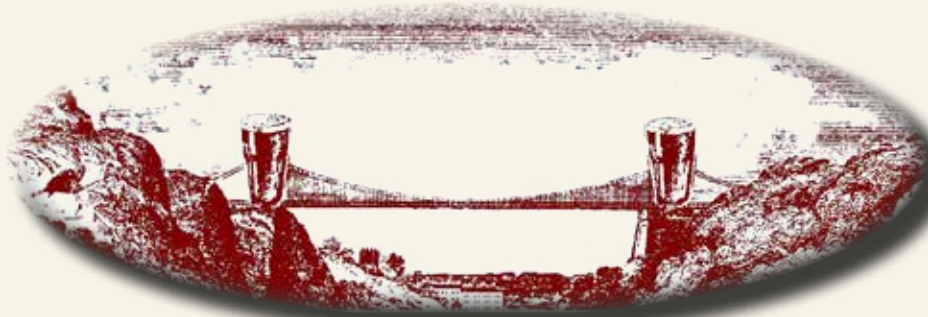




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PINTS WEST

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



Who's brewing at James Street Brewery? See page 26.



The multi-award-winning magazine of the Bristol & District Branch of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale, plus the Bath & Borders Branch

Brought to you entirely by unpaid volunteers

Ten thousand copies of Pints West are distributed free to hundreds of pubs in and around the cities of Bristol and Bath ... and beyond. Also available to read on-line at: www.bristolcamra.org.uk



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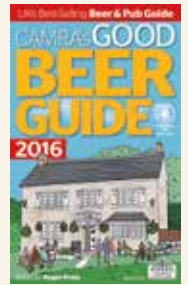
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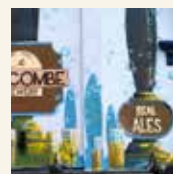
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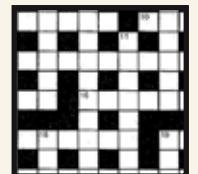
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Bristol Beer Festival

The nineteenth annual CAMRA Bristol Beer Festival will run from Thursday 10th to Saturday 12th March 2016 at Brunel's Old Station, Temple Meads, Bristol. There will be a fantastic range of around 140 different real ales on sale over the course of the festival as well as a good selection of ciders and perries. There will also be a variety of food available at all sessions.

Each year we see what tweaks and improvements we can make to the event. For the 2015 festival we made significant changes to the way tickets were sold and as this worked well we will be following the same model again this time. We have noticed that quite large queues have started forming before the Friday and Saturday evening sessions (which have opened at 7pm) so we are going to try starting them at 6:30pm for this festival. Also, as the attendance figures have increased for Thursday evening (the only session not to regularly sell out so far) we have decided to rent the venue for an extra day so we can set the beer up earlier. This should enable us to get pretty much the full range of beers on for Thursday evening, so it will definitely be a top session to attend.

On **Sunday 7th February** tickets will go on sale to CAMRA members at the **COMMERCIAL ROOMS** in Corn Street, Bristol from 12 noon until 2pm. Please bring the correct cash to the ticket sales sessions as we will not be able to accept cheques or credit cards. Tickets will only be sold to card-carrying CAMRA members at this session. Anyone who signs up to join CAMRA on Sunday 7th February will also be able to purchase festival tickets. The purchasing limits that apply for each valid CAMRA membership card presented are as follows:

For the Friday lunchtime, Friday evening and Saturday lunchtime sessions a maximum of any four tickets in total may be purchased (for example you could purchase four tickets for Friday lunchtime *or* two tickets for Friday evening and two tickets for Saturday lunchtime).

There is no limit on the number of tickets that may be purchased for the Thursday evening and Saturday evening sessions.

A simultaneous CAMRA member ticket sale will take place with the same rules at **OFF THE RAILS** at Weston-super-Mare train station on **Sunday 7th February**.

From **Tuesday 9th February** the remaining tickets will then be available to everyone to purchase **ONLINE** and the details of this will appear at www.camrabristol.org.uk.

If there are tickets remaining by **Wednesday 24th February** then some

will be put on sale at the **SEVEN STARS** in Thomas Lane, Bristol.

All ticket prices include £4 worth of beer festival tokens, which customers will receive on entry enabling them to go straight to the bar. Also included are a festival programme and a commemorative half-pint glass, marked for third and half-pint measures.

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

Richard Brooks



Date	Session	Time	Cost
Thursday 10 March	Evening	7pm - 11pm	£10 (incl £4 of tokens)
Friday 11 March	Lunchtime	11.30am - 4pm	£10 (incl £4 of tokens)
Friday 11 March	Evening	6.30pm - 11pm	£10 (incl £4 of tokens)
Saturday 12 March	Lunchtime	11.30am - 4pm	£10 (incl £4 of tokens)
Saturday 12 March	Evening	6.30pm - 11pm	£9 (incl £4 of tokens)



Artist revealed



People have enquired as to the person responsible for the artwork featured on the front page of the last edition of Pints West. As was clear from the article inside, this was detail of the mural that now adorns the whole of the frontage of the Prince of Wales on Gloucester Road in Bishopston (near the Arches). What wasn't revealed, however, was the identity of the person who did it.

Well the answer is local artist, Andrew Burns Colwill. Andy – born and raised in Clifton, resident in Greece for a couple of decades, and now living in Westbury-on-Trym – has been drawing and painting all his life. He receives all manner of commissions, including pubs, the exterior and interior walls of which make ideal canvasses.

Shown here are a few other examples of his work for pubs: ① back yard of the aforementioned Prince of Wales (the carrots have now been



replaced by sprouts); ② Tesco's, previously the Forresters, Westbury-on-Trym; ③ the Russel Arms, Barton Hill; ④ the Bristol Fringe, Clifton Village; ⑤ the Dolphin in Wellington (almost finished).

You can see more of Andy's work on his website at www.andisart.com.

SP



Good Chemistry Brewing

When the editor of Pints West asked me to head to GCHQ to write an article, I feared that he'd discovered my clandestine double-life of a secret agent, but, rather than Cheltenham, I was instead sent to an industrial estate just off the Bristol to Bath cyclepath in St Philips, where long-term Bristol residents Bob Cary and Kelly Sidgwick have set up the headquarters of Good Chemistry Brewing. The brewery is so called because, as Bob explains, "making beer is all about using good chemistry".

Bob was previously brewing at Wiper & True, having gone there from Great Western Brewery (GWB), after a number of years' experience of home-brewing before that, while Kelly brings marketing, advertising and sales experience and skills to the operation, having spent the last few years of her life touring festivals every summer running her own soft drinks business that she had created from scratch.

In the same way that King Street has now developed a well-earned reputation as Bristol's 'Beermuda Triangle' (formed by the Small Bar, Beer Emporium and Famous Royal Navy Volunteer), St Philips is now laying claim to doing the same for breweries, with both Moor Beer and Left Handed Giant but a stone's throw from where Bob and Kelly are launching Bristol's newest 10-barrel brewery.

When I visited the brewery in early November, the finishing touches were being put to the site, which was a two-storey, dirty warehouse when Bob and Kelly initially took it on. However, having taken down some of the ceiling and internal walls to open up the space, and having installed fermenters, conditioning tanks, mash tuns and everything else you'd expect to see in a brewery, it was easy to imagine that it would be only a matter of weeks before the first brews would be up and running, with a Belgian-inspired ale and a winter IPA the first two planned creations.

Good Chemistry are intending to produce beer in cask, keg and 660ml bottle-conditioned form, and their beers will be easy to spot due to the distinctive 'scientific' pictogram design of the pump clips and labels that will give a graphical representation of the hoppiness, body, sweetness, maltiness and bitterness of each of their beers. Look out for them, as they'll be coming to pubs and bottle shops near you very soon.

For more information and the latest news on what's happening at GCHQ, find Good Chemistry Brewing on Facebook, Twitter and at www.goodchemistrybrewing.com.

Stephen Edmonds



A Giant is Born

Back in February of this year, the Left Handed Giant (LHG) brewery was officially launched at Small Bar in King Street. The brewery, which forms part of the craft beer empire being created in Bristol by Bruce Gray, takes its name from the mythical giant said to be responsible for a lot of Bristol's local geography; carving out the Avon Gorge with its bare hands was, apparently, all in a day's work! The LHG brewery do not claim to have achieved anything quite on that scale (yet), but they have put the same effort into creating a range of modern beers with big flavours, inspired by the giants of the craft beer world and the Avon Gorge.

Bruce cut his craft beer teeth with BrewDog, having had the privilege of holding the reins of their first bar in Edinburgh prior to managing the



Bruce Gray

expansion of the bar chain up to the eighth one in Manchester. Subsequently he was involved in the formation of Craft Centric, a beer distribution company supplying craft beer to Scotland and the north of England, and the opening of the Hanging Bat Beer Café in Edinburgh. Relocation to the south west followed and the Big Beer Company was founded in 2013; with the focus on beers with big flavour, big body and big attitude. Big Beer Distribution was formed to distribute craft beers from the best breweries in the UK, based in an industrial unit in St Philips. When they needed a craft beer bar in Bristol city centre to showcase these beers, Small Bar was opened in December 2013; which is now firmly established, under the management of Jack Granger, as part of the "Beermuda Triangle" on King Street along with the Beer Emporium and the Famous Royal Navy Volunteer. A second bar, the Adam & Eve in Hotwells, has recently been (re)opened following a Big Beer Company makeover – Matt Wickham, formerly manager of the Colston Yard and, for several years prior to that, the Evening Star in Brighton, owned by the Dark Star brewery, was in charge here initially, but has now moved on.



Richard Poole

Moving into brewing was a natural development for the Big Beer Company and a 200-litre plant was installed in Small Bar not long after it opened. The brewing side of the business has taken a while to get established, but it has come on in leaps and bounds this year with Richard Poole coming on board as head brewer. Regular readers of Pints West may recall that Rich established Rocket Science Craft Ales in his garage in Yates – surely one of the smallest commercial

breweries in the country, and hence referred to as a nano-brewery as it is too small to even call a micro-brewery! He began commercial operations in April 2013, after being a keen home-brewer for over 15 years and having won both local and national home-brew awards during the period 2010 to 2012. Rich has done his own brewing, bottling and distribution; he even grows some of his own hops in his back garden and experimented with malting his own barley. Rocket Science beers all have a "space" theme, reflecting his scientific background – being named after moons, planets, etc.

LHG is currently a "cuckoo" brewery, using spare capacity at other breweries such as Cheddar Ales and Cotswold Spring to brew larger batches of their beers; with smaller batches being brewed on their own plant in Small Bar. When the brewery was officially launched in February at Small Bar, they had nine of their beers available; some of which were presented on both cask and keg dispense. The initial core range of Pale (4.1%), Porter (5%) and US Pale Ale (5.5%) were available. Also on tap were collaborations with Wiper & True: Bristol Vice – Sour Wheat Beer (4.5%); Arbor: Flat White – Imperial Coffee Milk Stout – El Naranjo/Mpemba (8.5%); and Weird Beard: Mo-Rye-Arty – Double Rye IPA (9%); together with some other small batch beers.

Subsequently the core range has been extended to include Red 5 (5%), Lactose Tolerant (5.5%) and IPA (7.4%). Further collaborations have been brewed with Bristol Beer Factory: Juice Bar – Hefeweizen (5.5%); Harbour: Saison (6.1%) and Beavertown: Sour Belgian Porter (6.8%). Due to the current unavailability of certain US hops used in the Pale Ale and US Pale Ale, Pacific Pale (4.1%) and Duet (5.2%) have been brewed recently. Also, bottle-conditioned beers have recently been introduced: initially Belgian IPA (7.1%); barrel-aged Flat White (8.7%) and Belgian Tripel (9.3%) in 750ml bottles; with others to follow in 330ml bottles.

LHG have come a long way in a short space of time, due in no small part to the experience Rich gained whilst learning his craft and experimenting as a home-brewer prior to establishing Rocket Science Craft Ales. He has also learned a lot about the pros and cons of different brewing plants during the past year and this should prove invaluable when LHG install their own brewery in St Philips at some point in the future. Rich will be working full-time at LHG from the beginning of the new year, but Rocket Science beers will still be brewed occasionally for special events. Meanwhile, look out for the opening of the LHG tap room next year.



Richard Poole



Jack Granger

Dave Graham

From Small Bar to Adam and Eve

After many years of changing and ultimately failing tenancies – and periods of closure – the Adam & Eve in Hotwells finally appears to be in safe and capable hands.

It has been taken over by the people (Bruce Gray and his team) who have made such a great success of the Small Bar in King Street in central Bristol.

On opening night at the end of October (and just about every night since) there were nine keg beers and five real ales on handpump, plus ciders. And what a selection of beers. Amongst them, of course, were excellent beers from their own brewery, Left Handed Giant (see the adjacent article 'A Giant is Born').



Our hosts on opening night. From right to left: Bruce Gray, Matt Wickham and Jack Granger.



Photo by Matt Wickham

Just like the Small Bar, no pints are available but any beer can be purchased in third, half, or two-thirds measures, and all are served in the pub's own branded glassware. The food menu majors on mussels and burgers, including chicken and vegetarian options, and Sunday roasts.

A visit here can be heartily recommended. Opening hours are currently 5pm to 11pm Monday to Thursday, 4pm to midnight Friday, noon to midnight Saturday, and noon to 11pm Sunday.

SP



Beers available on opening night at the Adam & Eve

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Calling CAMRA ladies!

It's fantastic that the growing popularity and rediscovery of real ale, craft beers and real cider has opened up the joy of a decent pint to a really wide audience. More and more women are amongst these drinkers and brewers.

Nationally, CAMRA says women drinking real ale and cider accounts for over a fifth the membership, which is an increase of 20,000 over the past decade. The figures for Bristol & District branch are similar; around 22% of the 3,000 plus members are women. That's well over 600 ale and cider loving ladies in the Bristol area.

Even though they are out there, we don't often see the female membership at events and socials. Denise (a long time member of CAMRA) and Bianca (a new member of the Bristol & District branch) have been wondering just why that is for a while now.

Could it be that lady members and the discerning female drinker would appreciate a get-together of their own? Are there venues and meetings times that would suit women better than others? Would the promise of all-female company entice more members to get out and about?

We are going to test the water and hold a ladies' social at **No 1 Harbourside** (in central Bristol) on Saturday January 30th from 1pm. Denise and Bianca would love to meet you there.

In the meantime, should you wish to, you can make contact at the following email addresses:
Denise Swain – dms887@hotmail.com
Bianca Ambrose – biancaambrose@hotmail.co.uk



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Hophouse transformed into Nettle & Rye



The Hophouse in Clifton Village, a large open-plan pub adjoining the Victorian Clifton Arcade, reopened following a major refurbishment in October under its new name, the Nettle & Rye.

The pub is run by the same people who have the Famous Royal Navy Volunteer in King Street in central Bristol, and anyone who frequents both establishments may notice one or two similarities, such as the unlabelled beer pumps, the boards on the wall listing the beers and ciders available, and the policy of serving only UK produce.

The man in charge is Alex Major (pictured). He has had the 'Volley' since June 2013 and felt the time was right to look at other projects as well. "I have always been keen to add another venue within Bristol, and we would only look at freehouses or free-of-tie properties. This would allow us to carry on the ethos and belief behind the Volley, finding the best beer and produce that the UK can offer. I believe the UK brewing industry is as strong as anywhere in the world and everyone should support the UK economy."

Alex had a short-list of potential properties and areas that they would look to move into, with Clifton being one of them. "Once I had decided on Clifton, I knew which property were potential targets. And after a bit of discussion, it was clear that the Hophouse was my first choice, due to it being the largest free-of-tie property in Clifton."

And so it was that on 10th September they took over the lease from Wadworth, and started some works to improve the site. "I always wanted to add a pub and restaurant to the company and the layout of the Hophouse lent itself to it. There were some challenges though, as we



had to move the bar as the use of space previously was very poor, and we had to separate the bar area away from the restaurant area to create a better eating space.

The refurbished pub opened on Thursday 29th October for the bar side of things, with the upstairs restaurant following on Friday 13th November. Alex says the two parts will complement each other, with casual fine dining upstairs and a proper pub downstairs running a secondary pub menu.

But why the name? Alex explained: "I have always liked the 'Something & Something' as a pub name and wanted something to reflect both food and drink, natural and UK based. So after some discussion, the 'Nettle & Rye' was born!"

A word about the beers: the new relocated bar now has eight hand pumps and twelve keg fonts. These are not labelled – so no pump clips in sight – rather boards along the side wall list the beers and ciders, 1 to 20. For clarification, numbers 1 to 12 are keg (ales, lagers and a couple of ciders), while numbers 13 to 20 are cask (a couple of still ciders and half a dozen real ales) ... or at least they were in the early days, and there's no particular reason to think that should change. Prices are shown for pint, two-thirds, half and one-third measures.

The Nettle & Rye is open Monday 4pm till midnight, Tuesday and Wednesday 10am till midnight, Thursday to Saturday 10am till 1am, and Sunday 10am till midnight. Pub food hours are Monday 5pm till 9.30pm, Tuesday to Friday noon till 3pm and 5pm till 9.30pm, Saturday 10am till 9.30pm, and Sunday noon till 6pm. The upstairs restaurant is closed Monday and Tuesday, but open Wednesday to Friday 6pm till 9.30pm, Saturday noon till 9.30pm, and Sunday noon till 6pm.

One final comment – the Nettle & Rye has possibly the longest solid wooden table you're ever likely to see in a pub!

SP



BADRAG - Bristol And District Rare Ales Group

“ In search of ‘rare ales’ ”

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, barley wines and milds.

www.camrabristol.org.uk BADRAG@camrabristol.org.uk

This is the time of year when, particularly in the centre of Bristol, it is not so difficult as it used to be to find rare styles of ale. Stouts and porters are fairly easy to find now. Old ales, barley wines, strong IPAs and strong milds appear from time to time. Mild ales, low strength bitters, wheat beers and ‘real’ lagers are much more rare. As if to prove the point, during a recent trail we met a man from Tonbridge in Kent who had come all the way to Bristol for the day specifically to do his own ‘rare ales trail’, knowing what Bristol was like in this regard.

Outside of the centre of Bristol, BADRAG has received recent reports of rare styles of ale appearing on a number of bars worthy of mention including **Beerd** in Kingsdown, **Bar des Amies** in Whitehall Road, the **Hare** in Bedminster, the **Kings Arms** in Kingswood, **Midland/Monaco** in Weston-super-Mare, the **New Inn** at Mayhill, the **Old Bank** in Keynsham, the **Old Stillage** in Redfield, and the **Portcullis** in Clifton. The **Wheatsheaf** in Thornbury recently held an 18-beer festival of which five were rare ale styles, and of 25 beers at the **Backwell Village Club** festival, three were rare ale styles. Most **Wetherspoon’s** have Exmoor Beast, an old ale style, and other rare ale styles from time to time.

On Saturday 26th September the **BADRAG Bedminster & Harbourside Dark Rare Ales Trail** replaced the similar Mild Trail held previously during May. The trail leader was Phil Luxton and the researcher who had to do ‘dry runs’ (tough job, but someone has to do it) was Colin Postlethwaite. Phil Luxton reports:

The trail started at the ‘Bemmy Spoons’, the **Robert Fitzharding**, where 20 or so trailers gathered to sample their first dark ales of the day.

