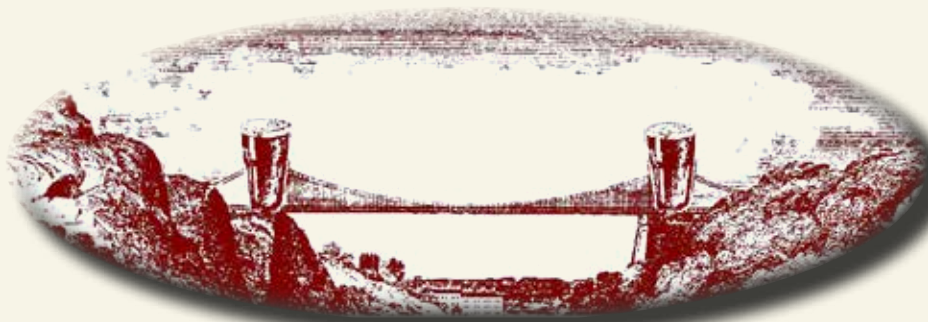




CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE

AWARD-WINNING



CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE

www.camrabristol.org.uk

# PINTS WEST

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

## What Pub?



Bottles		Lager & Continental	
4.5/	£3.80	Flensburger Gold	Germany 330ml 4.8/
7.1/	£3.80	Brooklyn Lager	Brooklyn USA 335ml 5.2/
7.0/	£3.60	Modelo Especial	Mexico City Mexico 335ml 4.5/
6.5/	£4.00	Kirin Ichiban	Japan 330ml 5.0/
6.0/	£4.00	Estrella Damm	Barcelona Spain 330ml 4.6/
7.3/	£3.30	Estrella Daura	Gumbrales Barcelona Spain 330ml 5.4/
6.5/	£4.00	Cuzcampo	Suilla Spain 330ml 4.8/
		Heineken	Amsterdam Holland 330ml 5.0/
		Menabrea	Italy 330ml 4.9/
		Kasteel Kru	France 330ml 5.2/
		Pauwel Kwak	Belgium 330ml 8.4/
		Lefse Brune	Belgium 330ml 6.5/
6.1/	£3.80	Erdinger	Germany 500ml 5.3/
7.7/	£4.00	Bacchus, Cherry Kriek	Belgium 375ml 5.8/
5.2/	£3.80	Bacchus, Raspberry Kriek	Belgium 375ml 5.0/
4.7/	£3.80	Tripel Karmeliet	Belgium 330ml 8.4/
7.1/	£4.00	Cold Label Barley Wine	Wilton UK 180ml 8.5/
4.5/	£3.80	Superbock	Austria 330ml 5.2/
5.0/	£3.60	Bitburger Drive	Germany 330ml 5.2/
5.2/	£3.80		
5.9/	£3.60		



# WhatPub?

The latest on [whatpub.com](http://whatpub.com), CAMRA's online pub guide, totally free to CAMRA members and non-members alike, and written by drinkers like you! *Duncan Shine explains all.*

In the last issue of Pints West, we featured [whatpub.com](http://whatpub.com), CAMRA's first ever online pub guide. 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!

We also asked you to get involved, and update the details of the pubs you visit to make sure [Whatpub.com](http://Whatpub.com) remains the most up-to-date and complete online pub guide out there... And what a response!

In the two months after the last issue of Pints West came out, we had an astonishing 323 separate pub updates through the [whatpub.com](http://whatpub.com) website. From Cheddar to Chipping Sodbury, we had updates on beers sold, phone numbers, wifi details, new pub pictures, pretty much every aspects of pub life.

On behalf of all local drinkers, thank you so much to all those who have contributed to making Bristol & District the best branch at updating the most complete online pub guide ever assembled.

At random, here are half a dozen of the updates we received: (Please note, some of these updates may already be out of date, so please tell us if they are!)

**Lamb, Axbridge:** Selling Butcombe Bitter, Cheddar Potholer and a guest beer;

**Star & Dove, Bedminster:** A lovely new picture of the bar area (*see front cover*);

**Gilly's, Chipping Sodbury:** The opening of a new bar selling five real ales;

**Whitehall Tavern, Bristol:** Selling Courage Best and Directors as well as Sharp's Doom Bar;

**Oxford, Totterdown:** Now selling a range of Arbor Ales' beers;

**Crofters Rights:** A complete update covering opening hours, nearby bus routes, live music offerings and the full beer range.

There are far too many updates to list here, so it's worth checking out the Pub News pages in this issue of Pints West. Also, go to [whatpub.com](http://whatpub.com) and check out the pubs near you. The Bristol & District branch of CAMRA now lists 590 separate real ale establishments, which is more than any other branch in the country. We have full details on 98% of those pubs. And that figure doesn't even include the pubs covered by our Weston-super-Mare and Severn Vale sub-branches.

## AN APPEAL FOR 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!

Please do make use of [whatpub.com](http://whatpub.com), and let us know any details which need to be updated. The more drinkers tell us, the better and more useful resource [whatpub.com](http://whatpub.com) becomes. If you use [whatpub.com](http://whatpub.com) and visit a pub that is pretty much exactly as described, then that is because someone like you took a few minutes to share what they found with drinkers the world over. Now it's your turn to repay the favour!

Specifically, we would love to hear about any of the pubs in the following areas: **Easton, Emersons Green/Downend, Keynsham, Worle, Alveston & Olveston, Cotham, Henleaze and Horfield.**

But any information about any pub or club that sells real ale will make a world of difference!

## HOW TO HELP . . .

### 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.

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Created by CAMRA who produce the UK's best beer & pub guide

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Search: Cornubia

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Ruck Mills  
Gristol  
BS1 1EN

View on Map

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✉ Send an email to the pub  
🌐 [thecornubia.co.uk](http://thecornubia.co.uk)

Opening Hours  
12-11 (11.30 Thu-Sat); closed Sun

About the Pub  
This used to be the Hospitality Suite of the nearby...

Date of visit  
06 / 11 / 2013

Score (0-5)  
e.g. 4.5 (rounded)

Brewery  
e.g. Greene King

Beer  
e.g. BA

Show advanced options

Submit Score

## Update the details!

- **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.)

whatpub.com

WHAT?PUB

Search for pubs... Nearby pubs

e.g. place name, pub name...

Search for pubs only

Places must serve real ale

Welcome back, Duncan  
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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!



# Bristol Beer Festival

## Tickets still available (at the time of writing)

At the time of writing tickets are still available for a number of sessions of the 2014 CAMRA Bristol Beer Festival. You can go to [www.camrabristol.org.uk](http://www.camrabristol.org.uk) for more information including details of how to buy these online, or go and see what they have left in the **Seven Stars**, Thomas Lane, Bristol.

Sterling efforts by local CAMRA volunteers ensured that the organised ticket sales sessions went smoothly at the member session at the Commercial Rooms and the public sale at the Old Fish Market. The enormous queue of customers that had arrived early for the member session was processed efficiently and members arriving after 1pm were able to walk straight in and purchase their tickets with no delay. Around 25 people also signed up to join CAMRA. Unusually, fewer people turned up for the second "public" sales session so that queue was processed even quicker. This also meant that some tickets were still available for the beer festival sessions that normally sell out early in the day. Ticket sales also took place at Off the Rails in Weston-super-Mare and we would like to thank all the venues for their cooperation.

The seventeenth annual CAMRA Bristol Beer Festival runs from Thursday 13th to Saturday 15th March 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. 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 [www.camrabristol.org.uk](http://www.camrabristol.org.uk) as it will feature further beer festival information including updates about ticket availability and the beer and cider lists as they become available.

*Richard Brooks*



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

Ticket sales sessions at the Old Fish Market (left) and the Commercial Rooms (below)



# The Vittoria - very much still a pub!

**H**ave you ever really put your foot in it? You know the sort of thing, asking someone 'what they've come as' only to be told they didn't know it was a fancy dress party; or saying 'it was good to see you in the Red Lion last week' to a friend, only to discover from the horrified look on your friend's husband's face that the trip to the Red Lion had been very much *off-piste*. Well, we at Pints West committed a similar faux pas in the last issue.

One of our contributors (who we won't name as we know Duncan Shine is sensitive about admitting his mistakes) wrote a piece in which he passed on the sad news that the Vittoria on Whiteladies Road was soon to close, and be converted to a trendy cocktail bar. Worrying news indeed, particularly for Jenni Muller and Hayley Beale, who had just agreed a three-year lease with Star Pubs & Bars and were actually planning to refurbish the pub before reopening it very much still as a pub!

So, in order to set the record straight, Pints West returned to the Vittoria in February to hear at first hand what was planned for this charming and historic hostelry.

The first thing to strike you is the change in the exterior colour. For years and years the Vittoria was swathed in a kind of bright terra cotta glow. It stood out like it had just failed the auditions for Balamory. Now, there is an elegant but understated feel to the British Racing Green paintwork and gold script lettering which spells out the name. The old Guinness mural has gone, and a Victorian style lamp shines brightly to draw weary travellers in.

Inside, I'm introduced to Jenni and we sit down for a few minutes over a pint of 'Vittoria Ale' (of which more later), and a coffee. Jenni and Hayley are both experienced in the licensed trade, but this is their first joint venture running a pub. They chose the Vittoria partly because it's such a lovely building, and partly for the prime location. Clifton Down remains very busy with both pedestrians and drivers, and is on the 'feeder' route for people visiting the pub before heading into town for a meal or to visit their favourite late night haunt.

The refurbishment now complete, Jenni explains to me that, as the pub is naturally a warm space, she has kept the interior very simple and traditional, with earthy colours, bare floorboards and exposed brick-work. The open fire is crackling away as we chat, and there is something tremendously welcoming and calming about the smell of kindling.

The kitchen is open, and food is available from 12 till 3 and again from 5 till 9 (all day till 8pm on a Sunday).

The idea is to create the atmosphere of a community pub that is equally welcoming to men and to women (and indeed to dogs, who will need to get along with Otis, a German Shepherd/Labrador cross). The rear of the pub is adorned on one side with publishing and editing paraphernalia, while on the other is the 'Art Wall' where local artists are encouraged to display and sell their work. There is a television, but this is to be used for major news events rather than just act as a chattering Cyclops in the corner. There will be live music on a Friday, with the emphasis on local musicians.

Hayley is in charge of the cellar and real ale selection. The plan is to have three real ales on at any one time. The 'Vittoria Ale' I tried is actually Caledonian 80/- rebadged and will be a resident beer alongside



St Austell Tribute. There will also be a guest from the Star Pubs list, which includes some local and unusual beers. Butcombe Bitter (local, but not unusual I guess) was the guest on my visit.

So, far from being a 'trendy cocktail bar', the Vittoria has re-emerged as a warm, welcoming and inclusive pub in the best traditions of the building it occupies.

Duncan Shine

# What's up at the Lansdown in Clifton?

It's not too close yet not too far from the Victorian townhouses, the university, shops, offices and flats. It's for this reason that on any day, the people you will come across in the Lansdown could include the rich and famous, students, workers, professionals, families and, of course, real ale drinkers. All are given a warm welcome by the landlord Charles Yaxley and his wife Amanda.

On the evening I visited, seven handpumps were stood to attention dispensing Exmoor Ale (3.8%), GWB Hambrook Pale Ale (4.0%), Otter Amber (4.0%), St Austell Tribute (4.2%), Hook Norton Old Hooky (4.6%), Cheddar Ales Totty Pot (4.5%) and Adlestons Premium Cloudy Cider (5.2%). During the summer months this usually reverts to six handpumps of which two are ciders.

Charles believes that "ale should be to an Englishman what wine is to a Frenchman." So as to provide a wide choice, there are never two beers on from the same brewery. He aims to keep a full range of styles available, from the session beer, to the pale, the golden, the best, the premium, and the dark, but if this is too much to choose from you can ask for a taster to help make your mind up. The beer is sourced mainly from South West breweries and he tries to give them the consistency of supply they strive for, by keeping the popular ones on for a few months before changing them. Occasionally he will bring in a couple of smaller polypins to maintain the variety and more importantly the freshness of the beer.

The wine drinker is catered for with a list of seven whites and seven reds; the menu lists a variety of meals including a new range of meat pies hand crafted from scratch on the premises. The Sunday lunch is always popular and can be taken in the main bar, the covered, heated garden area, or the terrace in the summer.

Charles originates from North Yorkshire, having grown up with the school, the church and the pub forming the heart of the community. His values are as old fashioned as the gas lights that burn in the bar. Since starting out at the Lansdown nine years ago, he believes he has achieved what he set out to do: "I am fiercely proud that the Lansdown is the best community pub in Clifton, but we are not resting on our laurels."

The sorts of events which have contributed to this position will continue to take place over the next few months: the Six Nations Rugby



Landlord Charles Yaxley behind the bar at the Lansdown

and the World Cup will all be shown on the big screen; to coincide with BADRAG's Clifton Mild Trail, there will be a mini beer festival on April 26th, featuring ten extra real ales (in addition to the usual half dozen on the bar), live music and food; to serve the community, the upstairs function is always available at no charge for local gatherings and events.

The pub, which started out 130 years as a coaching inn and was formerly known as a 'hotel', has continued to grow in popularity to the point that last year an extra real ale handpump was added. The invitation is there to see "what's up" at the Lansdown, to have a drink amongst the friendly locals and keep all those beers flowing!

*Michael Bertaque*

*The Lansdown, 8 Clifton Road, Clifton, Bristol, BS8 1AF*

## News from GWB

The newest edition to the Great Western Brewery (GWB) bottle and cask range is **Moose River** (5.0% ABV). It has already been well accepted in the trade, with sales exceeding expectations. The 'Moose' is brewed with all American hops. Golden-amber in colour, first impressions are of crisp grapefruit with caramel undertones. The nose is a lemon-sweet mix. A delicious full bodied India Pale Ale brewed with all American hops, Chinook and Amarillo, it has a fine balance between bitter and sweet on the tongue and finishes zesty and fruity. We are told that after a few pints the saying among the regulars at the brewery tap, the **Rising Sun** in Frampton Cotterell, is 'You've been Moosed'.

This is the first generally available beer GWB have brewed in a non-UK style. It is very similar to the **Bristol Belle** (5%) American IPA already brewed exclusively for the JD Wetherspoon chain. Moose River is available, not only to the trade but also to the public, via the brewery shop in Hambrook.

2014 promises to be an interesting year for GWB with plans to move into the realms of exotic tastes and new styles with assistance from Bob, an enthusiastic home-brewer who has won a silver award with his French and Belgian style beers. Bob has just joined the GWB team, promising to be a great asset.

*Henry Davies*

## Cheddar Ales

Cheddar Ales have a fifth fermenting vessel arriving soon, making their weekly brewing capacity 100 brewery barrels (circa 29000 pints). They are also doing some bottling for two other breweries in the area. Sales have been strong and production was up 10.2% in 2013 from 2012. Expect more of the same consistency and quality throughout 2014 with what the odd special thrown in for good measure. They also have a new, full time driver starting in March of this year.

*Jan Deverell*

Great Western Brewing Company  
Hambrook, Bristol, BS16 1RF

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# Bedminster update

A quick look at two pubs enjoying a new lease of life in Bedminster these days...

In West Street, the Full Moon at number 51 had been serving since 1822 but in recent years was looking tired and past its best. My notes from a few years back record a pub in poor decorative order, offering Bass and Courage Best, which at the time I described as ‘barely’ drinkable. There is no implied criticism of past licencees who will have done their best with an old building, but something needed to change.

Enter the **Hare**, which is something of a transformation. Actually, from the outside it doesn’t look that different even now. The name change and old Usher’s livery has gone, and the Full Moon sign has been replaced by a pretty illustration of the eponymous leporine. But inside is where the real difference is clear.

It’s a bright and cheerful space with square tiled flooring at the front and a raised carpeted area to the rear. Simple wooden furniture is dotted around the edge of the pub, and the top-lit bar showcases a good range of real ales. There are usually three on tap, with beers from the New Bristol Brewery and the Box Steam Brewery often featured alongside something from further afield.

In addition there are regular theme nights such as Belgian Beer and American Beer evenings, quiz nights and live music. It’s worth noting, though, that the pub is only open in the evenings (from 5pm on Monday to Thursday and slightly earlier at the weekend). There is a ‘secret’ garden though, and this is open till 10pm when the light and the weather allow.

The Hare is proof that with the right team in place there is no reason why traditional pubs can’t be invigorated and made very relevant to 21st century drinkers. Well worth a visit.

Head back down North Street towards central Bedminster and you will notice an establishment called the **Steam Crane** on your left. Originally a coaching inn, this place seems to have had more names than Elizabeth Taylor. It was the Florikan & Firkin for a while, and the Aurora, and Bar Salt, and the Bay, and probably two or three other names that I have forgotten.



The Hare



The Steam Crane

But in its latest guise it is promoted as an *Alehouse and Kitchen*. It’s been refurbished and the emphasis is on ‘eye catching’ interior design (chandeliers and candles, for example), and art work on the walls.

In terms of beer, there are up to six real ales on at any one time, as well as maybe the same number of keg ‘craft beers’. Again, it’s only open in the evenings (but till late), but it’s good to hear of a much changed pub trying to make a go of selling decent beer.

*Duncan Shine*

**AMBER ALERT**

OTTER AMBER

One to watch out for from the Good Pub Guide’s 2013 Brewery of the Year

OTTER BREWERY  
www.otterbrewery.com

THE GOOD PUB GUIDE  
BREWERY OF THE YEAR 2013

## Willy Good Ale: latest news

Willy Good Ale brewery is based at the Hartley’s Farm Shop on the Winsley by-pass near Bradford-on-Avon in Wiltshire. It is run by head brewer Will Southgate with the help of his family, together with marketing and sales person, Madelaine Ryan.

Their bottle-conditioned **Willy Brown** appeared in the spring edition of CAMRA’s *Beer* magazine where it was described by the resident bottled beer critic Des de Moor as: “A rich and substantial brown ale with shades of a German bock. A juicy, sappy palate dries on the finish with biscuit and roast coffee notes, and firmly resinous hops.”

Always interested in producing experimental brews, their latest offering **Trip Hop**, a tasty and hoppy IPA, is brewed to an ABV of 6.6% using the appropriately named “Experimental 366” hops. Fans of Kid Loco, Massive Attack, Portishead, etc, may also like this beer – who knows?

*Graham Walker*

# Small Bar - Big Pub!

Something is definitely stirring in King Street, central Bristol. When I first moved to Bristol in the late 1980s it was one of the main places for drinking real ale in Bristol. The atmospheric old cobbled street adjoining the harbour along Welsh Back is ideally situated. Somehow it faded somewhat as other streets such as Corn Street and Whiteladies Road saw almost every commercial premises turned into a bar of some sort in the following decades. Beery pubs still existed but were more scattered around the centre except for the cluster around Victoria Street. Pubs in King Street came and went with only the Old Duke and Llandoger Trow remaining constant – truly fine historic and characterful pubs, but neither renowned specifically for their beer offering. Now all that has changed and King Street may now be THE place for beer in Bristol once again! First came the opening of the Beer Emporium on the site of a former Indian restaurant, then the reopening of the Famous Royal Navy Volunteer with a new emphasis on beer. And now we have yet another fantastic new beer bar along the same short street.

The **Small Bar** opened its doors without any fanfare on Wednesday 4th December 2013. Most recently known as Sublime and previously as the Bunch of Grapes and Dr Thirsty's Surgery, this is a bar that is not actually very small as it consists of two adjoining buildings one of which also has an upstairs lounge area. A couple of us happened to wander past on opening night and decided to venture in. We were very pleasantly surprised at what we found. First of all we were warmly greeted by friendly staff who explained the beer offerings to us and offered free tasters of any beer that we showed interest in. It was immediately obvious that they were very well informed and seemed to have a genuine passion for beer. We have been back many times since and this level of service has been maintained every time, which is impressive.

The pub is the brainchild of Bruce Grey from Edinburgh. Together with his wife, he was involved in a similar venture up there called the Hanging Bat in Lothian Road. They have now brought the concept to Bristol. The manager day to day is Jack Granger all the way from Melbourne, Australia.

At this stage it is necessary to advise that Small Bar is a little different from the norm in several ways. The first is that it is not possible to buy any beer as a pint measure! All beers are offered in suggested sizes of a third, a half or two thirds of a pint mainly dependent on how strong the beer is. There are no pump clips, just a series of tall steel beer dispensers. All beers are listed on a blackboard above the bar and arranged by style with an indication in brackets whether the beer is cask or "craft keg".

