom Bar more to my taste than the Butcombe Bitter. I had a bit of a tour around the building. The old bar retains some standing areas. The downstairs lounge has been extended out by the addition of another room and then stairs lead to a further floor above set out with seating for eating in a couple of rooms. It all appears tasteful and classy. The eating and drinking areas have been further extended by the addition of a heated rooftop terrace and a garden.

There is more good news nearby in Clapton in Gordano where landlords Nick and Jane have recently signed a 20-year lease extension with Enterprise at the **Black Horse**. The "Kicker", as it is known locally, is a much loved pub in these parts and Nick and Jane have treated this 14<sup>th</sup> century pub with the affection it deserves. Good quality food is available lunchtimes except Sundays but the rest of the time the Black Horse is simply a boozier with a good range of real ales and ciders, flagstone floors, a large real fire and a cracking atmosphere.

That's when the good news runs out for Enterprise locally. Relations



Mezzé at the White Lion



Impero Lounge

## The Windmill Inn

PORTISHEAD



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between them and the landlady of the **White Hart** in Weston in Gordano, Lyn Palomares, have broken down and at the time of writing the pub is closed. This is a shame because Lyn, Craig and Rhea had worked hard to establish a good reputation for providing quality food and drink and had refurbished the pub a couple of times to my memory. Enterprise have stated that they aim to find a new landlord and resume trading. Local residents have taken the precaution of forming an action group and successfully applied for the White Hart to be classed as an Asset of Community Value in case Enterprise actually have other plans.

Back down the road, in the middle of Portishead High Street, at the **Poacher**, Ian and Zoe Clark have given up being landlords after three years after they were unable to negotiate an acceptable contract with Enterprise for the future. Temporary landlords have already been found by Enterprise.

Turning away from the comings and goings of our favourite pub company, we have some more good tidings. Bristol based group, Loungers, have transformed a former Budgens supermarket on the High Street into a large café bar. **Impero Lounge** opened in March 2013 and operates every day from 9am till 11pm with food served until 10pm. One real ale is available, brewed for them, I believe, by Bristol Beer Factory.

This brings me to someone who has been in place for more than a few months. On 8<sup>th</sup> November I attended the party thrown by Vic Long to celebrate 40 years in the **Ship** on the coast road out of Portishead. Vic and his wife, Debbie, treated their customers to food and the first drink and then drinks were at reduced prices. Young Victor was in his usual good form and even showed a few handy moves to sounds from the Wurzels. I never knew he had it in him. Congratulations Victor and Debbie and here's looking forward to a few more years. Let's hope for a least 50. Now that's something for Nick and Jane at the Black Horse to aim for!

Neil Ravenscroft

# Dawkins Ales

## A brief history

The brewery we now know as Dawkins was actually established as the Matthews Brewing Company in 2005 by Stuart Matthews and Sue Appleby in a farm workshop estate in the village of Timsbury, a few miles outside Bath. Using the best ingredients such as Maris Otter malt from Warminster Maltings, this small five-barrel brewery soon became known for its distinctive, uncompromising ales.

Dawkins Taverns was founded in 2002 by Glen Dawkins with the lease of the Miner's Arms in St Werburghs, Bristol. A real ale devotee, his first task was to rip out all the 'smoothflow' beers and boost the range of cask handpumps. Four more pubs followed (the Hillgrove and Green Man in Kingsdown, and the Victoria and Portcullis in Clifton), all strongly focussed on real ales.

Dawkins Ales acquired Matthews in January 2010. The Hillgrove was one of Matthews' first customers, so when Stuart and Sue decided to sell up it seemed a perfect fit; especially as they were already brewing exclusive beers for Dawkins.

## Recent news

Glen reports that sales of real ales are on the up across the Dawkins estate, adding: "It is particularly encouraging to see the trend noticed for several years is continuing; each year's influx of students increasingly turning to cask." He also says that the brewery is doing lots of swaps with fellow microbrewers across the country, so the choice of beers is ever-increasing in the Dawkins pubs. Of the beers, Glen says: "**Bristol Best** remains the Dawkins pubs' biggest single seller, but golden beers are definitely in the ascendant. In particular, new beer **Miner's Gold** is going down a storm at the Miner's Arms."

This autumn there have been three IPAs from Dawkins, **Resolution IPA** (5.3%), **Globalist IPA** (6.0%) and **Colonial IPA** (5.4%). For December, dark beer drinkers are treated to **Chocadee**, their 5.0% triple chocolate stout described as "rich and creamy with plenty of luxurious chocolate; smooth and satisfying on chill winter nights."

The Christmas special, only on draught in Dawkins pubs, is **Ho Ho Ho**, a 5.5% Christmas rum porter made with all-British malt and hops laced with a half litre of rum in every cask ("deep red fruits, chocolate and rich, warming tones of rum and spices"). There will only one cask per pub so look out for it.