A Black Knight ale of 5% (I didn’t note the brewery but it was probably Adnams) and Plain Ales’ Inndulgence (a 5.2% ruby porter) were on offer. Furthermore, Nathan the manager had kindly laid on some hot nibbles to kick the trail off – thanks Nathan. We then moved across the road to the **Steam Crane** where a further five trailers joined us. The pub had a Clouded Minds tap takeover which offered us Clout Stout (a nice 4.5% stout) and Hazel Nutter, an American style brown ale with hazelnuts.

Coincident to the trail, the Steam Crane, Hare, North Street Standard and Old Bookshop were staging an independent beer festival. Some trailers inevitably went ‘off piste’ to sample the beers at the Standard and the Bookshop, and also, further along the road, at the Spotted Cow, which happens to be a new entry to the recent Good Beer Guide and purveyor on that day of the current Champion Beer of Britain, Cwtch by Tiny Rebel.

Back at the **Hare**, Beerd Blackbeerd Porter (4.5%), a regular at the Hare, and Wild Beer Millionaire (on keg) were the dark beers on offer. There was also Wiper & True’s Bristol Blend, a dark ale with several blends of pepper which were enough to overcome any hoppy flavour but not make one’s eyes water.

Moving on to the **Tobacco Factory**, only the keg Milk Stout was available. When I mentioned to the bar staff about the trail I received many apologies as the porter they had ordered for the trail failed to turn up.

Next stop was the **Orchard** where, once again, no dark cask ale was on offer. Ten trailers still attended and enjoyed one of the many ales available from the barrels at the back of the bar (and for one or two it was an opportunity to enjoy some of the many ciders and perries on offer). The Nova Scotia had no dark ale so for some it was then a stroll round to the **Grain Barge**. Here a Moor stout (keg) was on offer at £5.40 a pint. By this time many trailers had taken the cross-harbour ferry to the **Bag of Nails** where landlord Luke Daniels had Black Forest Porter (4.9%) and Mr & Mrs Porter which everyone also seemed to enjoy.

The penultimate advertised trail pub, the **Three Tuns**, offered Moor Illusion, a dark beer but not stout or porter. Several trailers were still keeping up before some of us went around the corner to the **Lime Kiln** where landlord Paul Wratten offered a lovely pint of Stonehenge Old Smokey (5%), an old favourite of many.

To summarise, it was gorgeous weather for a trail, but the unavailability of dark cask ale in several pubs was disappointing. More trailers might have attended if it wasn’t for the rugby world cup and a Rovers home match.

On Saturday 10th October the **BADRAG Clifton Rare Ales Trail** replaced the similar Mild Trail in May. The leader was Jeremy Fletcher and the researcher was Michael Bertagne. Michael reports:

Pub crawls or trails may have a negative connotation amongst the popular media, however the Clifton Rare Ales Trail demonstrated some of the reasons why they can be beneficial not only for those involved but for a wider audience too.

The spending power of some twenty-five, or was it thirty-five, real ale enthusiasts was unleashed upon *Cliff Tun, The Place of Cliffs*, on that Saturday afternoon. They were treated to some unusual, some rare, but always interesting real ales, all specially selected and well kept by the participating landlords. It was not just regulars and locals who showed up, but several fans were drawn in making the journey from further afield, including a large contingent from the Chew Valley.

Most importantly, the main objective of the Rare Ales Trail was achieved: ‘To provide bar space to rare ales in order to widen the exposure and appreciation of them.’

This success is best summed up in the feedback provided by Rab Clarke, the landlord of the Good Beer Guide-listed Eldon House: ‘I



generally avoid porters thinking they would not go down well with my regulars. However I was pleasantly surprised with the number of Sunday dinner customers who enjoyed the Nethergate Umbel. It has got me thinking that perhaps I should be a little more adventurous with my ales.” So with that endorsement and the proof that by working with CAMRA these events can make a difference, let’s get into the details!

The proceedings started at the **Penny** on Whiteladies Road, opposite the logistics hub of Clifton Down station, where Anita and Gareth had laid on a Dukeries IPA (4.9%). Although not a rare style, the barrel originating from Nottingham was making a rare appearance in Bristol. On to the **Brewhouse & Kitchen**, where we were welcomed by head brewer Mark Wainright. On offer were four ales brewed on site including Nut Brown and Green Hop varieties. The Cherry Saison was not quite ready for general consumption but complementary samples were passed around for all to enjoy. Watch out for their Christmas Stout (9.5%) which had just been bottled and laid down in the cellar.

A short walk to the freshly painted **Victoria** revealed a Dawkins Mr. Peppermint mint porter. The new landlord Deacs was so keen to welcome us that he tapped the barrel the previous week but fortunately was able to source another in time for our scheduled visit. Towards the Triangle and, always worth a visit, was the **Quinton House** which presented a GWB Edwins Ruby Porter (5.2%). The **Eldon House** had another well travelled barrel, the previously mentioned Nethergate Umbel Magna (5.0%). The **Hope and Anchor** kindly provided two to choose from, Gyle 59 Starstruck Porter (6.6%) and Great Heck Topaz IPA (6.0%).

Honourable mentions must go to the establishments who would have been included on the trail had it not been for their own ‘rare’ circumstances which prevented a visit: the **Lansdown**, AKA Rugby World Cup HQ, who were catering to the high volume needs of fans watching three matches that day; the **Hophouse**, which was undergoing refurbishment to what is now the **Nettle and Rye** following a change of management; and the **Portcullis**, which was felt just a little too far away up ‘The Cliff’ in spite of offering a rare ale (a couple of local ‘trailers’ did make it to the Lansdown and Portcullis though). We will endeavour to get to them all next time.

Our thanks to the landlords for supporting the trail, the leader Jerry Fletcher and all who came along from near and far. There will be more trails next year, why not come along?

The Saturday 21st November **BADRAG City Centre Stout, Porter and Rare Ales Trail** will be reported on in the next edition of Pints West. Suffice now to say the pubs involved were the **Bridge Inn, Bank Tavern, Christmas Steps, Gryphon, Lime Kiln, Three Tuns, Bag of Nails and Hope & Anchor**.

Future BADRAG events

in which to enjoy some BADRAG style ales:

- **Saturday, 9th January, 2016: BADRAG Annual Review Gathering at the Surrey Vaults, 8-9 Surrey Street, Bristol BS2 8PS, 2pm to 5pm.**

Come and enjoy BADRAG style ales and have an informal chat about the progress of the BADRAG campaign as well as offering your ideas for future events and activities.

The Surrey Vaults is opening especially for us two hours ahead of their normal opening time and some food should be available, so please support this event.

City and Rovers have away games on that day, so come on you football fans to the Surrey Vaults!

- **Saturday, 20th February, 2016: BADRAG Mini Fest at the New Inn, Mayshill.**

Dave McKillop, licensee of the New Inn at Mayshill, is arranging to have six darker / rarer BADRAG style ales for us with three other cask beers, and food available.

A free coach will be provided to transport us to and from Bristol via Fishponds, on which BADRAG will be taking a “generous” collection for Dave’s nominated charity.

The coach seats are by advance bookings only, by emailing the branch social secretary Andy Gray on social@camrabristol.org.uk or signing his form at CAMRA meetings.

The coach will leave the Cornubia at 11am and return at about 4.45pm in time for those who wish to join with members of other branches in the region for a pub trail after the quarterly region meeting.

For full details of these events see www.camrabristol.org.uk/diary.html and for details of transport to any pub see whatpub.com.

Laurie Gibney, Michael Bortagne, Phil Luxton

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Shine on Blackboy Hill

When I moved to Bristol in the mid to late 1980s, one of the first places I rented a room was in Redland Road. It was a dingy little room, and after a year the landlord of the property was found to have been involved in unusual practices which drew the attention of both the police service and the tabloid press, so I made my excuses and left. (That's actually an entertaining story, but not one for these pages...).

However, one very great advantage of these digs was that it meant my local pubs were those congregated around the top of Whiteladies Road and Blackboy Hill. The Jersey Lily, Kings Arms, Port of Call, Coach & Horses, Beaufort Arms and the Elephant & Castle were all frequent haunts of mine, and I remember particularly enjoying Morland's Old Speckled Hen in the Coach & Horses when it was still new to Bristol, and brewed in Abingdon.

Now, nearly thirty years on, I live on the other side of Bristol, so was delighted to be asked to return to my old stamping ground (although I have no recollection of having done anything more aggressive than plant my feet firmly for warmth in the cold weather), to revisit these pubs from my past and see what traditional ciders and real ales are on offer.



Jersey Lily 193 Whiteladies Road, Redland, Bristol BS8 2SB

When I first visited the Jersey Lily, it was a faded Victorian boozier, quite down-at-heel and tatty. The peeling black paintwork on the outside was less than welcoming, and inside was dark and dingy. Of course, the pub does go back to Victorian times, and was originally known as the Wine Vaults, then for a while the Redland Ale & Porter Stores, but only the most venerated readers will remember it as either, as it became the Jersey Lily in the 1970s.

When we walked in out of the torrential rain for our visit, my wife (for she was my companion) commented that she would not even have recognized it from our forays all those years ago. Refurbished inside and out, and now in the capable hands of the Wickwar Brewing Company, the pub now has something of the cheery town-centre bar about it, shiny wood floors and furniture and a lovely red semi-circular settle on the slightly raised section at the back.

No traditional cider here at the moment, but five functioning handpumps featuring three beers from Wickwar (BOB, Star and Try Time) and two guests (Caledonian Deuchar's IPA and one from Theakston which had just gone off). I had the BOB for nostalgia reasons as this started to appear in the early 1990s, and it was in delightful nick.

Next, up the hill to the...



Kings Arms 168 Whiteladies Road, Clifton, Bristol BS8 2XZ

This one has come full circle. Built in 1820 or thereabouts, and then rebuilt in 1902, it traded as the Kings Arms from before Queen Victoria's reign right up until the Thatcher era. Then, in a misguided attempt to latch on to various fads and fashions, the charming old street-corner split-level pub I knew went through phases with names such as Babushka and Bohemia. Mercifully it is now back to its original name and operating as a pub again. Inside, the mixture of furnishings and levels makes this a dotty but endearing old trooper with a charm that absolutely befits this whole area. Again, no traditional ciders on offer but Exmoor Ale (bang on when I tried it) and Wickwar's BOB are both regulars. A pleasant pub in a lovely building.

Then up the steep and narrow York Street to the...



Port of Call 3 York Street, Clifton, Bristol BS8 2YE

Back in the late eighties as I recall, this was a lovely little real ale pub filled with characters and conversation rather than flashing lights and loud music. These days, the pub benefits from a 2013 refurbishment but is still very much a pub-goer's pub. The two bars that were there when this was the Down Porter House in the 19th century have long since been joined, and I suspect an off sales area in the middle removed altogether. The areas are still distinct, however, with the public bar on the left boasting a stillage on which sit six firkins from which real ales are dispensed. Usually three are on offer with three 'on the way'. The choice is varied and ever changing so it would be wrong to name individual beers here, but expect both local and national brews. Again, the hunt for traditional cider goes on.

Round the corner and down to the...



Coach & Horses
Highland Square, Clifton, Bristol BS8 2YB

Perched atop Highland Square like a queen surveying her minions, there has always been something grand, almost arrogant, about the Coach & Horses. Another Victorian building with a magnificent exterior, this was a George's and then a Courage pub. When we used to visit there was a charming landlord called Rog whose standard greeting was two thumbs up and a smile. Here was where Old Speckled Hen was just such a treat and a dangerous session ale on a Friday night with Tony and Helen (you remember them, surely? Lovely couple).

These days there are two areas, a little snug to the left, and a much more spacious drinking and eating area off to the right. They have a traditional cider – HURRAH! – Weston's Old Rosie, which seems actually much rarer than it used to in Bristol, but that may be due to the proliferation of Thatcher's brands in recent years. Also three real ales (Exmoor Ale, Sharp's Doom Bar and St Austell Tribute), plus sometimes a guest fourth ale, though not when I visited. The Tribute was lovely though, and doesn't yet appear to have suffered from over exposure like Doom Bar and Old Speckled Hen.

Head down past the Coach & Horses and in a dip in what is actually called High Street, and you find...



Black Boy Inn
171 Whiteladies Road, Redland, Bristol BS8 2RY

This was the Elephant & Castle in the late eighties, another boozier that had seen better days. Oft refurbished since, this is now a pub with very great emphasis on food, with dining areas to the front and rear.

One good way to judge a food pub's commitment to quality is to taste its real ale. If the pub is really committed to the best possible tastes and flavours, then that will include the beer. Here they have three real ales, which I gather change from time to time. Brews such as Butcombe Bitter, Timothy Taylor Landlord and Thwaites Wainwright will be on offer. I tried the Butcombe, as it is one of the bitterer bitters available, and that's how I like my bitter. It tasted crisp and fresh and was the perfect temperature, so I suspect the food will be lovely too.

Duncan Shine

All pubs mentioned are featured on whatpub.com, CAMRA's national pub guide.



The Beaufort Arms
23 High Street, Clifton, Bristol BS8 2YF

This was actually closed down for a while when I first lived here, but these days is a charming back-street (literally, despite the address) boozier. If a Spartan and a Puritan were to walk in here, they would both feel instantly ashamed of their erstwhile extravagant lifestyle and resolve to 'simplify' instantly. This is as back-street pubs should be. They do have a telly for sports, and there is a good deal of noise at busy periods, but mostly this is a place to put the world to rights. Cider is a speciality here! Thatcher's Traditional and Cheddar Valley as well as Taunton's own Traditional brand. I tried the Cheddar Valley, and it had that perfect dry taste and apply flavour that lures you towards the second pint like Sirens on the rocky shore. Dartmoor Jail Ale and Doom Bar are also on for those for whom ciderspace is a foreign country.

Finally, with the **Red Lion** on Worrell Road closed when we visited, we darted back onto Whiteladies Road to the...

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Consolidation at Arbor Ales

They say, “No news is good news.” Well, after the frenetic few weeks back in the late summer, when the move to new premises demanded priority, there is so little to report from Arbor that the single word ‘consolidation’ probably sums it all up.

Everyone at the brewery is settling in well; staff morale is buoyant in the relative luxury of adequate space.

Talking of staff, brewing assistant Alex Mansfield has left Arbor to resume full-time study and Rosie Setterfield-Price has joined the sales team in the lofty, spacious office.

Two more fermenting vessels, of 40-barrel capacity, are on order and a recent shipment to Italy of 240 kegs of **Yakima Valley IPA** (7% ABV) has taken place.

In the New Year work should start on the promised hospitality suite, thus facilitating regular organised brewery tours.

Oh, and some exciting new ales are in the pipeline so watch this space!

Henry Davies

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ARBOR

Crane set to boom

Arbor Ales’ move to bigger premises has provided a similar opportunity for their former tenant Crane Beer to expand. Now the sole occupier of the brewery at Lawrence Hill, Crane brewer Kevin Johnston has plans to increase production and move into cask ale – but only when the time is right.

Crane has now been in production for a year, with Kevin brewing a now established core range of pithily named beers which are, in his words, “unfiltered, unpasteurised, unfinned and unapologetically hazy”. The flagship **Boom** is a big 6.2% IPA, **Atom** (4.3%) is an American amber ale, and **Cake** a bittersweet stout weighing in at 6.6%, sales of which Kevin describes as “phenomenal”. Joining them is new beer

Glow, a golden IPA at 4.5% packed with citrusy hops.

Big, bold flavours, with no skimping on ingredients (Cake contains Peruvian cocoa and Ugandan vanilla) define Crane’s beers, which have been going down well in keg and bottle form both locally and nationally, as the ratings for Kevin’s offerings on beer websites testify.

Kevin will shortly be doubling production from 200 litres to 400 litres a week, but demand continues to outstrip supply, and Crane are thinking bigger. The ambition is to “grow organically” and expand over time to a 10 barrel run, brewing beers in keg, bottle and – welcome news for Pints West drinkers – cask.

Boom times ahead for Crane.

Marty Cummins

Dawkins unveils new brewery

Dawkins Brewery, as mentioned in the last Pints West, is relocating from Timsbury, just outside Bath, to Easton in Bristol. At the time of writing the Timsbury plant is still in operation brewing most of the beers while in Easton test brews are being done. Eventually all will be produced in Bristol and the Timsbury brewery will hopefully be sold off as a working brewery.

As a way of introduction, the new brewery held an open day at the end of October which attracted over 500 people. It was a good day, with all 14 beers from the current Dawkins range on offer, and apparently it was pretty much drunk dry. Glen Dawkins says: "It was with some relief that apparently we can actually organise the proverbial! Many thanks to all those who attended, and especially the staff from Dawkins pubs who were only here for the beer but ended up working a full shift!"

The day was also an opportunity to gauge the reaction to a new permanent addition to the range. The beer, (modestly) named **Tremendous Delicious**, is a multi-malt 4.2% ABV premium best bitter, and Glen says the reviews from drinkers on the day were overwhelmingly positive. In addition, the popular **Bristol Gold** is being tweaked up from 4% to 4.4% ABV to give it a fuller flavour (an interesting development as major brands always seem to go in the other direction). It will be seen first in the Miner's Arms in St Werburghs under its pseudonym '**Miner's Gold**' as the beer was originally brewed for that, the first Dawkins pub, where it remains the best seller.

The brewery will be holding another smaller-scale event before Christmas and they are aiming to open the tap room/shop regularly in the New Year – likely open Saturday afternoons to start with at least. As mentioned above, the new site is currently in test-brewing mode and the existing plant in Timsbury is still in production. Bottling is moving over to Easton first with the full switch-over expected to be by around the end of the year.



The new Dawkins brewery installation

In Dawkins pub news, Paul & Dee and Deacs appear to be settling in well at their two new ventures (the Portcullis and Victoria respectively, both in Clifton).

At the **Portcullis**, the kitchen has been upgraded and a new cooker installed, and hot meals are now available most days (not Tuesdays and Wednesdays). The upstairs room is newly decorated replete with comic-book wallpaper; apt as it hosts the monthly Oppo comedy club. Anyone who knows Paul & Dee will be aware of their love of Belgian beers and the range is steadily growing in bottle and on draught.

Down the road at the **Victoria**, Glen says: "The reaction to the recent refurbishment has been heartening and the pub remains as a cozy, welcoming, proper Victorian establishment with the crackle of the real fire on these colder nights. The popular Tuesday quiz continues and there are plans too on the kitchen in the very near future."

Glen adds that Dawkins pubs will always be about good ale first and foremost, but foodies can look forward to continuing pop-up kitchens (and late Sunday roasts) at the **Hillgrove Porter Stores**. And just launched are Monday roasts at the **Miner's Arms**! At the **Green Man** in High Kingsdown there is a brand new 'Burger Bible' menu. The pub is now open for food and drink Friday lunchtimes for essential end-of-week sustenance.