There are separate listings for "Blonde", "Amber/Brown", "Dark beers", "Wheat/Sour beers" and the intriguing "Crazy Sh\*t" section (without the asterisk). In total the normal offering is eight cask beers (real ales) and 16 keg beers. None are regulars but all beers are chosen from the most highly rated brewers, both from the UK and abroad. Some beers have popped up that I never expected to see on tap in the UK, for example Schneiderweiss Eisbok from Germany. Beers are priced individually and it is initially a mental challenge to work out what two thirds of a pint equates to in pints! Trust me – you soon stop caring anyway. There are also two ciders on offer – one of which is of the



"real" variety. To top it all off there is a rapidly expanding list of bottled beers fantastically well chosen from all over the world. The list is currently standing around 130 – ask at the bar for the "beer menu".

There are three separate rooms; the bar is via the left-hand entrance with a larger separate room to the right. Both contain a variety of seating and plenty of standing room. Upstairs is a pleasant lounge area with a number of comfy armchairs and sofas, plus a small library of books. This is also where the only ladies loos are found (gents downstairs). Food is a developing theme at the Small Bar, which has plans to expand the offering gradually. Generous sharing platters are already available and a number of "pop up" style franchisees have appeared – including "Chomp" at weekends.

The best news of all is that a very small brewing kit has recently appeared in the right-hand bar and brewing is about to commence as the **Big Beer Brewing Company** – beer may even be on sale by the time this reaches print. Short-length brews of both cask and keg recipes are planned with no constant beers. Collaborations with other local brewers are also likely.

Opening hours are 12 noon to 12.30 a.m. Monday to Wednesday, 12 noon to 1 a.m. Thursday to Saturday, and 12 noon to 12 midnight Sunday. Food is sold when open until at least 10 p.m.

Most unfortunately, by only opening in December 2013 the Small Bar is ineligible for the next Good Beer Guide (long story for another time!) so don't be put off if it is not shown. Give it a try and see if you are as impressed as I am.

*Vince Murray*



# News from Dawkins

Dawkins Ales, whose brewery is based in Timsbury just outside Bath, is brewing up several specials for spring. First up is the return of the occasional **Crystal Gold**, a golden 4.1% single hop variety beer.

Available at the moment is **Colonial IPA**, a 5.4% ABV beer which Glen Dawkins says is "made with all-English hops to prove that our own growers can increasingly match the New World suppliers for rich, forward fruit flavours." This is due to be followed by a sister **Colonial Black IPA** ("I know, it's a terrible oxymoron") described as 5.8% with well integrated malt and hops. Then there is **Foresters Black** which will be an intriguing 4.8% ABV oak smoked milk stout.

**Green Barrel** is a name from the past; it was the first commercial beer to bear the Dawkins name when it was made under contract for the pubs side of the business under the brewery's original ownership. (Dawkins used to be Matthews.) It is now being reintroduced as a premium amber, malty bitter at 4.2% ABV.

The beer brewed for the **Miner's Arms** (the Dawkins pub in St Werburgh), **Miner's Gold**, has become well established and has proven very popular elsewhere. The brewery has decided to make it more widely available as **Bristol Gold** (try it under its original name at the pub's beer festival, pencilled in for late June).

The Dawkins pubs will be busy with events over spring and summer. Helen and Krishna will be holding a beer festival at the **Green Man** in Kingsdown from 27th to 31st March as a precursor to a major event end of May/early June, to be held jointly with near-neighbours the **Kingsdown Wine Vaults**.

St George's Day sees the annual beer festival at the **Victoria** in Clifton with Paul and Dee presenting beers from all over England for a few days from 23rd April. The landlords are also keen supporters of Belgian beers with an ever expanding list of bottles, and the pub is apparently one of the few outlets in the country for **Delirium Tremens** on draught.

Nats Clarke, assistant manager to Joe at the **Portcullis** in Clifton Village is off on a new adventure in Aberdeen with husband Ned (a former manager of said pub) as he moves there to BrewDog's HQ. Glen says: "She's done a terrific job and will be missed. Good luck to them both!"

SP

The Campaign for Real Ale - Reading & Mid Berkshire presents:

## THE 20th READING BEER & CIDER FESTIVAL

Thursday 1st May to Sunday 4th May 2014

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**Friday 2nd May**  
11am — 11pm  
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**Saturday 3rd May**  
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# The Eastfield Inn: a pub that has something for everyone

The Eastfield Inn has had its share of ups and downs during its long life but the latest reincarnation could be said to have something for everyone.

Located towards the Westbury-on-Trym end of Henleaze Road in Henleaze village, the pub occupies a large plot with a car park at the front. Inside, the pub is very spacious with many drinking areas, and boasts an impressively large garden at the back.

Landlord Graham has been in charge of the Eastfield for eight months, deciding to take the plunge after a fifteen year career working in pubs. He is also a local man, having lived nearby the pub for 20 years, and after experiencing the evolution of the Eastfield in its various guises, reckoned he knew its true potential.

Entering through the front door you encounter a well-furnished large lounge with a combination of tables and chairs and stools, sofas and armchairs, and are confronted by a long bar including six hand pumps. Around the side of the bar is another furnished drinking area that leads to an airy conservatory that can be hired for conferences, parties, etc. There is also a furnished back room where live music is held on Fridays, currently of a jazz, blues, folk or funk flavour, which can also be hired for parties.

A nice traditional feature of the pub is a working, full-size skittle alley with three active teams. The alley can also be used by individuals or parties at no cost.

The pub is owned by Star Pubs and Bars which is the rebranded Scottish and Newcastle Pub Company, itself owned by Heineken. The Eastfield won Best Pub Transformation in the Star Pub Awards in 2013.

Graham keeps three regular beers: Eastfield Ale (a bitter brewed by Caledonian, part of Star), Butcombe Bitter and St Austell Tribute, and takes three guests from the Star portfolio. Graham says the choice is quite extensive and not too restrictive and often includes local ales, which he chooses whenever possible. The day I was there Bath Ales Barnsey, Caledonian XPA and Young's Winter Warmer were the choices. I tried the Eastfield Ale, a very acceptable Scottish style bitter which was served in excellent condition. The pub is Cask Marque accredited.

Graham is pro CAMRA and welcomes members with a 20p discount on all real ales. He is also hoping to get on the list of the Westbury Wobble, a traditional New Year visit, organised by CAMRA, to real ale pubs in the Westbury-on-Trym area.

The Eastfield is also popular for its locally-sourced food, and the chefs are the reigning dessert champions for the Grillstock BBQ and Music Festival held on the Bristol Harbourside each year. The chefs went to the Las Vegas World Food Championships last year and came back with a lot of happy memories but unfortunately no awards.

Graham has done well in a short time to build up the community side of the pub, and various activities and festivals take place. As well as the music and skittles, Monday quiz night is very popular, not least because there is always a £100 jackpot. Ten to twelve competing teams is the norm.

Following the Henleaze Christmas Fair last December the after-event party was held in the Eastfield with live music and free entry



for all. Forthcoming events include the Cider and Chocolate Factory Festival to be held over the Easter weekend. By this time the family-friendly garden will be fully renovated and will have a dedicated toddler area.

And what better to celebrate Graham's and the reborn Eastfield's first birthday than a beer festival to be held over Fathers' Day weekend (June 13th to 15th), with a choice of more than 15 beers and a barbecue in the garden!

*Roy Sanders - photos by Jo Sanders*



# New brewery premises for Ashley Down and Wiper & True

As reported in the last edition of Pints West, Ashley Down Brewery and Wiper & True have been in discussion about sharing some brewing space for quite some time. On the 6th of February Ashley Down Brewery made the 600-yard trip from a back garden garage in St Andrews to the former print works at 2-8 York Street. The building has already been home for a couple of months to Wiper & True, who for the moment continue to 'gypsy brew' – renting other breweries to brew their own beers. Also, the hamburger and steak specialists Chomp have their own space on the W&T side and part of the offices upstairs.

Vince Crocker says that the increase in space will enable the continued expansion that Ashley Down Brewery needs to enable him to 'pay the mortgage and perhaps make a profit one day.' His first brew on the 11th of February was his popular **Pale Ale**, a 4.3% golden, balanced bitter. On the 12th he brewed a new beer, **York Street**, a 3.5% malty session beer with loads of Bramling Cross and Boadicea hops, which should be available mid March.

After a very busy winter for Ashley Down, the new brewery will enable Vince to meet the increasing requests/demands for his beer.

Wiper & True have already used the Ashley Down kit to start as they mean to go on, brewing an inaugural India Pale Ale called **Family Tree**, a 7.2% delight available towards the end of March. It blends three hops that are all related – Nugget, Simcoe and Mosaic. Wiper & True followed this on with a vanilla milk stout and will be brewing all kinds



The new premises: Wiper & True and Chomp on the left, Ashley Down on the right.

of strange brews in the months to come.

Look out for the Ashley Down's Plum Porter and Wiper & True's **Winter Rye** at the 2014 Bristol Beer Festival.

To celebrate, Ashley Down Brewery and Wiper & True and Chomp are planning a 'Beef and Beer' evening at York Street on the 29th of March. Contact the breweries for further details.

Here's to a successful spring season!

*Tony Durbin*

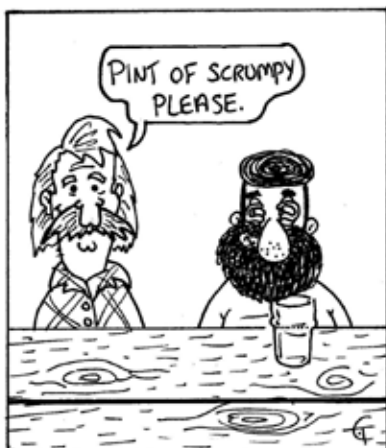


On the left, the Ashley Down kit that filled Vince's garage looks dwarfed in their new surroundings. The two tall fermenting vessels on the right are Wiper & True's.



Lots of room for Wiper & True to expand. At present the back rooms are used for bottle conditioning (Ashley Down's) and storing Wiper & True's bottled beer and key kegs.

The Bar Code  
by Eddie Taberner



BARCODE@EURESEARCHER.COM

# News from Butcombe

## Skittles and Butcombe Bitter

Butcombe is delighted to announce that Butcombe Bitter has taken over sponsorship of the biggest skittles competition in the UK from Dry Blackthorn. Traditional British skittles is alive and well and still played in many pubs.

So the call goes out to all West Country skittlers: sign up your teams now to compete in the Butcombe Bitter British Skittles Championship 2014. Qualification matches begin this Spring and lead onto the big final days in Torquay on 19th and 20th September. The sign-up for teams is open now, so get involved; there are great benefits for both skittlers and landlords who have skittle alleys; all the details can be found here: [www.shootoutclub.co.uk/skittles](http://www.shootoutclub.co.uk/skittles).

## News of Butcombe's real ales

**Adam Henson's Rare Breed:** Butcombe's third permanent beer (joining Butcombe Bitter and Butcombe Gold) has "found a new home at the 3.8% strength category" (it was previously 4.2%) and also has a striking new pump clip image. Butcombe says it had responded to calls made from its customers to have a permanently available beer at 3.8% back in the Autumn. This position was filled with the **Matthew Pale Ale** (formerly **Mendip Spring**), but with Rare Breed's continued popularity and growth into a major brand in the West Country, Butcombe have taken the decision to make Rare Breed their permanent beer below 4%. Butcombe say the new version of the beer, which has been in trade since December 1st, "retains the depth and drinkability of its former version and adds more fruitiness and crispness for a cracking 3.8% session beer."



**Yeti Pale Ale:** This new 4% beer will be available for landlords in the West Country to buy from late May through until August in cask. It is described as "a crisp, bitter pale ale with a beautiful balance of rugged North American hops."

**Crimson King:** Look out for Butcombe's "brand new big red beer" at 4.3%; it will be available in September, October and November.

**Old Vic Porter:** During December, January and February, the ever-popular Old Vic Porter (4.7%) was available but it is now coming to the end of the season, with the Bristol Beer Festival being the last chance for a while to enjoy it from the cask.

**Brunel Atlantic IPA:** This has been available on cask (4.1%) during January and February, bitter in style but "zinged up with the addition of beautifully fruity American hops."

**Haka:** This golden bitter at 4.5% with fruity tastes from the New Zealand hops was extremely popular last year and we are all looking forward to it being available in March until November this year.

## News of Butcombe's pubs

To save the trouble of getting home after a few ales did you know you can stay overnight in four of Butcombe's pubs? The **Old Crown** at Kelston near Bath, the **Rose and Crown** at Hinton Charterhouse, the **Cross Keys** in Rode near Frome, and the **Malt Shovel** in Cannington near Bridgwater all offer

overnight accommodation. No doubt it's best to phone the pub and book in advance by getting the phone number from the website (rather than just turn up "a bit tired"). Special deals are also available on Sunday nights in April and May.

## Other news

We can confirm that Butcombe Brewery will again be hosting their annual open day this year. More details next issue of Pint West. Meanwhile the brewery tours may be available: for large groups (25-40) they are often booked up ahead but individuals or small groups (up to 15) can join a tour without having to wait; see the website for more information.

The Butcombe Brewery shop in Wrington is open 9 till 5 Monday to Friday and 9 till 12 on Saturday.

As mentioned in the last Pints West, Butcombe has launched a book titled 'Cooking with Beer and Cider'; a sell-out on the first print run, more copies have 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.

The latest edition of the quarterly on-line magazine 'Butcombe Bytes' will be available from early March. It can be accessed via the website at [www.butcombe.com](http://www.butcombe.com).

*Nigel Morris*

**Cooking up a storm!**

**Cooking with Beer & Cider**  
Ian Salisbury & Butcombe Brewery  
With contributions from Josh Eggleton & Adam Henson

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**PRIDE IN EVERYTHING WE BREW**

# Project Venus at the James Street Brewery

NOW the Bath Brew House pub has been open for a few months their new brewster Anna Schwaeble has settled in, and in January she held a meeting of Venus Project members. This is an association which aims to support and encourage female brewers. On Saturday 11th January sixteen members arrived from around the country, and naturally enough they brewed some beer together. The beer was called Venus Velvet, a 4.9% ABV chocolate stout – it's all been drunk now unfortunately.

*Chris Rogers*



Our thanks go to Kirsten Elliott for use of the photos. She has written about the event in full (with more photos) in the blog she and Andrew Swift produce, 'Awash with Ale (a Swift round of pub news, views and history)' at [www.awashwithale.co.uk](http://www.awashwithale.co.uk).



# Raise a glass to the female beer revolution

There was a time, not that long ago, in a galaxy not so far, far away, that the very notion of a woman being interested in and consuming beer would have the source of much chortling scorn and guffawed derision. Much chortling MALE scorn and derision.

But the stigma of an old bearded bloke sat in the corner of a pub, accompanied only by a pint of fine ale, a whippet and his own melancholy memories, are a thing of the past. The universe of real and cask ale has opened up its enriching and dizzying borders and frontiers to previously untapped markets – students and women being the two prime ones.

For the time being though, those pesky stooidents can wait. Right here, right now we're looking at women – how they've embraced beer in a way previously unimaginable to not only certain sectors of the alpha male beer-quaffing elite, but by the pub and real ale industry as a whole.

In particular, there's been a significant rise in the number of professional women brewers across the country and – according to leading industry figures – they're becoming increasingly influential too.

Did you know Bath's own literary sweetheart and purveyor of finely-penned romantic tomes, Jane Austen, was partial to brewing beer when she wasn't burning the midnight oil about 18<sup>th</sup> century aristocrats, dashing dandies and rogues?

It's true and not in the slightest bit sexist to acknowledge that beer is still dominated by the male contingent, but in Austen's day part of the daily household chores included brewing beer. In fact, it had been part of women's work for thousands of years until the (slightly unfair) image and reputation of beer for the beard-and-cardigan types set in.

Female brewers – or brewsters as they're now commonly, and rather affectionately, known – are mooted to be on the upsurge again. In fact, they're playing a healthily significant role in reinvigorating the beer industry. And whilst pedants might argue there's no official figures to show exactly how many women currently professionally brew (get back to the bar, you fiend!), you don't have to look far to find them.

Emma Gilleland, for example, is head of supply chain at Marston's, the UK's leading independent brewer. Arguably, she's also the most influential brewer in the country. And for a company that produces over 60 real ales from five breweries, she's responsible for the quality checking of every single pint.

And the title of Brewer of the Year 2013? Well, that was awarded

by the British Guild of Beer Writers to another woman as well – Sara Barton, who owns and runs Brewster's Brewer in Lincolnshire. Even greater admiration and kudos goes to her for being the first woman to win the award in its entire 20-year history.

And Anna Schwaeble was a brewster at Bristol's very own Zero-degrees before relocating to pastures new as resident brewster at James Street brewery in Bath.

Roger Protz, editor of the 2014 *Good Beer Guide*, said that women opening their own businesses are also helping to ramp up the number of UK breweries. Last year, a record-breaking 197 breweries opened, with the total number in the UK hitting an all-time high of 1,147.

"More and more women are setting up their own breweries and becoming head brewers at well-established ones," he says. "Their influence is really growing in the industry, just look at Emma Gilleland. It's exciting to see."

Brewing, then – my fellow ale-quaffing comrades – is coming full circle. The earliest recorded evidence of beer in Britain dates back approximately 4,000 years. Even back then, women were the primary brewers.

Jane Peyton, alcohol historian and author of *Beer O'Clock: Craft, Cask and Culture*, said: "Beer was food and food preparation was the domain of females. Ale was traditionally made in the home and brewed for the family. It was part of the daily diet for everyone – children included. It provided nutrition and was a safe source of drinking water. Anything left over was usually sold, often providing a valuable income for households."

It was the eventual social and economic shifts that led to beer production being moved from homes to factories, and ultimately out of the hands of women. From then on – up until recently, at least – beer was largely manufactured and produced by men for men to the extent it's safe to say, as wine was to women, beer had been assigned a distinctly male identity.

Now of course, you can waltz into any Bristol beverage emporium – from the Cornubia to Coronation Tap – to see a phalanx of females supping on an ale just as enthusiastically as the men.

The female beer tide has most certainly turned – and I'll raise a glass to that.

*Jamie Caddick*



# BRISTOL PUBS GROUP

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

*Our aims are simple.  
The Bristol Pubs Group will:*  
**Promote the use of community pubs.**  
**Campaign against closure of pubs that could be viable.**  
**Campaign against insensitive alterations.**

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



## Foresters gets the chop

Unless you live in Westbury-on-Trym or have recently visited there, you may not be aware that another of Bristol's pubs has closed for good.

The Foresters, situated on Westbury Hill, has become yet another pub converted into a Tesco store.

Of course Tesco – who some time ago stated that they had no strategy to target pubs – have already opened stores in quite a few former pubs in the Bristol area, pubs including the Standard of England in Southmead, the Friendship in Knowle, the Fellowship in Filton Avenue, the Bell in St George and the Royal Oak in Portishead. There are others. And there has also been the protracted battle by local residents to prevent the Bristol House in Weston-super-Mare being turned into yet another Tesco store.

Admittedly the Foresters did appear to have struggled over recent years and there had also been some reported incidents of trouble from time to time. However, those readers with a long memory may recall that prior to its recent decline the Foresters was a lovely two-roomed pub with a wood-panelled interior and a decent trade. Given its prominent central village location and the attractive nature of the pub's exterior, it is disappointing that the pub could not have been turned back to a successful local for the people of Westbury-on-Trym.

So, why could the pub not have had its interior restored? (It was knocked through into one room several years ago, which many thought ruined it.) Why could it not seek to offer the best real ale choice in the area together with other quality products and a decent food offering? (Two-roomed pubs are well placed to accommodate both drinkers and diners.)

With experienced licensees running the place, could such a combination not have saved the pub? Failing pubs have been turned around in other parts of Bristol and there are numerous other success stories all across the country. Fortunately, there are still several other decent pubs in Westbury-on-Trym, so local people and visitors still have a reasonable choice.

### Could it be your local pub next?

Your local CAMRA branch is working with MPs and councillors



to try and get changes to planning laws to prevent the loss of pubs to other use such as shops, etc, and nationally CAMRA is also lobbying Government very hard on this issue.

### But you can help too.

If you too are concerned about the loss of community pubs, both at the local and the national level, why not write an email or letter to your MP and local councillor to state your concerns? We have lost dozens of such pubs already in the Bristol area in the last few years and the figure nationally is many thousands.

Please spare a few minutes. If we all do this, together we may be instrumental in saving our locals.

Pete Bridle

## Clampdown on the Coach House



The Coach House public house at 380 Stapleton Road, Easton, Bristol, located close to Stapleton Road railway station, is a Victorian circa 1880's two-storey brick-built building consisting of three large arched window frames and an offset doorway at ground floor level and three equi-spaced angular pedimented dressed freestone windows on the first floor.