For the fourth year running Dawkins have teamed up with Bristol Silents to support the annual Slapstick festival of silent comedy towards the end of January 2014. This year celebrates the centenary of Charlie Chaplin's little tramp character.

They'll be brewing two beers with new recipes this year: **Slapstick Black**, a 4.7% coffee stout, and **Slapstick White**, a 4.0% golden ale. Every pint sold contributes to the festival. ("Beers brewed in black & white!" says Glen.)

Bristol's town centre is fast improving as a place to drink, and now you can enjoy a pint of real ale at the classy Riverstation ("restaurant and bar+kitchen") on the waterfront. The eponymous **Riverstation Ale** is a malty, biscuity amber coloured 4.2% ale brewed by Dawkins.

The Dawkins range of bottle-conditioned beers are reportedly going well at the likes of independent wine merchants Corks of Cotham and Bells Diner in Montpelier.

The brewery is now working on a special brew for the New Year to celebrate the fact that all five Dawkins pubs are listed in the CAMRA Good Beer Guide 2014.

SP

## Truman's returns to East London

For over 300 years until closure in the 1980s, Truman's was one of the most familiar names in British brewing. In September 2013 the name returned to the capital with the opening of a new brewery in east London after a 24 year absence.

Businessmen James Morgan and Michael-George Hemus bought the Truman's name in 2010 from Heineken, who had acquired it when they took over part of Scottish Courage two years earlier. At first they had the beers brewed under contract by Everard's in Leicester and at Nethergate in Essex. Now after an investment of £1million they have opened their own brewery in Hackney Wick, less than three miles from the original brewery in Brick Lane.

After years of planning, the opening of the new 10,000 sq ft brewery – named 'The Eyrie', the term for an Eagle's roost – is an ambitious enterprise. The new 40 brewer's barrel (BBL) capacity brew house specialises in traditional cask ale, making Truman's the biggest cask ale producer in East London.

James Morgan, managing director, commented: "I am just delighted, and not a little humbled, to be able to return Truman's to East London. We are producing brilliant, flavour-packed ale from our new brewery and are working hard to ensure that Truman's beer is once again a great name in brewing."

Truman's was founded in 1666, and was once a heavyweight of British brewing. As early as the 1850s it was brewing 400,000 barrels a year, making it the world's largest brewer. After years of relative decline it fell victim to the merger mania of the 1970s and 1980s, after which the pubs were sold and the brewery closed.

The new Truman's team has retrieved from the National Yeast Bank in Norwich the original yeast strain – "the beer's soul" – that was used at the Brick Lane brewery in its heyday. Preserved in liquid nitrogen since 1958 at temperatures of minus 196°C, the yeast will ensure that the beer produced is authentically Truman's.

To begin with, Truman's is brewing two beers: Truman's Runner (a best bitter) and Truman's Swift (a golden ale); as well as a number of special editions and archive releases. The third permanent member of the range is being created with the help of the customers of the pub chain Nicholson's, who are stocking the brewery's beers.

The 'Great Truman's Taste Test', which sees two competing beers continuously refined according to drinkers' feedback, is taking place throughout the autumn, with the winning beer taking pride of place in the line-up.

Ben Lockwood, assistant brand manager at Nicholson's Pubs, said: "We are particularly delighted to be supporting the revival of one of the UK's biggest names in brewing."

Norman Spalding

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The Hillgrove, Dove St, Kingsdown BS2 8LT  
The Victoria, Southleigh Rd, Clifton BS8 2BH  
The Portcullis, Wellington Tce, Clifton Village BS8 4LE  
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**DAWKINS**



# A grand day out – courtesy of RCH and Twisted Oak breweries

Back in late September around 20 members of the Bristol CAMRA branch enjoyed a great Saturday daytime trip around North Somerset. The idea was triggered when we became aware that both RCH and Twisted Oak breweries were holding their annual open days at the same time.

RCH, based at West Hewish near Weston, have not done brewery tours for many years, but do offer this once-a-year chance to look around and enjoy a few free samples. Twisted Oak are a very new brewery near Congresbury and none of us had visited there before – so the chance just had to be taken!

We were aware that RCH were only open from 10am to 1pm so an early start was required. The plan was to also take the chance to visit a few nearby Good Beer Guide pubs and present their treasured licensee packs which contain that all important GBG 2014 window sticker. As the itinerary was to be a heavy one a long lunch stop at the branch pub of the year – the **Plough** at Congresbury – was also booked in. We became aware in advance that the West Dorset branch of CAMRA were planning a remarkably similar day out so we amended our itinerary to avoid clashing at the Plough.