Dawkins shareholder Jane Dutson tests the cooling fan in the new brewery



Building work in progress for the brewery bar and shop

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Award-winning Dawkins Pubs

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

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SP

News from Wiper & True



Michael Wiper taking delivery of the new brewing equipment



2015 has been a big year for the Wiper & True (W&T) brewery, with them now hitting their straps on their own 15-barrel plant in St Werburghs following previous operation as a ‘cuckoo’ brewery. More fermenters have recently been installed, which has eased the pressure on the other ones and now allows an extra brew day each week. This is just as well as the run-up to Christmas has been manic. Head brewer Will Hartley is now supported by assistant brewer Will Davies, an experienced home-brewer. The 10-strong team headed up by the founder, Michael Wiper, is multi-tasking; with Martin Saunders and Vicky Helsby from the office team both having brewed recently. A new automated bottling machine has just been ordered from Italy and, at the time of writing this article, Will is actually in Italy fronting W&T tap-takeovers in Milan, Lecco, Florence and Bologna; it’s a tough job being a head brewer but, hey, someone’s got to do it!

Back in September, W&T were heavily involved in Bristol Beer Week (BBW). They had the privilege of opening proceedings with a tap-takeover at the **Hillgrove Porter Stores** in Kingswood. This was hosted by Jamie Ashley, the enterprising landlord of this fine Dawkins pub, who was Michael’s first customer. Taking over all 12 cask lines and six keg lines was a challenge for W&T, with the majority of their output going into bottle and keg, but they were up for it. They provided six of their own beers in cask, which included **Porter: Bristol Blend** (5.9%), brewed specially for BBW; and curated six more from other fine breweries – two from their good friend Vince Crocker at Ashley Down Brewery, with the others coming from Hawkshhead, Ilkley, Magic Rock and Northern Monk. Their own **Pale Ale: Mosaic** (4.7%) was available on both cask and keg dispense, with the cask version being the first beer to sell out on the night. For a bit of fun, W&T also provided a ‘ClickSnicket’ photo booth on the patio outside; where you could have your picture taken with a number of props – chief amongst them was a diver’s helmet made out of a plastic beer keg. If you are familiar with the distinctive W&T branding, you will be aware that an image of a diver’s helmet is associated with their porters. Also during BBW they invited four lucky beer adventurers to join them and become a brewer for the day, brewing an amber ale on the Tuesday and a milk stout on the Friday. On the day, they were guided through the process of crafting a W&T beer from beginning to end; subsequently they were invited back to enjoy the first tasting of the beer they had helped to make.

As mentioned above, the run-up to Christmas has been manic for W&T. Look out for **Porter: Plum Pudding** (5.9%), with its distinctive seasonal branding and **Winter Ale: Whitefriars** (6.4%). A special event not to be missed is their Christmas tap-takeover at the **Famous Royal Navy Volunteer** on King Street organised by Emily Penney. They will be taking over all of their cask and keg lines as well as filling their fridges for what promises to be a veritable festive feast of beer. Christmas jumpers will be tolerated but are ill-advised!

Dave Graham



Steve Powell and Michael Wiper posing in the photo booth

News from Ashley Down Brewery

The meeting to discuss ideas for the much-needed expansion of Ashley Down Brewery was held at the local St Andrews Bowling Club. As mentioned in the last Pints West, the brewery is now temporarily back in owner Vince Crocker's garage. The meeting of interested parties, called to consider possible relocation, was well attended, with over 50 attendees, and this has given Vince plenty of food for thought for the future development of the brewery. For the moment, though, Vince is concentrating on his joint venture to open a micro-pub, the Drapers Arms on Gloucester Road, sometime soon (more on that in the next issue).

The open day at the brewery for Bristol Beer Week was very popular. When I popped in and sampled some of the beers, I found the **Sideways** to be on excellent form. I also tried a **Brabant Wheat** (6%) to which Vince had added two and a half kilos of cherries back in August. The result was **Cherry Brabant Wheat**, an interesting pinkish beer, with wheat sweetness and a hint of sourness from the cherries. I don't normally like beers with a cherry taste but his one had the right balance for me and many others who attended.

In October, Ashley Down Brewery was pleased to support the St Werburghs City Farm's 'Apple Day' by supplying them with a green-hopped beer, brewed with fresh hops picked from the gardens of nearby neighbours, Mr Street and Mrs Green. The 4% beer was appropriately named **Green Street** and it went down well.

Recently, Ashley Down Brewery has been very busy brewing and bottling a few Christmas favourites. During my visit, hundreds of bottles were maturing in Vince's living room, dining room, and even on the landing. These include **December**, a full-flavoured, malty 4.6%, rich hazelnut-coloured beer with a Bramling Cross and Goldings hop finish, and **Extra Stout**, a delicious rich full-bodied stout at 7.4%, brewed with a little muscovado sugar. The **Plum Porter**, a lovely 5.2% porter with a hint of smoke and half a bottle of ruby port in every firkin should be



Vince needs more space!
Plum Porter ready for bottling and Pale Ale waiting to go into the cold store for conditioning.

bottled by now. All of these should be out and about during December, hopefully freeing up a bit of room in the house for his super-tolerant family. Also look out for Vince's new **Oatmeal Stout** in the new year. He is also trying to ensure that he has plenty of pins and firkins available for the Drapers Arms.

Tony Durbin

Bristol Beer Week 2015

Now in its third year, Bristol Beer Week (BBW) 2015 was held back in September. This celebration of all things beery that Bristol's breweries and pubs have to offer was the brainchild of Lee Williams and Steve Powell. Lee, formerly of Small Bar on King Street, is currently having a break from beer and so was not involved this year; leaving Steve to mastermind things. The concept of a beer week comes from the US, where Lee lived and worked for a while after growing up in Bristol.

This year's events were bookended by a launch party at the Hillgrove Porter Stores in Kingsdown, featuring a Wiper & True tap-takeover, and a closing party at the Moor Tap in St Philips, a family event featuring beer Olympics. In between these events there were many others such as the launch of the Rainbow Project 2015 (also in its third year) at Small Bar, where seven top UK breweries teamed up with seven of the best breweries from the US to brew a beer loosely based around the colours of the rainbow, a sours festival and Left Handed Giant tap-takeover at Small Bar, a Moor tap-takeover at BrewDog, Fyne Ales and Siren Craft



Brew tap-takeovers at the Beer Emporium, a German "Reinheitsgebot" beer festival at the Barley Mow, craft beer pong at the Famous Royal Navy Volunteer and a home-brewing competition run by Brew Bristol.

In addition, there was a huge festival of beer across the three pubs that make up the "Beermuda Triangle" on King Street; where there was an opportunity to win a unique T-shirt by visiting all of them.

Many thanks go to Steve for organising this year's event and to all of the establishments that participated in making it such an enjoyable occasion.

Dave Graham



News from Butcombe



Brewery open day 2015

One of the highlights of the year for Butcombe is their brewery open day, through which Butcombe not only thank the village of Wrington, where it is based, but also thank the Butcombe drinkers both locally and further afield. This year it took place on Saturday the 26th of September.

Visiting by bus from Bristol needed a little more planning than previous years; there is no direct bus to Wrington. The A1 airport bus followed by the A2 bus worked for me, meaning I arrived before the bar opened, and giving me time to present a rather belated award to Butcombe before the full crowds arrived. This award was for Matthew Pale Ale (now back with its original name of Mendip Spring) which had gained Silver in the Bitter Category of last year's Champion Beer of Britain South West Region competition.

This year the open day followed the established tradition of having excellent weather; the sun was shining as visitors enjoyed sampling the various Butcombe ales whilst chatting to the brewery staff and, for some of us, looking out for fellow CAMRA members from Bristol, Weston and the surrounding areas.

Regular brewery tours on the day gave a chance to look around the brewery and ask the brewers questions. A full programme of entertainment kicked off with the Mendip Morris Men, followed by some cool jazz sounds from suavely dressed Cherry Pickers and for the first time at the open day some great rock songs from the Weekend Heroes. As the few hundred visitors started arriving there was a moment of panic as the barbecue for the locally sourced food stubbornly refused to light; luckily a spare barbecue was sent out for so nobody went hungry for too long while delicious organic burgers were barbecued. A storyteller kept the kids well entertained during this great family day out and as always everyone had a really great day out with "brewery fresh" beer. Many thanks again to Butcombe Brewery!

A message from Guy

Guy Newell, the managing director of Butcombe Brewery from 2003 until his retirement this year, has sent this goodbye message to Pints West readers: "Becky and I have enjoyed a brilliant 13 years running Butcombe Brewery. In 2003, we bought a small brewery behind Simon and Maureen Whitmore's farmhouse in the village of Butcombe. It's been a rock 'n' rollercoaster ride since then."

Guy listed many achievements including: "Building the largest new-build brewery in the UK in the last 40 years (150-barrel brew length), doubling cask beer volumes, establishing a strong bottled beer business, and carefully but surely taking the inherited six-strong pub estate to 18 pubs."

Guy stated: "The new Butcombe managing director is Geraint Williams with 25 years of experience in the on and off trade." He added: "We are leaving a fantastic team in situ, the strongest we have ever had, and wish all of them and Geraint every good luck for the future." Guy also wanted to thank all Butcombe customers for making their tenure so memorable.

Ale news

The legendary Yuletide beer, Christmas Steps, is making its usual appearance (available from late November) – a red-hued, full-flavoured ale at 4.2% that uses Challenger and Bramling Cross hops, the latter delivering a distinctive and fruity blackcurrant finish.

The Butcombe 'director of brewing', Stuart Howe, has a new brew calendar for 2016 featuring four new seasonal offerings available for one to three months each. This will include Simcoe (4.5%) in the spring, 31 Hop Gold (4.2%) in the summer, and Munich Helles in October. Stuart has also developed a new beer, being made in small batches as part of the 'Limited Edition' range, called Zeus, a dry-hopped 7.4% barley wine.

Bitter, Gold and Rare Breed will be available all year round joined by new beers as mentioned above and also returning favourites which will include Mendip Spring pale bitter (3.8%); Haka, the Nelson Sauvignon-hopped bitter (4.5%); and 2015's new beer, Moxee Washington State IPA (4.8%).



Scenes at the Butcombe Brewery open day



Nigel Morris





Outgoing Guy Newell (left) receiving yet another award for Butcombe

Exmoor Gold declared best Golden Ale in South West

Exmoor Ale, the iconic golden ale which was also the first of its kind to be brewed when debuting in 1986, has recently been awarded top prize in CAMRA's South West Regional Champion Beer of Britain *Golden Ale* category. What makes the award even sweeter for the brewery, which moved into new premises in 2015, is that during the summer, it heard (unconfirmed) rumours that Exmoor Gold no longer suited the contemporary definition of a *Golden Ale* and could be moved to the *Best Bitter* category.

"Who would have guessed it?" said a delighted Jonathan Price, Exmoor Ales' managing director. "Exmoor Gold winning top prize in the *Golden Ale* category for the South West Region Champion Beer of Britain, not long after we heard that new beer judging categories could exclude it, the first and original golden ale, from the *Golden Ale* category.

"Never mind, this recognition from CAMRA members is much appreciated and it nicely crowns the quality of our head brewer's output from our new brewery this year."

Exmoor Gold was first brewed as a seasonal beer in 1986, when Exmoor Ales was called Golden Hill Brewery, and it was produced to celebrate the 1,000th brew of the Wiveliscombe-based brewery's flagship beer Exmoor Ale. What made it stand out was that it was a single-malt beer and much paler than most of the copper- and bronze-coloured beers on the market then. Little did Golden Hill/Exmoor Ales know that they were starting a brewing trend for golden ales. Since its inception Exmoor Gold has won many awards, with the current being the latest.

"I remember my first pint of Exmoor Gold," says Price. "I was in the bar of the White Horse in Exford, the main watering hole in the heart of Exmoor. It looked like a lager in the glass, but it wasn't and neither was it like any other ale I had tasted. I had not even heard of golden ales. One pint led to another as I was wowed by its malty, citrus, bittersweet, toffee and vanilla character. Six month later I bought the brewery."

Over the years Exmoor Gold has also been lauded by beer writers such as Roger Protz and the late Michael Jackson of 'Beerhunter' fame.

Roger Protz, in the book *300 Beers To Try Before You Die!*, said: "The beer has a powerful punch of earthy hop resins, lemon fruit, juicy malt and a hint of butterscotch. Hops and fruit burst across the tongue, underscored by sappy malt and butterscotch. The finish lingers, becomes dry and intensely bitter, but juicy malt continues to make its mark on a memorable and refreshing beer."

Michael Jackson, in the *Great Beer Guide*, said: "The beer is fresh-tasting, firm, creamy, dryish, with a hint of dessert apples."

And in my own book *1001 Beers You Must Try Before You Die*, I said: "Enticingly golden in colour. The nose interplays between a fresh bouquet of grassy and floral hop and a subtly soft, fluffy caramel-tinged maltiness. The palate sees more balance between gentle grainy maltiness and sprightly floral, citrusy fresh hop fruitiness. The finish is bittersweet."

Adrian Tierney-Jones

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PRIDE IN EVERYTHING WE BREW

BATH & BORDERS BRANCH

Pub news from the CAMRA Bath & Borders branch

Bath and surrounding villages

Bath Brew House, James Street West, Bath

The Bath Brew House has recently been awarded the title of *Best Freehouse in the South West* by the Great British Pub Award committee. Please see main article.

Bear, 6-10 Wellsway, Bath

This local landmark, with Snowy the life-sized polar bear standing above the entrance porch, has recently reopened as *Zazu's Kitchen @ The Bear* following refurbishment. The Bear, which closed in August, had been taken on by the Zazu's Kitchen Group. Bristol readers may be familiar with the Zazu's approach from their Gloucester Road and North Street (Bedminster) outlets.

Three beers were on during a visit by one of our local members: Bath Ales Gem, Butcombe Rare Breed and Milk Street 15 Anniversary Ale.

Culture & Cure, 3 Belvedere, Lansdown, Bath

The freehold of this bistro-style bar, which closed earlier this year, has gone on the market with an asking price of £475,000. An open day was held on Tuesday 25 August and the deadline for submitting sealed bids was set for Friday 28 August. The selling agents are James A Baker. The future of this four-storey Georgian terraced building, which has undergone two major changes of identity within the last twenty years, is now uncertain. Formerly a cider pub called the Beehive, and often frequented by students, it was transformed into a smart, upmarket wine bar and renamed Grappa. More recently it was extensively refurbished for a second time whereupon it became the Culture & Cure.

Packhorse, Southstoke, near Bath

The ongoing story of the Packhorse, which closed in May 2012, reached a new stage this summer. A planning application to convert the former Punch Taverns pub to a private residence was submitted by its present owner to Bath & North East Somerset Council, but was subsequently withdrawn. In the short time the application was up for consultation over ninety objections were posted on the council's planning website.

The Packhorse has been the subject of long-standing local campaign to see it reopen. On closing it was quickly listed as an Asset of Community Value and last year the local campaign mounted an unsuccessful bid to buy the pub from its current owner. So, for the time being, the Packhorse remains in limbo.

East Somerset

Crown & Sceptre, 38 Trinity Street, Frome

This pub, which closed earlier this year, is up for sale. James A Baker, the selling agents, are asking for £250,000 for the freehold of this Punch Taverns pub, which has five letting rooms. Rental offers are also being invited. Formerly known as the Jolly Butcher, this end-of-terrace pub sits in a densely populated residential area to the west of the town centre.

Mason's Arms, Marston Gate, Frome

This large pub on the south-western edge of town has become the fourth Frome pub to close in a year. Owners Punch Taverns have, however, released a statement saying that the Masons has not closed permanently, and they are planning to make a considerable investment in the site. They have said that, once a new tenant is in place, they will carry out a sympathetic refurbishment. The pub would remain closed until the refurbishment is finished, but they hope to have everything complete as soon as possible. The pub is being marketed at £32,000 with an annual rent of £26,300. The Mason's, which had been run for several

years by Vanessa and Paul Faulkner, closed its doors in October and became the most recent in a line of four Frome pubs that have closed in the last year, the others being the Crown & Sceptre, the Packhorse and the Ring o' Bells. Hopefully none of these will be permanent.

Ring o' Bells, 75 Broadway, Frome

The freehold of this pub, which closed around a year ago, has now been sold. We believe it went for around the £195,000 price tag asked by selling agents, James A Baker, but what the future holds for this pub is as yet unknown.

City Arms, 69 High Street, Wells

This city-centre pub was found to be closed and locked up on a visit on Sunday 6 September. The reasons for the closure are unknown. The leasehold on the City Arms has been up for sale for £85,000 for some time with selling agents Fleurets.

The building was formerly the City of Wells jailhouse, which closed in 1810, and sometime later became the City Arms. The main bar retains the small barred windows and low-vaulted ceilings of its former existence. The building encloses a courtyard with outdoor seating on three sides. The attractively painted pink exterior makes the pub an easily recognised landmark within the city.

West Wiltshire

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

This end-of-terrace town-centre pub, which closed towards the end of 2013, re-opened in November as a café, bar, bistro and store.

According to its website the Grapes is a collaboration between five friends with one thing in common: another life spent amid the vines of south west France. Andrew and Anna Barwick own and run *Chateau Rigaud*, where Steve Carss has been head chef for the past six years. Meanwhile Debrah Smith and Peter Woodcock own and run *42 Rue Victor Hugo* in the Languedoc. Their ambition is for the Grapes to bring all that's best in the south west of France to the Bradford-on-Avon area. Meanwhile the plan is for the bar at the Grapes to showcase regional beers and ciders.

Weaving Shed, Lamb's Yard, Bradford-on-Avon

A new combined restaurant, café and bar has opened on the Kingston Mill development in the centre of town. There are two draught beers, two draught ciders and craft bottled beers available amidst the wine, cocktails and spirits.

The new venue was originally a weaving shed from the time when Kingston Mill was a textile factory. In 1843 Stephen Moulton, a former agent of US rubber pioneer Charles Goodyear, secured the UK patent for the vulcanisation of rubber and five years later converted the mill into a rubber factory. It was in the former weaving room that the messiest part of the vulcanisation process was carried out and it became known as the *Black Hole* by workers and locals.

Rising Sun, 61 Woodmarsh, North Bradley

The structural restoration work on this pub, which was badly damaged when a 38-tonne lorry crashed into the front of the building in November last year, is now complete. The lease of this pub is up for sale with selling agents Fleurets.

Ship Inn, 1 Frome Road, Trowbridge

This freehold of this large street-corner pub is has been on the market. The selling agents are James A Baker and the original asking price is £349,000 plus VAT and the deadline for best and final offers was set for 16 July. We are not clear whether the pub has yet sold.

Steve Hunt

BATH & BORDERS BRANCH

Brewery news from the CAMRA Bath & Borders branch

Blindmans Brewery, Leighton, near Frome

Blindmans is continuing to produce a range of bi-monthly specials on top of its core range of six beers. Recently these have included **Sahara** (July to August), 4.0%, described as a golden, thirst-quenching ale with a light floral taste and a clear and crisp finish; **Backstreet Beer** (September to October), 4.2%, a mid-brown rounded ale full of subtle toffee flavours; and **Bah-Humbug** (November to December), 4.5%, a warm Christmas beer full of fruity flavours. Meanwhile the two bottled beers **Buff Amber** (3.6%) and **Buff Gold** (4.0%) continue to be available individually or by the case.