Before the dawn of the motoring age in the era of Shanks's Pony, Stapleton Road was a thriving main thoroughfare from Old Market towards East Bristol with a variety of shops, pubs and other businesses serving the community along its length. The area around the Coach House itself was also subject to frequent flooding from the River Frome nearby, as shown in a late Victorian drawing by Samuel Loxton of a rowing boat navigating along that part of Stapleton Road.

Over the years the fortunes of the Stapleton Road shopping area have gone into decline along with some of its pubs, including one next door to the Coach House itself which was demolished some time ago. Despite this, the Coach House has managed to survive until now, however in late 2013 the pub was suddenly closed down and its alcohol license suspended for reasons which are unclear. After making some enquiries with the Ashley, Easton and Lawrence Hill Neighbourhood Partnership as to when the pub would reopen again, I was informed that it would remain closed pending the outcome of legal proceedings, which was very disappointing news.

Not to be deterred, I pointed out that with suitable investment and an experienced management team put in place to run the pub it would have every chance of a viable and sustainable future, which might also help with local urban regeneration. This is due to fact that the pub has a prominent location on a busy main road close to the successful St Marks Road shopping street and Stapleton Road station. With the forthcoming electrification in around 2018 of the Great Western Railway network from London to Bristol and Cardiff, together with improvements to the local rail network with the Greater Bristol Metro (Metro-West) rail project, there would be every prospect of greater footfall at the station and therefore much potential passing trade for the pub.

Bristol Pubs Group will be monitoring the closure situation closely to ensure that everything possible is done to get the pub reopened again as quickly as possible for the benefit of the local community and future rail passengers.

*Ian Beckey*

## A sense of foreboding about the Fishponds Tavern



The Fishponds Tavern is located at 47 Lewington Road, Fishponds, Bristol, off Staple Hill Road near its junction with the Cross Hands public house. It is a turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century two-storey brick-built pub on the end of a terrace of late Victorian artisan dwellings. This former Usher's pub consisted of a main bar and lounge annex with an open fireplace providing some warmth. It appeared that the pub might have been extended at some stage because it takes up two plots of land which can be seen with differences in the roof-line height, but this would need to be confirmed by further research.

Despite the fact that the pub was somewhat tucked away in the back streets of Fishponds, away from the main Fishponds and Staple Hill roads, it seems to have survived as a popular local community pub until now. However, a few weeks ago I was informed that the pub had just closed and was unlikely to reopen as a licensed premises again and was possibly going to be converted into a shop of some sort. This was bad news so I decided to go and visit the property to find out what the current situation was. When I arrived there I noticed that the curtains were all drawn across downstairs and there was no sign of life in the building apart from a light being left on upstairs. When I tried contacting the pub to see if it was going to reopen no one answered my phone calls so it could be assumed that the premises were empty.

These signs were not at all encouraging and do not bode well for the future of the Fishponds Tavern as a local community pub and therefore Bristol Pubs Group will be monitoring the situation in case any planning applications are submitted for a change of use of the pub to a retail outlet.

Because this pub has been part of the local community for so many years, Bristol Pubs Group would not want to see it lost after all this time.

*Ian Beckey*

## Queens Head failed by South Gloucestershire Councillors

The Queen's Head in Willsbridge was built around 1670 and had been a pub since 1719. It was a historic 17th century inn, a Grade II listed building, and also South Gloucestershire's only pub in CAMRA's National Inventory of Heritage Pubs.

It should have been protected under South Gloucestershire Council Policy RTII and it could have again been a community asset as it was in its heyday. Planning permission should only be granted if the pub was not viable and there were alternative pubs available within the locality. No viability test was taken and despite these conditions and the recommendations to refuse permission by both Planning and Conservation Officers, the decision was made to approve. With free of tie conditions and several buyers interested, Willsbridge has lost its only pub with no suitable local alternatives available.

A staggering lack of knowledge and insight of the pub trade by the Councillors and a less than rigorous and thorough investigation or understanding of the importance of this pub has resulted in a decision that defies all common sense. CAMRA are seeking to ensure that such an error never happens again in South Gloucestershire.

*Ray Holmes*



# Pub news

Are'n't pubs brilliant? So many to try out and talk about. They are all unique and all of the pubs mentioned in this article have their own story to tell. The **Bristol Pubs Group** are a busy lot as there are so many threats to pubs; and while they are campaigning to save our pub stock, and enjoying good chat in the many pubs that are still open, they learn much from fellow pub customers that share a passion for pubs, the community and good cheer. So whether you fully digest this column or just skim read it taking in the bold pub names that mean something to you, please try to get into some of them and enjoy what they offer – there are some gems. Anyway enough of the waffle, let's get on with the report starting in Clifton.

On Whiteladies Road in Clifton the two traditional pubs on 'The Strip' are in the news. The **Vittoria**, previously reported to become a wine bar, has actually changed owner and is continuing to trade as a traditional pub with new decor offering a selection of real ales to those that are seeking an alternative to the glitz of that busy stretch. The former **Penny Farthing** has re-opened following a short closure as the **Penny**. Wadworth ales continue to be available plus up to three guest ales. The ex-Wadworth pub the **Grapes** in Clifton is to undergo a conversion



The Beaufort

Moving out through the north of the city the **Lounge** in Old Market is for sale. Formerly the **Mason's Arms**, this Grade II-listed building pre-dates 1700 and has been part of the licensed scene in Old Market for a very long time. Hopefully this arrangement will continue under a new owner. The Bristol Pubs Group is objecting to a planning application to



The Grapes

into two four-bedroomed dwellings. In the south of the city (of Bristol) the **Assembly** in Bedminster has survived a cull following its owning company going into administration. The pub has changed hands and will continue with an injection of investment. Just along the road the former **Bar Salt** has become the **Steam Crane** and is under the same ownership as that of the **Golden Guinea** in Redcliffe. Staying in Bedminster the **Ropewalk** on Bedminster Parade has re-opened and remains as a Young's pub. A mile away as the rook flies the **Oxford** in Totterdown was offering three ales from Arbor Ales on a recent visit. These three were lined up beside the two regular brews. The **Knowle Hotel** closed in January but soon re-opened under the control of a relief manager. There may be interest in a community buy out for this large pub that survives among what is becoming something of a 'pub desert' with many of south Bristol's local pubs lost in recent years.



The Greenbank

convert the **Beaufort Inn** in Montpelier into four flats. The owner has blamed the smoking ban and stiff competition around Stokes Croft for the demise of her pub. The Bristol Pubs Group hope that an alternative viewpoint can be established where a modernisation of the pub could re-introduce it into this eclectic and popular part of town. The fiasco at the **Greenbank** in Easton has not gone away. Following the refusal of his planning application the owner has appealed to Bristol City Council and this appeal was still pending at the time of writing. The local community has a keen demand for this pub to re-open.

A fabulously large mirrored bar-back can be found in the **Air Balloon Tavern** in St. George. This striking feature can be acquired



The Knowle



The Air Balloon Tavern



The Fishponds Tavern

along with the pub by a buyer where the re-generation of the Air Balloon could retain one of Bristol's finest traditional pub interiors, and act as a draw to the area with its eye-catching external facade. See it on [www.heritagepubs.org.uk](http://www.heritagepubs.org.uk). The **Bull** at Crew's Hole is closed and there is work going on inside – to what end we don't know.

A public meeting that would be attended by councillors and owner Enterprise Inns took place at the time of writing (27<sup>th</sup> February) to discuss the future of the **Chequers** in Lodge Road, Kingswood. This pub has been closed for far too long so an action plan to get it back into pub use would be welcomed by the community. In Fishponds the **Fishponds Tavern** has closed but the **Greyhound** on Lodge Causeway has the shutters down after a year in place and is understood to be opening in March.

The **Bourne End** in Henbury has had a planning application refused to demolish and replace with – you guessed it! – four dwellings. In Shirehampton a long campaign to save the once Enterprise Inns owned



The Bourne End

**Lamplighters** from permanent loss looks to have taken a turn for the better. The local community, MP Charlotte Lesley, and the Bristol Pubs Group all campaigned for this pub and the fruits are that Dominic and Kathie Gundry-White, together with Norman Routledge, have bought it and plan to reopen in the spring. Great news and proof that well thought out, heart felt campaigns can be victorious.

In South Gloucestershire the **Jolly Cobbler** in Kingswood has re-opened and the 'To Let' sign has been removed, while the **Anchor Made For Ever** in New Cheltenham has a new licensee. For anybody who wondered what would happen at the **Hollybush** in Bridge Yate, we can tell you that it is due to open in March. This pub closed a few years ago and sat idle before an extensive renovation and enlargement began. Despite a couple of stutters it has now reached completion and James Prangell, who previously ran the Swan at Swineford, has taken it on to run as a food-led pub that still encourages drinkers to enjoy a social pint with friends.

In Chipping Sodbury the Good Beer Guide-listed **Grapes** closed for a couple of days between Christmas and New Year during a change of licensee. The new owner Kerri Postlethwaite is encouraging attendance by CAMRA members and is initially offering two real ales and a real cider, Black Rat, with scope to increase the number of ales as trade demands. The out-going licensees Dave and Gilly have moved into

their premises on the other side of the road, **Gilly's** (or **Horseshoe** as it is being renamed). They are presenting up to five real ales and have extended their opening hours as they extend Gilly's business in addition to its wine bar beginnings.

If you've misplaced your Pints West and want to remind yourself of that pub that you're going to visit, then get the latest on **whatpub.com** – but don't end up spending your evening checking out *all* the pubs on your mobile or computer screen. No, get to the bar and order a drink! *Enjoy....cheers!*

*Mike Jackson (for the Bristol Pubs Group)  
Photos by Tim Belsten and Les Cooper*



## Pubco campaign gains momentum

Since the Government delayed its plans to introduce a Pubs Watchdog to ensure fair practices in the pub industry last year, campaign groups and opposition parties have mounted pressure on Vince Cable to stick to his clear promise and act before it is too late.

On Thursday 16th January CAMRA launched a petition to urge the Government to stick to its clear promise and introduce a Pubs Watchdog to retain fair practices in the pub industry.

The petition secured 15,000 signatures within 24 hours of launching and has since attracted many thousands more. Please continue to urge others to sign the petition calling on Government to introduce a Pubs Watchdog here: [www.pubscandal.org.uk](http://www.pubscandal.org.uk).

The petition was ahead of a Commons Debate on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> January where Shadow Business Minister Toby Perkins MP urged the Government to stop dragging its feet and introduce legislation critical to the longevity of the pub industry.

Thanks to the support of 3,000 CAMRA members lobbying their MP urging them to speak out about the desperate need for reform, MPs from all parties attended the debate and proved the overwhelming support to end the Great British Pub Scandal.

You can view more about the debate and what happened here: [www.camra.org.uk/article.php?group\\_id=12472](http://www.camra.org.uk/article.php?group_id=12472).

During the debate, Business Minister Vince Cable, who launched the consultation in January 2013, said: "There is no attempt to kick this into the long grass. We are trying to do this properly."

### What happens now?

The next step is to increase the pressure on Vince Cable to introduce a Bill in this year's Queen's Speech (May 2014) to ensure there is sufficient parliamentary time to introduce a Pubs Watchdog before the next General Election in 2015.

Read more about it and sign the petition to help save pubs here:

[www.pubscandal.org.uk](http://www.pubscandal.org.uk)

# Do you care about your local pub?

## A brief overview of getting your pub listed as an Asset of Community Value

With pubs continuing to close at an alarming rate, you never know where the next threat will come from or which pub will be the potential victim. It could be your local!

High property prices mean pubs are being targeted for conversion into supermarkets, fast food outlets, and housing developments.

We have lost many pubs in this area in recent years and, even since the last edition of Pints West, the local branch of CAMRA has heard of several more pubs that are under very serious threat of permanent closure. Details of some of these can be found in this edition.

However there is something that you can do to protect your pub from the axe.

Through the Localism Act, the Government introduced new powers in 2012 for communities in England to nominate valued facilities such as pubs as "assets of community value" (ACV). Where pubs are listed as such, this enables communities to "stop the clock" for up to six months if they're put up for sale. This enables communities time to consider options for saving the pub.

Listing your local pub as an ACV can be hugely beneficial and acts as a statement or marker that the pub is important to the local community. The fact that the local community have rallied and made the effort (not a big ask) to nominate the pub and the local authority have agreed to list it (in these cases, not for architectural reasons) adds a further level of protection. The ACV listed status of the pub can be used by a local authority as a material consideration when reviewing a planning application such as when a pub is threatened with conversion to residential use.

Moreover, if the owner decides to sell off the pub, if it is listed as an ACV, this will trigger a moratorium on the sale for up to six months. This will give the time for a third party or the local community to get together a bid to buy the pub. Lots of information on communities buying pubs is available, if required, from CAMRA and other organisations.

Since the scheme started, over 300 pubs have been listed as ACV including a few in the local area. Indeed, as soon as March 2013, the first case of a community takeover happened as a result of an ACV being in place.

To list your local as an ACV, all you need to do is go to your local authority web site and look up the section on Assets of Community Value or Rights to Bid. Download a nomination form or, if you can't find one, visit the national CAMRA web site and you can download the CAMRA template from there.

Fill in the form with as much detail as you can on why the pub deserves to be classified as a community asset. Then demonstrate that at least 21 people from the local community support the listing of the pub – again, this should not be a big ask. Then simply check the local authority web site to see where the nomination form needs to be submitted. Many councils have guidelines explaining how they are accepting nominations. For addition help see [www.camra.org.uk/listyourlocal](http://www.camra.org.uk/listyourlocal).

Getting 21 people together will hopefully not be a big problem – most community pubs have at least 21 regulars! Be informed when asking people to sign, have some easy to follow documents with you, and make it known that people are not committing to buy the pub by nominating it as an ACV, i.e. they will be under absolutely no obligation. The people should be fairly local to the pub and it might be best to exceed to the minimum 21 signatures in case one or two people are not eligible to nominate – perhaps they may not be local enough or not on the voters roll.

If the pub is put up for sale, you then have options – please see the CAMRA web site for details. Additionally, you can speak to other communities who have been through the same process. During the moratorium, local groups and other local businesses can put in a bid to buy the pub. There have been lots of examples of communities buying their pubs down the years and many of these are now thriving locals.

Good luck. Please keep us informed should you decide to get your pub listed as an ACV (email [bristolpubsgroup@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:bristolpubsgroup@yahoo.co.uk)).

*Pete Bridle*

*Additional information can be obtained from the following:*

*My Community Rights:*

[www.mycommunityrights.org.uk/community-right-to-bid](http://www.mycommunityrights.org.uk/community-right-to-bid)

*Pub is the Hub:* [www.pubisthehub.org.uk](http://www.pubisthehub.org.uk)

*The Plunkett Foundation:*

[www.plunkett.co.uk/whatwedo/Co-operativePubs.cfm](http://www.plunkett.co.uk/whatwedo/Co-operativePubs.cfm)

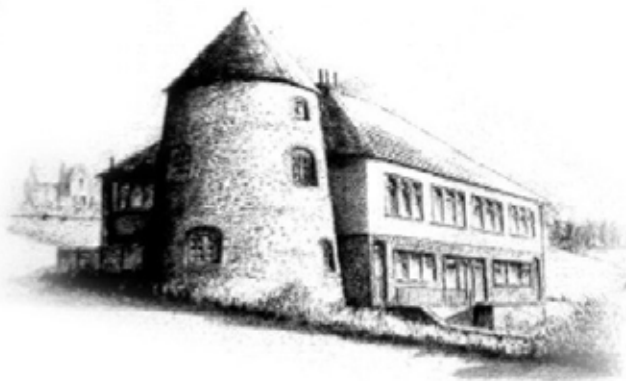
*CAMRA:* [www.camra.org.uk/listyourlocal](http://www.camra.org.uk/listyourlocal)

*Information on grants available to support you:*

[mycommunityrights.org.uk/community-right-to-bid/grants](http://mycommunityrights.org.uk/community-right-to-bid/grants)

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# News from the Bristol Beer Factory

The Bristol Beer Factory are pleased to report that sales over Christmas were again excellent (setting new records) and, impressively, demand did not really slow in January. Two of the current brewers have been promoted to take on the shared role of 'Head Brewer'. Steve Feely (Operational) and Jonny Mills (Technical) will share the title of Senior Brewer. The Bristol Beer Factory consider that they both have fantastic skill and enthusiasm and will take the brewery forward in 2014.

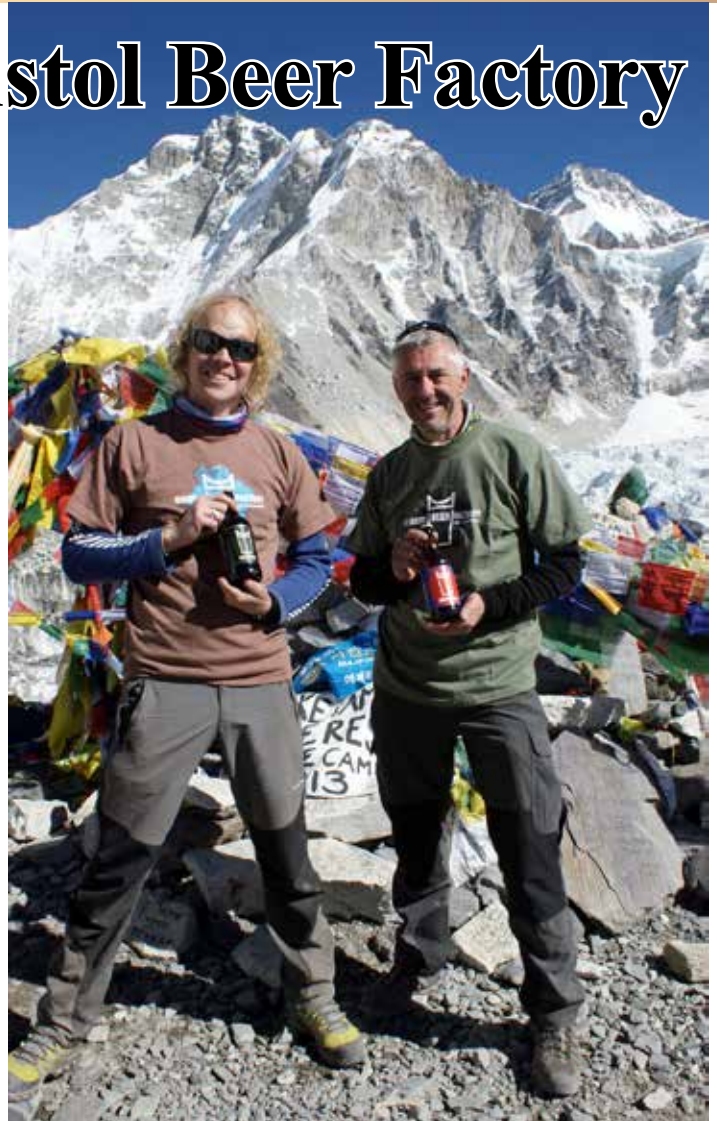
The annual production schedule is being finalised and apparently features an exciting range of specials including some more barrel-aged beers with Belgian, American and British influences. The brewers aren't saying any more at the moment as they don't want to spoil the surprise. These special brews will mainly be available in bottles (in bottle-conditioned real ale form of course) but some will make it into cask and keg.

February will see the launch of the new styled **Sunrise**. The brewery has decided to give Sunrise a bit of a revamp by upgrading the hop charge, although the malt will remain the same. It will still be the same 4.4% English golden ale, however it will now use Bramling Cross and UK Cascade hop varieties in addition to the Pioneer that it has always used.

The Bristol Beer Factory are also showing interest in foreign travel. People on the other side of the world will be able to sample two of their award-winning beers: **Southville Hop** – SIBA (Society of Independent Brewers) National Champion Bottled Beer 2012 – and **Independence** – SIBA South West UK Champion bottled beer 2013 – are on their way to the Beer & Cider Company in Perth, Western Australia. Bristol Beer Factory products will allegedly soon also be in a number of other countries, including Brazil.

Finally, just before Christmas, Matt Boyle did a fund-raising trek to the base camp of Everest and raised £13.5k for the Frenchay After Burns charity, FAB. Bristol Beer Factory helped Matt out with some sponsorship and in return Matt took a bottle of **Independence** and a bottle of **Milk Stout** to the top of the world. For more info on Matt and FAB please visit [www.justgiving.com/mattboyleeverest](http://www.justgiving.com/mattboyleeverest).

*Richard Brooks*



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 - The Brewery, Durnford St

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# News from Arbor Ales

When I visited the Arbor Ales brewery today (12<sup>th</sup> February) the place was the usual hive of industry and, despite being very busy in the office, boss Jon Comer was happy to spare time to tell me the news over a coffee.