The coach arrived at RCH around 11am and we were warmly greeted on arrival by the RCH team. West Dorset, also 20 strong, were already there. We were pointed towards no less than six different barrels of beer and invited to sample as many as we wished. Most people tried all six but we also had to remember the long day ahead. Freshly cooked generously sized bacon rolls were also seized upon at a mere £1 each – all money to charity. Somebody had made around half a dozen “Old Slug Porter fruit cakes”



which sold out in minutes too.

which sold out in minutes too.

This visit also gave me, as Brewery Liaison Officer for RCH, the chance to present no less than four “Champion Beer of Britain” regional award certificates to RCH in person (see picture). There cannot be many breweries anywhere in the UK that have won as many as four of these awards in the same year! Pride of place goes to the gold award for RCH Old Slug Porter – which qualifies this fine brew for entry into the final stages of the national Winter Beer of Britain competition. A massively deserved achievement for the RCH team. Pictures show managing director Paul Davey, head brewer Graham Dunbavan and the team accepting their awards.

At around 12.30 we reluctantly dragged ourselves away to the Plough for lunch (though it was a delight to visit the Plough), whilst West Dorset went off to Twisted Oak. A pleasant relaxed hour and a bit later and very well fed, we moved on to Twisted Oak ourselves. At this point it became apparent that we had received rather duff information from a certain well known absent CAMRA member, who shall remain nameless. He had said that Twisted Oak were doing open day until 5pm, when it should have been 2pm! Thus as we arrived at 1.55pm we must have seemed a little rude – however the owner and brewer Keith Hayles took it in his stride and was happy to hang around to give us the full brewery tour and ample time to sample all three of his regular beers. Thanks again Keith for your excellent hospitality. Keith is pictured with us at the brewery.

The next stop was meant to be the **Lamb** at Lower Weare to present them with their first ever Good Beer Guide sticker. Although the freshly reviewed Guide stated that they open all day on Saturdays, this was obviously no longer the case as the doors were well and truly locked and lights out at 3.10pm! So it was on to the nearby **New Inn** at Cross a free house and GBG regular, followed by the **Swan** at Rowberrow – a Butcombe owned pub that also features regularly. The grand day out was completed by an hour long stop at the **Crown** in Churchill which is one of only two pubs in our patch to have featured in all but one year of the Guide’s existence.

This really was an excellent Saturday out and our grateful thanks go again to all at RCH and Twisted Oak for their splendid hospitality.

*Vince Murray (photos by Tony Durbin)*

## Cryptic Crossword

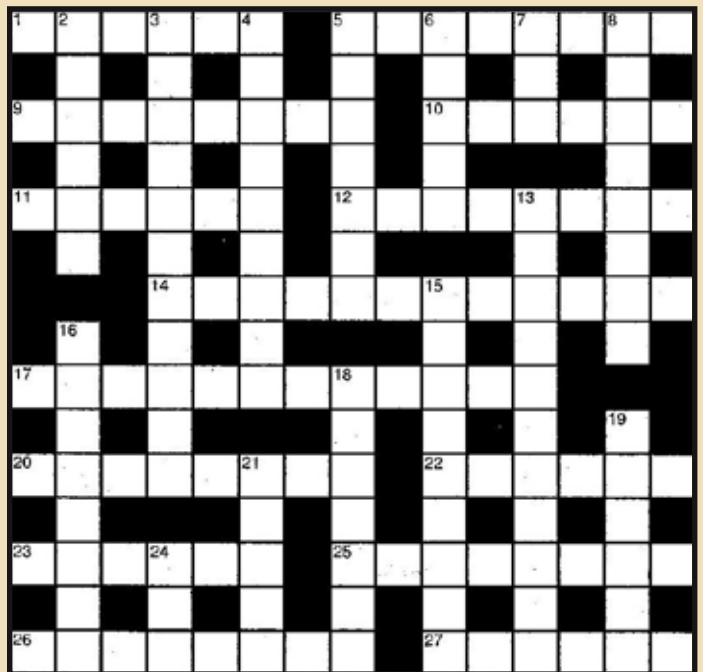
*Compiled by Pete and Eddie Taberner*

### CLUES ACROSS

1. Clever Welsh brewery (6)
5. Sings about one French female (stout) (8)
9. Cognac I drained contained industrial pollution (4, 4)
10. Container for cold tunnel brewery (3, 3)
11. Some might open pale ale for a correspondent (6)
12. The first beer swallowed - the six I added shows (8)
14. Lack of necessity, require smaller bit of 8 dn’s beastly home (12)
17. Drunken ed. rated pickled eggs ’e brought together (12)
20. Provides Holy rest for the drinker when confused (8)
22. A North Yorkshire beer is Stephenson’s fuel (6)
23. Intoxicated state of 24dn on rough Devon hilltop (6)
25. Shepherd Neame with an old flame I included as test candidate (8)
26. Smart son drunk with Pedigree (8)
27. I hear old geezer has tendency to vomit (6)