Milk Street Brewery, Frome

A major refurbishment and expansion of this sixteen-year-old micro-brewery is near to completion. The latest phase of work has seen the installation of a new mash tun, a direct-gas-fired copper, and a 15-barrel fermenter, for which the roof of the brewery, a converted cinema at the rear of the **Griffin** pub, had to be removed. The brewery's expansion will see a doubling of the brew



length from six to twelve brewers' barrels and a potential doubling of Milk Street's weekly output.

Twisted Brewing, Westbury

Twisted Miner (4.5%), one of the brewery's first seasonal beers, went back into production in mid-September. A dark porter, the recipe includes a high proportion of dark malts and treacle and uses hops that impart a blackberry aroma. More recently **Veteran** (4.2%), an autumn beer produced in support of Remembrance Sunday and the Royal British Legion, went into production. This is a dark-chestnut ale brewed with a trio of British hops, one of which is grown locally at the **Horse & Groom** in Westbury.



Steve Hunt

Abbey Ales

Abbey Ales, brewing in Bath since 1997, are once again producing their highly regarded **Twelfth Night**. Brewed to a strength of 5% ABV, this is their special Christmas winter warmer, dark amber or ruby in

colour, and full of fruity malt flavours. They describe it as "Christmas pudding in a glass, perfect for supping whilst sitting around a real log fire in your local, merrily eating hot chestnuts!"

This is usually popular with discerning local landlords, and no doubt likely to be found throughout December in,

amongst others, Abbey's own pubs the **Star Inn** on the Paragon, the **Assembly Inn** on Alfred Street, the **Coeur de Lion** in the city centre and the **Trinity** on Kingsmead Square. (Whilst there look out for another winter special, the golden coloured hoppy **White Friar**, also 5% ABV.)

Twelfth Night also joins their flagship beer **Bellringer** in being available in boxes (18 or 36 pints) for home delivery.

Trevor Cromie

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The Bar Code
 by Eddie Taberner

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The Frome beer scene

Frome is a well-blessed town for discerning drinkers, with a wealth of historic, atmospheric pubs serving beers and ciders to delight the most discriminating palate. It even has its own excellent brewery.

If you arrive at Frome railway station, with its classic Brunel roof, you can walk towards the town along Portway and down Vicarage Street. You will soon arrive at the **Three Swans**, opposite the top of the aquatically picturesque Cheap Street.

A few years ago this route would have included the Portway Hotel, where Montgomery had his headquarters prior to D-day, and the White Horse, which featured in early editions of the Good Beer Guide. It is now a fish and chip shop. Once Frome boasted 80 drinking establishments, but sadly the trend towards pub closures continues; the town lost three more in the last six months.

The Three Swans, with its individual style, underwent major refurbishment and change of ownership about two years ago. It's an excellent



The Three Swans

starting point for a beer adventure. You can be sure of a friendly welcome from Helen, the enthusiastic landlady and her staff, as they serve pints of Abbey Ales' Bellringer and Butcombe Bitter, plus a guest Butcombe beer. Homemade snacks are available but no meals. The pub is open evenings and at weekend lunchtimes.

Carrying on towards the Market Place you will come to the **Archangel**, a former coaching inn known as the Angel. This has been substantially



The Archangel

redeveloped to become an attractive hotel and gastropub. The airy bar serves Archangel Gabri-Ale, brewed locally by the Milk Street Brewery, and a guest beer or two, which includes offerings from Box Steam, Butcombe and many others. An interesting draught cider is usually available too.

Looking right as you leave the Archangel



The George Hotel

you will see the **George Hotel** dominating the Market Place, as it has for many centuries, with its floriferous hanging baskets and ornate balconies. The Riot Act was once read from these balconies, during the notorious Frome Riots of 1816, erupting from a Saturday afternoon discussion on the price of potatoes. Such arguments about the price of chips continue on Saturday nights to this day. The George is a good Wadworth's house and always has a wide range of well-kept beers from that brewery.

It's a short step down to the traffic lights, where you'll find – hiding almost between the Bridge and Iceland – Frome's oldest pub, the **Blue Boar**. It's very much a locals' pub but it does serve a very good pint of Ringwood Best.



The Blue Boar

A little way up Bath Street, opposite St John's church, is the **Old Bath Arms**. This old pub, once brewery, was closed for a long time but it has reversed an overbearing trend by reopening as a pub selling real ale. It recently won a heat of television's "Three in a Bed" for its bed and breakfast facilities, mostly due to the enthusiastic owner, Richard. Beer is an ever-changing selection mainly from the excellent Plains Brewery at Sutton Veny. It is served exclusively on gravity. Richard is a champion of the idea of beer straight from the cask and, when he was at the Masons at Warminster, he designed his own cooling system. On occasion in the past beer quality has been variable, but their Black Rock steak is always delicious.

Slightly off the beaten track is the **Crown** in Keyford, another locals' pub. It's one of those very old, unchanging pubs that knows its clientele. It always serves draught Bass and a guest beer.

In Badcox, recently refurbished and reopened, is the **Artisan**, formerly the Olive Tree, which was formerly the Ship. This establishment has yet to win its beer spurs; it has served Butcombe Bitter and Caledonian Deuchars, plus its house-branded 'Artisan Ale', but on recent visits real ale has not always been available. We hope and trust that their real ale sales will flourish in the future and it becomes a must-visit pub for the discerning drinker.

The Trinity area of Frome has two very interesting pubs. The **Lamb and Fountain**, one

The Frome Beer Festival

Frome has had the occasional beer festival in the past, but they have been few and far between. However that is about to change.

The **Cheese & Grain** in Market Yard, a local non-profit making charity, is hosting the Frome Beer Festival in March 2016. Assisted by two enthusiastic local CAMRA members, they intend to put Frome back on the beer festival map with a selection of 50 beers and ciders.

Admittance will be by ticket only, available in advance from the Cheese & Grain box office. The £10 fee includes a souvenir glass, a programme with tasting notes, three half-pint beer tokens and live music during the evening sessions.

Sessions are Friday 18th March from 6pm to 11pm, and Saturday 19th March from 11am to 3pm and from 6pm to 11pm. Book in person or phone 01373 455420.

Will George



The Old Bath Arms



The Crown, Keyford



The Artisan, Badcox



The Lamb and Fountain

of Frome's oldest pubs, is famous for its choice of ciders. "Mother's", as it is sometimes known because of the extreme age of its landlady, Freda, has been in her care for almost 50 years. From its cellars you can enter the "Frome Tunnels" when these mysterious passageways are open to the public. This locals' pub serves a fine pint of Sharp's Doom Bar as well as ciders.

Not far away you'll find the **Griffin Inn**, the brewery for the award-winning Milk Street



The Griffin Inn

Brewery. Their excellent beers are brewed in a former "adult" cinema behind the pub. This lively pub offers drinkers the best choice of real ales in Frome with their extensive range of own brews. These include the iconic Funky Monkey; Zig Zag, a stout; and Amarillo, a well-hopped golden beer. They are well worth seeking out. But it also serves a range of outstanding guests from around the country; Yeovil, Dark Star and Crouch Vale are among recent favourites. The pub is noted for its eclectic range of live music, especially at weekends. Note: it is not open weekday lunchtimes.

Will George (photos by John Macarthur)

The Historic Inns of Frome

Frome is one of the most historic towns in Somerset, with more listed buildings than any other town in the county. Not surprisingly, given its importance as a market and manufacturing centre, a fair few of them were inns. But of the many books that have been written about the town's history, none of them has focused on this aspect of its heritage – until now. *The Historic Inns of Frome*, just published by Akeman Press, tells the story of around 120 inns, alehouses, taverns and beerhouses, starting at the long-lost Albion on Cheap Street and ending at the elusive Wyredrawers Arms on Portway. Compiled by Mick Davis and Valerie Pitt, the depth and breadth of research is astonishing, as is the longevity of many of the town's best-known hostelries. The Griffin, for example, home to the Milk Street Brewery, dates back at least as far as 1717, while the Lamb – now the Cornerhouse – was there by 1693 (although it did move to new premises in 1887).

This is a story of high life and low life, with everything in between. Grand coaching inns played a major role in the social, political and economic life of Frome, with vast fortunes being made – and lost – by those who founded pub and brewing empires. At the other extreme, backstreet beerhouses and wayside taverns, central to the lives of generations of working people, ranged from the eminently respectable to the haunts of highwaymen, prostitutes and vagabonds, where even the local constabulary feared to tread.

The interest of the book is not purely historical, however. Like most other towns, Frome has seen many once busy hostelries, the hubs of their community for generations, run down, closed and converted to other uses or simply bulldozed. One of the most prominent recent casualties was the Weaver on the Butts, closed in 2009 and demolished in 2013. Yet, amid all the doom and gloom, Frome still has some superb pubs, well worth seeking out. And, as the splendid refurbishment of the former Olive Tree – reopened in June 2015 as the Artisan Pub & Kitchen – shows, the news certainly isn't all bad.

For anyone who knows Frome, this fascinating book, with over 200 illustrations, will be an indispensable guide to an unjustly neglected aspect of the town's history. For anyone who doesn't, it will be an introduction not only to some splendid pubs, but also to one of Somerset's most intriguing and best-preserved towns.

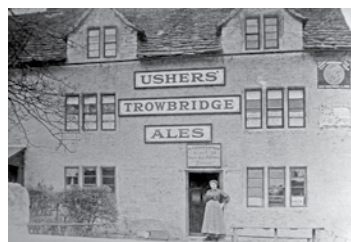
Andrew Swift



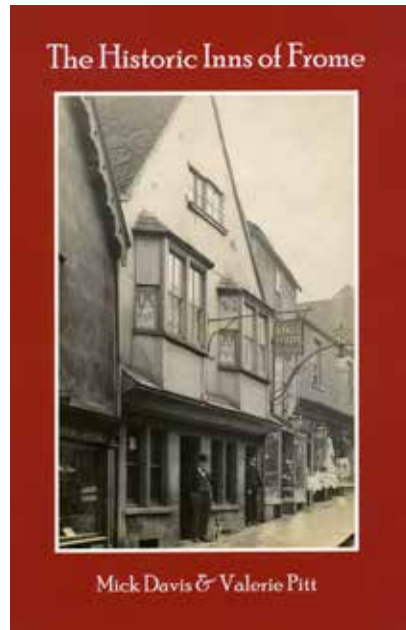
A packed audience at a music night in the Bridge Hotel in the 1960s. The pub closed in 1973.



The Globe on Vallis Way, closed in 2010 and now a private house.



The Royal Oak on Broadway, seen here over a century ago, and still going strong today.



A 1950s view of the Railway Hotel, later renamed the First & Last and now a Chinese restaurant.



The bar of the Unicorn on Keyford shortly before the pub was demolished in 1968.



The pub that came back from the dead. After closing in 1959, the Old Bath Arms on Palmer Street became a gift shop and later a restaurant, but in 2012 it was taken over by Richard Findley, who transformed it into one of the most popular pubs in Frome.



The site of the Weaver on the Butts after demolition in 2013 – but with the inn sign still in situ.

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The Historic Inns of Frome by Mick Davis & Valerie Pitt costs £10 from bookshops or direct (post free in the UK) from Akeman Press, 58 Minster Way, Bath BA2 6RL (www.akemanpress.com).

Electric Bear Brewing



Bath's newest brewery, the Electric Bear Brewing Company (the launch of which was reported in the last Pints West), held their first open days in October at their Brassmill Lane site, about two miles west of the centre of Bath.

All of their regular beers were available at the first session on Saturday 3rd October, those being **Persuasion**, a 3.8% golden ale; **Infrared**, a 4.2% red ale; **Elemental**, a 4.4% crystal rye IPA; **Livewire**, a 5.4% American-style IPA; and **Edison**, a 4.8% Czech-style lager. Some were on gravity dispense from cask, some in keg, and some in both. Their first monthly special, a 4.2% golden ale, surprisingly called **No 1**, was also on the bar at that family-friendly afternoon session. Customers were able to take Electric Bear beers home in 330ml bottles, 5-litre mini-kegs or 2-litre growlers.

Their second planned session on the evening of 23rd October also included their first nano-brew, **Bear Jokes**, a 7.0% IPA, and was especially well received. Such was the demand that they also opened for a short time on Saturday 31st, this time with a Halloween theme and treats for those turning up in fancy dress.

Their winter special, the aptly named **Cherry Blackout** – an 8% cherry chocolate stout available in cask, keg and bottle throughout the Christmas period – should be joined by a doppelbock (around 9.4%) by the time you read this. Further full-size and nano-brew specials will follow at roughly monthly intervals, with the nano-brews sold exclusively at their Brewery Tap.

The brewery currently delivers to pubs with about a 20-mile radius of Bath, and **Persuasion** and **Elemental** will soon be available to Enterprise pubs via the SIBA *Beerflex* scheme (*Direct Delivery Scheme* became *Beerflex* in June 2015).



The brewery shop is now open noon to 5pm Monday to Friday, and the Tap room noon to 6pm Fridays. Their beers will also be available at their chalet in the Bath Christmas market from 26th November to 2nd December. They hope to extend Tap opening hours in the future. For latest opening hours contact the brewery on 01225 424088, follow them on twitter @ElectricBearUK or of course on whatpub.com (search for 'Electric Bear Brewery Tap').

Trevor Cronie

Bath Brew House “Best Freehouse in the South West”

The Bath Brew House has recently been awarded the title of *Best Freehouse in the South West* by the Great British Pub Award committee. Lucas Van Rensburg VIII, general manager at the central Bath pub (pictured right), is incredibly pleased: “We’re so thrilled to have been honoured with this award. We have worked very hard since opening almost two years ago, so the recognition that this award represents means a lot. We’re very proud of what we do here; from our spit-roast and smokehouse-influenced menu to our own microbrewery and homebrewed beers, we keep everything local and personal, which means using the best ingredients and working with the best, and often smallest, breweries in the South West.”

The Great British Pub Awards are an annual recognition of pubs



Some of the Bath Brew House management team: from left to right, Gareth Burgess (head chef), Flis Weeks (assistant manager) and Lucas Van Rensburg VIII (general manager)

within the UK, with various categories ranging from *Best Freehouse* to *Best Wine Bar/Pub*, and are viewed as the “Oscars of the pub industry”.

The Bath Brew House opened in September 2013 and has quickly proven popular with both locals and tourists. It boasts an open kitchen, complete with a spit-roast, as well as a smokehouse where they cure their own meat and cheese. The spacious beer garden houses free ping-pong, as well as an outside bar, and turns into a heated beer tent during the colder seasons, allowing them to host their twice-yearly beer festivals and private functions. Sundays bring live music in the afternoons, along with scrumptious roast dinners and all the weekend’s best sport shown live on big screens.

The pub always has a variety of local guest ales, as well those produced by their in-house microbrewery, the **James Street Brewery**. Tours of the brewery run twice daily (be sure to book ahead through their website www.thebathbrewhouse.com).

The Bath Brew House is currently gearing up for Christmas with an exciting festive menu catering for meaty and veggie tastes and head brewer Anna Schwaeble will be brewing some seasonal beers.

Bath Rugby Ladies brew at James Street Brewery

Bath Rugby Ladies' team was established in 2004, and recently joined up with Bath Rugby Football Club, which is celebrating their 150th anniversary this year. So on Monday 24th August the Ladies team was invited by James Street Brewery to help brewster Anna Schwaeble brew a special ale to celebrate.

As CAMRA 'Brewery Liaison Officer' for the brewery I was invited too. The last time I saw Anna brewing was when she was at the Zerodegrees brewhouse in Bristol, with all its computerised brewing equipment. James Street Brewery is a complete contrast as it is completely manual, and apart from the fermentation tanks upstairs, the brewing equipment is packed into a very small space round the corner from the bar – big enough for the brewer, but distinctly crowded when there are several people all trying to help, watch what is happening, or take photographs.

Due to work commitments some of the team couldn't be there, just Sarah Holloway (team captain), Sarah Burgess, Naomi Lander, Fiona Dawson and Gemma Thornburn. They obviously have a strong team spirit, most of them were wearing their team shirts with surnames on the back and calling each other by their surnames. These weren't the only signs of team spirit, some of their descriptions of after-game antics reminded me of the male rugby teams at uni. I imagine most rugby players will have heard of a 'boat race'!

Team members were involved in the brewing as they added the malt, hops and yeast at the appropriate times, but brewing consists of bursts of activity separated by long waits for processes to complete, so during some of these pauses we were given samples of the four of the James Street beers which were on: **Osiarius Porter** (5.7%), **Live & Let Rye** (4.5%), **Emperor** (4.4%) and **Gladiator** (3.8%). Emperor and Gladiator are regular brews so should be available if you visit.

None of this seemed to be very hard work – until it came to digging the spent grains out of the mash tun. As the level went down it became necessary to lean further and further in, which was back-breaking work.



The equipment provided was a blue plastic spade which looked like a giant version of something from a child's seaside bucket and spade set. I hope the lucky cattle who will get to eat the grains will appreciate the effort. When the brewing process was complete there was, as usual with a brewery, a lot of equipment washing needed – no one complained when we weren't asked to help with this more tedious aspect of brewing.

We got to taste the wort which was sweet and delicious, rather like a bedtime drink, but once the hops had been added and it had been boiled it was quite different. Although I could taste the malt and hops the combination at this stage was unpleasant – I suppose that's unsurprising as drinking beer ingredients before they have been fermented is a bit like eating food before it's cooked. No doubt the beer will be excellent when it's finished.

The name of this beer is **Tap 'n' Go**, which is something which may be awarded to you when the referee's decision goes in your favour – sounds good to me. The original gravity is 1044 and the alcohol by volume (ABV) between 4.2 and 4.3%. The hops used are Rakau, Motueka, Citra and New Zealand Pacific Gem.

The beer was launched at the Bath Brew House on Friday 18th September to coincide with the start of the Rugby World Cup; hopefully the team members recovered in time for their first league game on the Sunday. They brewed a total of 17 firkins, so there were plenty of opportunities to try it. The Pulteney Arms which sponsors the team was also hoping to take a firkin.

If you would like to learn something of the art and science of brewing, James Street Brewery runs brewing experience days for £60. It's a whole day of learning about and getting stuck into the brewing process, and includes a tutored beer tasting, bacon butty breakfast, two-course lunch, drinks, and a goody bag and some beer to take away.

Or if rugby is more your style, contact Sarah on bathrugbyladies@hotmail.co.uk or 07816 757644. Alternatively go along to the Lambridge ground in Bath for a chat on Tuesday or Thursday evenings.

*Chris Rogers
with photos by Sarah Burgess*



News from the Great Western Brewing Company

2015 has proved to be a busy year for the Great Western Brewing Company (GWB), which started with their **Edwin's Ruby Porter** being awarded a Silver medal in the SIBA South West completion in the 'Small Pack Strong Beer' category.

The GWB marketing department has been enhanced to develop further the full beer range, and recently a new bottling plant (pictured) has been commissioned to provide flexibility in expanding the range of beers, which are available in the brewery shop and other sales outlets.



For the festive season they will be brewing the ever popular **Cock Robin**, a 4.3% Christmas ale. Customers wishing to stock up for Christmas, but who might have problems in getting to the Hambrook brewery shop, will be pleased to know that GWB will have a full range available at their chalet at the Broadmead Xmas market.