A fourth (and final) fermenting vessel has been ordered; when delivered this will bring the brewery's capacity up to 70-75 brewer's barrels per week. Export orders have increased recently, the latest from as far as Australia! Once this order has been despatched, a further order will be sent to Italy. These consignments are, of course, mostly bottles and kegs. A bottle-labelling machine has been commissioned – this will help to satisfy the rising demand for Arbor's range of bottle-conditioned ales.

With regard to the beers, Jon is concentrating on the core range as most customers want to repeat orders for beers they know. The variable **Triple Hop** (4.0% ABV) range has been discontinued but will be available as a regular ale under the same name based on the recipe for No. 18 in the series. The single hop series has also been abandoned – the regular **Motueka** (3.8%) filling this niche. Fans of the quirky "one-offs" will be pleased to know that there will still be occasional **Freestyle Fridays** available. Collaborations with other brewers continue apace, the latest was a **Smoked Porter** (5.5%) produced with Wiper & True.

The increasing popularity of well-hopped beers has resulted in problems with the ordering of hops from suppliers. Jon said that he has to get his orders in very early – well before the hops are needed – otherwise the price will have rocketed; a bit like trading in the "futures" market!

*Henry Davies*

# From Bristol Cider House to Surrey Vaults



While ago it was called the Bristol Cider House and specialised in ciders. Prior to that it was known as the Surrey Wine Vaults. Now it has been acquired by a new management team who have renamed it the Surrey Vaults.

Lyndsey and Glenn have recently taken over the pub – a historic building in Surrey Street, St Paul's, on the cut-through between Portland and Brunswick Squares – and given it a refreshing make-over.

The new-look Surrey Vaults is a free house and the plans are to stock a changing range of three real ales at all times. Furthermore they say they are offering CAMRA customers a 10% discount on all ales.

As Pints West was being finished, the doors had only just re-opened on what Lyndsey and Glen describe as "a proper pub revamped" and these are very exciting times for them. We wish them success in their new venture.

*SP*



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## Solution to the crossword on page 38

Across: 1 Silver, 5 Fireside, 9 Spanking, 10 Bullet, 11 Ullage, 12 Lansdown, 14 Evil-smelling, 17 Optometrists, 20 Frothing, 22 Noodle, 23 Triple, 25 Let's slip, 26 Agitator, 27 No-side, Down: 2 Impale, 3 Vintage port, 4 Rhine wine, 5 Fuggles, 6 Robin, 7 Sol, 8 Diet wine, 13 Dolls houses, 15 Essington, 16 Sparging, 18 Regular, 19 Allied, 21 Inert, 24 Pot.

# The Hollybush re-emerges

**A**gainst the current climate of pubs everywhere under threat of conversion into flats or yet another 'local' supermarket, it is hugely refreshing and encouraging when a long-closed pub returns from the risk of dereliction to re-emerge as a vital community resource.

And that is exactly what appears to be happening with the Hollybush in Bridgegate. From the moment when it was badly damaged by fire in 2008, there was a real concern that it would be lost for good. It remained unused and slowly dilapidating for some while, with occasional hints that someone 'had bought it', 'was thinking of buying it', 'wanted to demolish it and build flats'. The former car park was barren scrubland and all hope seemed lost...

Imagine our delight then, when we at *Pints West Towers* received notification that the Hollybush has been undergoing a complete refurbishment, inside and out, and is due to open in March! We had to know more, so we arranged to meet with James Prangell on site and have a nose around.

James has most recently been running the Swan at Swineford, an excellent Bath Ales house down by the River Avon (much closer to the Avon this winter than usual!). However, when the owner of the Hollybush (who is not a part of Bath Ales but has a strong working relationship with them) was looking for a reliable tenant, and James was looking for a new project, this seemed like a match made in heaven.

Those who have the pleasure of travelling along the Bath Road in Bridgegate will have noticed work going on at the Hollybush for quite some time now. The exterior has changed from its previous cream and red colouring to a British Racing Green finish, and the front wall and entrance porch have been stripped back to their original stone.

James shows me inside via the glass-fronted 'south wing' of the building, which has been transformed into a formal (ish) dining area, complete with an open-plan kitchen at one end. When we visit, the central main bar area still has various tools and materials strewn about the place, but you can see how the look and feel of the place has been



updated. Green glazed tiles on the pillars, and a nicely stripped floor and those who remember the pub of old will notice a much more light and airy feel than before.

And the bar has moved! I recall wandering in during the 1990s and accidentally interrupting a quiz night. The bar was immediately to my left, as was the glowering quizmaster. Now, the bar sits along the far wall, the better to make more room for an overflow diners' and drinkers' area off to the left.

The bar will feature six handpumps and, although there is no 'tie', James is keen to continue to feature Bath Ales beers. The brewery have been very supportive of the project, particularly in the installation of the bar and cellar. Gem will be the main resident beer, alongside a couple more from Bath, and one or two additional guest ales. There will also be a traditional cider.

Outside, that rubble-strewn car park has been completely resurfaced and marked out, and there are plans to put benches next to the little brook that runs past, to make full use of the natural setting.

James plans to build on his experience working in Bath Ales pubs by providing a traditional pub with a modern feel; where the emphasis is on good beer, good food and good conversation. He hopes to reopen on or around March 7th so, with luck and a fair wind, the Hollybush should be looking forward to welcoming you by the time you read this.

*Duncan Shine*



Work in progress as the bar is moved



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# BADRAG - Bristol And District Rare Ales Group

## Mild Month

Once a year (currently centred around the month of May) CAMRA promotes – with organised and DIY trails – mild ale, one of the iconic brews that it is too often hard to find. Mild ale is usually dark in colour but occasionally may also be the same colour as bitter beers, and which are then known as light milds. Significantly, mild should not have a noticeable bitterness and is often malty. If you ask a non-beer drinker why they don't like beer, they often say it is because it is too bitter for them; mild ale might suit their taste!

An excellent description of this ale style can be found on bottles of the lovely multi-award-winning Lancashire Dark Mild, brewed by Thwaite's and sold by Marks & Spencer: "One of the Great British styles ... as its name suggests mild means lightly hopped and not bitter. Dark milds get their rich colour from caramel and roasted malts and although (usually) relatively low in alcohol, are full in body with a lingering quality."

**Local breweries** that have so far advised us they will brew mild ales, and the beers in question, for April/May include those below. Licensees are advised to order now to avoid disappointment.

- **Ashley Down – Vanguard** (3.9%), in cask and as RAIB\* (tel 0117 9836567).
- **Cheddar Ales – Mild Cheddar** (3.6%), a light mild (01934 744193).
- **Cotswold Spring – OSM** (3.9%), their SIBA National Champion dark mild that will be available from March until early June (01454 323088).
- **Cottage – Atlantic Mild** (4%) (01963 240551).
- **Great Western Brewing (GWB) – Meerkat Mild** (3.9%), a light mild which last year was a little bitter for the style (0117 9572842).

**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)

- **RCH – Hewish Mild** (3.6%), available all year (01934 834447).
- **Severn Vale – Monumentale** (4.5%) (01453 547550).

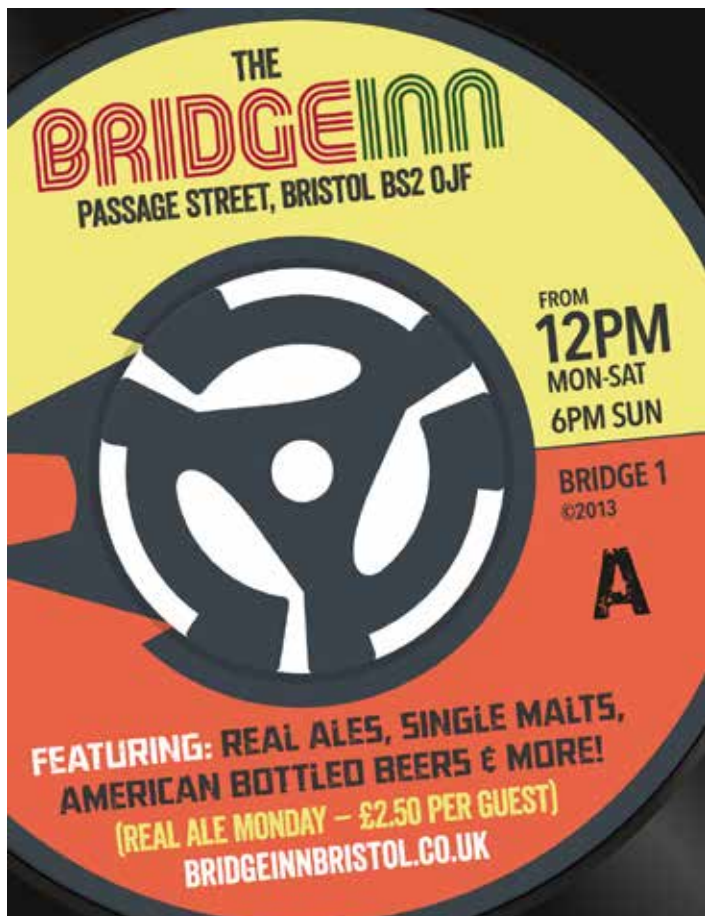
\*RAIB stands for 'Real Ale In Bottle' and is ale still undergoing secondary fermentation in the bottle – as such it is considered a real ale. Also known as bottle-conditioned, it is usually poured carefully to leave the small amount of yeast sediment in the bottom of the bottle. **Ashley Down Vanguard** is available as a RAIB, so if you don't think you can sell a cask, why not get some RAIBs in for your customers to enjoy? The above mentioned **Lancashire Dark Mild** (3.7% ABV) and Thwaite's own **Nutty Black** (3.9%) are some more examples of RAIBs.

## Take a Walk on the Mild Side

Once again this year BADRAG has organised a number of Mild Month trails to be done on foot, apart from one which will be a coach trip. These events, shown below, are open to all, CAMRA members or not. At the time of going to press, and subject to confirmation (see [www.camrabristol.org.uk](http://www.camrabristol.org.uk)), they are:

### A Walk on the Mild Side of Kingsdown - Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> April.

This will start at 7pm in the **Highbury Vaults** (St Michael's Hill, BS2 8DE) and progress to the **Robin Hood, Colston Yard** and **Gryphon**. (To be led by Jerry Fletcher, 07585 807613.)



# Cleve RFC Beer Festival 2014



## Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> March

Cleve RFC, The Hayfields, Cossham St, Mangotsfield, Bristol BS16 9EN  
Tel: 0117 957 5775 Email: [karenperrott@cleverugby.co.uk](mailto:karenperrott@cleverugby.co.uk)

## A Walk on the Mild Side of Clifton - Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> April.

Starting at 12 noon in the **Portcullis** (Wellington Terrace, BS8 4LE) then on to the **Hophouse, Lansdown** (which will be holding a mini beer festival), **Victoria, Quinton House, Berkeley and Hope and Anchor**. (To be led by Jerry Fletcher, 07585 807613.)

## A Walk on the Mild Side of Bedminster & Harbourside - Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> May.

From 12 noon at the **Robert Fitzharding** (Cannon Street, BS3 1BN), then on to the **Steam Crane, Hare, Hen and Chicken, Tobacco Factory, Orchard, Nova Scotia, Grain Barge and Three Tuns**. (To be led by Phil Luxton, 0778 0873786.)

## A Walk on the Mild Side of the City Centre - Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> May.

Starting at 7pm in the **Barley Mow** (Barton Road, BS2 0LF), then on to the **Volunteer Tavern, Elephant and Commercial Rooms**. (To be led by Graham Watson, 07873 272769.)

## South Glos Trail - Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> May.

This will be a coach trip and seats will need to be booked through Andy Gray, Bristol & District CAMRA social secretary, at branch meetings or by emailing [camrasocials@btinternet.com](mailto:camrasocials@btinternet.com). Departure is from the **Cornubia** (Temple Street, BS1 6EN) at 11.30am. Visiting the **Cross Hands, Globe, New Inn** (food stop), **Gilly's/Horseshoe, Beaufort Arms, Salutation Inn and Anchor Inn**. (To be led by Mike Lawrence, 07896 233237.)

(If any pub does not have a mild ale available on the day, we don't tend to linger but rather move on in order to give greater support to those pubs that have put on a mild.)

## DIY Mild Trails

If you can't join one of our organised mild trails, the following pubs, in postcode order starting from the centre of Bristol, have advised us that they will try and stock mild ales (throughout the month of May unless otherwise stated), so please support them:

**Elephant**, St Nicholas Street, BS1 1UB

**Gryphon**, Colston Street, BS1 5AP

**Cornubia**, Temple Street, BS1 6EN (available April and May)  
**Seven Stars**, Thomas Lane, BS1 6JG (a few mild ales every week subject to available pumps)

**Bridge Inn**, Passage Street, BS2 0JF

**Barley Mow**, Barton Road, BS2 0LF

**Highbury Vaults**, St Michael's Hill, BS2 8DE (available Thursdays to Sundays)

**Robin Hood**, St Michael's Hill, BS2 8DX (four of five different milds throughout the month)

**Miners Arms**, Mina Road, BS2 9YQ

**Hare**, North Street, BS3 1EN (mid April to end of May)

**Chelsea Inn**, Chelsea Road, BS5 6AU

**Red Lion**, Whitehall Road, BS5 9BP

**St Georges Hall**, Church Road, BS5 9HL

**Lansdown**, Clifton Road, BS8 1AF

**Hope and Anchor**, Jacobs Wells Road, BS8 1DR

**Berkeley**, Queens Road, BS8 1QE

**Kings Arms**, Kingswood, BS15 4AB

**Kingswood Colliers**, Kingswood, BS15 8HP (mid April to mid May)

**New Inn**, Mayshill, BS36 2NT (available Thursdays to Sundays)

**Anchor**, Thornbury, BS35 1JY

**Rising Sun**, Frampton Cotterell, BS36 2HN

**Salutation Inn**, Ham, GL13 9QH

## And finally ...

Many thanks for the ten or so volunteers and many supporters in the trade that make this programme happen. Plans for Mild Month start six months earlier in November the previous year when BADRAG decides which trails to arrange. The next task is to ask local breweries if they will be brewing mild ale, and local pubs if they will stock mild ale all month, at busy times of each week or for our trails. Then comes Christmas and a busy time in the trade when we put the preparations on hold. In January we remind those who have not responded once or twice that we need an answer by the end of the month, so that we may prepare this article in time for the last Pints West magazine before Mild Month.

*Denise Swain and Laurie Gibney*

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# BATH & BORDERS BRANCH

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

### Bath and Surrounding Villages

#### Boater, 9 Argyle Street, Bath

The Boater is one of three city-centre pubs (along with the Crystal Palace and the Huntsman) 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. At the time of writing the pub was closed.

#### Cork (formerly Cork & Bottle), 11-12 Westgate Buildings, Bath

This pub has recently closed for a refurbishment. Hopefully it will re-open soon.

#### Green Park Tavern, re-named GPT Smokehouse, Lower Bristol Road, Bath

This venue, which had been closed since the summer for a major refurbishment, re-opened on Friday 12 December as the GPT Smokehouse, a restaurant and bar serving dishes made from home-smoked meats using a new all-American imported smoker that cooks local food low and slow over a hickory wood fire. There are up to three real ales available.

#### Grappa Wine Bar, formerly Beehive, 3 Belvedere, Lansdown Road, Bath

This former cider house, which many years ago was converted into an upmarket wine bar, has recently closed. Its future is uncertain.

#### James Street Brewery, Bath Brew House, 14 James Street West, Bath

Bath's newest micro-brewery held its official opening on Wednesday 23 October. The head brewer is Anna Schwaeble, who was formerly at Zerodegrees, Bristol. Four beers were available to try. The mainstays of the range are the classic best bitter Gladiator (3.9%) and the stronger, hoppier Emperor (4.4%). There is also a rotating seasonal beer whilst the brewery's own range is supplemented by a regular selection of guest beers. In late November a seventh hand-pump was installed on the bar. James Street beers are available in take-home form as minikegs.



James Street Brewery

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

This pub, which closed in around May of last year, re-opened on Monday 25 November and had an official re-opening party on the evening of Friday 29 November. The lease on the Enterprise-owned pub has been sold to business partners Tom Carnaghan and Ben Nathan, who spent the two months prior to re-opening thoroughly refurbishing the interior. Mr Carnaghan has described the new look as "vintage-industrial" with old chair and tables. Much of the furniture has been



Ye Olde Farmhouse surrounded by scaffolding

sourced locally from the Owl and the Ivy in Walcot Street. The new landlords hope to be able to offer bed and breakfast accommodation in the future. Meanwhile there are plans to re-introduce live music nights, though not on the same scale as under the previous landlords, who had made the pub a frequent live music venue.

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

A planning application has been made to convert this pub, which has been closed for several months, into a health clinic, office space and flats. Local resident Miranda Matthews, who bought the building last year from Wadworth's, wants to refurbish the inside of the building, some of which dates back to the 16th century. The Olde Farmhouse has been a pub for at least 200 years although, as its name suggests, it was

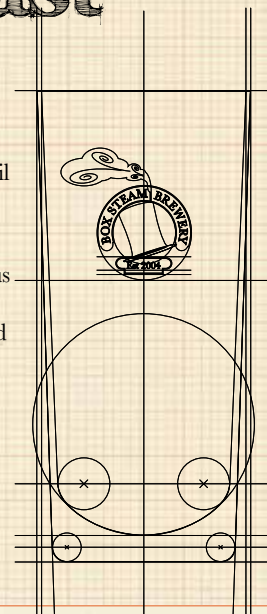
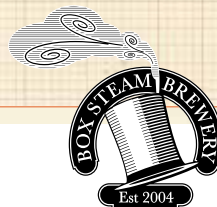
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originally built as a farmhouse. In more recent times the pub became an important live music venue on the local jazz scene. The application, made by agent David Noble on behalf of Mrs Matthews, asserts that the pub has been in decline for eight years. The application seeks to convert the ground floor of the building into a health clinic specialising in complementary medicine. The lower basement would provide office space, the upper floor converted into two one-bedroom flats and the recording studio turned into a two-bedroom flat. Meanwhile a car park at the back of the building will be kept for clients and residential parking.

### Packhorse, Southstoke, near Bath

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. A well-attended public meeting held in November attracted a large level of support for the pub's re-opening and, following a professional valuation, a formal written bid has been submitted to the owner. Members of the *Save the Packhorse* action group are confident that the Packhorse can be re-opened as a viable concern and would make a sound investment for prospective shareholders. The group has formed a co-operative, similar to the one used for the successful community buy out of the Bell on Walcot Street, and is seeking investors to buy shares. The minimum investment would be £500 and the maximum £20,000. The group will need to raise something of the order of £550,000 in order to buy and refurbish the pub. At the time of writing the Save the Packhorse group was waiting for a response to its bid from the owner and hoping to agree terms with him in the near future. To keep track of the latest developments please see [www.southstoke.net](http://www.southstoke.net).

### Richmond Arms, 7 Richmond Place, Bath

A community buy-out of this pub, one of only a very few in northern Bath, could be on the cards. The *Save the Richmond Arms* campaign group is continuing to research the option of acquiring the freehold of the pub and has been touch with some of the regulars at the Bell on Walcot Street where a successful community buy-out was mounted earlier this year. At the time of writing the group was trying to negotiate an agreement with the selling agents for the purchase of the pub and working on a community share prospectus. A launch event is to be held at the Richmond Arms when the prospectus is published. To keep up to date with developments please see [facebook.com/savetherichmondarms](https://www.facebook.com/savetherichmondarms).

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

This Wadworth-owned pub, which closed last year, has recently re-opened under a new landlord. The Rose & Crown originally opened as a beer house in the 1840s and has been serving the community of Larkhall ever since. Much of the original character of the pub has survived.



The Richmond Arms



The Rose & Crown, Larkhall

Uniquely the pub has a heated bar foot-rail. The new landlord is clearly a real ale enthusiast with upwards of four beers on at any one time. These include 6X as a regular and various guests. The kitchen, which had still been closed when the pub re-opened, should be up and running by the time this is published. The menu will include a choice of pies from the Lovett Pie Company along with lighter options, tasty bar snacks, battered black pudding and thrice-cooked chips. Meanwhile the pub has an interestingly designed website: [www.roseandcrownlarkhall.co.uk](http://www.roseandcrownlarkhall.co.uk).



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New Rose & Crown landlord Tom Lightbody

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

### East Somerset

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

The freehold of this village pub, which was closed at the time of writing, is on the market for £249,000. 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, was reported as closed in the last edition of Pints West. It was still closed at the time of writing. The future of this pub is uncertain although it is thought unlikely that it would close permanently as a pub.