### CLUES DOWN

2. Iac thought hard and cleared the beer (6)
3. Badly needed pint initially not under the influence (11)
4. Half a pint is of no importance (5, 4)
5. Intoxicated teen gets a leg up to become respectable (7)
6. Person who might slip an ‘E’ into the whisky (3)
7. Female born in The Annexe even (3)
8. Brewers from borders with Newcastle link (8)
13. Sweet liqueur incident with bee swarm (11)
15. A dry as dust cocktail, lacking density, for the weekends (9)



16. Lean tome devoured over non-alcoholic drink (5, 3)
18. Old cider makers, happy people, take me right in (7)
19. Inferior cheap whisky and its consequence (3, 3)
21. Performed slowly in the cellar. Good Heavens! (5)
24. Unlikely to sup up this nasty fluid! (3)

*Solution on page 37*

# Cotswold Spring Brewery



The multi-award-winning Cotswold Spring micro-brewery was established in 2005 and is situated just outside Chipping Sodbury on the southern tip of the Cotswold Hills.

Head brewer Nik Milo's passion for creating unique and flavour-some ales has helped the brewery to great success in national and regional competitions over the past seven or eight years.



Bristol & District CAMRA members were recently invited by managing director, Mark Frankcom, to a celebratory brewery tour and social evening, to observe the brewing process and taste ales such as **Guv'nor** (4.6% dark stout); **Codger** (4.2%) and some new



Cotswold Spring forever winning awards. Left: OSM is Gloucestershire Beer of the Year 2013. Above: OSM gets a Silver in the Champion Beer of Britain 2013 competition

additions to the range such as **Grafter** (4.3%) and **Bard** (a 4.6% pale ale).

Cotswold Spring's latest successes include a silver award in the mild category at the Champion Beer of Britain (CBOB) competition, held at the Great British Beer Festival in August 2013. The award was made to **OSM**, described on its pump clip as 'Old Sodbury, mild mannered, with a long slow finish, the perfect quaffer'. **OSM** and **Stunner** (a 4% golden ale) were also winners at SIBA's national competition in March 2013, with OSM declared Silver Supreme National Champion and Stunner taking bronze in the best bitters category.

Mike Lawrence

## A rebranding for Dartmoor Brewery



After a successful 12 months in the Bristol area, Dartmoor Brewery has taken the next step in establishing its brands with a new brand identity as part of an on-going expansion programme.

The Princetown-based brewery is the highest brewery in the UK at 1,465 feet above sea level and is famous for its Jail Ale, Legend and Dartmoor IPA beers. It has introduced a redesign of its branding to highlight its Dartmoor heritage.

Sales director Tim McCord said: "The new brand style draws on the strong provenance of Dartmoor, reinforcing Dartmoor Brewery as the definitive, authentic brewery on the moor. Inspired by Dartmoor's rich

heritage, a simplified recognisable logo and powerful graphic imagery featuring the iconic Staple Tor has been introduced across Dartmoor Brewery's award-winning beer brands to bring a consistency to the branding and reflect each beer's unique flavour and identity."

A new website – [www.dartmoorbrewery.co.uk](http://www.dartmoorbrewery.co.uk) – has also been launched to reflect the new branding and give visitors details of all the beers produced, a history of the brewery, and a round-up of news and events.

SP



Some of the Dartmoor Brewery team at the unveiling of the new branding

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# Plain Ales



Plain Ales began life as the Bow House Brewery, when owner and managing director James Timoney, a keen amateur brewer, started brewing commercially in the tiny double garage behind his house in Chitterne.

The brewery went into commercial production using a 2.5-barrel plant in October 2008, while James was still working full time in Swindon. Within weeks James' inaugural beer **Innspiration** was short-listed from over a hundred beers in a blind tasting at the CAMRA beer festival in Swindon. At this point the brewery was producing only 10 casks a week but this was confirmation that it was on the right track and, having juggled two jobs for nine months, James left his position as an IT consultant to brew full time in July 2009. By December 2009 demand had outstripped supply and James took the decision to move the brewery to an industrial unit on the Deverill Road Trading Estate in Sutton Veny, three miles down the road. Three upgrades in plant size later, with three fermenters and increased floor space, the brewery now produces 130-plus barrels from three brews per week from its 10-barrel plant and also stocks beer (and cider) from other local breweries for distribution.

The workforce has also expanded and, in addition to James himself, the brewery now employs a brewer, a drayman, a bookkeeper, an apprentice and James' wife Ellie who does the marketing, while James covers sales and anything else that needs doing! Brewer Jim Stoddart



Plain Ales personnel, from left to right: Jim Stoddart (brewer), Andrew Mattson (trainee), James Timoney (owner and MD), Garry Osment (drayman)

came to Plain Ales in July 2010 from Surrey Hills Brewery and by October had won his first award for **Inncognito** at the East Dorset CAMRA Beer Festival.