There are already plans for some branding redesign, plus the introducing a small range of 'craft' beers, so keep an eye out for them.

Keith Morey

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BRISTOL PUBS GROUP

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

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

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



Pub News

Right in the middle of Bristol, the refurbished **Bay Horse** on Lewin's Mead re-opened mid-November sporting a re-branding, a new menu and up to five real ales. In St. Nicholas' Market venerable old pub the **Crown** in All Saints Lane is under new ownership and has increased its drinks offerings to up to five real ales and four ciders and/or perries. This pub has continued as a stalwart in this part of Bristol for many years and it is good to see it continuing to stay relevant. A premises licence has been submitted for the **King Street Brew House**. The City Pub Company (West) Ltd is the applicant and it is they who also operate the Bath Brew House brew pub with James Street Brewery within. The **Colston Yard** has been sold by Butcombe to Distinctly Cape Pubs Ltd and had re-opened with a refurbishment and up to five cask ales of which Butcombe Bitter remains with the other four being guest ales. A stone's throw away the **Scotchman and his Pack** could be open by the time you read this after a couple of years closed following a long slow decline. As can be said now for so many city-centre locations this area has a vibrant pub scene which we hope the Scotchman can successfully complement. Up the hill in Clifton's King's Road the former Hophouse has enjoyed a new lease of life and re-opened as the **Nettle & Rye**. If you recognise the practice of posting the beer details on whiteboards mounted on the wall then it might click that the people behind the **Famous Royal Navy Volunteer** (the Volley to you and me) are running it. The pub operators from King Street seem to be spreading their wings with the **Small Bar** owners taking over the **Adam & Eve** on Hope Chapel Hill in Hotwells. Like the Small Bar drinks are ordered in one-third, half or two-third of a pint measures. Real ale, keg beer and cider are offered.

The planning application made by Garvan Hickey and Vince Crocker (Vince of Ashley Down Brewery) to open a brand new micro-pub on Gloucester Road called the **Draper's Arms** has attracted a lot of support. Let's hope this venture gains permission (possibly by the time you read this?) allowing it to further increase the diversity of Bristol's pub scene. The **World's End** in St. George has been gutted of its pub identity and remains as a shell that does not let on what its fate is.

Right over in the west of the city the **Lamplighters** is the latest Bristol pub to offer a discount for CAMRA members – don't forget to join up for your discounts and other CAMRA benefits!

In our branch area's seaside resort the **Orchard** on Meadow Street in Weston-super-Mare is a pub no more; we have been informed by the owner that it is now a hotel and restaurant. Sad news has come from the people running the **King's Arms** at Cheddar that they have had to close the pub because they just cannot compete with Cheddar's tourist watering holes which are trading well while the traditional locals' pubs are feeling the pinch. Unless someone can make things work here this could be the loss of this popular music pub. Not a lot to inspire so far in this paragraph so news of the **George and Dragon** at Felton remaining closed since August is nothing to raise a glass to. The bad news continues at Chew Stoke where the owner of the **Yew Tree** is continuing his determined effort to convert this village pub into a dwelling house. His latest planning application has however been refused by the council. In case you have not had enough bad news from Somerset we can report that the **Winterfield Inn** at Paulton is not a pub anymore but an Italian bar and restaurant. Some good news may be salvaged though if Wadworth can attract a new tenant to their currently closed **Queen's Arms** at Chew Magna and the currently open-and-trading **Carpenter's Tavern** at Dundry attracts a buyer as it

is currently up for sale. The **Butcher's Arms** at Yatton had its freehold for sale and had closed but word is that it re-opened in November. Fully blown good news prevails at the **White Hart** at Weston-in-Gordano where an Asset of Community Value (ACV) designation and lots of campaigning from the community has culminated in the re-opening of their pub following over two years closed.

Once again the **Packhorse** in Southstoke near Bath is prey for a property developer. A planning application seeks once again to convert this last pub in the village into residential. A lengthy campaign has been fought by locals to save this pub and the developer has not had any success; let's keep the battle going to win back the Packhorse for its community. If you want to get ahead then get a crown. As well as the Crown mentioned in the first few lines of this article the **Crown** at Keynsham has re-opened with a major refurbishment and update presenting up to three real ales and six letting rooms. The **Old Crown** at Kelston is also reported to have been taken on by the same pub company as Bristol's Colston Yard and has had a makeover with improved space utilisation and lighting. Four ales are served from the historic and possibly unique cash register style beer engine.

The **Live and Let Live** in Frampton Cotterell had been closed and scaffolded during November for refurbishment but is due to re-open by December. In Oldland Common the **Cherry Tree** has closed and is shrouded in solid fencing with something going on behind it by its new owner, but what we don't yet know. The **Tennis Court Inn** on the A420 through Kingswood and Warmley closed in September. Another large pub with trading potential on a major thoroughfare, it has been struggling along for a few years but having lost nearby pubs the **Stationmaster**, **Highwayman** and possibly the **Anchor Made For Ever** the local community and the Bristol Pubs Group would dearly like it to gain an essential identity as a foundation for a long future.

If you are interested in Bristol's pub heritage or your local or favourite pub then you might like to read a 521-page account of its 19th and 20th century pubs in this new study: historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/nineteenth-and-twentieth-century-pubs-bristol.

Some pubs in Bristol are gaining 'Local Listing' status which recognises buildings of architectural merit or significance which fall short of English Heritage Grade II statutory listing. Recent pubs to gain this listing are the fine looking **Avon Packet** in Southville and the long closed **King Charles** in Kingsdown/Stokes Croft.

Asset of Community Value (ACV) status has been awarded to the **Kings Head** in Whitehall and the **Beaufort** in Clifton following applications by Bristol Pubs Group. If the following north Bristol pubs had gained more recognition in their day then their communities may still be enjoying them;

Beaufort, Montpellier – now housing
Waggon & Horses, Easton – now flats
Pit Pony, Easton – demolished
Bell, Stapleton – converted to housing
Old Fox, Horfield – now a restaurant
Fellowship, Horfield – now a Tesco shop
Foresters, Westbury-on-Trym – now a Tesco shop
Bourne End, Henbury – demolished for housing
Standard of England, Southmead – now a Tesco shop
Wayfarer, Brentry – demolished

*Mike Jackson
for the Bristol Pubs Group*

Uncertain future for the Cherry Tree?

The Cherry Tree at Oldland Common (pictured) closed suddenly in early October this year and soon afterwards six-foot-high wooden hoardings were erected around the pub. The picturesque neo-Georgian pub had been put up for sale during the summer and the sign outside still shows it for sale by James A Baker, with their website stating that it is currently “under offer”.



It is only just over two years ago that local MP Chris Skidmore presented the Cherry Tree with the award for Kingswood Community Pub of the Year 2013. It was at the time a very popular pub in the area hosting family events in its large garden, regular live music, pub games and serving simple well-priced pub food and two cask ales.

Early in 2015 the landlord at the time of the award left the pub and there followed a number of temporary managers during which period there was a significant downturn in trade.

Mr Skidmore was active in successful campaigns to save the White Hart at Bitton and the Lamb at Cadbury Heath, and he is currently involved in the campaign to save the Tennis Court Inn in Kingswood. He was quoted in the local press expressing concern over the sudden erection of the hoardings and hoping that a suitable buyer could be found for the pub so that it can remain as a pub. Bristol Pubs Group has contacted Mr Skidmore and local councillors to try to find out more information as they are concerns

over the future of this once-thriving local.

Hopefully a buyer who will maintain the Cherry Tree as a pub is found and it won't go the same way as the nearby Queens Head at Willsbridge which, in 2013, was sold and converted to residential accommodation.

Martin Gray

Central Bristol pub crawl

On Saturday 7th November the Bristol & District branch of CAMRA led a central Bristol pub crawl (organised by the Bristol Pubs Group) with additional members attending from Cheltenham CAMRA and also the London CAMRA Pubs Group. So we were in for a sizeable crowd.

The mid-day start was at the **Lime Kiln** behind the City Hall (formerly the Council House). Paul Wratten, the landlord, was obviously delighted with a packed pub so early in the day, with over 40 in attendance by the time we arrived. Paul as usual had some very good interesting beers on to keep us all satisfied. Pete Bridle (chair of the Bristol Pubs Group) gave a short speech welcoming all and explaining that, as some pubs were quite small, we would split the group up to ease getting served as we went along.

The next venue was the **Bag of Nails** at the bottom of Jacob's Wells Road. As many will know, this is a small pub and it did not take long to be quite full. With the many pub cats running about it was quite entertaining, especially for those on their first visit. Luke Daniels, the landlord, had a good selection of beers on, which always seems different to anyone else's. It did however include a couple of local ones in the form of Ashley Down Brewery's Green Street, made with fresh local hops, and Butcombe's Zeus, a complex 7.4% barley wine.

With people coming and going the next stop was the **Hope and Anchor** further up Jacob's Wells Road. With a good selection of beers on offer, this larger pub was more able to accommodate those who wanted to stay and enjoy a nice meal.

The **Three Tuns** was our last stop this side of the centre and by now we had re-grouped as an impressive crowd of over 50 people. The photo shows some of those present, with a further dozen or so camera-shy ones inside (and a couple of us taking photos). The barman had only heard the night before that we were coming but he coped admirably with such a big crowd turning up. The pub had the usual range of good ales including offerings from Arbor Ales and some good dark beers like Empire Old Liquorice Stout.

At this point it was decided to take in another pub en route, in addition to the original eight planned, as we had plenty of time. So a detour to the **Gryphon** in Colston Street for a substantial part of the group was felt in order. This again is a relatively small pub and the barman was not quite ready for the mid-afternoon influx, but he coped well, and the large crowd must have been great for trade. There is always a very interesting range of stronger and darker beers here, and those tried were very enjoyable.



Next it was across the centre and to the **Seven Stars** in Thomas Lane. As usual there were eight beers on here, catering for all tastes and ranging from golden ales to stouts, such as the complex looking Prospect Big Jack. There was also live music on to keep us entertained.

Most stragglers had caught up by now for the visit to the **Kings Head** in Victoria Street. This was part of the reason for the London Pubs Group crowd coming down as they wanted to visit this particular heritage pub (as well as the Seven Stars with its Thomas Clarke anti-slavery history). The Kings Head is very small but fortunately we were not in such great numbers as some by now had dispersed home. There were four beers on tap here.

Next was the nearby **Cornubia**, a busy classic pub with a good range of draught ales and cider. The last venue of the crawl was the **Barley Mow** in St Philips. It has a good choice of beers which include their own Bristol Beer Factory range.

Going by feedback since, it seems all really enjoyed the social and it was surprising to see so many still at the end of a long and luckily dry-weather day. The quality beers were plentiful in range and numbers all day.

For images of pubs we visited, uploaded by the London Pubs Group, go to www.londonpubsgroup.camra.org.uk and look for 'Daytime crawl of Bristol'.

Your local CAMRA branch arranges lots of great social events and they are open to all members. Why not check out our diary at the back of the magazine or visit the branch website at www.camrabristol.org.uk.

Keith Shapland

BRISTOL PUBS GROUP

Local listing of pubs

Readers will probably be aware that the listing of a building for its appearance and history is carried out by Historic England (previously English Heritage), at the request of members of the public. Listing can give a building added protection in regards of planning laws.

Buildings which may not be to such a high standard for listing may be 'locally listed' by the council for that area. Although not as protective, the local listing of a building (or street furniture) should be given consideration in terms of planning applications.

For some time now, Bristol City Council has been running a website 'Know Your Place' (further details lower down) partly for this purpose. And for a number of months, Bristol Pubs Group has been considering the quality, and researching details of, a number of pubs for this. This is ongoing. We have now nominated some on the website which readers can view.

Take the **Avon Packet** in Coronation Road, Southville. Maps and its structure indicate this may have been the first of its terrace (they are misaligned). The pub has green and maroon glazed ceramic tiles to entire ground floor with a fine Art Nouveau frieze. It dates back to the mid-1800s. A plan from 1873 shows it having a coach house and stables.

In Ashton Gate is the **Coopers Arms**. This pub has dramatic gables, ornate Queen Anne Revival chimney stacks, and a fine steep plain clay tile roof. This is a typical bold showy late-Victorian landmark, designed by WD Gough. Personally, I always like the sort of text it displays on the front –

possibly because I enjoy porters and stouts?

In Bedminster, the **Old Globe** has facial architecture looking quite mighty. This is a handsome Victorian corner composition in muscular red brick with a skilfully handled radiused corner to Church Lane, rising to a bold gable and three boldly modelled dormers with masonry surrounds and pediments. The pub shows on a map of 1874.

In the same area is the **Barley Mow**, which is a beautiful example of understated flat-fronted corner pub with West Country stepped voussours to timber sash windows above. It stands out most with the spectacular use of green and deep ochre ceramic glazed tiles on one side and exuberant chequer board pattern below dado level on the other. Licensees have been found back to 1853.

The **Luckwell Hotel** in Ashton is a landmark. Its unusual appearance is enough to deserve local listing, regardless of its plans only being dated 1902. It has painted brick and half timber with fine robustly detailed fenestration, timber corbelled eaves, and elaborately moulded fascia with dentils. Handsome Bridgewater double roman clay tiled roofs punctuated by a bold half-timbered gable, a hexagonal corner pyramidal roof in plain clay tiles and dramatically corbelled red brick chimney stacks.

At the top of St Michael's Hill stands the **Highbury Vaults**. Its symmetrical west elevation focuses at ground level on a typical early Victorian "shop front" style fenestration to the front snug bar (or 'vault') with entrance door alongside, the frontage set up against the back of pavement thus emphasising its pivotal position in the frontages along the east side of St Michael's Hill. Its erection was around 1840-55. This pub is part of CAMRA's Regional Inventory of historic pub interiors. Until the 1930s its only bar was the snug. Its plans then indicate the current outside drinking area was thin air – at basement level was a courtyard with toilets!

In St Jude's lies the **Swan With Two Necks**. In 1925 plans were submitted for its current fine pebble-faced upper storeys with timber-framed windows over robust smooth red brick base with elegantly detailed recessed bay surmounted by fascia, frilled leadwork. Its left-hand entrance appears to have been for off-sales use.

In St George, a 1904 rebuild of the **Three Crowns** stands as a very fine, substantial composition in red brick and deep red terracotta with two grand storeys. Its roof is steep-pitched roof with boldly modelled parapet and cornice. Inside, this has a very admirable, grand bar back.

In the High Street of Shirehampton stands the **George Inn**, a landmark rebuilt in 1930 as the George Hotel. It is a good example of an inter-war "improved" pub as found in large numbers in suburban areas of larger cities. It has a full range of typical materials including soft red brick, tile hanging, ornamental chimney stacks, plain clay tiled roofs and lintels and half-timberwork. Some smaller earlier metal-frame panes retained in the east and west single-storey ends.

Further details of these pubs, and others, can be found on the 'Know Your Place' website maps.bristol.gov.uk/knowyourplace. This shows maps of various dates, with options to show different details, using various tickboxes. For handheld gadgets, a cut-down version can be found on maps.bristol.gov.uk/kyp.

Others we have nominated to date include the **Bag of Nails** (Hotwells), **Merchants Arms** (Hotwells), **White Lion** (The Centre), **Crown Tavern** (St Phillips), **Shakespeare** (Redland) and **Gryphon** (Colston Street). All sources of information are credited per case.

You may know of a pub worthy of local listing which you would like to nominate. To find guidance on doing so, visit www.bristol.gov.uk/planning-and-building-regulations/know-your-place. Alternately, you may wish to nominate some other building or item, or just add some other historic data. The map shows a lot already nominated by many people, along with photos from the past, historic details and drawings, a lot from the Bristol Records Office.

Take a look and consider your locals!

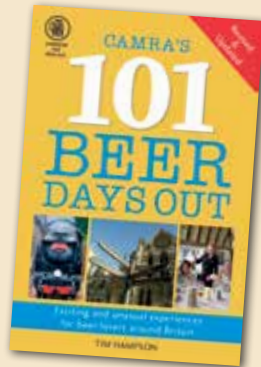
Tim Bolsten

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The Bay Horse

The Bay Horse pub in central Bristol has reopened following a refurbishment, menu overhaul and re-branding exercise accompanied by an influx of new staff. The number of hand pumps has been increased from three to five



featuring Bay Horse House Ale (brewed by Prescott Ales), one guest beer, two Greene King beers and a cider.

Although the pub may not have had a particularly high profile amongst real ale fans in recent years, the Bay Horse has a historic link with CAMRA as it was the venue for the very first meeting of our local branch back in 1971.

Pictured is General Manager Denis Lambert.

Richard Brooks

Brewery news

Cheddar Ales

Cheddar Ales will release their award-winning **Festive Totty** just in time for Christmas. This brew is a festive twist on the multi-award-winning dark porter Totty Pot.

Described as being perfect for matching with cheddar cheese, Christmas cake or dark chocolate, the Festive Totty has been popular with seasonal customers for the last seven years. The creamy porter and stewed fruit flavours even make an exceptional Christmas pudding recipe which you can find on the Cheddar Ales website (cheddarales.co.uk).

Festive Totty is brewed using pale, Maris Otter, chocolate, crystal and roasted malts and hopped with a blend of English Northdown and Goldings whole hops. It is 4.7% ABV and is available in casks and 500ml bottles.

James Street Brewery

Anna Schwaeble, brewer at the James Street Brewery in Bath, took part in a 'collaboration brew' at the end of August with Bristol Beer Factory and Zerodegrees. This was to produce a 'Wheat IPA' – not a style I've ever heard of before!

They were also going to experiment with a different type of yeast to the usual wheat beer yeast as they wished to avoid the banana hints that can often be tasted with that beer style.

Chris Rogers

Zerodegrees

This has been a good year for specials from Zerodegrees, they have been coming tasty and fast. If you are lucky you might get the last of the Kölsch or the Wheat IPA, the collaboration ale brewed for Bristol Beer Week (both described in the last issue of Pints West).

Other good news is that the Christmas Special is on its way and should be available by the time you read this. It's a dark, ruby coloured ale at 5.0% ABV, brewed with dark crystal malt for the colour, and Munich and Melanoïdin malts for the body. It will be a full bodied beer, quite sweet, with Christmas spice overtones of nutmeg, cinnamon, ginger and cloves.

Roy Sanders

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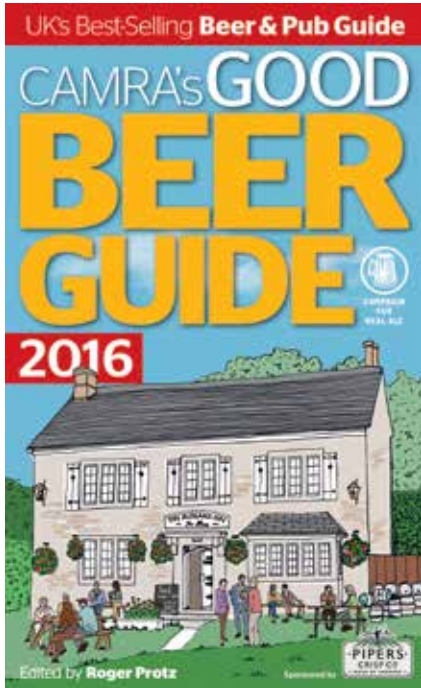
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Launching CAMRA's Good Beer Guide 2016



The local launch of the 2016 Good Beer Guide (GBG) took place at the Small Bar on King Street in central Bristol on Friday 11th September. The pub was one of 19 new entries amongst the 63 pubs that the Bristol & District branch selected for the Guide this year. There was a similar turnover of pubs to previous years with 30% of the pubs in the branch area being new entries, which reflects very much the exciting and continuing changes in the beer scene in our area.