#### Griffin, 25 Milk Street, Frome

A beer festival is being planned at this pub, which is effectively the brewery tap for the Milk Street brewery, for the early May bank holiday weekend. The pub's website at [www.fromegriffin.co.uk/category/griffin-events](http://www.fromegriffin.co.uk/category/griffin-events) should give more details nearer the time.

#### Mason's Arms, Marston Gate, Frome

This leasehold on this large Punch Taverns-owned pub, situated on the outskirts of Frome, is on the market for £29,500. The selling agent is Sidney Phillips.

#### Vine Tree, 35 Berkley Road, Frome

The leasehold on this large Enterprise Inns-owned pub, a few hundred yards northeast of the town centre, is on the market for £30,000. The selling agent is Sidney Phillips.

#### Bell, 13 Frome Road, Rode, near Frome

This large pub, situated on the main A361 road between Frome and Trowbridge closed in around mid or late January. A sign on the door states that the pub is closed for refurbishment by the new owners and would re-open soon. There is some confusion over whether or not the lease, which had (and may still) be owned by Flatcappers, has been sold on. A sign advertising the lease for sale has been erected at the pub.

#### City Arms, 69 High Street, Wells

The lease of this popular city-centre pub is on the market with Falcon Commercial for £167,500. There are 17 years left to run on the current 25-year lease. Meanwhile the present leaseholders are buying a business abroad.

#### Globe Inn, 18-20 Priest Row, Wells

This is slightly old news but good news all the same. The Banwell House pub company, noted for a number of positive transformations of pubs in our area, acquired this attractively situated pub last year. Newly

refurbished, the Globe is a comfortable multi-roomed pub, with a secluded beer garden out back, located down a quiet side street just north of the city centre. There are normally four cask beers available, with two Butcombes and two Cheddar Ales on at the time of the branch's most recent visit.

#### King's Head, 36 High Street, Wells

This pub was found to be closed in December and its website seems to have been shut down. The lease is up for sale at £47,250 per annum.

#### Quarter Jack (Wetherspoon's), 18 Priory Road, Wells

The newest branch of Wetherspoon's in the east Somerset area opened on Tuesday 21 January. Formerly the Wells Emporium, a large antiques shop just off the city centre, the building was refurbished at a cost of £1.4 million. Wetherspoon's had originally planned to open its first outlet in this area on the site of the Old Academy and Amulet Theatre in the nearby town of Shepton Mallet but, having in the meantime gained planning permission on the old glass-fronted antiques store, opted for Wells instead. Features include a glass-fronted real ale cellar and an intriguingly designed beer garden. The name of the pub may relate to the figure of Jack Blandifer. He can be found high on the wall above and to the right of the inside clock face of Wells Cathedral. Jack holds a bell and a hammer. On the hour he strikes the bell with the hammer a number of times to indicate the hour, turning his head as he does so to listen to the sound, but he also strikes two bells with his heels to indicate the quarter hours (two strikes for a quarter past, four for half past and so on). The mechanism for moving Jack Blandifer is as old as the original cathedral clock, which dates from around 1390, whilst the figure that we see today was replaced in the seventeenth century.

### West Wiltshire

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

This town-centre pub, which had closed briefly for a change of management in the summer, closed again towards the end of last year. The new managers tried hard to attract a wider clientele by opening at 9am for coffee. At the time of writing the Grapes was still closed.

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

The future of this pub, which closed in early May last year, remains uncertain. We understand that planning permission was being sought to demolish the side buildings for redevelopment.

#### Hop Pole Inn, Woods Hill, Limpley Stoke, near Bradford-on-Avon

Locals are taking steps to safeguard the future of this ancient village locals' pub. Residents and the village parish council have joined forces to get the Hop Pole listed as an Asset of Community Value. If successful it would mean that any attempt to sell the freehold for any other purpose than as a pub must allow the community a six-month window to put together a bid to compete for the purchase. The Hop Pole, which is owned by the Wellington pub chain, is seeking new tenants after the previous lease holders Latona Leisure gave notice to quit. At the time of writing the pub was closed. A questionnaire has been circulated around the villages of Limpley Stoke and Freshford and 92% of respondents said that they wanted the Hop Pole to be protected, sustained and enhanced.

#### George, High Street, Codford, near Warminster

Refurbishment work at the George is still ongoing. It is not certain yet when the pub will re-open but we hope it will be soon.

#### Mash Tun, 4 Woodmarsh, North Bradley, near Trowbridge

The future of this popular village is uncertain following the news, reported in December, that landlady Carolyn Taylor had been given notice to quit the Enterprise Inns-owned pub on Wednesday 1 January 2014. There are fears that the pub will be demolished and houses built on the land. According to an article in the local press Ms Taylor was not informed that the pub had been on the market and only discovered the news when her chef had heard a rumour that the freehold was up for sale. In the same article the selling agents, James A Baker, said that the pub had been on the market since September 2013 and that a purchase was, at around mid-December, lined up with a view to the sale going through in January 2014. The asking price was £240,000. Ms Taylor, who lives in North Bradley, took on the pub eighteen months before, having previously been made redundant by Wiltshire Council. There appear



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# 36th CAMRA BATH BEER FESTIVAL

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SATURDAY 12th APRIL 2014: 11am - 3.30pm & 6pm - 11pm



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The ticket price includes £2 worth of beer tokens to all customers (which will be given to customers on entry to the event itself), a free souvenir glass and an up-to-date beer list. A further £2 worth of beer tokens can be claimed by card-carrying CAMRA members at the event itself. The full price must be paid when ordering tickets in advance.

**Advance Tickets** available from the Old Green Tree, Green Street, Bath.

**Tickets can also be ordered** from Martin Ansell, 38 Maple Gardens, Bath, BA2 3AG. Please state session(s) required and send a cheque, made payable to Bath & Borders CAMRA, along with a stamped addressed envelope.

Please note that numbers are restricted at this venue and it is strongly recommended to buy tickets in advance.

**This year's charity is Parkinson's UK:**  
[www.parkinsons.org.uk](http://www.parkinsons.org.uk)

to be no recent planning applications for conversion of the pub but, rather worryingly, all the pub signage has been removed.

**Bath Arms, 41 Market Place, Warminster**

A major refurbishment is underway at this town-centre pub as it makes the transformation into Warminster's first branch of Wetherspoon's. By January a staff recruitment banner had been erected. The pub is expected to re-open on 1 April 2014.

*Steve Hunt*

## Ivan Gerald Swift RIP

THE death occurred of Ivan Gerald Swift on 16th January 2014 aged 73 years. Ivan was the landlord of the Tuckers Grave, one of CAMRA's heritage pubs, for 30 years. He was a great friend of CAMRA and always served a good pint. A local man (born and now laid to rest in the nearby village of Hemington), Ivan was a great fan of rugby union, especially Bath RFU. He loved his pint of Butcombe, was a great animal lover and an outdoor man. His wife Glenda, a wonderful lady, is for the present time still running Tuckers Grave. Ivan, true to the end, passed away at closing time.

*Roy Priestley*

**Bath & Borders CAMRA are pleased to announce that this year's festival will be held at Bath Rugby Club at The Rec, set in the heart of Bath.**

We would be hard pushed to find a more central location and one that is so connected with the city. The venue is on two levels with the beer being served on the lower level.

The club rests on the banks of the Avon next to Pulteney Bridge, one of the classic views of Bath, and provides a very pleasant walk from the train station.

We will be having around 40 or so beers mainly from the local area with a few others from further afield. Over the past few years there has been an embarrassment of riches in terms of beer choice for even the largest festivals and some hard choices have to be made regarding selection – we think that we have covered all bases and there will be something for everybody.

For our charity this year we have chosen to support Parkinson's UK, a very worthwhile cause.

Tickets will be available on the door but we strongly advise drinkers to buy in advance. We hope you like the logo which combines beer and rugby and we thank Perry Harris for designing it for us.

Hope to see you there. Cheers!

*James Honey*

# Good start to 2014 for Bath Ales

Another year starts with success for Bath Ales: Festivity is declared a 'Champion Porter', and they secure a large export order for their beers to Russia. Added to that Graze Bristol has been refurbished to be more like its big sister in Bath and work continues on the development of the two new outlets in the Colston Hall. More information on the latter in the next issue of Pints West.

## Seasonal ales and specials

Bath Ales' winter seasonal, **Festivity**, has been voted by CAMRA members in the South West as the Champion Porter of the region. This means that Festivity will go to next year's Winter Ales Festival to be judged against porters brewed in the rest of the country, for the title of Champion Porter of Britain.

Now spring is on its way (we hope, and we deserve a good one this year!) **Golden Hare** has arrived in the usual outlets in cask and bottle. Brewed using floor-malted Maris Otter barley and Goldings hops, this 4.4% ABV ale will be available on draught until April, or while stocks last. This year Golden Hare will also be available in Everards pubs in the Leicester area.

For connoisseurs of the stronger and darker beers Bath Ales are still selling bottle-conditioned brews of the **Sulis Collection**. Four varieties of Imperial Stouts and a Barley Wine are available, as described in the Pints West 100<sup>th</sup> edition.

## Exports expand Bath Ales' boundaries

Russia has become the tenth country to join Bath Ales' export portfolio as the business introduces its beers to new territories. Shipments to foreign markets doubled in 2013 and the brewer intends to double sales again in 2014.

The deal with Russia will see Gem, Wild Hare, Dark Side and Barnsey available in the off-trade market nationwide. Russia will be the biggest export market for Bath Ales followed by New Zealand, and Brazil. The full list of export countries is Brazil, Denmark, Finland, France, Hong Kong, Ireland, Mexico, Sweden, New Zealand and



Russia. Surprisingly only about 17% of breweries in the UK export their beer overseas, so there is a big opportunity to be grasped!

## Graze Bristol refurbishment

Graze Bar and Chophouse in central Bristol (pictured above) was closed after Christmas for a month undergoing refurbishment. First opened in November 2009, the bar/restaurant was the original of the successful Graze concept, now with sister venues in Cirencester and the flagship Graze in Bath.

Designed by local business Simple Simon, changes include a complete overhaul of the kitchen and improved seating areas, along with a fresh new look aligning it more with the Bath Graze, including a prominent white cow's head!

The food side of the Graze concept is based around top quality British meat which is cooked in the Josper oven, which is a charcoal fueled oven. However the latest menu also includes delicacies such as duck hearts on toast with dates and port sauce, and smoked haddock kedgeree with cockles and poached egg.

I visited shortly after the opening to have a meal with my French friend who was in town for the night. He was impressed with the decor and ambience, and we enjoyed a good meal. There are still three hand pumps on the bar and I had a very good pint of Festivity – my friend, I am afraid to say, was drinking a lager beginning with H.

## News from the Beard Brewery

Beerd beers continue to pop up in various places; **Silvertip**, the 4.7% New Zealand style pale ale seems especially popular. Look out also for cask versions of the Beerd brews we mentioned two issues ago. I found **Razor**, the 5.9% full-bodied IPA, in the Beer Emporium and very nice it was too if you like fruity hoppiness.

Beerd brewer Shane is looking out for rum barrels, as he thinks Festivity conditioned in them will make a rather fine rum porter. If by chance anyone has any rum barrels lurking in their shed or garage please let Shane know!

**bath ales**

<b>The Grapes</b> George Street, Oxford 01865 793380	<b>The Hare on the Hill</b> Kingsdown, Bristol 0117 9081982	<b>The Hop Pole</b> Upper Bristol Road, Bath 01225 446327
<b>The Salamander</b> John Street, Bath 01225 428889	<b>The Swan</b> Bath Road, Swineford 0117 9323101	<b>The Wellington</b> Horfield, Bristol 0117 9513022

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Bar & Chophouse  
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0117 9276706

Bar, Brasserie & Chophouse  
Gosditch Street, Cirencester  
01285 658957

**COLSTON ST. BAR & KITCHEN**

Colston Street, Bristol  
0117 2047131

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# Zerodegrees: full steam ahead!

I recently met the new brewer at Zerodegrees Bristol. As seems the fashion these days he is a young dynamic person with impeccable training and experience. Unusually, in this country at least, he is French and trained in Belgium.

His name is Simon Gueneau and he hails from Paris. He did his training in the two major breweries in Brussels, Cantillon and De la Senne. He has subsequently spent time in London brewing at the Botanist brewpub near Kew Gardens, where he was made redundant after Mitchell and Butler bought the pub and promptly closed down the microbrewery.

He started work with Zerodegrees on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2013 and following the repairing of the brew kit (see issue 100 of Pints West) worked flat out learning on the job and brewing five times a week, trying to keep up with the Christmas demand. Now it is quieter he is able to take stock and plan ahead for some special brews, in which he is fully supported by manager Max.

Production of all the regular beers has been maintained: Pilsner (the most popular), Pale Ale, Black Lager and Wheat Beer. Simon told me his primary aim is to maintain consistency of this core range while brewing a special once or twice a month.

The latest special in the bar is an Italian Lager (to please his new boss?) and the next one will be an English style Golden Ale. The latter has already been brewed using Carogold and lager malts from Warminster and Bramling Cross and Challenger hops in the brew followed by dry hopping with Challenger and Styrian Goldings. I



was able to taste a pre-conditioning sampler and already it had the refreshing, slightly fruity taste of a pale golden bitter. The ABV will be 4.2%.

Simon is also thinking about introducing a more French influence to the brewing after the previous German styles, and as he said to me "French beer is not only Kronenbourg!" In fact he named a couple of French brewers worth noting: Thiriez from the Nord (North) region and Brasserie des Garrigues from the Gard region in the South of France. He had also thought about Belgian style brewing but the high cost of duty on these types of (strong) beers would not make it commercially viable for Zerodegrees.

As an interesting aside the Cardiff branch of Zerodegrees has brewed an Imperial Stout in honour of Don Whaley, a popular CAMRA member, who died recently.

During our discussion we talked about Bristol's breweries and Simon indicated that he very much wants to join the local scene and meet like-minded brewers. He was already aware of the new crop of 'craft' bars in Bristol and also the importance of CAMRA. He offered to host a future tasting session when he has some interesting specials available and already the CAMRA Young Members contacts are planning to take advantage of this offer.

To summarise, brewing is back to normal in Bristol Zerodegrees and we welcome another young brewer to the Bristol scene and wish him well in his ambitions.

*Roy Sanders*



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# Watering Holes in the Desert

## brought to you from Weston-super-Mare

### Weston Whispers

Following the last issue of Pints West in which Tim Nickolls wrote of the **Nightjar** in Worle ("A pub at the heart of its community") we received the following message: "*Di Bradley, licensee of the Nightjar in Worle featured in the last edition of Pints West, would like to thank the two surprise visitors from Bristol who very kindly left an excellent pair of Laurel and Hardy figurines for Di to add to her collection behind the bar. Di was out at the time and would like to thank the people personally if they would like to get in touch.*"

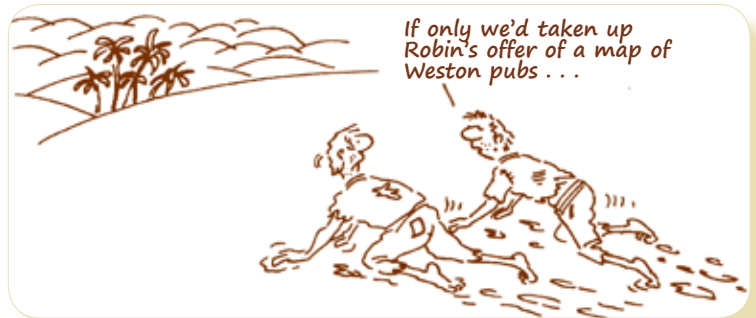
The **Bear** in Walliscote Road had its first beer festival recently, with ten beers on gravity dispense including such classics as Oakham Black Hole Porter (5.9%), Atomic Power (4.8%), Otter Bramble (4%) and Wychwood Dogs Bollocks (5.2%). The same pub had notable beers Otter Claus and Mole's Moël Moël over the Christmas period.

The **Regency** in Lower Church Road had a barrel of Kite Scary Kite (4.3%) with a very quick turnover as it was so popular. **Off The Rails**, located at the railway station, had the RCH Santa Fé as usual over the festive season and very good it was reported to be.

The Weston '**Seasonal Ales Saunter**' this year was held on a Thursday evening as it was felt that the pubs would be exceptionally crowded on the Friday before Christmas; this may have led to the drop in numbers of this usually popular event, when participants go from pub to pub, but only drink in those that have a festive beer on. The official tour started at the **Criterion**, where there was Sharp's Nardelik (5%), with about eight members of CAMRA swelling the good number of regulars there, and with the warm fire it was difficult to get some to leave. Next at **Sam's Bar and Grill** there was a choice from Dartmoor Santa's Secret (4.2%) and Quantock Rockin' Robin (3.9%). Passing a few pubs that didn't have the requisite beers (despite at least two saying they would have) the group went to the **Cabot Court**, with five festive ales there including Elgood's Snicklemas bitter, to the **Regency** for Cotliegh Reinbeer, the **Brit Bar** for Wickwar Christmas Cracker, and finishing at the **Dragon Inn** where RCH Sante Fé and Mauldon's Bah Humbug satisfied most palates. There were about 15 people by now, both members and non-members, on the tour.

On the 18<sup>th</sup> January a proposed tour of Taunton pubs was attempted by two brave members of the Weston sub-branch, meeting a member from Somerset branch and also one from Bristol branch. Brave, because it was probably the wettest Saturday in the wettest January on record, and they viewed the flooded levels from the train on the way there; in fact they were most surprised to find Taunton only partially submerged, and many shoppers braving the flooded pavements. They went to the **Drawbridge** and the **Apple and Parrot** finding only Sharp's Doom Bar on sale, and this not being to their finely tuned tasting, they went to the **Castle Green Inn**, now run by Dorset Brewing Company, with three DBC ales on and a guest beer Great Heck Treasure (4.8%), with as yet no sign of the pub introducing keg beers. Then to the **Racehorse Inn** in East Reach, a St Austell house, where Tribute and Proper Job had been augmented by the rugby beer Ruck'n Roll (4%), and thence to **Molly Malones** (formerly the Malt & Hops) – not an Irish themed pub, but a free house selling three ales including Timothy Taylor Landlord bitter, and where they made use of the very fast pool table. Thence across flooded streets to the **Ring of Bells** where four ales including Crouch Vale Brand X were on sale; this has become Somerset CAMRA Pub of the Year. Disappointingly, the **Plough Inn** had no real ale on, but a good selection of real ciders satisfied the wet quartet. The final port of call was the **Grove**, where three beers including the Cottage Resolution were to be found, and where you can get a good CAMRA discount (providing you tell them as you order your beer).

The social evening on the following Friday to Worle pubs was rather down in numbers, due not only to the wet weather, but also that a few of the usual social stalwarts were in Bristol for the screening of silent movies! Starting at the **Golden Lion**, five members enjoyed the Otter beer, then meet up with a sixth member at the **Lamb** where the Butcombe Bitter was as good as it always is here. The group then went to the **Old Kings Head** where the Newman's Red Castle Cream is often the house beer, as it was



then. Not being that common a beer, most of the thirsty travellers hadn't tried it before and found that the visit was worthwhile. We had planned to go to the **Woodspring** where often up to four ales have been seen in recent times, but an advance party told us that they'd run out of real ale, and so before catching the bus back into town the group split into two visiting the first two pubs again. Before dispersing some of them enjoyed a final nightcap at the **Dragon Inn** back in Weston.

There is a good diary of events planned for the next three months, and hopefully more of you will be tempted out on these socials which are organised for you, including on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of March when we shall welcome a delegation of CAMRA members from Croydon for a tour of Good Beer Guide and historic pubs in central Bristol.

Following a plea in the letters page of Pints West 100 regarding maps for locations of pubs, if anyone needs an online map of the Weston-super-Mare central pubs they can get one from [robinwild42@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:robinwild42@yahoo.co.uk) (updated monthly).

*Robin E Wild*

## Weston diary and contact

- **Friday 14<sup>th</sup> March:** Social gathering at the Nightjar, Mead Vale. Start at 8pm. Bus number 3 passes the door. Anyone getting bored with the choice of ale can follow this with a trip to the Summerhouse, also bus number 3, which is a Marston's house.
- **Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> March:** Meet & Greet at the Regency (opposite Weston College in Lower Church Road) 7.30pm for 8pm, with beer and skittles, and other pub games for those that want to play. New members very welcome, and also any non-members who'd like to find out more about the local branch.
- **Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> March:** Bristol central pubs. We will be welcoming a delegation from Croydon CAMRA who wish to visit Bristol, so I have devised a tour that takes in not only Good Beer Guide pubs but also some of the historic pubs and newer bars around the King Street area. Meet at Cornubia (see GBG or whatpub.com to find it) at 1pm. The tour will finish at 7.30pm at Bristol Temple Meads railway station.
- **Saturday April 12<sup>th</sup>:** Wells city pub tour. 126 bus to Wells, departs Alexandra Parade at 11am, back in Weston about 6pm.
- **Good Friday 18<sup>th</sup> April:** Social at the Bristol House, Milton Road, 7pm. Number 7 bus stops outside.
- **Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> May:** Social at Sam's Bar and Grill, near Criterion in Upper Church Road, 8pm.
- **Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> May:** tour around Hotwells and the harbour area west of central Bristol. Meet at Grain Barge 12 noon, bus 1 stops close by, X1 get off after Merchants Arms and walk 5 minutes, pub (boat) on the waterfront.