With their range of core beers, available all year round, Plain Ales aims to provide a wide range of styles and strengths to suit every taste. The core range has the prefix *Inn* and the team had great fun thinking of names that might fit; some that didn't make it off the drawing board include *Innebriated*, *Inntimate* and *Inn-a-pickle*. The inaugural (or *Innaugural*) beer **Innspiration**, a best bitter at 4.0% ABV, was followed in 2009 by **Innocence**, a 4.0% golden bitter. Innocence won Beer of the Festival at West Dorset CAMRA's Oktoberfest in Weymouth in 2009. **Inncognito**, a 4.8% port stout, won Beer of the Festival at East Dorset CAMRA's 13th Beer Festival in Poole in 2011, while *beertoday.co.uk* voted Innocence and Inncognito as its joint Beer of the Year 2011.

Other beers in the core range are **Inntrigue**, a 4.2% ruby best bitter, and **Inndulgence**, a 5.2% ruby porter. Due to popular demand former specials **Arty Farty**, **The Wife's Bitter** and **Sheep Dip** are also now available all year round. Plain Ales also offers a bespoke service of an ale designed specifically for the client.

Plain Ales beers can be found in pubs as far north as Preston and as far south as St Ives in Cornwall, as well as throughout West Wiltshire, and have even been exported to Norway. The beers are also available 'on tap' direct from the brewery, where members of the public can drop in for a pint or take home a carry-out. So if you find yourself in the vicinity of Sutton Veny, why not pop in?

David Hartley

## 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**, Gloucester Road, Lower Morton, Thornbury
- **Bank**, John Street, Bristol
- **Bear Inn**, Walliscote Road, Weston-super-Mare
- **Beaufort Arms**, North Road, Stoke Gifford
- **Black Swan (Dirty Duck)**, Stoke Lane, 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
- **Cotham Porter Stores**, Cotham Rd South, Kingsdown, Bristol
- **Drawbridge**, St Augustines Parade, Bristol (city centre)
- **Famous Royal Navy Volunteer**, King Street, Bristol
- **Globe**, Church Road, Frampton Cotterell
- **Grapes**, Rounceval Street, Chipping Sodbury
- **Gilly's**, High Street, 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**, Badminton Road, Mayhill
- **Old Stillage**, Church Road, Redfield, Bristol
- **Orchard Inn**, Hanover Place, Bristol
- **Queens Arms**, Celtic Way, Bleadon
- **Robert Fitzharding**, Cannon Street, Bedminster, Bristol
- **Royal Oak**, Lower Bristol Road, Twerton, Bath
- **Seven Stars**, Thomas Lane, Redcliffe, Bristol
- **Three Brooks**, Bradley Stoke District Centre, Bradley Stoke
- **Three Tuns**, St George's Road, Hotwells, Bristol
- **Volunteer Tavern**, New Street, St Judes, Bristol
- **Westbury Park Tavern**, Northumbria Drive, Henleaze, Bristol
- **White Lion**, Quay Head, Colston Avenue, Bristol (city centre)
- **Woolpack Inn**, Shepherds Way, St Georges, Weston-super-Mare



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.

# Wessex Brewery



Wessex Brewery is located on a farm in the rolling countryside of South Wiltshire. Chaz Hobden, owner and brewer, has been brewing on this site for 12 years on his elderly 3½-barrel plant, although the fermenters are very modern conicals and produce about 750 barrels a year.

The beer portfolio is very extensive with many seasonal and special beers available, some to order.

Chaz is a very experienced and skilled brewer having worked for Ushers and Watneys and as a locum brewer at Tisbury, Oakhill and Goldfinch breweries. However his skills go beyond just brewing. He will design and build and has commissioned breweries such as Springhead and Evan Evans as well as providing a problem solving consultancy service to other or fledgling breweries. He has been involved in trial brewing projects with Hatty Browns, Avalon and Kennet & Avon breweries as well as training new and potential brewers, allowing them to use his plant. He is an advocate of 'pop-up' pubs and has recently opened just such a pub in Devizes. Wessex Brewery also distributes various cider brands in keg, poly cask and bottle.

All of this is achieved alone; there are no employees or part-timers or silent partners. The brewery is the man; the man is the brewery.

Paul Smith

# Kennet & Avon Brewery



Founded earlier this year, Kennet & Avon is one of region's newest breweries. For the moment the beers are being brewed at **Wessex Brewery**, near Longbridge Deverill, Warminster, whilst K&A's founder and proprietor Malcolm Shipp is gently establishing the brand.