If you want to know which other 62 pubs were selected, why not buy a copy of the Guide from any good bookshop, online from CAMRA, or at a CAMRA event or festival. Members receive a healthy discount if buying directly from CAMRA at shop.camra.org.uk. As well as discovering which pubs in the branch area have been selected for their high quality beer the Guide will be an invaluable resource when you travel to other parts of the country. The Guide also makes an ideal Christmas present for beer lovers.

The picture show Small Bar manager Jack Grainger receiving the pub's first, and well deserved, GBG pack from former GBG co-ordinator Vince Murray on the left of picture and current GBG co-ordinator Martin Gray on the right.

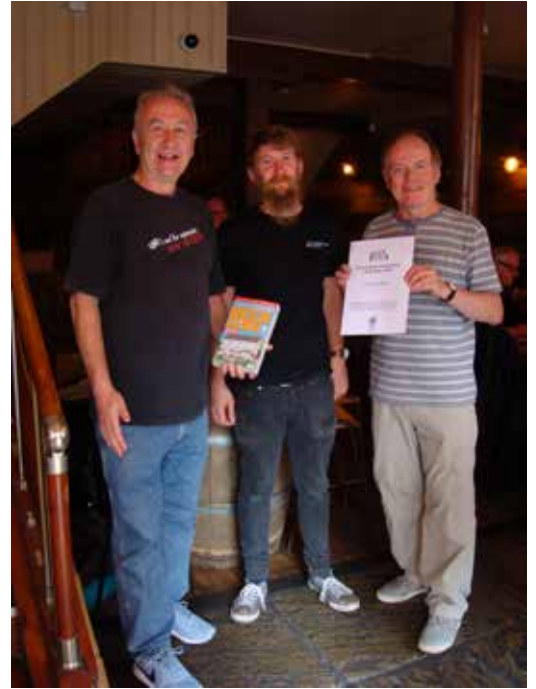


Photo by Marilyn Murray

Bristol & District CAMRA branch's Good Beer Guide selection process

With the launch of the 2016 Good Beer Guide behind us, the long process for selecting entries to be included in the 2017 Guide is now well underway, with a selection meeting for the Bristol & District branch's allocations due to take place at the end of February 2016. You can assist in the selection process for the 2017 Guide by regularly scoring the beer you drink on the National Beer Scoring System (NBSS) via the WhatPub website.

Beer scores, which should be based on the **quality** of the cask beer served, are used in many CAMRA branches as a major factor in the selection process, and in the Bristol & District branch we use beer scores as part of the selection process, including the compilation of the "long list" of pubs to be included. This long list for the 2017 Guide is now nearing completion and beer scores recorded by members from the Bristol & District branch and members from other branches across the country have been useful in helping to determine which pubs should be included. Beer scores recorded also help in determining where to arrange survey trips to, if pubs are not within easy reach of Bristol city centre.

Including the two sub-branches of Severn Vale and Weston-super-Mare, there are around 680 pubs in the Bristol & District branch area. Due to publishing limitations only 63 pubs from the branch area can currently be included in the Good Beer Guide, so it is important that we try to select the best 63 in terms of **beer quality**. However there may be some excellent pubs in the branch area serving consistently good beer that nobody has recommended or scored beers in. So if you do come across an example try to visit it again to ensure that the beer quality is consistent and if it is, let me know as soon as possible (email marting1@sky.com) so that there is time to arrange a survey trip. It would also be helpful to record a beer score or two for the pub via whatpub.com as this will help in the selection process.

I am pleased to note that the number of beer scores for pubs in the branch continue to increase and in the last quarter to October 2015 we hit the 1,000 mark in terms of scores recorded, with scores from over 100 members, although only around 30 of these people are from the Bristol & District branch. So we still have more than three times as many scorers from other branches scoring beers in our branch area. Whilst this does demonstrate the attraction of the local area as a beer

destination, it is disappointing that not more local members are scoring their beers on a more regular basis (a total of 55 local members have scored beers at some stage in the last year). So local members: please carry on scoring beers whenever you can. If you have "lapsed" in your scoring please try to start again and if you have never scored a beer before via whatpub.com give it a go next time you go to the pub. I would particularly like to encourage members in the two sub-branches of Severn Vale and Weston-super-Mare to start scoring beers as we have very few scores recorded in these areas.

You can score beers via whatpub.com either on your smartphone whilst you are in the pub or on your computer when you get home. Don't forget to score beers in other branch areas as well, as it will assist those branches in selecting their entries for the Good Beer Guide. Remember that you should base your score on the **quality** of the beer, not whether it is a particular beer or beer style which you prefer. As a reminder the scoring system is as follows (with the option to use half points if your opinion of the beer falls between two categories):

0. No cask ale available.

1. Poor. Beer is anything from barely drinkable to drinkable with considerable reluctance. You may have been unlucky and were served one of the last pints in the barrel. If the beer is exchanged without a problem and taken off sale you may use your discretion and not score the beer at all.

2. Average. Beer doesn't inspire in any way. It is drinkable, but you may decide to try a different beer in the pub or move on to another pub.

3. Good. Good beer in good form. You may cancel plans to move to the next pub. You want to stay for another pint and may visit this pub again.

4. Very Good. Excellent beer in excellent condition. You will probably want another one so you stay put!

5. Perfect. Probably the best you are ever likely to find. This may be difficult to assess and a seasoned drinker will award this score very rarely.

It's as simple as that, so please try to score the quality of the beer you drink whenever you can.

Martin Gray

News from the Bristol Beer Factory

When this edition of Pints West went off to be printed the Bristol Beer Factory were shortly due to hold their annual open day on Saturday 28th November. This is when the brewery throws open its doors to thank the Bristol public for their support over the past year. Complimentary beer samples, stout stew and Milk Stout cake plus live music and the possibility of Morris dancing were promised as well as the offer of 10 to 20% off the price of all merchandise for this day only. We hope it all went as planned and a good day was had by all.

The long awaited Bristol Beer Factory **Barley Wine** has been bottled and was to be ready for the brewery open day. This has been aging in red Burgundy oak barrels for over five months and "will make the perfect Christmas present for all beer lovers". **Bristletoe**, the 4.7% Christmas oatmeal porter, is now available in both bottle and cask. They have also just bottled their **Vintage 2015** which will be available in bottle as from mid November. As usual the brewery has included a little twist to their Vintage recipe and this year it is the addition of a barrel of their aged barley wine. So give it a try and see whether you can pick up those oak flavours.

The **Barley Mow**, Bristol Beer Factory's pub in St Phillips, is reported to be thriving and has released its Christmas menu which will be available from the beginning of December. This is described as being a beautiful choice of three starters, three mains and three desserts, of course with the Barley Mow's range of top class beers to wash it all down with. Ideal for the office party get together for some festive fun. Interested parties can book by calling the pub on 0117 902 6317.

Richard Brooks

Southville Hop

a taste of independence!

BRISTOL BEER FACTORY

Southville Hop Acer Seven Independence Hefe Gold Vintage Saison Bitter Kiwi Sunrise Ultimate Stout Bristletoe Milk Stout Sorachi and our new Unlimited range

Official brewery tap—Barley Mow St Phillips
BristolBeerFactory.co.uk

News from Bath Ales

As befitting its 20th anniversary, Bath Ales has gained another award for its original brew; **Gem** has won the Bronze award in the Best Bitter category of the CAMRA South West Region Champion Beer of Britain competition. And to give it another birthday boost, Bath Ales brewed **MegaGem**, a cross between a dark bitter and a barley wine. MegaGem showed intense complex and malty flavours, with a slight bitterness, and fruity aromas. The double-drop fermenting process has given it added depth and flavour, at a mind-blowing 7.4% ABV (alcohol by volume).

Bath Ales also brewed a special bitter for rugby fans during the Rugby World Cup. **Conversion** was a 3.6% ABV bitter brewed from British hops giving hints of citrus and berries.

As we reach December Bath Ales is providing two porters to keep away the winter chill. As usual the seasonal award-winning **Festivity** is brewed using floor-malted Maris Otter barley and roasted chocolate malt (together with the Challenger and Bramling Cross hops from Kent) to give it those chocolate, coffee and vanilla flavours. They have also resurrected **Ghost Hare**, the porter brewed with a subtle (!) hint of chilli from real, oak-smoked Ghost chillies from the Upton Cheyney Chilli Company which, combined with chocolate malt and Challenger hops, gives this rich porter a bit of a kick. Enjoy either or both; the cold, damp season can be long!



News from the Beerd Brewery

This autumn was a busy season for Beerd. As well as brewing nearly a full range of beers for the beer festival at the **Wellington** in Horefield, they collaborated with **Crane Beer** on a refreshingly tart saison, named **SILO**. As you might expect with a saison, **SILO** features hints of red peppercorn, cloves and a marmalade finish from added orange peel.

Another collaboration saw Beerd working with the Insight Brewing Company of Minneapolis, USA. They produced a 5.5 % IPA with a tropical aroma, and citrus and grapefruit flavours, with a slight bitterness and a pine overtone. The name, **Path of the Giant's Axe**, is influenced by a local Bristol legend about two giants, one of whom created the Avon Gorge (allegedly).

Roy Sanders

bath ales

Festivity 5.0% vol

Our specially crafted porter

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Watering Holes in the Desert

brought to you from Weston-super-Mare

Weston Whispers

The **Criterion** on Upper Church Road has entered into an arrangement with the award-winning Timothy Taylor brewery, based in Keighley, West Yorkshire. One feature of this is that there will now always be a Timothy Taylor beer on at the Criterion. This will be one of the four following beers, on a rotation basis: *Landlord*, *Boltmaker* (both previously CAMRA Champion Beers of Britain), *Golden Best* (a light mild) and *Dark Mild*. The Taylor beer will sit alongside five other real ales, always featuring two or three guest beers and a great range of real ciders.

Tom Nickolls



Who'd have thought a desert like this would ever be the place for a brew-pub to spring up?



Socials Report

So just what have members of the Weston-super-Mare CAMRA sub-branch been up to recently?...

On 21st August we had our traditional summer seaside saunter which, although previously starting from the Captain's Cabin, this time started at the renamed **Majors Bar and Grill**. This pub has changed names six times since 1974. Seven members of the Weston sub-branch were there at the start and the *Wells Bombardier* was preferred over the other beer. Moving on to the **Old Colonial** (the Slipway Bar being closed) we had a choice of two Marston's ales, as they own the hotel, and were joined here by three other members; the *Marston's Pedigree* was good and we were able to sit outside to enjoy it. A *Jennings* beer was also available. We next went to the **Cabot** where most of the beers were GWB beers and met two more members who had been elsewhere to eat and returned here for some proper ale. The beers we sampled here were good. The Royal Hotel's **Feathers Bar** was full of 'wrinklies' listening to exceedingly loud crooner's music and the beer, though OK, was expensive for Weston being £1.95 for a half pint of *Exmoor*. Finally we diverted from the seaside to go to the **Brit Bar**, where the music was again loud, but a four piece rock 'n' roll band was much quieter! Better beers too, and we drank *Cheddar Totty Pot*, a dark beer considered very tasty by those who like this style of beer, and were joined here by two more members not seen often on our socials (welcome Dave Allan and Jane Case).

With strict instructions not to tell the press as it was before the official launch of the Good Beer Guide (GBG), we had an ad hoc meeting on 27th August (unadvertised except via the Weston-super-Mare CAMRA email list) to present the GBG accreditations to the **Brit Bar**, as it was the first time they've been in it. Seven members of the sub-branch were present. Congratulations to the other Weston pubs featuring in the Guide for 2016 (but you'll have to buy a copy to find out which they are).

On Wednesday 9th of September we had a meeting using the curry night at the **Regency** as an excuse, where the guest bitter was an old favourite, *Wadworth Farmers Glory*, though most of us old enough to remember it thought it wasn't as strong as it used to be. This was followed by *Imperial PA* (brewed by *Blindmans Brewery* for the pub) at the **Imperial** followed by the *Blindmans Mine Beer*.

Weston hosted the Bristol & District branch meeting on the 23rd September at the **Conservative Club** where *RCH 30.7 Anniversary Ale* had been added to the guest ales for our benefit, and as it was straight from the barrel it was popular at £2.60 a pint – cheaper than their regular beers!

Saturday 10th October was a review of central Bristol pubs, with a number of us visiting (in order) the **Cornubia**, **King's Head**, **Seven Stars**, **Bank Tavern** and **White Lion**. We then stretched the definition of 'central' to include a walk to the **Surrey Vaults** and then on to the **Volunteer Tavern** for their beer festival.

The evening of Friday 23rd October found half a dozen members gathered at the recently reopened **Woodspring** pub in Worle High Street to discuss our programme of events for 2016. There were two beers on offer here, *Sharp's Doom Bar* and *Greene King Abbot*, which were not very exciting; it seems that these are to be the regular beers with no guests planned. The pub appears to be managed with no presence from the new owners and the pub was not busy, but with loud music being played. We moved on to the **Nut Tree**, also in Worle, to be greeted by

more loud music and *St Austell Tribute*, *Courage Best* and *Fuller's London Pride*. The *Tribute* was not as good as on previous visits but was drinkable. From here we went to the **Kings Head** to sample the *Castle Coch* from *Celt Experience* which was enjoyable. We finished off at the **Worle Century Club**, the first time for one or two, but well known by our skittles players with its exceptionally long and difficult alley, and with a match in progress. *Doom Bar* and *Butcombe Bitter* were available, but we all went for the rare *Springhead Barebones* at 4.7% which we also enjoyed.

On Saturday 7th November some of us from the sub-branch had a beer (or two) in **Off The Rails** at Weston-super-Mare railway station (both *Dartmoor Dragon's Breath* and *Goddard's Fuggle-de-dum* being in excellent condition) before we caught the train to Highbridge where, in the heavy rain, we walked to the **George Hotel** for *Dartmoor Jail Ale*, and a chance to dry off a bit.

Catching the bus to Burnham-on-Sea, we alighted opposite the Royal Clarence Hotel (where RCH beers were first brewed) and passed that establishment as the main bar, which until recently sold real ale at about £2 a pint, has now closed, and the new small bar only sells bottled beer. We went to the **Victoria** which had ales *St Austell Tribute*, *Sharp's Doom Bar* and *Butcombe Bitter* on. Some of us ate bar meals (at £4), and we spent the best part of an hour there.

It was then a five-minute stroll to the **Dunstan House** (in the Good Beer Guide for the last few years) where five different beers were on, including two from *Young's* (Bedford) and two from *St Austell*. As it was now warm and sunny most of us went outside to drink, with the sun having dried the seating up considerably. Another short walk took us to the **Railway**, a Greene King pub, where a couple of weeks ago they had three beers on including one very dark beer from *Bellhaven*, but on this visit they only had *Greene King IPA* on.

The next pub, the **Somerset and Dorset**, had *Ubu Purity* as well as *Butcombe Bitter*, so we stayed for about half an hour. Not far away was a café advertising ale at £2.50 a pint, but alas on closer investigation it turned out to be only *Carling* and *Newcastle Brown*! However, opposite it, the **Pier Tavern** had *Exmoor Gold* (re-badged as *Exmoor Rugby Gold*!) which was drinkable and fairly cheap. Next to it is the Wetherspoon's **Reed's Tavern**, a new entry to the Good Beer Guide, where we were hoping for some survivors from the recently ended beer festival; it was not to be – but *Quantock* beers *Wills Neck* and *Rourke's Drift* at £2.03p a pint were quite acceptable.

One member left us here to go to a beer festival at the **Ring of Bells** pub in Taunton, while the rest of us proceeded to catch the bus back to Highbridge to visit an old pub in a relatively new estate where the former cattle market used to be, the **Globe**. Regrettably the *Wadworth 6X* was not ready, and so we had bottled *Theakston's Old Peculier* and made the best of it. We then called in at the **Coopers Arms** for *Young's London Gold*, *Caledonian Autumn Red*, *Sharp's Doom Bar*, *Courage Directors* and *Butcombe Bitter* were also on here. We caught the 17.27 train back to Weston and a few returned to **Off The Rails** for some *Cottage Trick or Treat*.

Robin E Wild and Bill Barnes

Onwards and upwards at the Brit ... now brewing its own beer!

The Brit Bar, just off Weston High Street close to the Playhouse, continues to go from strength to strength. This autumn has already been a momentous one for Sam Cureton and his team. Aside from celebrating their fifth anniversary, in September they were given due recognition by CAMRA by gaining entry into the Good Beer Guide for the first time, featuring in the 2016 edition (the ideal Christmas present for ale-drinking friends!).

Ever since the pub opened it has offered some fantastic beers, with arguably the most imaginative selection being offered in Weston, giving rare and welcome prominence to dark beers. In the early days low demand during the earlier parts of the week had occasionally meant that no ales were available. This has now been well and truly rectified. Sam, Jay, Luke and Abi have gradually built up the bar into being a well-supported venue throughout the week (not just on the very popular weekend live music nights) and there are now always at least two beers on during the early part of the week, with the choice being ramped up to four at weekends.

At the same time that we broke the news to Sam that he had made it into the Good Beer Guide, Sam broke the news to us that he was launching his own on-site brewery! This will be the first brewery in the



View of the Brit from the road entrance



Sam Cureton sitting at his bar

town since 1863 so this news was well received. Sam explained that he had several reasons for starting the brewery. He was getting frustrated with not being able to buy the type of beers he wanted, in particular dark beers – a case in point being the reduced production of pub favourite Funnel Blower, the vanilla porter produced by the Box Steam Brewery. Another factor for Sam was the cost of buying in the beers that he likes. In these times when many pub owners seem to have a total disregard for the price they charge their customers, this is still important to Sam. Real ales are £2.99, regardless of strength, with the added attraction of a 10% discount for CAMRA members, or a loyalty card scheme whereby you get a card stamped for each pint purchased, with the seventh pint being free. This equates to the cost of the seven pints working out at £2.56 each. Not a bad price I am sure you will agree. Also, being someone who runs a pub and who has a deep interest in the brewing process and in the many styles and flavours of real ale on the market, Sam had reached a point of thinking, “Why can’t we do this ourselves,” and put the wheels in motion to begin brewing his own beer.

The first beer appeared on the bar on 27th September, badged as from the ‘RPM’ brewery – the abbreviation of Revolutions Per Minute, reflecting the strong musical theme at the pub. This was, fittingly, a dark beer – Dublin Stout at 3.6% ABV. Since then there have been a steady

stream of beers, reflecting the eclectic tastes of Sam and much of the Brit’s ale-drinking clientele, examples being a Peach IPA and Liquorice Bitter. The only beer that has been produced twice has been a German-style dark wheat beer – although a festive beer sold out in one night, so will be produced again. This 4.7% ABV effort was described by Pints West’s very own Robin E Wild as “wonderful.”