All tours and socials open to members and also any non-members who'd like to find out more about the local pubs and local branch.

### Contact

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

# Tim Nickolls: enjoying a well-earned retirement

Just seven members including the landlord turned up at the Woolpack in St Georges in the Autumn of 1999, following letters of invitation sent out by Bristol & District CAMRA, who sent two representatives to gauge interest.

Two of the seven found out that we came from the same area of North London, so there was an immediate connection there and four of us decided to take up the cudgels and form the Weston-super-Mare sub-branch. Becoming known as the "Gang of Four" we decided that we didn't want a formal committee but that Tim Nickolls was potentially the best organiser amongst us, so he became leader and the rest is history.

Founding "Gangster" Mike Coleman recalls: "I remember the early days of Weston CAMRA well. The four of us would take it in turns each month to drive on a mystery pub crawl in the countryside, with the passengers not knowing where we were going. Subsequently we decided minibus trips were a better idea, as we would all then be able to drink."

Some nostalgia from co-founder Rich Neale, now living in Bristol: "On one of our 'Beer Geek' trips to Belgium, we were approaching the car park of famous Trappist brewery Westvleteren's brewery tap, when Tim spotted an older gentleman on his bike. It appeared that he had just come from the bar even though it was only 11.30am and had clearly been partaking of the local beer! Obviously worse for wear and unable to maintain his balance on the bike, he promptly fell off into the road, causing us to fear for his safety. We quickly realised he was unhurt as he promptly got up and relieved himself in the middle of the road all over his bike, in anger. We fell about laughing as he tried to ride off down the lane in a zigzag motion."

Co-founder and original "Gang" member Steve Reed eulogises: "All

four of us were considered mavericks in the beginning, as we hated the thought of committee politics, but without Tim's enthusiasm to glue the branch together it's fair to say we would probably have struggled. So now one-time punk rock gigster, perennial Belgian beer enthusiast and true Son of the Desert, Tim, has opted to stagger gracefully along the Trail of the Lonesome Pine. Who knows what the future holds for the sub-branch, but whatever happens next, you can be sure that old 'messed train' won't be far away!"

We are certain that all of the current members of Weston sub-branch would want us to express our appreciation of all the hard work Tim has put in over 13 years, now that he has decided to retire as leader to enjoy a well-earned rest. He will of course still be very much part of the local scene.

Tim Nickolls R.I.B. (Rest in Beer)



So much choice!  
Tim on a WsM branch  
'International Beer Geek'  
trip to Bavaria in 2008

The "Gang"



## Chippenham Beer Cider & Perry Festival

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- No tickets on sale at Olympiad Reception

**Friday: 6pm - 11pm £6**  
**Saturday: 11am - 4pm £5 (live music)**  
**Saturday: 7pm - 11pm £5 (live music)**

**Tickets for Festival are available:**

**In Person:** From LETS FACE IT, 28 New Road, Chippenham  
(cash sales only)

**By Post:** From Sam Henly, 35 Park Lane, Chippenham SN15 1LN  
Send SAE please. Cheques payable to NW Wilts CAMRA

**On Line:** [www.nwwiltscamra.org.uk](http://www.nwwiltscamra.org.uk)

**On Door:** For Saturday 11am - 4pm only

Venue is only 5 minutes on foot from the town centre and 2 minutes from the train station and bus stops. It has a pay and display car park with provision for disabled badge holders.



[www.gloucesterbeerfestival.org.uk](http://www.gloucesterbeerfestival.org.uk)



## 2<sup>ND</sup> GLOUCESTER CAMRA BEER & CIDER FESTIVAL

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# Weston Wassail Wander



In January each year, our local cider farms organise their wassail celebrations and this year 45 Weston CAMRA members, family and friends were around on the 18<sup>th</sup> for the whole of the sixth Dandy annual Saturday Millwhites Cider Wassail celebration at Orchard Barns, Rooksbridge. Each year the weather seems to be different but this year's pouring rain would have caused few problems for chionophobic Bristolians as the chimenea, available from local *tiendas*, that replaces the traditional wassail bonfire was tented and soon dried out any wet wassailers. Sadly, said rain turned out to be an omen of what was to come on the Somerset Levels, possibly so named after the spirits that inhabit the cider orchards. However, Bob assures me that apples float and so, come the scragging season, they should all arrive in t'mill baht trouble.

The wassail ceremony, from the Old Norse '*ves heill*' 'be healthy', is in the farm orchard and aims to produce a healthy crop of apples for the new year's cider production. Wassailing goes back hundreds of years but celebrating such seasonal transitions includes: Roman festivals that may have involved candles; the across-the-border *Y Fari Lwyd*, with pre-Christian origins; and Celtic fire festivals, perhaps in Glasgow, once the "Tinderbox City" although with far fewer strikes nowadays. The January Burns Night apparently means something else to good poets. Speaking of the Romans, *in lingua latina* presumably according to a non-poetic Bishop in my school, our first mention of cider was by Julius Caesar's legionnaires, who were perfectly healthy and found us making it with crab apples, possibly coming out of the side of the press. The idea was taken back to Rome, there presumably having been some roads that led there, and it was a great success in the Empire, possibly from being seen in an Old Market. It was Norman Wisdom that brought us other sorts of apple, possibly in addition to conkers on pointless bay horses. For those theatre-goers who, due to Zeus's Echo, misheard Bud Flanagan singing 'Underneath the Arches' with Old Vic, wassailing turned up in Ambridge on the evening previous to our outing. Obviously, fictional Borssetshire apples cannot compare with succulent Somerset ones, even if the aptly-named Pip Archer did give Kathy Perks for her hard work and Oliver Sterling by the sackful.

Getting back to Rooksbridge, possibly misnamed as *corvus frugilegus* can fly over rivers, the wassail is led by the Wassail Queen, a non-Florentine Lady with the Lamp who sings like a nightingale. Everyone parades to the large decorated apple tree singing loudly, or singeing if too close to a processional lantern. In a circle around the tree, they cheer to awaken it and frighten off the 'evil spirits' lurking in the outer darkness. Pieces of soggy cider- and this year rain-soaked toast are hung on the tree to encourage the Wild robins to stay, as they are the 'good spirits' of the tree, although perhaps not of the League at present. Shotguns are fired to further scare off the 'evil spirits', and perhaps

give the Robins a chance to make them go for a Burton and Bury them in a nearby farming Man's Field.

Ceremony over, everyone goes back to the cider bars to continue with what is the serious business of the evening for CAMRA members. Anyone who asks the organisers what the date has to do with the changing seasons will hear that it is near to the Old Twelfth Night on the Julian calendar. There is no truth in the rumour that this is to be reintroduced to delay by eleven days any secret information reaching the Assanges of this world and whistleblowers are welcome to scare off 'evil spirits'. The present Twelfth Night is for some itinerant non-republicans 'El Dia de Los Reyes' Kings' Day, another excuse for exchanging presents.

But getting back to the matter in hand, this year's wassail again had live music with the Somerset Paddies. The first prize of the many in a wonderful raffle for the Great Ormond Street Hospital was most appropriately a cider tasting for six. There were also: tea and biscuits for the more abstemious; Baileys for the older person; hair therapy of course; fudge for the politicians; a candle to light the way to the tree; Chivas Regal as possibly drunk instead of Pernod by Keith Ricard; and Port for the stormy night.

Millwhites press Somerset apples that are hand selected from their orchards and two cider bars with free tasting this year offered us: Hedge Layer at 4.8% a light and refreshing thirst quencher with a rounded medium flavour; Traditional Medium Scrumpy at 6.5% a sparkling deep golden fresh cider with a dry oaky taste; Rioja Cask 6.7% full flavoured dry cider that is aged for the connoisseur in red wine barrels; Rum Cask 7.5% premium cider aged in barrels from the Jamaican Rum Company and the 2009 Champion Cider of East Anglia; and Whisky Cask also 7.5% but a smooth medium dry cider aged in Scottish whisky barrels for a subtle spirit finish. For those leaving at the end of the night and thinking of arriving home, there was also Apples And Pears at 5.0% a refreshing blend of the Traditional Medium Scrumpy and fresh pressed pear juice, better than anything that ever came out of Shepton Mallet in my Batchelor days. This is one of three Scrumpy blended Millwhites fruit ciders, the others being: Blackberry Blush Cider, at 6.5% a late summer blend with the juice of hand-picked blackberries; and Strawberry Cider also at 6.5%, a blend with the juice of sweet strawberries. I understand that there is no gooseberry cider, perhaps because the legitimacy of this blend would be questioned by fathers with the types of shotgun heard during the ceremony.

Any road up, as they say far away from Somerset, for the third year running a thoroughly good time was had by all CAMRA members and guests at what has indeed become an annual event for we Weston Wanderers.

*Dr John (exactly 1,000 words)*

## The Wassail Song

This is heard around the turn of the year and sung in part at the wassail ceremony:

**Here we come a-wassailing  
Among the leaves so green o'  
Here we come a-wandering  
So fair as to be seen o'**

*Love and joy come to you,  
And to you your wassail too,  
And God bless you and send you  
A happy New Year*

**We are not beggars brazen o'  
Going on from door to door  
But your neighbours' children o'  
All that you have seen before**

*Love and joy ...*

**God bless the master, best of men  
And the good mistress too o'  
With all their little children  
As round the table they all go o'**

*Love and joy ...*

*Dr John*



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# A Round with Robin

The **Beer Emporium** in King Street in central Bristol has had a few 'brewery take-overs' this past quarter, and I have been to some of them. The first was a 'meet the brewer' from *Saltaire*, and at reasonable prices I sampled the *Hopfen*, *Triple Chocoholic*, *Madagascar IPA* and *Winter Ale* and, the following day, *Hazelnut Coffee Porter*, *Blackberry Cascade* and *Challenger Special*. Another was when the *Beerd* brewery had four of their ales there in cask and four in keg too, and I was able to try the *Silvertip* and the *BigSmall* (2.8%), the latter a very complex hoppy beer for such a low ABV.

I visited the **Backwell Village Club** beer festival in November where I was able to try the unusual *Celt La Tene* (3.3%) and the brilliant beer from near Evercreech in Somerset, *Wild Madness*. Some other new beers (for me) that I tried in November and think worth a mention were *St Austell Old Cornish Porter* (5%) at the **Horse and Groom** (behind the Council House aka City Hall), the *Baxter's Rednik Stout* (4.1%) at the **Gryphon** (Colston Street), and *Abbey Ales Oh Mr Porter* (4.9%) and *Hapax* (brewed at the *Kingstone Brewery*) *Jingle Porter* (7%) at the **Seven Stars** (Redcliffe). At this last mentioned pub on the 1<sup>st</sup> of December "Beatles Day" for the acoustic music scene, I was able to drink the unforgettably named *fff* beer *I can't remember* (6%). That day ran into the first of the 'beeriocals' this quarter, when they had 22 ales from the West Midlands until the following Thursday, including brewers *Sadlers*, *Byatt*, *Two Towers*, *Toll End* and naturally *Old Swan* and *Sarah Hughes*.

The *fff* beer *I can't remember* was also on at the **Gryphon** beer festival, where my favourites were the *Buxton Dark Night* porter (5%), *Salopian Black Ops* (7.4%) and *Byatt's Black Cat* (4%). From here I went to the **Beer Emporium** beer festival which was being held in a marquee. My fellow Pints West correspondent Dr John would no doubt refer to the tent as a Marquis as it was in King Street. They had a good selection of beers here also, and no problem keeping them cool as it was a cold wet day; my favourites were *Summer Wine Barista* (4.8%) and *Hardknott Lux Borealis* (3.8%), a 'northern light' beer with Aurora hops.

Before Christmas the mulled cider was much in demand at the **Cornubia** to warm the boule players, and it was also delightful of Phil to share bottled Hapax Jingle porter and hot roast chestnuts with us one

very cold day. Following the article in Pints West 100 about the *Three Dagers* brewery, I tried and liked their *Dagers Edge* (4.7%) beer at where else but the **Gryphon**. The *O'Hanlon's Goodwill* made an unexpected return at the **V Shed**.

Over the Christmas period I had *Branscombe Vale HoHoHo Festive Frolics* (4.7%) at the **Crediton Inn** in Devon and also, at Exeter's **Imperial Hotel**, *Hunter's Slaughtered Lamb* (4.5%) and *Country Life Black Boar Devon Porter* (5%).

On the Sunday before the New Year I went to Bath with friends to try the newly opened pubs and some old favourites too. Starting at the **Graze** bar next to Bath Spa station, we tried the *Platform 3 Keg IPA* (5.7%) at £2.30 a half pint (this is normally available in cask too, but not then). On to the **Bath Brew House**, which is the old Metropolitan pub but with a good makeover; here was a good range of beers both cask and keg, and I tried the *James Street Brewery Gladiator* (3.8%), a classic bitter, and a 5.5% beer from *Sunny Republic*. Then to the **Raven**, and halves of the *Raven Gold* (4%) and the *Teignworthy Russian Imperial Porter* (10.5%), the two costing £4.70. We proceeded to the **Star** for *Caledonian Bitter Winter* (4.8%) and the **Bell Inn**, now owned by the community consortium, for the *RCH Pitchfork* from eight available beers. We passed the **Old Green Tree** which being old fashioned keeps to old Sunday hours and went to the **Coeur de Lion** for *Nethergate Augustinian* (4.5%), and finally *Abbey Bellringer* at the **Royal Hotel** opposite the railway station.

The New Year saw the next 'beeriocal' at the **Seven Stars** from East Yorkshire breweries and there were many that delighted, but *Brass Castle Bad Kitty* (5.5%) and the collaboration beer by *Steel City & Great Heck Yule Twig* (5.2%) were the ones to die for. Good to hear Ant Noel and his band there with these beers still available on the Saturday. Later that week I was to have a "Wild" Tuesday evening, which suited my name by having a *Church End Wild Thing* (4.2%) there, preceded by a pint of *Wild English Roots* (4.8%) at the **Gryphon** for only £2.50.

The *Cotleigh* brewery are celebrating their 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year and the **Cornubia** hosted a 'meet the brewer' evening, where five of their beers were on hand pump and the bottle-conditioned *Peregrine Porter* was there too to be given away. The *Old Buzzard* (4.8%) was in tip-top condition. A new *Arbor* beer is always cause for celebration by me and I really enjoyed *The Three Little Wolves* and the *Big Bad Twig* (4.8%), a hoppy Friday afternoon special, at two of my favourite Bristol pubs.

January slipped into February, almost unnoticed through the continuing rain, except for the **Seven Stars** Welsh 'beeriocal' where another *Steel City* collaboration beer, this time with *Pixie Spring Brewery Hopcraft The Boss* (4.6%) vied with *Hopcraft Simcoe Plus* (an easy drinking 5.4% IPA). Despite the flooding I was able to get to the **Tewkesbury Winter Ales Festival** where on the Saturday there were still 65 of the original 80 ales still to be drunk. I contented myself with nine thirds of new brews and old favourites with *Penpont Silent Night* (7.2%) taking my accolade, though the *Wapping Journeys End* (6%) from Liverpool was great too. Then with some friends I visited a few pubs in Gloucester, the best being the **Pelican** where I enjoyed the *Wye Valley Dorothy Goodbody's Winter Sun* and *Wholesome Stout*.

Robin E Wild



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## Some Wetherspoon Lines

The Metropolitan Bar in Marylebone NW1 To Baker Street's Sherlock Holmes does not belong Whilst named for the first urban underground railway It came with its fine selection of ales long after his day But sampling them often marks the starting point for me Some London places where once I lived to set off to see

One such place is Highgate where The Gatehouse in N6 Was not in my time there yet within Wetherspoon bricks Once at this 'high gate' weary travellers a toll did pay To cross the Bishop of London's land on their way Down south just as much later on the deep Northern Line As Northerner I paid my fare each day to avoid a fine

Dr John

## Readers' Letters

Readers are welcome to send letters to the Pints West Editor

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

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

### Sussex beers best

A friend of mine in Bristol CAMRA mails me a copy of Pints West when it is published and I always look forwards to reading Robin E Wild's column 'A Round With Robin'.

As a native of Sussex I must commend Robin on his excellent taste when he says that Sussex beers are his favourite. He is of course quite right. I've been exiled in Birmingham for 19 years and apart from Dark Star beers we rarely see Sussex beers here.

Regards, Clive Walder,  
Birmingham CAMRA.

*Thanks for this Clive. I know Pints west gets around – a comment from a Liverpool drinker corrected us at Pints West when I wrote about a beer at the Lion Tavern in Moorgate, Liverpool a few years ago! Though actually I'm from Surrey, in the bad old days of the 70's when most beer was fizz, you could always get a good pint from Harveys/Beards of Lewes by sneaking into Sussex! – Robin E Wild.*

### How do I get there?

Just picked up a copy of edition 100 so congratulations on your editorship for so many years. Now then – your correspondent John Craven (letter writer about maps) raised a very good point which is relevant to me as well, as I am sure it is to a number of other readers.

It concerns pubs that are featured mainly on the outskirts of your area – yes I know those pubs in the City Centre, but what about the others? I would love to visit them, but how do I get there? Equally I am sure that they would welcome custom from outside their area.

So why not in the articles show how to get there by public transport? Would it be possible to show bus route numbers, departure points, and frequency of service? For those travelling by train a "plus-bus" ticket enables unlimited travel in the Bristol City area and I would like to use this facility to visit those pubs.

Regards, Brian Francis,  
Cardiff.

*Something we could bear in mind, though of course you are helped nowadays by the maps available in CAMRA's on-line pub guide [Whatpub.com](http://Whatpub.com) – Ed.*

### Bar billiards

I am a regular pub-goer, and enjoy the (increasingly rare) sight of old and traditional pub games on my drinking travels.

Last year I decided to organise a trip to London to meet up with a group of friends for a "Bar Billiards Crawl". We visited five pubs in East and Central London to enjoy a few pints and a fun competition. The thing that struck me most was that, in every pub, other drinkers came up to us as we played to ask us more about the game – it seemed they didn't ever use the tables because they had no idea how to play. Obviously we were happy to share our knowledge in the hope that it

would encourage people to play themselves, and perhaps extend the lives of a few more bar billiards tables!

Now I would very much like to organise a similar trip more locally, but I am struggling to find many venues – and this is where I ask for your readers' help. Apart from the Avon Packet in Southville, and the Highbury Vaults in Kingsdown, can any readers recommend any pubs in the Bristol and surrounding area with working bar billiards tables? If so please email me at [otterpond@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:otterpond@hotmail.co.uk). Thanks a lot!

Yours, Kevin Moseley,  
Email [otterpond@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:otterpond@hotmail.co.uk).

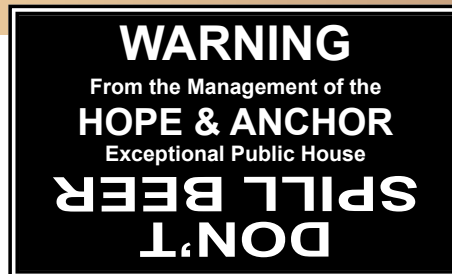
### Reminiscences of sports and games in pubs

First I would like to give a belated congratulations to Pints West on reaching 100 editions. Also to commend Steve (the editor) on the brilliant job he does on producing Pints West, and keeping it at such a high standard.

Right, that's the creeping part done, now on to my views on the above subject. When I first entered public houses, as far as I can recall, the main games being played were darts and occasionally dominoes. Then as I moved around I came across bar skittles, quoits, shove ha'penny, bar billiards and now and then various games of cards. Back in those days, if anyone was caught playing for money, they were 'nicked' and the landlord could lose his licence. I also knew a few pubs that had a billiard table, where snooker was the usual game, as billiards was a far more skilled game. (Well that's my opinion.)

Nowadays the main game seems to be pool, as the landlord can make money out of it, and youngsters enjoy playing it. Cribbage and dominoes are quite popular in some pubs (I run a crib and a domino team, in the Anchor, just outside Thornbury). Although it is difficult to attract younger players to these games, I would hazard a guess that it's because you need to 'think' to play these games.