Meanwhile, on Friday 25th October, Malcolm and his business partner Chaz Hobden of Wessex Brewery opened the first of what they hope will be a chain of independent beer specialist pubs in the area, the **Vaults**, in the former Lignum antiques shop on St John's Street in Devizes. The pub, which in business terms is separate from the brewery, is part of a joint venture between Chaz and Malcolm called the **Pop-Up Pub Company**.

Malcolm plans to open a new 15-barrel-brew-length brewery alongside the Kennet & Avon canal itself at the Old Sawmills, Sells Green, Seend, next door to Roy Francis Plant Hire at Martinslade Bridge. There are a range of industrial units being built on this site, including a block of three units and a further block of eight. K&A is proposing to take two units of the block of three and has been offered the option on the third unit for a year. There will be a slight change of use requirement in order to brew from this site but the brewery has done a pre-application enquiry to the council which returned a reasonably positive outcome. The brewery will make its application when the frame of the building goes up in the next few weeks. K&A has also spoken to the Canal and River Trust about having a zig-zag path down to the towpath so that boaters, cyclists and pedestrians can access the retail counter without using the road. Again the feedback here has been positive.

For the moment though the brewery is establishing the brand across the region, in particular around Devizes, where it is seeing many successful listings for both bottles and casks.

All the beer names take their theme uniquely from the brewery's watery namesake. Beers produced so far are **Pillbox** (4.0%), **Dundas** (4.2%), **Rusty Lane** (4.4%) and **Caen Hill Hop** (5.0%), the latter having just received an award for beer of the festival at Wickham Beer Festival in Hampshire. Planned beers are a session beer **Bedwyn** (3.7%), a porter called **Bruce** (4.7%) and a honey beer called **Honeystreet** (4.5%) and several more undecided at present.

Malcolm has been involved with pubs and brewing in the Bristol area. He had a short-term lease on the Swan With Two Necks in St Jude's where he held the first ever (as far as we are aware) Irish cask ale festival. In 2001 he started the Nursery Brewery in Keynsham and at the same time had the nearby Old Bank pub. He also ran a large wholesale company called Shipping Beer, supplying a large number of pubs and beer festivals across the country, from the same site as the brewery.

Malcolm has known Chaz Hobden, proprietor and head brewer of Wessex brewery and formerly a manager at Usher's, for over 20 years,



Malcolm Shipp in the Vaults

and Chaz was Malcolm's first choice to design and brew K&A's first beers, all of which have turned out to be excellent, and whilst Chaz won't be the brewer at the new plant, he will certainly be on hand to make sure the recipes match.

## The Vaults

Described as a micro-pub, the Vaults is a small pub specialising in real ales and bottled beers. It serves at least one K&A beer on draught on rotation but is otherwise fiercely independent about choice.

There are two rooms for drinkers while the cellar is to be converted into a bottled beer shop. The furniture has been made from scrap and recycled timber by local artist Jonathan Rigg. Lesley Symons, who formerly ran the Porter Blacks (Wetherspoon's) in Chippenham, is the pub's new manager.

The range consists of up to five real ales and a real cider and around 80 bottled beers.

The Vaults is currently open from 12 to 3 and 5 to 9 on Monday to Thursday, 12 to 9 on Friday and Saturday, and 12 to 3 on Sunday. It is likely that these hours will be extended once the bottled beer shop downstairs is fully operational.

The new pub has very much the atmosphere of a small Irish pub and, whilst it is primarily aimed very much at the beer connoisseur, it caters for wide ranging clientele. It also sells wines, coffee and soft drinks. In a town that has lost at least four pubs in the past few years, the opening of the Vaults comes as a very welcome new addition.

*Steve Hunt*

## Bristol CAMRA membership passes 3,000

The total membership of the Bristol & District branch of CAMRA has exceeded the 3,000 mark for the first time ever. This reflects the national trend where CAMRA membership, which first passed the 100,000 figure as recently as 2009, now stands at over 156,000.

At a time when beer sales are in overall decline, it is heartening to see that real ale is increasing its market share. This, coupled with the astonishing rise in the numbers of new breweries, is all very positive. Of course, this is all against a backdrop of high numbers of pub closures which is both very worrying and sad for local communities, and also bad news for consumer choice. The issues and reasons behind pub closures are well documented in recent issues of this newsletter and CAMRA will continue to fight for issues such as planning laws to be changed to give much greater protection.

Perhaps it would be fair to say that the upturn in CAMRA membership is a reflection of the growing interest in real ale. As has been said in previous articles in Pints West, CAMRA not only saved real ale, it created and continues to sustain an interest in which this fantastic and diverse style of beer can thrive. This is achieved as a result of CAMRA spreading the word via its many beer festivals, its publications such as the Good Beer Guide, the many branch magazines such as the one you are reading now, its media profile, and by word of mouth and the enthusiasm of its many members. Speaking as just one member, I have got quite a number

of people into real ale, and if this is multiplied by a substantial portion of the membership, perhaps we can see why there is now such an interest in our favourite beer style.