Sam sees the current period as being very much a trial, with a wide number of recipes being tried through his “minimalist” 10-gallon set-up. He admits to being on a learning curve, with some beers working better than others and Sam is meticulously documenting everything related to each beer, from the start of the brewing process right through to customer reaction. The current game plan is that come the spring, Sam will have refined his recipes and identified one beer that will be permanently produced, supplemented by a range of occasional brews. The brewery will become a proper standalone business, as opposed to just being “The Brit brewing its own beer.” Proper branding, beer names, pumpclips, etc, will be established. It is hoped that next year some RPM beers will find their way into local beer festivals and maybe some pubs.

We wish Sam well with this venture and look forward to enjoying the evolution of Weston’s RPM brewery.

Tim Nicholls



From small acorns . . .

(The cryptic) Dr. John ... Battles On

The Song of the Germans *Das Lied der Deutschen*

After the Bavarian *Münchner Oktoberfest*, or “*Wiesn*” for the rhyming Munich mayor Dieter Reiter, thoughts idly turn from Rudolf Diesel and Volkswagen’s Lower, possibly famed for its cows, Saxony’s Wolfsburg to Usain Bolt taking the rest of the year off and celebrating in *lederhosen*. “Prince Rupert”, if you will bear with me, was the Duke of Bavaria over whom his uncle King Charles I metaphorically lost his head to make him Duke of Cumberland, which he might not have done if he had known that the silly sausage’s 1645 surrender of Bristol, to the possibly toy soldiers of Parliament’s New Model Army, would do nothing to help him keep his head.

King Charles II was also dogged by descendants who had no luck with Bristol, as his illegitimate son the Duke of Monmouth and his rebel forces were put off by the Gloucestershire militia and did not attempt to take the city before losing the 1685 Battle of Sedgemoor at Westonzoyland near Bridgwater. No surprise there, as they were up against John Churchill, later Prince of Mindelheim, Bavaria and son of an earlier Sir Winston Churchill and Elizabeth Drake, whose own family was too posh to acknowledge being related to Sir Francis of that ilk. All this gave plenty of watering holes the opportunity to say that Lord Chief Justice Jeffreys slept there during his Bloody Assizes.

Monmouth had landed in Dorset and headed towards Seaton in East Devon without the benefit of the South West Coast Path. With no Hobbs Boat, he turned north at the River Axe, perhaps thinking he was nearing Bristol as there was no Seaton Tramway on the other bank. If the Stop Line Way from Seaton to Weston-super-Mare had not been delayed, he might have read the signs and decided go to back home. But, he went the East Devon Way to Colyton, missing Seaton where the 18th century Fore Street Kings Arms is handy for the Tramway and serves Branscombe Vale ale to a caravan park’s visitors when open but many local pubs still seem to have weekday wartime opening hours. Seaton’s atmospheric Marine Place seafront Vault Bar keeps modern hours and its wood fittings include three Marston’s cricket stumps as hand pulls. Two or three guest ales are offered and there were: refreshing Tolchards Devon Coast from Newton Abbot; and our own hoppy Abbey Ales Bellringer.

Colyton Tramway and ex-railway station is just outside the medieval market town reputed to be the most rebellious in Devon. At the St Andrew’s Square Gerrard Arms free house there was no Branscombe Vale, Bass or Otter, as it was not welcoming invaders as it may have done as a coaching inn in 1506 but certainly would not have done when it lost its thatched roof in a 1914 fire. The Kingfisher Inn in Dolphin Street is a 16th century all-day free house much appreciated by the locals and serving local food. The West Country regular beers were: herbal, fruity Branscombe Vale Brewery Summa This modern English Amber Ale from Seaton; and balanced Sharp’s Doom Bar from Rock, the Queen of Cornish Ales. Skinner’s Betty Stogs seemed to have flayed. The one changing beer was duplicated, if you copy: hoppy St Austell Tribute; and Wrington’s refreshing Butcombe Bitter.

In the 1600s, Bristol had what is now the possibly haunted but certainly welcoming Greene King White Hart in Lower Maudlin Street by Bristol bus station and accessibly without the Walls, as is Rupert Street. It had the regular own brands: hoppy IPA; Morland Old Speckled Hen crafted fine ale, possibly delivered in an MG; and smooth, mature Abbot Ale. The “changing” beer was The White Hart House Bitter Finest Ale, somewhat reminiscent of Hardys & Hansons hoppy bitters.

Welsh Marches *Y Mers*

As border, rather than owner-occupier, troops had helped the Gloucestershire militia defend Bristol, Monmouthshire *Cyngor Sir Fynwy* has the nearest foreign language watering holes not requiring a passport, and Wales *Cymru* has a Great British Beer Festival (GBBF) winner called ‘hug’ ‘*Cwch*’, there seemed good reason Wye Chepstow *Cas-gwent* was a good place to practise paying 5p for superstore bags and considering a Welsh-specific solution to our Asset of Community Value rules. Heston Marc Blumenthal, he of the Latvian flowered valley, Triple Cooked Chips and honorary MSc from Bristol Uni, knows pubs are a good investment and, courtesy of Waitrose, that “The British ale house has kept going because it’s adapted to changing tastes and that trend will continue.” We can help our licensees in this by running an Asset of Community Value campaign and contributing to the Revitalisation Project that recalls our pre-1973 name, the ‘Campaign for the Revitalisation of Ale’.

Getting back to *Y Mers*, not named after the marches necessary for the troops to reach places such as Bristol, the 1131 Tintern Abbey *Abaty*

Tyndyrn, last seen on the way back from Llanthony and honoured to be near to Offa’s Dyke, suffered at the hands of Henry VIII but was immortalised by William Wordsworth in ‘Lines written a few miles above Tintern Abbey’. The 1816 cast iron border bridge into *Cas-gwent* from Tutshill, not the one on the Congresbury Yeo but the one where J K Rowling lived in Church Cottage and worked with her sister as a church cleaner, was closed along with The Bridge Inn so this was neither the first nor the last pub in *Cymru*.

Handy for the Museum *Amgueddfa*, which has exhibited JMW Turner’s 1790s ‘Ruins of West Front, Tintern Abbey’, the Enterprise Inns Chepstow Castle Inn is in Bridge Street with seafood and pies to delight the mathematician. The regular Bath Ales Gem was not in its setting and so there were two changing national beers: sparkling Wiveliscombe Exmoor Gold and bittersweet Masham Black Sheep Ale.

The homely privately-owned wood-floored and furnished early 1600s Three Tuns Inn, also in Bridge Street, is guarded by Chepstow Castle and an old clock is dedicated to ‘Sir George Thorold, Knight, Baronet, Lord Mair of London’, presumably once only as there is no mention of a cat. The three changing beers included a smooth Challenger Ale from the regular local Kingstone Brewery in Tintern at £3. The usual Castles Brewery of Caldicot offering may have flown off with a parliament of rooks, the Cotswold Lion Golden Fleece with a winged ram and the Wickwar Gold with a blonde but these were more than adequately substituted by: Dowlais Rhymney General Picton Give to the Hero, the Drink of the Brave; and Swansea Boss Brewing Company Blonde punchy pale ale.

The Brains 16th century Coach & Horses Inn in Welsh Street had the three regular beers: Cardiff’s Brains The Rev James (Buckley) Original ‘new look same great taste fine ale revelation ask at the bar for a sample’ and SA copper-coloured ‘special ale’; with Keighley’s Timothy Taylor championship Landlord strong pale ale. The three changing beers sourced from regional breweries were: Fuller’s London Pride English Pale Ale handed down at 4.7%; citrusy St Austell Proper Job IPA (4.5%); and Brains own Craft Brewery Black Mountain (5.0%), a hoppy black American-style IPA at £2.

The 1644 Lion, now in Lion Square, previously known as Pye Corner and then Post Office Square, had room for Greene King IPA as its one changing beer.

The 16th century horse racing and golfers’ Beaufort Hotel in Beaufort Square is handy for the railway station *gorsaf rheilffordd* and the Offa’s Dyke national footpath just over the border and had Doom Bar, one of the two regulars, the Sharp’s Atlantic having perhaps been sunk. Clean-tasting Butcombe Rare Breed was the changing beer.

The Bell Hanger in St Mary Street is the local family Wetherspoon named after the ironmonger, bell hanger and nailer who previously traded there. It is not known what he did in his spare time. Of the four regular beers, which include London Pride, there were: Doom Bar; Ruddles Best Proper Country Ale, containing malted barley; and Abbot. The three changing beers sourced from regional breweries were represented by: fruity Wickwar The Original Chestnut Ale Cotswold Way possibly drunk by William the Conqueror; and Bath Ales hoppy, if hares can hop, Summer’s Hare – catch it while you can at £2.05. The Celt Experience was not on and was not being drunk at the British Museum either. A feature of watering holes over the border is the rich, fruity, scarily-clipped Black Dragon, rather than The Red Dragon *Y ddraig goch*, Medium Dry, one of the many Gwynt y Ddraig *Dragon’s Breath* award-winning Llantwit Fardre, South Wales handpicked and pressed traditional farmhouse ciders and perries now sold, after 14 years’ production, in seven countries around the world.

Back Home *Here’s mud in your eye!*

For the annual branch meeting at the Weston Conservative Club, cider seemed to be sadly far from members’ thoughts but at least the prices impressed, with the, to give it its short description, regular red triangle New Year’s Day 1876 UK Trade Mark 1 Marston’s, Luton full-flavoured William Bass finest ale (4.4%) at £2.70. After replacing the earlier Wells & Young’s balanced Courage Best Bitter as one of the two changing beers, the malty Cottage Brewery Castle Cary Dogfight was coming to an end, with presumably a British victory. The second changing beer was Abbot, later replaced by Devizes Wadworth 6X classic premium ale. Paul and Graham’s West Hewish site new plant first steam boiler brew, RCH PG Steam complex bitter was an additional fourth offering for the evening and was later transferred from gravity to one of the pumps. With the same handy dispensation, the other additional ale was RCH Thirty Point Seven pale golden Thirty Years Anniversary at 4.5%.

Moor Beer

After a manic summer, momentum at the Moor brewery in Days Road, Bristol continues to grow. Several new beers appeared in November, which included **Envy**, a delicious 4.2% fresh green hop bitter, and **Not Another Eurovision Beer**, a 5.3% lovely hoppy, floral pale ale which was brewed in collaboration with the crew from BrewDog Bristol. Both of these are available in cans. Meanwhile, this year's brew of **Fusion** is maturing and should be released in bottles before Christmas, and **Smokey Horyzon** is available again.

Looking ahead, there will be a new beer for what Moor proprietor Justin Hawke describes as the cinematic release of the year, the latest Star Wars film, 'The Force Awakens!' It's fair to say Justin is a massive fan. The details of this new beer are being kept under wraps for the moment. By the way, the film is on release from 16th December.

Meanwhile, Justin will be visiting Wroclaw in Poland in December to brew a collaboration beer with an up-and-coming brewery at Wroclaw, Dr Brew.

The brewery's Tap continues to open Thursdays and Fridays from noon to 10pm, and on Saturdays from noon to 8pm, and there are off sales from 10am to 5pm on all weekdays. The Tap will close early on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve, and will be closed in between these dates. Plastic polypins of their beers can be ordered, though you'll need to give week's notice for these. Otherwise, beer will be available in bottles and cans. Also, look out for Moor at Christmas markets in Queen Square, Bristol.

The cans have proved a tremendous success since their launch in August, and may be found in some pubs and off licences, such as Corks in Cotham and Bedminster. Increasingly, they can be found in what has often been a beer desert – restaurants. Establishments such as Spoke & Stringers, Flour & Ash and The Ox now stock Moor beer cans.

If you associate beer in a can with nasty and metallic tastes, be prepared to be amazed by these new-style cans. Taste tests have proved they compare remarkably well to draught beer – and of course all Moor beers are unfiltered, unfiltered and unpasteurised, whether in cask, keg,



bottle or can. You could perhaps consider them to be can-conditioned beers, reminiscent of bottle-conditioned beers which are often referred to as 'real ale in a bottle'. Currently there are thirteen different cans available!

Phil Cummings

Awards for RCH

RCH continue to amass awards for their great beers – the latest being no less than four won at the South West Regional judging for Champion Beer of Britain. Their **Hewish Mild** and **Old Slug Porter** both won the Gold award in their categories and will therefore go forward to the national judging round and are in with a chance to win the overall Champion Beer of Britain title.

Furthermore, **Pitchfork** won the bronze award in the Golden Ales category, and **East Street Cream** also won bronze in the Strong Bitters category. This is a fantastic achievement; could it be a record for one brewery in the same year?

The two new versions of **Old Slug Porter** that were brewed this year – **Chocolate Slug** and **Blackberry Slug** – both proved so popular that they have been added to the permanent range.

Vince Murray

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Readers' Letters

Readers are welcome to send letters to the Pints West Editor

Steve.Plumridge.PintsWest@gmail.com

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



Unwelcome signs of the times

Vince Murray's article in Pints West 107 about lost pubs in the Kingswood area sporting signs of what they used to be prompted me to reply on this subject as it has provoked my thoughts for some time.

I have mixed feelings as on the one hand it records the trail of destruction of our pub heritage for all to see, and serves to remind one of the local history. On the other hand it is depressing and, as Vince points out, appears as an attempt to rub salt into our wounds.

One of my local pubs, the Golden Lion in Frampton Cotterell, was demolished for a housing development and the pub sign stands to this day bearing the name of the brewing pub company that sold the pub for development. The name on the pub sign reminds me who profited from my pub loss.

I have attached a photograph (above).

Cheers,
Mike Jackson,
Frampton Cotterell.

Bristol beer prices

I am one of a group from Exeter and East Devon who make regular visits to Bristol particularly to enjoy the 'Beeriodicals' at the Seven Stars.

In spite of the fact that the UK is in a state of near zero inflation and that the beer duty escalator has been abolished, we have been disappointed during the last few months that, with the exception of the Seven Stars and one or two others, the price of a half has

been steadily increasing to the extent that it is almost impossible to buy a half for less than £2 in most pubs. We are also upset that people ordering halves are often discriminated against and charged sometimes considerably more than half the price of a pint.

When one is covering about nine pubs during a visit one cannot drink pints all the time. If this trend continues I predict that several pubs will close owing to customers being put off. This could also spell disaster for the many new breweries in and around Bristol.

Yours sincerely,
David Edwards,
Devon.

Staple Hill Legion skittle alleys

I recently was given your magazine, which is very good. However you had an article in it with some wrong information. It was to do with the Staple Hill's Portcullis and the information about Staple Hill Royal British Legion and our skittle alley. It states that we would only let people in by signing into the club.

To bring you up to speed with our branch I have to go back to 2011 when the Legion Club closed, not the branch. The branch owns the building and is the charity. As you may know as a charity we are unable to sell it items and that includes drink. So a club comes into existence run by Legion members and, yes, in the past you did have to be a member and sign in to come in. However in 2011 our club closed. The branch took over the running of the whole building and brought in a private company for the bar. Because we now do not have a club anyone can come into our building which includes hiring our hall with a dance floor and stage, Beaufort Lounge, short mat bowls and of course our two skittle alleys.

And this is what I need to point out ... that we do have two skittle alleys which are available for anyone to hire with a bar attached.

We also welcome children as we hold a night once a month called Family Fun Night where at the present time we have at least 50 children and their parents. A disco and entertainer is involved with dances and games. Sometimes people like Mickey Mouse or the Snow Queen come as special guests. In December we shall have a grotto and Father Christmas. The bar is always open with food also for sale these nights.

Thank you,
Mrs Madeleine Bills (Chairman),
Staple Hill & District Royal British Legion
Kendall Road, BS16 4NB.

Micro-pubs

I am writing to ask for the help and support of CAMRA, and any Pints West readers, in the hope of alerting Bristol City Council to the micro-pub concept which I and others am endeavouring to introduce into this area.

There is a growing need for the micro-pub as so many of our locals are lost forever, with owners selling them for high-priced flats and supermarkets. The micro-pub will take us back to a time when we got a good pint of ale for a very fair price, and some peace and quiet to enjoy it in! To be able to come down and have a drop of your favourite from the cask and a chat with your fellow drinker with no music, TV or game machines to distract you.

Wouldn't it be great to have your landlord or landlady to chat to again and not just not feel like you are just another number!

Thanks,
Mark Farrell,
Clifton, Bristol
(one-time landlord of the Three Tuns)
markthesparky@live.co.uk

The John Gatty letter

Well, here I go again, putting fingers (yes, I use two) to keyboard to write another letter to our well known "head hitter" Steve, in the hope that he may see fit to print it in the next edition of Pints West.

Since the last edition of this highly esteemed magazine, 'Management' joined me in attaining the ripe old age of four score years. We had a meal for family and friends at the Thornbury Golf Club – the meal was excellent, and they had two real ales on, Hobgoblin and Doom Bar, both in good condition, so I managed a pint or three to celebrate her birthday.

As a matter of interest, did you know that you get an increase of 25 pence per week added to your pension when you reach 80? Now, on a Monday morning, we sit and try to decide what we should do with our 50p that week.

We had an invite to a 50th wedding anniversary at a posh hotel near Bristol, so I thought I should look my best and put my whistle & flute on, but the blinkin' thing had shrunk in the wardrobe, and I'd only had it for two years! There was a two-inch gap in the waist of the trousers. Any rate, the meal was good, but they had never heard of real ale so I went teetotal for the evening.

Two friends Chris and Frank invited me to join them on a trip into Bristol to take in a few beers at Wetherspoon's world beer festival. The first pub we went into had a poor selection, but the second was smashing – they had a rack set up in a back room with a great selection of good ales all at £2.55 a pint, or £2.05 with a CAMRA voucher – not a bad price for a decent pint.

The Catholic Club in Thornbury had their 15th annual beer festival and, as I had been to the other 14, naturally I had to visit this one. I arrived there just before 6pm, along with son Roger, Caroline (his intended) and my eldest grandson, Paul (who is 39 years of age). They had 17 ales on, and five ciders, and I thought it was the best selection they had ever had. The beers ranged from 3.6% to 5.0%, most from brewers I had never come across. My favourite beers came from the Milestone Brewery (don't know where hail from) – they had three and they were nice fruity beers, just right for a good session. The strongest beer on offer was Zenith, an IPA from the Cross Bay Brewery (nope, don't know that one either). I managed to taste 11 or 12 of the various beers. Paul is not into real ale, so he stuck to cider – I guess he will grow into real ale in time.

November 5th came in with a bang. It was the first evening of the Wheatsheaf Beer Festival and as usual Roger and I were first in to start the ball rolling. Russell (the landlord) makes up a bar out the back of the pub, which makes a genial atmosphere for quite a few imbibers. He had 18 ales on offer, and eight real ciders, all in tip-top condition. During the evening a large number of members from the Bristol Branch came in, on a 'meet and greet'

Severn Vale CAMRA

End of a (Spotty) era?