I would guess one of the most popular games in this area is skittles, a game I had never come across until I emigrated to Thornbury. A game, I must say, I became quite addicted to. Mind you, I was never very good at it, but



I did enjoy playing, and I met some very nice people travelling around the local pubs.

I gave the skittles up several years ago (too energetic) and, as mentioned, I prefer a sitting-down game now. Of all the games I've mentioned, shove ha'penny would be my favourite, but unfortunately I have never seen it played anywhere (the last one I saw was at the Salutation, Ham, whilst Don & Sue were running the place). However I do know a landlord who has a genuine board; he showed it to me one lunch time, so I came home and hunted down my original ha'pennies, dating from the 1940s. What is so special about ha'pennies for playing? They are rubbed down to a fine finish, so they can slide along the board. I have seen discs in the past, but they were not the same. A ha'penny was the size of a two pence piece, but I don't think "shove tu'penny" sounds right.


There is another game which has become quite popular, and that's the French game petanque, or as we call it boules. This game is played on any hard flat surface, regardless of stones/chippings, where a small round rubber ball is thrown a few feet away, then three people chuck 'huge ball bearings' to see who can get the nearest to it. I did join a team for a few seasons, but when my pals packed up, so did I. I did find it back aching bending down to pick up my ball bearings.

I guess there are quite a few games I have forgotten, or never come across. So if you can think of any, I will be more than pleased for you to buy me a pint of 'the good stuff', while you tell me about it/them.

Cheers to all from one of your Thornbury drinkers.


John Gatty,  
Thornbury.

# Rucking Mole joins the pack!




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# Cider festival in a box!



Want to hold a cider festival but don't know where to start? Bristol Cider Shop has launched a new service that might be able to help. 'Cider Festival in a Box' is aimed at pubs, clubs and anyone else thinking of holding a cider festival.

The kits include everything you need to run a cider festival, including tasting notes, posters, flyers, t-shirts and a hand-picked selection of award-winning cider and perry. If you have particular favourites, they will put together a bespoke list for you or you can order a pre-made selection 'off the shelf'.

Bristol Cider Shop is a small, independent retailer, based on the historic Christmas Steps in central

Bristol. The shop is run by Peter Snowman and Nick Davis and has been going since December 2010.

Like everything else in the Bristol Cider Shop, all of the ciders on offer are award-winning and (unlike some of the more commercial brands) are made from 100% fresh cider apple juice. They are all made by small independent producers within 50 miles of Bristol, and are sourced direct from the farm. The shop stocks over 100 varieties of 'real' cider, including draught cider (available by the pint or the barrel) and a wide selection of bottled cider, as well as cider brandy, cider chutney, cider vinegar, cider books and cider gifts.

Peter Snowman, owner, said, "We have so many people asking us to help them organise cider festivals. A lot of publicans and festival organisers are absolute experts when it comes to beer, but they don't necessarily have the same background in cider. That's where we come in."

As well as supplying everything you need to run the festival (except venue and staff) they will also help you to promote it. They are going

to feature all of the festivals taking part on their website, as well as promoting the events through their social media pages, in their monthly newsletter and in the shop.

They will deliver anywhere in mainland UK and they hope that this will make 'proper' cider much more accessible to people around the country. They need a minimum of two weeks notice to ensure the best range of cider possible but they recommend booking early as they are expecting to be very busy!

## Ben Reidy RIP

All of us at Pints West were truly shocked and saddened to hear of the sudden and horribly premature death of Ben Reidy or "Aussie Ben" as he was often known, on Wednesday 12th February. The popular landlord (or General Manager to give him his proper title) of the Old Fish Market in Baldwin Street, Bristol was only 40 years old.

Ben first surfaced in Bristol as Deputy Manager at the Old Fish Market as part of a team with Jaume Escoriza around eight or nine years ago. They moved down from the Victoria, a well known Fuller's pub near Paddington in London. Prior to their arrival, it could be said that the Old Fish Market had been underachieving in terms of trade and of beer quality. It did not take them long to change all of that. Within a year the pub was thriving and established a reputation as the place in Bristol to enjoy live TV sport accompanied by a fine pint or six of great real ale. They won the pub a coveted place in the Good Beer Guide where it has remained ever since. Around 2008 Ben was called back to London to complete his training and then enjoyed a spell running the prestigious Mawsons Arms which is part of the famous brewery buildings at Chiswick. Then there followed a year or so back in the West Country managing the Bear & Swan in Chew Magna. Jaume remained at the Fish Market until 2010 when he decided on a change of career and headed out of Bristol. He was surprised to receive a phone call from Ben asking if he "minded if I apply for your old job?" Soon after Ben was back in his adopted and spiritual home in a pub and a city that he loved.

Ben was born and raised in Hervey Bay, on the Australian coast near Brisbane, where he spent years working on the sea. He set off to see the world and discovered London and Fuller's. Then he discovered Bristol and its maritime history which he loved. He was a naturally friendly and happy person who greeted everyone with a smile and cheery greeting. I honestly cannot ever recall him failing to greet my arrival at the pub without rushing over to shake my hand, enquire after my health and (on many occasions) offer to buy me a pint! I never witnessed him in any kind of mood or unhappy. He was absolutely passionate about serving top quality ale and was very proud of hosting the ticket sales sessions for Bristol Beer Festival every year. The only time I felt he wasn't totally happy was when we paid a surprise visit to the Bear & Swan in 2009. Whilst the pub and beer were immaculate, it is very much a "genteel dining experience" kind of place as opposed to the hustle and bustle of the Old Fish Market. It just wasn't Ben's kind of place. His face literally lit up when a minibus full of familiar faces turned up!

Ben was absolutely in his element in the Old Fish Market, especially when big sporting events were on. He would be right in the thick of things, playing the jolly host and trading friendly insults with us "pommies". He loved Australia beating England at cricket or rugby but always took it on the chin when we won. At least he got the last laugh with the recent Ashes! No doubt the Old Fish Market will recover and thrive again but it just won't be the same without Ben's cheery presence. If you knew Ben please raise a glass to him and wish him all the best wherever he is now.

Cheers Ben - thanks for being such a great bloke - you really will be missed.

Vince Murray

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# Severn Vale CAMRA

## A trip into the wilderness

At the beginning of December, several members of the Severn Vale sub-branch made another foray into the wild lands to the North – well, alright – some of the lumpier bits of South Gloucestershire. That's not the county – South Gloucestershire, but rather the South of the county of Gloucestershire. Confusing, isn't it? With our driver Rod firmly out of control at the wheel, we bounded up the A38 trying to keep up with the tractors.

Turning up a lane barely wide enough for the car, we started to climb the edge of the Cotswold escarpment. Sitting in the back, I could see nothing. Streetlights were not in abundance. I had no idea where we were or where we were heading. Nonetheless, after what seemed like several decreasing circles, we alighted at the **New Inn** at Waterley Bottom. This wonderfully named hamlet lies within throwing distance of Dursley, yet it's a two-and-a-half-mile road trip around the ridge that lies between. The New Inn is a wonderful country Good Beer Guide-listed pub with great character, and some great characters. When we visited, they had Moles Best, the house beer New Inn Ale (a 3.8% beer brewed by Moles), and Wickwar Bankers Draft, plus some seven or eight real ciders and perries.

With many more pubs on the itinerary, Rod rushed us away into Wotton under Edge (WuE), pausing briefly at the **Black Horse** in North Nibley to quickly eyeball what was on offer (Greene King Abbott, Wickwar BOB and Wye Valley HPA). Parking at the bottom of the High Street in WuE, we walked up to the top and glad we were to get to the Swan, for 'twas a chilly night and the wind didst blow. The Swan did a good pint of Butcombe's Rare Breed, plus Old Hooky and Doom Bar.

We stuck our noses in at the **Star Inn** to see they were stocked with Greene King's Morland Original, Wickwar Coopers, Bath Gem and Butcombe Bitter, before calling in at the **Royal Oak**. We tarried awhile at the Royal Oak as they had a brace of Cotswold Spring beers, namely

Codger and Bard (both very good), as well as London Pride and Brains Reverend James.

Next up (or, rather, down) was the **Falcon** – still in WuE. Here we found an excellent pint of Stroud Brewery's Tom Long, plus Wickwar Gold and GWB Maiden Voyage.

Having just about exhausted the WuE pubs, we started back towards Thornbury. The village of Charfield, however, lies betwixt the two, and boasts three pubs. As Rod's car seems to be incapable of passing pubs without stopping, stop is what we did. I don't know how, but he seems to have an almost encyclopaedic knowledge of just about every pub in the country. This genuine interest in pubs – the architecture, the number of rooms, the décor, the themes – has obviously spread to his well-trained car!

The **Railway** is a fascinating pub full of (oddly enough) railway memorabilia and photos. Rod is a retired railwayman whose fascination with all things rail has not declined. It was also full of handpumps. Six of them. These were serving up Wells & Young's Bombardier, St Austell Tribute, Wadworth 6X, Courage Best, Sharp's Doom Bar and Greene King IPA. Now there's nothing particularly wrong with any of those beers in isolation, but it seems odd to me that with the opportunity provided by six handpumps, there should be such a conservative (possibly boring?) choice. Nothing strong, nothing dark, nothing local.

Next was the **Plough** with Otter Bitter, Wickwar Bankers Draft and Courage Best. Bankers Draft it was to be. Fortunately perhaps (since I might already have over-indulged slightly), the Pear Tree was closed (I've since heard that they do close early of an evening, and it was somewhat after 11pm when we were there).

Thinking we were now definitely on the home run, Rod's car suddenly veered off into the **Royal Oak** in Cromhall, still open at 11:30pm. Good for them! This former Good Beer Guide-listed pub has had its ups and downs over the last decade or so; the previous landlord now manages the bar at the George, Chipping Sodbury. Two real ales on offer here; these were GWB Maiden Voyage and Wickwar's Christmas Cracker. I know I tried the Christmas Cracker but – for some reason – am unable to recall how it was.

I'm sure we made it back to Thornbury, and Rod made it back home from there. I think. Good job his car has a homing instinct. And what a star – practically abstaining this time so that we didn't have to.

*Martin Farrimond*

**S**evern Vale CAMRA is a sub-branch of the Bristol & District branch of the Campaign for Real Ale. The sub-branch covers roughly the area bounded by Thornbury in the north, Severn Beach in the south, the River Severn in the west and the M5 in the east.

## Severn Vale diary and contact

- **Fri 7th March:** Survey trip, TBC.
- **Fri 14th March:** Old Spot, Dursley, 12:30.
- **Wed 19th March:** sub-branch meeting, Bowl Almondsbury, 20:30.
- **Fri 4th April:** Survey trip, TBC.
- **Fri 11th April:** Old Spot, Dursley, 12:30.
- **Thu 17th April:** sub-branch meeting, Anchor, Oldbury, 20:30.
- **Fri 2nd May:** Survey trip, TBC.
- **Fri 9th May:** Old Spot, Dursley, 12:30.
- **Wed 21st May:** sub-branch meeting, Wheatsheaf, Thornbury, 20:30.
- **Fri 6th June:** Survey trip, TBC.
- **Fri 13th June:** Old Spot, Dursley, 12:30.
- **Wed 18th June:** sub-branch meeting, Anchor, Thornbury, 20:30.

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).

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# Pub news around (and beyond) the Severn Vale area

THE **Codrington Arms** in Engine Common – just outside of Yate – has closed. The Punch Taverns-owned pub has a sign on the outside offering the tenancy. Fancy running a pub?

In Thornbury, the **Wheatsheaf** ran their first beer festival last October. This featured 21 beers from up and down the country over a three-day period, a special bar being set up in the “barn” behind the pub. Highlights for me were Corvedale’s Dark & Delicious and Bristol Beer Factory’s Independence. Coming up soon will be the Wheatsheaf’s Cider Festival, now in its fifth year, and featuring over 20 local ciders and perries. This year’s event will be on the 24th, 25th and 26th May. And an early mention for this year’s beer festival: there’s a preview night on 16th October for CAMRA members, and then on the 17th, 18th and 19th, there’s festival itself with over 20 ales/porters selected from around our region and further afield, plus music in the afternoons and evenings.

Hard on the heels of the Wheatsheaf’s beer festival was **Christ the King Catholic Social Club**’s 13th annual beer festival. Sixteen beers (Bristol Beer Factory’s Milk Stout and Independence were my favourites), three ciders and one perry were on offer to the thirsty punters, with music on the Saturday night.

Community news at the **Swan** on Thornbury’s High Street, where the ‘charity of the month’ (March to April) is to raise £1,500 from the weekly Wednesday quizzes and Thursday night bingo to fund a new computer for the Citizens Advice Bureau. May’s charity of the month will be for Thornbury In Bloom.

Lots of changes in Chipping Sodbury lately, with the unusual – and most welcome news – of a new pub opening. Bucking the trend of pub closures, **Gilly’s**, at the top of the High Street, opened for business as a pub on New Year’s eve. Gilly’s was previously a tapas bar run by Gilly (wife of Dave who had the Grapes, just across the road). Dave and Gilly had run the Grapes for several years, building up a reputation for stocking an interesting range of real ales on their five handpumps, with strong and/or dark ales usually available. It’s good to see the old settles crossed the road – aided by customers; these are now residing in splendour in their new location. Moving across the road to their own premises has given Dave and Gilly the opportunity to increase the drinking area, whilst providing a proper, temperature-controlled cellar. In the compact cellar, use of the clever cask-widgit system allows casks to be stored vertically to supply the five handpumps on the bar.

By the time you read this, the pub may have been renamed to the **Horseshoe**: just awaiting the arrival of the new signs (the pub’s on the corner of Horseshoe Lane). Incidentally, once inside, you could be forgiven for thinking you’re in the Grapes, as the old signage in the lounge and bar has also made its way from across the road! 20p a pint discounts are available for CAMRA members.



Gilly’s/Horseshoe bar (above) and cellar (below)



So what of the **Grapes**, then? New tenants Kerry and Sam took over just in time for the New Year and have been busy redecorating and renovating. At the moment there are three handpumps serving regular beers – Sharp’s Doom Bar, Cotswold Spring Bard and Otter Ale. There are hopes of installing a fourth pump for guest ales.

There’s live music on Friday evenings and discounts for CAMRA members – 20p a pint and 10p a half. This made the Bard the cheapest beer I’ve had for a long time at just £2.30 a pint (£2.50 regular price).

*Martin Farrimond*

## Meet & Greet evening at the George, Chipping Sodbury

ON a wet Friday at the end of January (are there any that weren’t wet?) a bus load of real ale fans from the Bristol area, and many local CAMRA members from the Chipping Sodbury, Yate and nearby areas, arrived at the George Hotel for an informal social ‘meet and greet’ evening. The idea was to give local CAMRA members (and interested non-members) the opportunity to meet with other active members from the branch area, including the committee, and to find out what’s going on in the branch.

It was also an opportunity to meet the new management at the George – Bill, Gaby and Jared – who provided us with a wonderful selection of real ales and some homemade rye bread, cheese and pickles.

The range of beers on the evening included Uley Pigs Ear (5%); Box Steam Funnel Blower (4.5%), a dark ale with a hint of vanilla; Milk Street Beer, a hoppy golden ale at 5%; Stroud Budding, a lovely

pale blond ale (4.2%); and GWB Moose River, a more malty beer at 5%. There was also a selection of ciders or lagers for those who need something different.

I am pretty sure that most everyone who attended the ‘meet & greet’ evening really enjoyed the experience of meeting new people and drinking some good real ale (some for the first time maybe). Talking with all the bar staff and management, it seems they really found it was a rewarding evening. They would like to thank everyone who took part in the event and would like to do the same again sometime.

So our own thanks must be offered to Gaby, Bill, Jared and all the staff for hosting the event.

I should also point out that the management of the George Hotel would like to offer discounts on their real ales to card-carrying CAMRA members. At the moment the exact details are still to be finalised, but it seems like all real ales will be around £3 a pint for CAMRA members. Just ask at the bar, and thank the staff for the discount!

*Mike Lawrence*

# The Crewe Cruise

Of several annual pilgrimages I make, that to Crewe is one of the most interesting and enjoyable. I should explain. For the past twenty or more years I have attended the Annual Crewe Luncheon held at the Crewe Arms Hotel, Crewe, on the third Saturday in November. This social event, now run by the London & North Western Railway Society, is the present-day revival of a traditional annual reunion of engineers, from far and wide, who all served apprenticeships at Crewe Works.

In the nineties and the early noughties, of the three or so Crewe pubs listed in the Good Beer Guide (GBG), none looked very interesting and I returned to Bristol as soon as the meeting ended late in the afternoon – usually because I had a band engagement in the evening. Since 2005, with an improving GBG picture and no gigs in the offing, I have travelled by train and extended my stay in order to visit “Crewe’s Finest”.

Although I only visit them once a year, landlords of the regular GBG pubs usually greet me with, “Good Lord, is it that time of year already?” or words to that effect. It is gratifying to be welcomed as a “regular”. Over the years the GBG entries have changed slightly of course. Two longstanding pubs have failed to qualify in the last few years, the **British Lion** (Tetley) on the Nantwich Road and the **Crown** (Robinsons), Earle Street – the latter, sadly, called a final “last orders” a little while ago. Another pub missing from this year’s Good Beer Guide is the **Angel** (Oakwell) in a basement in the Victoria Centre and which opens at 10am.

Although the social event at the Crewe Arms Hotel commences mid-morning, the actual lunch is served at 12.30 allowing me to visit a couple of pubs beforehand. Also, with the earliest opening time 11 o’clock, the year’s timing threatened to be tight even before considering the new GBG entry, which didn’t open its doors until midday.

**Hops**, in Prince Albert Street, is a privately owned café-bar featuring five hand-pumped ales, seven draught and over 100 bottled Belgian beers. Michael Tavis Oakes leased the ex wine bar, reopening in 2007, too late for the local CAMRA branch to consider it for the 2009 edition of the Good Beer Guide voting for which took place early in 2008. A GBG pub since the 2010 edition, the beer quality is absolutely stunning!



Hops

I started with the regular ale from nearby *Townhouse* brewery, Enigma (3.5% ABV). This straw-coloured bitter has a citrus-floral aroma, a good body of chewy malt and tart fruit through which a stunning hop character emerges. Hops and fruit linger in the aftertaste. Enigma usually scores the highest mark in my rating every year. Next up was *Liverpool Craft Brewery* Hop Beast (4.0%), an amber ale with malt, hops and fruit on the nose, hints of pale berry fruits in the malty



Michael Travis Oakes at Hops

## Cryptic Crossword

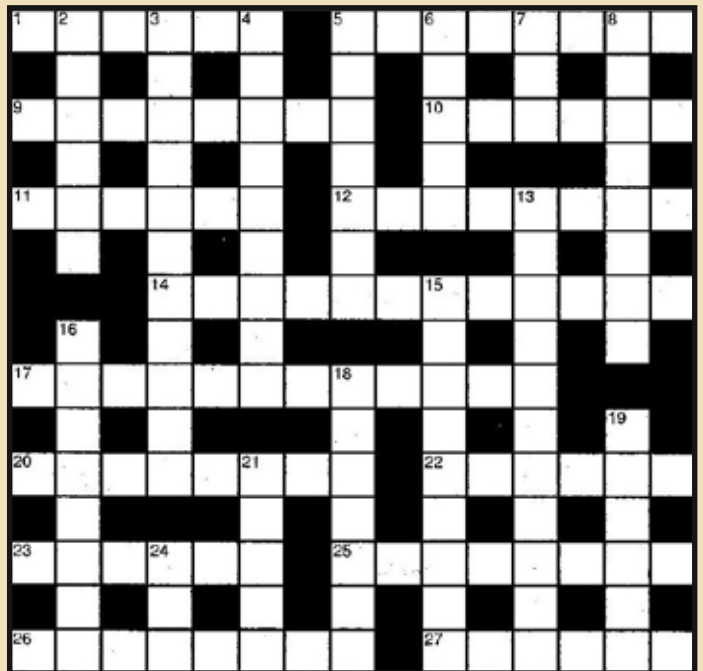
Compiled by Pete and Eddie Taberner

### CLUES ACROSS

1. & 10 ac. Beer from the Beer Engine is the lycanthrope’s nemesis (6, 6)
5. Black Country premium ale enjoyed in the inglenook (8)
9. Spirited drinking hole in Bath when new monarch’s joined in (8)
10. see 1 ac.
11. Some dreadful lager left in the keg (6)
12. Bag of Nails is heartless and depressed. Could have been a Clifton pub (8)
14. Level gins mixed with half a Miller held in bad odour (4-8)
17. Dispensers of glasses toasted port site most (12)
20. Trivial chattering of the drinker – and possibly his drink! (8)
22. Evidently no Brains’ served at this food bar (6)
23. Booze put very quietly on the slate (6)
25. Indiscretion allows Pils to be tipped over (4, 4)
26. Use oat plus endless grain in model fermenter (8)
27. Is done drunkenly when the rugby match ends (2-4)

### CLUES DOWN

2. Goblin beer that could transfix? (6)
3. A 1920 ruby, for example, to be found in Bristol’s old harbour (7, 4)
4. Inn where I got sloshed with a Blue Nun (5, 4)
5. Gee-gees racing around fuel traditional hop (7)
6. Sounds like there’s thievin’ at this hoodless Bristol hostelry (5)
7. Campbell could be after Mexican beer (3)
8. I dine out with wet low calorie version of 4 dn (4, 4)
13. Sloshed souls collapsing in small child-friendly pubs? (5, 6)
15. Morton’s beers will make some ladies sing tonight (9)



16. Spring into action with silver device to moisten the barley (8)
18. Locals at the local, like clockwork (7)
19. Defunct national brewer initially angry landlords left in extreme disgust (6)
21. Pint with no head on it upsets the queen, “It’s flat” (5)
24. This Cheddar totty could be hot! (3)

Solution on page 20



The Hop Pole

taste and a slightly astringent finish. I didn't sample the *Off Beat Way Out Wheat* (4.5%) because I had already tried this ale elsewhere, instead passing to the *Titanic Plum Porter* (4.9%) which (surprise) smelled strongly of plums. Roast came through in the plummy taste with chocolate notes leading to a strong roast, bitter finish. I completed my tasting with a mouthful of *Coastal Rampant Ruby* (6.5%) – a half pint of this rich ruby red, sweetish, strong ale would have been too much at that early hour!