All of this, coupled with the many successes in numerous other campaigning areas, makes CAMRA an organisation that has been of great benefit to the pub user – particularly if your favourite tippie is real ale, or real cider and perry.

Compared to many other national organisations, CAMRA is very good value with annual membership just £23 for a year or £28 for joint membership (£2 extra for non-direct debit payers). With discounts in many pubs and a range of other benefits, for many members this can make the annual membership fee a real bargain. There are also the branch socials including brewery trips, pub crawls, branch meetings, etc, which all members are welcome to attend. But most important of all, for those who join, you will know that you belong to a campaign that is doing all it can to protect pubs, breweries, and drinkers' rights.

CAMRA will continue to campaign on a whole range of issues as well as enjoying some great beer along the way. We also welcome new members all the time so, if you haven't joined yet, why not do it today?

Simply visit [www.camra.org.uk](http://www.camra.org.uk) and click on "join" or, fill in the form in this magazine. And, don't forget, it's better value to join by direct debit.

*Pete Bridle*

# A Campaign

# of Two Halves

Fair deal on beer tax now!

Save Britain's Pubs!



## Join CAMRA Today

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

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

### Your Details

Title \_\_\_\_\_ Surname \_\_\_\_\_  
 Forename(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Tel No(s) \_\_\_\_\_

	Direct Debit	Non DD
Single Membership (UK & EU)	£23 <input type="checkbox"/>	£25 <input type="checkbox"/>
Joint Membership (Partner at the same address)	£28 <input type="checkbox"/>	£30 <input type="checkbox"/>

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

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

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

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

Applications will be processed within 21 days

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

Title \_\_\_\_\_ Surname \_\_\_\_\_  
 Forename(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy) \_\_\_\_\_

PINTS WEST (Bristol & District) - Edition 100

01/06

## Campaigning for Pub Goers & Beer Drinkers

## Enjoying Real Ale & Pubs

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



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Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

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  - If you receive a refund you are not entitled to, you must pay it back when The Campaign For Real Ale Ltd asks you to
- You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by simply contacting your bank or building society. Written confirmation may be required. Please also notify us.

# Branch diary

## Diary of the Bristol & District branch of CAMRA

- **Wed 4<sup>th</sup> Dec** – Committee Meeting, Gryphon 8pm
- **Sun 8<sup>th</sup> Dec** – Christmas Social, Gryphon 7pm
- **Tues 17<sup>th</sup> Dec** – Gloucester Road Christmas Crawl, start Lazy Dog 6.45pm, then Annexe, Robin Hood, Cider Press.
  
- **Sun 5<sup>th</sup> Jan** – Westbury Wobble, start Victoria and Mouse 12-1.15pm, then RAFA Club 1.15pm, Post Office Tavern 2.30pm, Black Swan (Dirty Duck) and Prince of Wales 3.15pm, White Horse and White Lion 4.15pm
- **Wed 8<sup>th</sup> Jan** – Survey/Explorer Trip, Cross City (south), dep Cornubia 6.45pm
- **Thurs 9<sup>th</sup> Jan** – Bristol Pubs Group, Bag of Nails 7pm
- **Tues 14<sup>th</sup> Jan** – Committee Meeting, Gryphon 8pm
- **Thurs 16<sup>th</sup> Jan** – BADRAG Meeting, Three Tuns 7.30pm
- **Wed 22<sup>nd</sup> Jan** – Branch meeting – Crofters Rights 7.30pm
- **Wed 29<sup>th</sup> Jan** – Survey/Explorer Trip, Weston-super-Mare fringes, dep Cornubia 6.45pm
- **Fri 31<sup>st</sup> Jan** – Meet and Greet, the George, Chipping Sodbury 7.30pm (coach from Cornubia 6.45pm)
  
- **Sat 1<sup>st</sup> Feb** – Bristol Pubs Group Crawl, start Eldon House 2pm, then Lion, Mardyke, Bear, Pump House, Nova Scotia, Cottage and Orchard
- **Tues 11<sup>th</sup> Feb** – Committee Meeting, Gryphon 8pm
- **Wed 12<sup>th</sup> Feb** – Survey/Explorer Trip, East Bristol, dep Cornubia 6.45pm
- **Sat 15<sup>th</sup> Feb** – BADRAG Meeting, Hophouse, Clifton 2pm
- **Tues 18<sup>th</sup> Feb** – Survey/Explorer Trip, Cross City (north), dep Cornubia 6.45pm
- **Wed 26<sup>th</sup> Feb** – Branch Meeting, Anchor, Thornbury 8pm (coach from Cornubia 6.45pm)

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

## Need more Pints Wests?

If your pub requires more copies of Pints West (subject to availability), please contact the distribution coordinator: email [pintswest@gmail.com](mailto:pintswest@gmail.com).