The new GBG entry turned out to be a good 20 minutes' walk away from Hops. The **Hop Pole**, on the Wistaston Road, is owned by Punch Taverns. It is an old-fashioned north of England boozier with a central bar surrounded by side rooms. For licensees Russell Halden and his wife Jackie, this is their second spell at the pub. They sold the lease four and a half years ago but re-leased it again two years ago. They have recently reopened another Crewe pub, the **Fine Lady**, at present offering only one real ale, the intention being to develop another specialist cask ale outlet. The Hop Pole now carries three real ales – two regulars and a guest. I sampled the *Weetwood Ales Cheshire Cat* (4.0%), a yellow bitter whose malty taste carried marzipan notes and ended with a moderately astringent hop aftertaste, and *Portobello Pale Ale* (4.0%ABV) – floral hops on the nose and fruity hops on the tongue and finish. *Robinsons Trooper* (4.8%) was also on and, while I was there, the next guest beer was delivered in the shape of *Cross Bay Halo* (3.6%ABV).

No buses run along Wistaston Road so I had to walk back to the junction with Edleston Road halfway along which I managed to catch a bus to take me along the Nantwich Road to the Crewe Arms adjacent to the railway station. Needless to say, when I reached my objective the lunch had already started, the first course having been served a few minutes before my arrival, but I managed to get served with my soup. The whole event concluded at 5.30pm whereupon I made my way to the third and last GBG pub, the **Borough Arms** in Earle Street.



John Webster at the Borough Arms

John Webster has been the landlord, and latterly the freeholder, of the Borough Arms for the past eight years. This ex Punch Taverns property has featured in every Good Beer Guide since 2002. Nine handpumps serve a changing range of, mainly, light hoppy ales with darker beers also appearing from time to time. These are all served at the bar in the upper level of this split-level pub. The lower counter of the bar has at least ten Belgian beers on draught. On the shelves and in the



The split-level Borough Arms is perched on the edge of the bridge over the West Coast Main Line railway

coolers are approximately 100 Belgian and other bottled beers. A two-barrel brewery, commissioned in 2005 to supply two ales to the pub, is currently closed. John says that the brewer, who is "getting on a bit" hopes to start brewing again soon.

Upon arrival, and after exchanging pleasantries with John, I tried the *Oakham JHB* (3.8%). As my half pint was rather cloudy, John went to the cellar to check the cask, saying it had only 'come on' the day before – it proved to be empty. Mine had been the last drop! The line was flushed and the next ale put on within a few minutes during which time I sampled *Magic Rock Curious* (3.9%). This pale gold ale had a floral aroma, citrus taste and strongly hopped finish. Next came my replacement for the JHB, *Fyne Ales Jarl* (3.8%), a straw-coloured citrus-tasting ale with a good malt body ending in a very bitter hop aftertaste. *Burton Bridge Golden Delicious* (3.8%) had a hint of sulphur (from the gypsum always present in Burton-on-Trent well water) in the hop-led aroma, the taste and finish were nicely balanced between pale malt and hops. A slightly stronger beer came next; *Conwy California* (4.4%) was another straw-coloured ale with fruit on the nose. A hoppy, fruity finish followed an astringent taste.

The other cask ales on sale were two from *Salopian*, Shropshire Gold (3.8%) and Lemon Dream (4.5%), *Oakham Bishop's Farewell* (4.6%), and the current dark ales, *O'Hanlon's Stormstay* (5.0%) and *Sarah Hughes Dark Ruby Mild* (6.0%).

As my train ticket had been booked in advance, I was committed to the 19.22 train and so had to say goodbye to John, and the small core of regulars who also remember me, wishing them well until the same time next year. Walking back to the station I reflected that, with the exception of the JHB, all the beers I had tried were in absolutely tip-top condition and none even approached the £3-a-pint mark!

Henry Davies

## Bristol's Heritage: Taverns Trail

Coming soon! A handy printed map highlighting the hidden heritage of Bristol's city centre pubs. A handful of CAMRA's history enthusiasts have got together to create the map which will feature 30 pubs so visitors to Bristol can see the city in a new light.

All the pubs are a significant part of Bristol's heritage. Aside from the many pubs housed in listed buildings, such as the Pump House, the Cornubia and the Commercial Rooms, the map will cover social heritage such as the Seven Stars' link to the anti-slave trade movement and unique quirks such as the Shakespeare's (Victoria Street) water wells which were once used for brewing.

But it's not all about the pubs; the map will bring the visitor right up to date by featuring Bristol's thriving brewing scene.

The team are looking for sponsorship to pay for design and print costs; we're delighted to say that we've already got confirmed support from several of our most notable breweries and pubs. If you, your pub or your brewery would like to support the map please contact Maureen Armstrong (denmojazz@blueyonder.co.uk).

Follow us @BrisTavernTrail.

Helen Featherstone

## 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
- **Annexe**, Seymour Road, Bishopston, Bristol
- **Bank**, John Street, Bristol
- **Bear Inn**, Walliscote Road, Weston-super-Mare
- **Bell**, Badminton Road, Old Sodbury
- **Beaufort Arms**, North Road, Stoke Gifford
- **Black Swan (Dirty Duck)**, Stoke Lane, Westbury-on-Trym
- **Bristol Cider Shop**, Christmas Steps, Bristol
- **Brit Bar**, High Street, Weston-super-Mare
- **Cider Press**, Gloucester Road, Bristol
- **Coach & Horses**, Braggs Lane, Old Market, Bristol
- **Coach & Horses**, Highland Square, Clifton, Bristol
- **Cornubia**, Temple Street, Bristol
- **Cotham Porter Stores**, Cotham Road South, Kingsdown, Bristol
- **Drawbridge**, St Augustines Parade, Bristol (city centre)
- **Eastfield Inn**, Henleaze Road, Henleaze, Bristol
- **Famous Royal Navy Volunteer**, King Street, Bristol
- **George Hotel**, Broad Street, Chipping Sodbury
- **Globe**, Church Road, Frampton Cotterell
- **Grapes**, Rounceval Street, Chipping Sodbury
- **Gryphon**, Colston Street, Bristol
- **Hare**, North Street, Bedminster, Bristol
- **Hope & Anchor**, Jacobs Wells Road, Bristol
- **Horse & Groom**, St George's Road, Bristol
- **Horseshoe** (formerly Gilly's), High Street, Chipping Sodbury
- **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
- **Squire Inn**, Broad Street, Chipping Sodbury
- **Surrey Vaults** (was Bristol Cider House), Surrey Street, Bristol
- **Swan**, Badminton Road, Nibley
- **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 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.*

# Upcoming CAMRA Young Member Socials

Following on from January's excellent Young Members' pub crawl in Bristol centre, and our honourable team entry in the Brew Dog Epic Beer Quiz we have yet more tasty socials pouring out of our diaries, and into your pint glasses!

Young Members should keep an eye out for our **Tasting Sessions** where members of Bristol and District CAMRA's Official Tasting Panel will be discussing what we should be looking out for when drinking our favourite beverage. Topics will include flavour, colour, aroma, off-flavours and much more.

You will even get the chance to eventually critique your own beer with a **Home Brewing Workshop**.

And if you want the perfect dish to accompany that beer then join us at one of our **Kitchen Socials** where we will be cooking up one, two or a few beery dishes!

With **Cellar Tours and Brewery Tours** and trips abroad (OK, Bath and Cheltenham!) we are treating the first half of 2014 as we mean to go on for a very long while!!

You can keep up to date by following **@youngBADales** on Twitter or email [badyoungmembercontact@gmail.com](mailto:badyoungmembercontact@gmail.com) and you will be added to the Bristol and District CAMRA Young Members mailing list.

Ooooh, and if you didn't get round to making pancakes on Shrove Tuesday it is never too late to put a wee twist on an old favourite. Just add some beer to batter and get flipping!!

Same amount of your favourite ale to milk should do the trick!! X

*Talisha Mills*



## Our Tasting Panel

The main function of the Bristol & District Tasting Panel is to write tasting notes for the CAMRA Good Beer Guide's brewery section. We have just completed another successful year's tasting, as we have written or updated entries for 48 beers from the 13 breweries in our branch area. New breweries are opening all the time though, so there is an increasing number of beers to describe.

Ideally we meet in a pub which is owned by a brewery, so that we stand a good chance of finding all their eligible beers on. If the brewery hasn't any pubs it can be difficult to find more than one of their beers at a time, so this year we asked several pubs to put beers on especially for us. We have to thank Sam at the **Bank** for a couple of events, Paul at the **Seven Stars** who put two beers on at very short notice, and Barbara at **St George's Hall** for letting us take over all the pumps on the bar except one for our tasting evening!

We are also responsible for judging the 'LocAle' competition at the Bristol Beer Festival. We consider a 'LocAle' to be a beer which is brewed within about 30 miles of Bristol. Last year Arbor Ales' wonderful Yakima Valley won, with Bristol Beer Factory's Southville Hop runner-up. Both of these are distinctively hoppy beers, but there are so many tasty beer styles around now that something quite different could win this year.

We always welcome new members to our tasting panel. Potential recruits have to have their taste tested, be trained in describing the appearance, aroma and flavour of beer, and be able to identify beer faults. Our training has recently become rather more professional as Helen Featherstone took over our taste testing and training afternoons last year. They are also fun. If you would like to join us, email me, Chris Rogers, at [chrisofbristol@gmail.com](mailto:chrisofbristol@gmail.com) with your CAMRA membership number.

*Chris Rogers*

## Need more Pints Wests?

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

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10,000 copies printed quarterly and distributed to hundreds of pubs throughout the region

Also available to read on-line at [www.bristolcamra.org.uk](http://www.bristolcamra.org.uk)

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

# Branch diary

## Diary of the Bristol & District branch of CAMRA

- **Sun 2<sup>nd</sup> March:** GBG Selection Meeting, 12 noon, the Elephant, St Nicholas Street.
- **Thurs 6<sup>th</sup> March:** Bristol Pubs Group Meeting, Gryphon, 7pm.
- **Tues 11<sup>th</sup> March:** Committee Meeting, Gryphon, 8pm.
- **Thurs 13<sup>th</sup> - Sat 15<sup>th</sup> March:** Bristol Beer Festival, Brunel Old Station, Temple Meads.
- **Thurs 20<sup>th</sup> March:** Meet & Greet, the Regency, Weston-super-Mare, 7.30pm. This trip will be by train. People can if they wish arrange to meet at Temple Meads, cost £6.50 return (£13 for Groupsave for four). Trains at 18:26, 18:56 & 19:15, return trains at 22:01, 22:49, 23:17.
- **Wed 26<sup>th</sup> March:** Branch Meeting, the Elephant, St Nicholas Street, 7.30pm.
- **Tues 9<sup>th</sup> April:** Committee Meeting, Gryphon, 8pm.
- **Thurs 17<sup>th</sup> April:** A Walk on the Mild Side of Kingsdown, starts 7pm at Highbury Vaults, then Robin Hood, Colston Yard and Gryphon. Led by Jerry Fletcher 07585 807613.
- **Wed 23<sup>rd</sup> April:** Branch Meeting, the Elephant, St Nicholas Street, 7.30pm (provisional venue).
- **Sat 26<sup>th</sup> April:** A Walk on the Mild Side of Clifton, starts 12 noon at the Portcullis, then the Hophouse, Lansdown (Beer Festival), Victoria, Quinton House, Berkeley and Hope & Anchor. Led by Jerry Fletcher 07585 807613.
- **Thurs 1<sup>st</sup> May:** Bristol Pubs Group Meeting, Gin Palace, 7pm.
- **Sat 10<sup>th</sup> May:** A Walk on the Mild Side of Bedminster & Harbourside, starts 12 noon at the Robert Fitzharding, then Steam Crane, Hare, Hen & Chicken, Tobacco Factory, Orchard, Nova Scotia, Grain Barge and Three Tuns. Led by Phil Luxton 07780 873786.
- **Wed 14<sup>th</sup> May:** Committee Meeting, Gryphon, 8pm.
- **Thurs 15<sup>th</sup> May:** A Walk on the Mild Side of the City Centre, starts 7pm at the Barley Mow, then Volunteer Tavern, Elephant and Commercial Rooms. Led by Graham Watson 07873 272769.
- **Sat 17<sup>th</sup> May:** South Glos Mild Trail, coach departs Cornubia 11.30am, return 8.00-8.30pm. Cost £15 or less. Visiting Cross Hands, Winterbourne Dow; Globe, Frampton Cotterell; New Inn, Mayshill, Gilly's/Horseshoe, Chipping Sodbury; Beaufort Arms, Hawkesbury Upton; Salutation Inn, Ham; Anchor, Thornbury. To book a place on the coach email [camrasocials@btinternet.com](mailto:camrasocials@btinternet.com).
- **Wed 28<sup>th</sup> May:** Branch Meeting, Lazy Dog, Ashley Down Road, 8pm (provisional venue).

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)*



brought to you entirely by  
unpaid volunteers

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

**LETTERS:** please email correspondence to:  
[Steve.Plumridge.PintsWest@gmail.com](mailto:Steve.Plumridge.PintsWest@gmail.com)

or post it to:

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

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

**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).

**For any pub updates:** please enter them through [whatpub.com](http://whatpub.com) or email details to [whatpub@camrabristol.org.uk](mailto:whatpub@camrabristol.org.uk).

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

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

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## Bath & Borders diary

- **Thursday 6th March, 8:30pm.**

A social/mini crawl in Trowbridge starting at the Rose and Crown on Stallard Street and then on to the Stallards pub.

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 36

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

Inclusion of an advertisement does not imply endorsement by CAMRA.

## 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

Chris Rogers	Jan Deverell	Rich Neale
Denise Swain	Laurie Gibney	Robin E Wild
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Ian Beckey	Pete Taberner	Vince Murray
James Honey	Ray Holmes	Editor:
Jamie Caddick	Richard Brooks	Steve Plumridge

## Pre-register Now for Members' Weekend & AGM, 25th - 27th April 2014



**CAMRA Members' Weekend**, featuring the National AGM and Conference, is where our members discuss our future policy and direction. The weekend also offers the opportunity to members to socialise with friends, visit recommended pubs and go on organised trips. The Members' Weekend is open to all CAMRA members and will be held at The Spa Complex, Scarborough from 25th April to 27th April 2014.

### Pre-register your interest today

You can pre-register online through the Members' Weekend website:

1. Visit the Members' Weekend website: [www.camraagm.org.uk](http://www.camraagm.org.uk)
2. Select "Member Login" at the top right hand corner to log in to the website
3. Once logged in, click "Register" on the home page or on the navigation bar located in the top right hand corner
4. Once clicked, you should receive on-screen confirmation that your registration has been successful

**Please note** that joint members will need to login and register individually. Closing date for pre-registration is **Friday 28th March 2014**.

Alternatively you can register by returning the form below. As a pre-registered member you will receive the Members' Weekend Handbook before the event. This will be sent out the week following the cut off for pre-registration. Members' Conference packs will be available at the venue.

### I would like to pre-register (Closing Date for Pre-registration is Friday 28th March 2014)

Membership Number	<input type="text"/>	Joint Member Number (if applicable)	<input type="text"/>
Full Names	First <input type="text"/>	Surname	<input type="text"/>
(Joint member details if applicable)	First <input type="text"/>	Surname	<input type="text"/>
	Email <input type="text"/>		

### Volunteer at the Members' Weekend

There are plenty of volunteering opportunities to get involved in at the Members' Weekend. If you wish to volunteer to work at Weekend please mark in the boxes below, Tuesday the 22nd April to Monday 28th April 2014, the day and times which you would be available. Your details will be passed to the Members' Weekend Staffing Office and you will be contacted nearer the time.

Tue		Wed		Thu		Fri		Sat		Sun	
am	<input type="checkbox"/>	am	<input type="checkbox"/>	am	<input type="checkbox"/>	am	<input type="checkbox"/>	am	<input type="checkbox"/>	am	<input type="checkbox"/>
pm	<input type="checkbox"/>	pm	<input type="checkbox"/>	pm	<input type="checkbox"/>	pm	<input type="checkbox"/>	pm	<input type="checkbox"/>	pm	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please return the completed form to:  
Members' Weekend 2014 Registration, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, Herts, AL1 4LW.  
**Closing date for pre-registration is Friday 28th March 2014**

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

Email enquiries to [clothes@camrabristol.org.uk](mailto:clothes@camrabristol.org.uk). Please allow up to 4 weeks for delivery.



### PINTS WEST CLOTHING ORDER FORM

	Price each	Quantity	Size	Colour
T-SHIRT	£16.00	.....	.....	.....
POLO SHIRT	£19.50	.....	.....	.....
SWEAT SHIRT	£21.50	.....	.....	.....
FLEECE	£25.50	.....	.....	.....

**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.

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

POSTCODE .....

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

# A Campaign

# of Two Halves

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## 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 101 01/06

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



This Guarantee should be detached and retained by the payer.

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

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

9 2 6 1 2 9

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

Membership Number

Name

Postcode

### Name(s) of Account Holder

\_\_\_\_\_

### Branch Sort Code

\_\_\_\_\_

### Bank or Building Society Account Number

\_\_\_\_\_

### Reference

\_\_\_\_\_

### Instructions to your Bank or Building Society

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

Signature(s)

Date

### The Direct Debit Guarantee

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

150,000 members and growing!

# CAMRA Membership Benefits

For just £23\* a year, that's less than a pint a month, you can join CAMRA and enjoy the following benefits:

- A quarterly copy of our magazine BEER which is packed with features on pubs, beers and breweries.
- Our monthly newspaper, 'What's Brewing', informing you on beer and pub news and detailing events and beer festivals around the country.
- Reduced entry to over 160 national, regional and local beer festivals.
- Socials and brewery trips, with national, regional and local groups.
- The opportunity to campaign to save pubs and breweries under threat of closure.
- The chance to join CAMRA / Brewery Complimentary Clubs that are exclusive to CAMRA members. These clubs offer a variety of promotions including free pint vouchers, brewery trips, competitions, and merchandise offers.
- Discounts on all CAMRA books including the Good Beer Guide.



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Plus these amazing discounts...

	<p>£20 worth of JD Wetherspoon Real Ale Vouchers.**</p>		<p>15% discount with National Express coach services.</p>		<p>10% discount on toprooms.com.</p>
	<p>10% savings at Cotswold Outdoor.</p>		<p>15% off boat hire with start locations form Falkirk to Hilperton.</p>		<p>20% off brewery and beer tasting tours.</p>
	<p>10% discount on booking with cottages4you.</p>		<p>10% discount on booking with Hoseasons.</p>		<p>Up to 52% off - with attractions for the family too numerous to name.</p>

For more on your CAMRA Membership Benefits please visit [www.camra.org.uk/benefits](http://www.camra.org.uk/benefits)  
 \* This price is based on the Direct Debit discount. \*\* Joint CAMRA memberships will receive one set of vouchers to share. CAMRA reserves the right to withdraw any offer at any time without warning and members should check CAMRA website for updated and details of current offers.