## 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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## brought to you entirely by unpaid volunteers

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

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[Steve.Plumridge.PintsWest@gmail.com](mailto:Steve.Plumridge.PintsWest@gmail.com)

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**Published by** the Bristol & District Branch of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale, end of November 2013 ©

**Next edition:** end of February 2014 (probably).

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

**CAMRA Good Beer Guide:** suggestions for future entries, and comments on existing ones, can be made to our GBG co-ordinator, Vince Murray: [vincent.murray@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:vincent.murray@blueyonder.co.uk).

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

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**Design & Layout:** Steve Plumridge.

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



## Bath & Borders diary

- **Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> Dec 8:30pm:** A social at the Castle in Bradford on Avon.
- **Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> Dec, 8:30pm:** A social at the Duke of Cumberland, at Holcombe.
- **Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> Dec, 8:30pm:** A social at the Pultney Arms in Daniel Street, Bath.

See [www.bathandborderscamra.org.uk/events](http://www.bathandborderscamra.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](mailto:denis.rahilly@talktalk.net).

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

## Weston diary and contact

See page 30

## Severn Vale diary and contact

See page 35

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Inclusion of an advertisement does not imply endorsement by CAMRA.

# 100 PINTS WEST

Multi-award-winning magazine of the Bristol & District and Bath & Borders branches of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale

## Pints West celebrates its 100<sup>th</sup> edition

In the late Spring of 1989, Avon Drinker, the forerunner to Pints West, hit the pubs of Bristol as a four-page “free sheet”. It was launched to heighten people’s awareness of real ale and has been the local branch of CAMRA’s campaigning vehicle ever since. Under the long-standing editorship of Steve Plumridge, who took over from issue 23 (Spring/Summer 1994 edition) it has evolved into the multi-award-winning glossy magazine (you can hardly call it a free sheet any more) it is today. This is some feat of achievement when you consider that Steve, and Pints West’s many contributors, are all volunteers. There are in excess of 200 CAMRA branches in the UK, many of which produce newsletters, and to win the top accolade (CAMRA Branch Magazine of the Year) four times is remarkable.

We have seen a lot of changes in the beer, brewing and pubs industry over these last 100 editions. In 1989 we had six massive brewing conglomerates who, by virtue of near monopoly, were able to distort competition and choice. In what was Avon at that time, we had just three independent brewers challenging Courage and Bass for a share of the beer market in the pubs of Bristol: these were Butcombe, Smiles, and the new micro-brewery Ross which started off in Hartcliffe. We lost Smiles in 2006 and, although Mike Ross hasn’t brewed for a long time, you can still catch up with him at the Brewers’ Droop shop on Gloucester Road. Butcombe, of course, goes from strength to strength and, since the demise of the Courage Bristol brewery, is now our biggest brewer. This is a far cry from the situation we have today: we now have over a dozen independent real ale breweries in the Bristol & District branch area, and a similar number in the area covered by the Bath & Borders branch, but although people’s awareness of real ale has certainly been raised, the campaigning focus

has switched to the city and surrounding area’s pubs. It’s all very well having lots of real ale choice but if there’s nowhere to sell it, we’re all doomed!

Pubs need all the help they can get at present. They’re closing at an alarming rate, and CAMRA – through its national parliamentary lobbying and, in Bristol, the forming of a dedicated Pubs Group – sees it as a top priority. Largely gone are the days of the traditional tied estate, whereby it was the brewery that simply charged its tenants rent and oversaw the upkeep of its pubs. Legislation, although well meaning, has not been helpful. Now the licensee, more often than not, has to enter into extortionate lease and supply agreements with pub-owning chains and pay rent on top of that. Pubs have had to cope with the smoking ban and our level of beer duty is one of the highest in Europe making a visit to the pub unaffordable for many who end up picking up cheaper drinks with the weekly shop at the supermarket.

Every 12 to 18 months, CAMRA focuses its efforts on specific campaigns. These are currently to encourage more people to try a range of real ales, cider and perries – this is going particularly well in the centre of Bristol with the opening and re-opening of a number of bars and pubs serving exciting ranges of real ale. We continue to campaign to stop tax killing beer and pubs; CAMRA is also lobbying to secure an effective government support package for pubs and is trying to raise the profile of pub-going and increase the number of people using pubs regularly. Regarding the latter, why not come along to one of our many social events and lend your support to these campaigns. With CAMRA membership at an all time high, we’ve come a long way, ably assisted by Avon Drinker/Pints West, since 1989!

*Alison Bridle*

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**

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



OTTER BREWERY  
[www.otterbrewery.com](http://www.otterbrewery.com)