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

Second Friday of every month and it's the eagerly-awaited trip from Thornbury up to the award-winning Old Spot in Dursley, courtesy of the local bus company. When I say local bus company, this route has been passed from one company to another over the last year with all of them seemingly wanting to wipe their hands of the whole affair. First Bus ran the route for several years before changing routes, route numbers, timings, reliability and finally stopping the 87 earlier this year.

Severn Vale Transport Ltd then took on the 87 route to Dursley, changing the route and timings once again, but still facilitating our monthly trips. Now, and without any announcement, the 87 bus suddenly terminates in Wotton-under-Edge, several miles short of Dursley. Don't get me wrong; Wotton-under-Edge isn't a bad place, but I counted the number of Old Spot pubs there: zero. Number of multi-award winning pubs in Wotton-under-Edge: zero. So maybe not a great alternative.

With great sorrow, crisis meetings have been held by the faithful, with no firm alternative plans in place yet. An exploratory trip to Chipping Sodbury is planned (and will have happened before this Pints West comes out) to test the public transport links from Thornbury and survey the High Street pubs for potential Spotty alternatives.

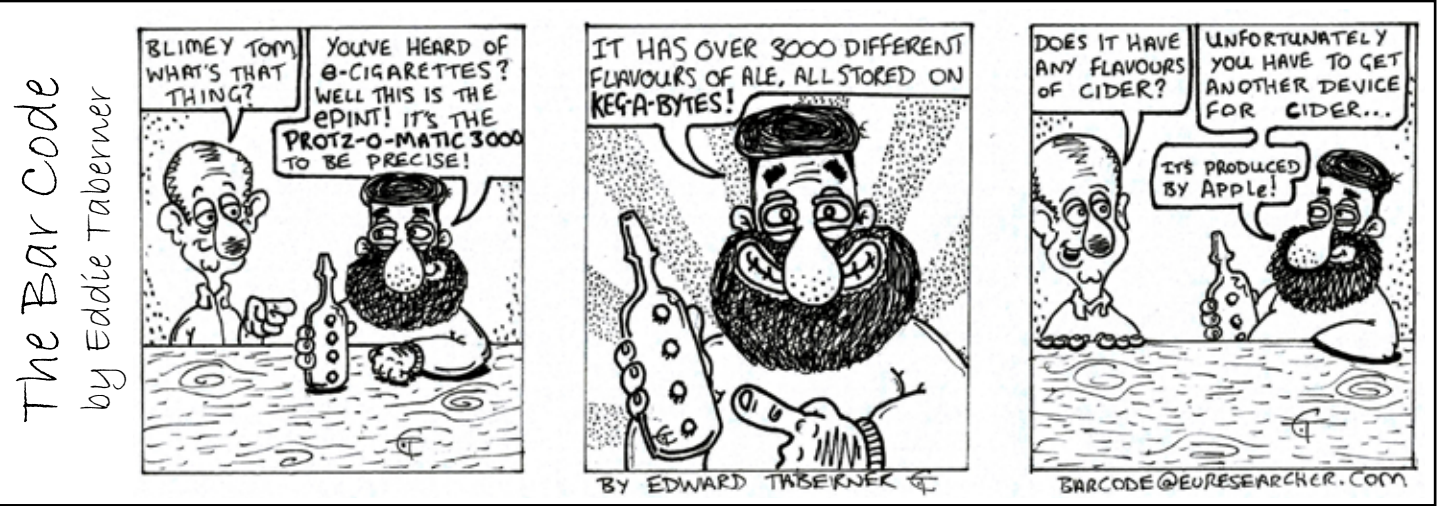
Potential alternatives will have to have...

- A good range of real ales in first class condition, with a range of strengths;
- A range of styles, preferably including one or more dark ales;
- A friendly atmosphere;
- Decent food, but not haute cuisine;
- An absence of music and TVs;
- Very close proximity to a bus route from Thornbury (some of "the team" aren't great on their pins, especially after a few!).

If you run, or know of such a pub, PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE let us know.

In the meantime, please don't make a speculative trip to the Old Spot in the hope of meeting us there (but please don't boycott the pub - they're as upset about it as we are - and it's always worth the visit). Because of the uncertainty, don't rely on our Old Spot trips in the diary at the back of this Pints West. We'll still be making our regular second-Friday-of-the-month outings and we'd still love to greet you on our trips, but please contact us first to find out where we'll be going. SevernValeCAMRA@gmail.com is the email address to use.

Martin Farrimond



to encourage non-members to sign up. How embarrassing for me, as I had decided to say hello to our highly esteemed editor, and me with no suit to wear. I thought, 'What on earth will he think of me?' But, as I had already sipped six or seven bevvies, I could not have cared less what he thought. I shall know if he doesn't print this effort of mine. We did have a chat, and I was really impressed with the amount of hours he puts in getting this magazine laid out and printed. So, if you have a glass in your hand whilst reading this, raise it and toast Steve (note this, first name terms). If I remember right he called out 'hey you' when

he wanted to speak to me. Unfortunately, I caught some type of bug, which laid me low for three days, so I was unable to get to the 'Sheaf, for the rest of his festival. In the one evening I did get to visit, I have to say that Russ did a grand job to get some different real ales into Thornbury. Well done Russ. If any of my regular readers have not attended either of the two aforementioned beer festivals, may I suggest next year you find the dates they are on and high tail there - I can assure you that you will not be disappointed. Strewth, I've just had a brain wave. If I

save my extra 25 pences for 10 weeks, I can pay a visit to a Wetherspoon's and have a pint. Unless you would like to meet me beforehand and treat me. If this effort of mine should get printed, the great granddaughter, Lilly (known as Pumpkin) will help deliver the copies to the pubs I deliver to with a lot of pride that she has been mentioned in two editions of this mag'. Please Steve (still first name) make a little girl happy! Bye for now. John Gatty, Thornbury.

It's all about Cask Ale!

2015 edition of Cask Report is published

The latest edition of the annual Cask Report was published at the end of September. It found that 2014 was the third consecutive year of growth in sales of cask conditioned or 'real' ale.

Cask ale accounts for 17 per cent of all on-trade beer (most of the rest being lager) and 57 per cent of on-trade ale sales. The report predicts that this will rise to 20 per cent of all on-trade beer by 2020, if present trends continue.

In 2014 sales of cask ale grew by 0.2 per cent while overall sales of beer in the "on-trade" (i.e. in bars as opposed to take home) fell by 1.1%. This trend continued in the first six months of 2015, when cask sales grew by a further 0.5 per cent while on-trade beer sales fell by 2.9 per cent.

The report also found that people who drink cask ale visit the pub twice as often as the average pub-goer and spend almost twice as much as other pub-goers when they are there.

The author Pete Brown says, "Cask ale drinkers are a lifeline to tens of thousands of British pubs. But," he adds, "it's not just the money they themselves are spending that makes these drinkers so important. It's also the fact that they bring other people with them. Our research shows that 70 per cent of cask ale drinkers take the lead when deciding which pub to go to with a group of friends. So although till receipts may show cask beer to be a relatively small proportion of pubs' takings, it drives sales of other drinks, helping keep pubs profitable – and open!"

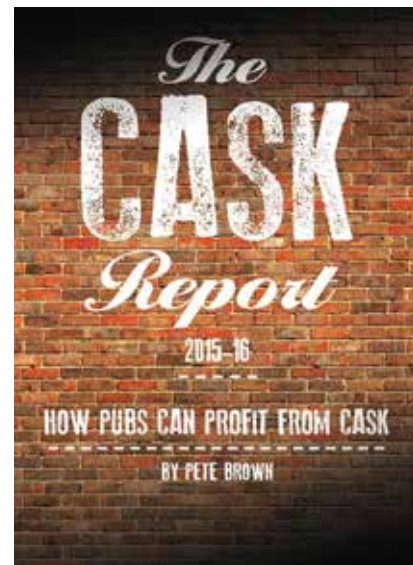
The Report says that there are now 1,700 breweries, and new ones

are opening at the rate of nearly four a week. British brewers produced 11,000 different cask beers during 2014.

Pub companies and many licensees have far more choice of beer than they did five years ago. In 2010, just 4 per cent of pubs stocked seven real ales or more, now over 12 per cent stock that many.

In Bristol & District CAMRA's branch area there are now 23 breweries in operation, with more due to open; this compares with 16 a year ago.

"Cask-conditioned ale [i.e. real ale] is in growth, its market share is increasing, and drinkers have more choice in terms of style, strength, colour, aroma and flavour than ever before. What a great success story for British industry," says Pete.



Norman Spalding

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 (or occasionally other things) to card-carrying members. Some examples:



- **Air Balloon**, Gloucester Road North, Filton, Bristol
- **Albion**, Bristol Road, Portishead
- **Anchor Inn**, Gloucester Road, Lower Morton, Thornbury
- **Annexe Inn**, Seymour Road, Bishopston, Bristol
- **Bank Tavern**, John Street, Bristol
- **Bay Horse**, Lewins Mead, Broadmead, Bristol
- **Bear Inn**, Walliscote Road, Weston-super-Mare
- **Bell**, Badminton Road, Old Sodbury
- **Beaufort Arms**, North Road, Stoke Gifford
- **Black Castle**, St Philips Causeway, Brislington, Bristol
- **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**, 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 Inn**, Church Road, Frampton Cotterell
- **Golden Guinea**, Guinea Street, Redcliffe, Bristol
- **Grapes**, Rounceval Street, Chipping Sodbury
- **Gryphon**, Colston Street, Bristol (just up from Colston Hall)
- **Hare**, North Street, Bedminster, Bristol
- **Hare on the Hill**, Thomas Street North, Kingsdown, Bristol
- **Hope & Anchor**, Jacobs Wells Road, Clifton, Bristol
- **Horseshoe**, Downend Road, Downend, Bristol
- **Horseshoe**, High Street, Chipping Sodbury
- **Imperial**, South Parade, Weston-super-Mare
- **Lamplighters**, Station Road, Shirehampton
- **Lime Kiln**, St George's Road, Bristol (behind City Hall)

- **Mill House**, Emerson Way, Emersons Green, Bristol
- **Nettle & Rye**, Kings Road, Clifton Village (formerly Hophouse)
- **New Inn**, Badminton Road, Mayhill
- **Old Stillage**, Church Road, Redfield, Bristol
- **Orchard Inn**, Hanover Place, Bristol
- **Penny**, Whiteladies Road, Bristol (by Clifton Down shopping centre)
- **Prince of Wales**, Gloucester Road (near the Arches), Bristol
- **Red Admiral**, Alexandra Parade, Weston-super-Mare
- **Robert Fitzharding**, Cannon Street, Bedminster, Bristol
- **Robin Hood**, St Michael's Hill, Kingsdown, Bristol
- **Royal Oak**, High Street, Nailsea, Bristol
- **Royal Oak**, Lower Bristol Road, Twerton, Bath
- **Roo Bar**, Whiteladies Gate, Clifton, Bristol
- **Rose & Crown**, High Street, Wick
- **Sandringham**, Quaker's Road, Bromley Heath
- **Seven Stars**, Thomas Lane, Redcliffe, Bristol
- **Shakespeare Tavern**, Prince Street, Bristol
- **Ship Inn**, Lower Park Row, Bristol
- **Ship Inn**, Thornbury Road, Alveston
- **Star**, Bristol Road, Congresbury
- **Steam Crane**, North Street, Bedminster, Bristol
- **Strawberry Thief**, Broad Street, Bristol (Belgian beer bar)
- **Surrey Vaults**, Surrey Street, St Paul's, Bristol
- **Swan**, High Street, Thornbury
- **Swan Inn**, Badminton Road, Nibley
- **Talbot Inn**, Bath Road, Keynsham
- **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)
- **White Lion**, Passage Road, Westbury-on-Trym, Bristol
- **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.

Please let us know of any additions or deletions via whatpub.com.



More capacity at the New Bristol Brewery

Maybe it's like a world record attempt for the number of people who can fit into a phone box (fourteen) ... or maybe it's something more 'out of this world' like the Tardis; either way, the fact is that the current tiny premises of the New Bristol Brewery at 20a Wilson Street in St Paul's now accommodate a 15-barrel plant.

The upgrade to the existing facilities has been preceded by several unsuccessful attempts at finding and moving to suitable new premises. The work has only just finished and the first full-length brew has now been completed. The most difficult aspect of the work was to install and commission the new kit, piece by piece, while continuing to produce beer in conjunction with the remaining parts of the old faithful five-barrel installation. The latter has not gone to waste; it has been picked up by a local home brewer (watch out for future developments in that area).

Patrons of New Bristol, and those who have attended the Bristol Beer Festival, will be pleased to hear that the first brew using the new kit was the award-winning **Super Deluxe Stout** (7.0% ABV). This is a complex brew which includes blow-torched brown sugar, cold-pressed coffee, vanilla pods and milk sugar, to name but a few of the ingredients. At the time of writing it's in casks but there was also plenty put into the more widely available forms of bottles and cans. Check out the New Bristol Brewery website (www.newbristolbrewery.co.uk) for a list of outlets.

As part of the expansion, brewing brothers Noel and Tom have also

been able to secure space from the storage facility adjoining the brewery. This is earmarked for cold storage with capacity for over 200 casks. For those interested in seeing the transformation they have started running brewery tours, the first one of which took place back in September. Details of tours for interested parties can be obtained by calling Tom or Noel James (pictured) at the numbers shown on the website.



Joining the small team is a new assistant brewer, Fergus. According to Noel he's "a lovely chap with a real passion for beer". His first brew, a brown porter called **Shergal Farkey** (4.5% ABV) contains Bramling Cross and Aurora hops. It's already out across Bristol.

The next challenge will be to meet the demand for bottles. New tanks have been brought in which will allow direct bottling. Look out for the distinctive black opaque bottles featuring Bristol Zoos' Alfred the gorilla (1930-1948) in a space suit, which will be finding their way to a pub, shop or restaurant near you. Maybe there is something out of this world about New Bristol Brewery.

Michael Bortagne

Cryptic Crossword

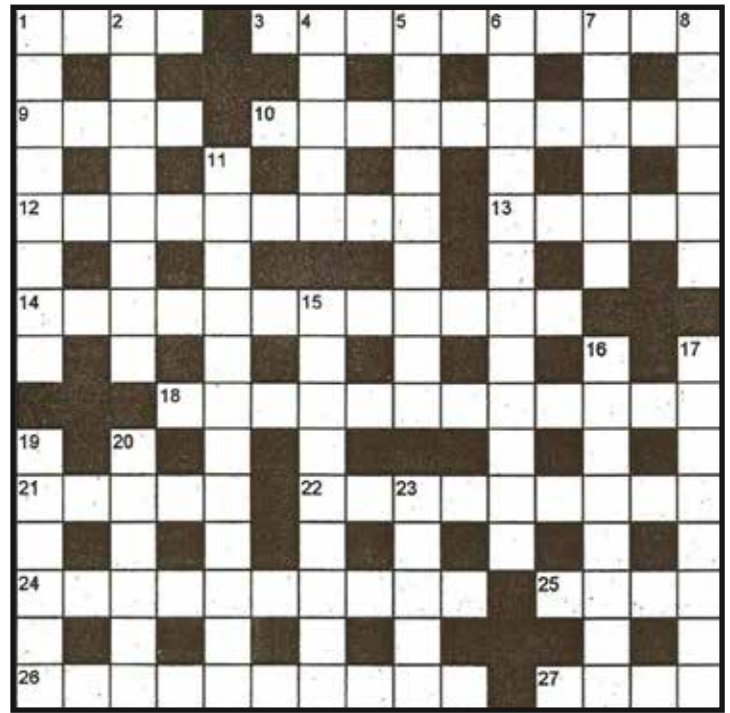
Compiled by Pete and Eddie Taberner

ACROSS

- 1. Bargain booze retailer delivers pickled dill (4)
- 3. A new device at the pub, cheers! (10)
- 9. Common term describing *Prince of Wales* and *Duke of Beaufort*. Heard it could be rude (4)
- 10. Strong drink for a tasty soul? (4, 6)
- 12. City dignitary associated with the *Coach and Horses* (4, 5)
- 13. First IPA taken on board with backward European. That is the question (5)
- 14. Windy reverberation from cask beer. Yech! It's nothing (8, 4)
- 18. Midland bock, an alternative to a dark beer from the Gower (5, 7)
- 21. A small grain drink taken within the club boundaries (5)
- 22. Their pints produce kidney trouble (9)
- 24. The very spirit of the barley (4, 6)
- 25. Good health from first of Holden's beer (4)
- 26. Sips unseen cocktail to create state of anticipation, then ... (2, 8)
- 27. ... does drunkenly sung poems (4)

DOWN

- 1. Other half of Timothy Taylor's flagship bitter? (8)
- 2. Borne mad Brewdog – a big beast! (8)
- 4. Unknown Eden brew can be found wanting (5)
- 5. Leading teacher following over-the-top queen for a Devon beer (5, 4)
- 6. 'Hare' that I swallowed with MEP at the old Hippodrome (12)
- 7. I notice really unusual strong home-brew starts a flood (6)
- 8. Knock back a Gem after bar snack spice (6)
- 11. Illicitly import containers – of second rate beers (7, 5)
- 15. Method for delivering ten quiche recipes (9)
- 16. Square in St Paul's area, the home of fortified wine? (8)



- 17. Ancient Greek hero whose men got beastly drunk (8)
- 19. Is back around poncy flavoured snack (6)
- 20. Have doubts that half-finished quiz will attract charitable donations (6)
- 23. Devout spilling soup over head of innkeeper (5)

Solution below

The price of beer

Beer, in all its styles, has been the main staple of pubs for centuries. From the original simple ale houses, through the heavy industry of the industrial revolution and into more recent times, people visit pubs in vast numbers to enjoy a beer.

Even today, with the plethora of alcoholic delights on offer, beer is still the most popular drink sold in public houses.

Beer, in years gone by, was the first choice of drink of the common man. Thirst quenching and affordable, it was consumed in huge volumes across the UK. However, in recent decades, it became an easy target for various governments to raise capital by regularly increasing beer duty in the annual budgets. Worst of all, in 2008, the then Labour government introduced the dreaded 'beer duty escalator' which increased duty, year on year, by the retail price index (RPI) plus 2%. This country already had one of the highest levels of beer duty throughout the whole of Europe; pubs were closing and beer sales were in decline. The escalator made no sense at all and was simply another go at the nation's favourite drink and drinkers. The increase in duty inevitably resulted in beer prices increasing rapidly and, quite simply, drove yet more people out of pubs resulting in an increase in pub closures. Let's remind ourselves that when a chancellor increases beer duty, prices of beer increase at an even higher rate than the duty increase itself – the reason for that is another issue.

The result of the beer duty escalator? A staggering 42% beer tax increase between 2008 and 2012.

Following these years of such beer duty increases, at RPI plus 2% – and despite CAMRA lobbying to point out the damage being done to community pubs – CAMRA really upped its game on the issue and went full on in its lobby of key Government departments, plus individual member lobbying of their MPs, and culminating in a mass lobby at Westminster in 2012. The result was not only a scrapping of the beer duty escalator but also, as a result again of ongoing campaigning by CAMRA both from its head office and by many of its 175,000 members, three successive beer duty cuts in the last three budgets.

Although each of the three cuts were only of 1p – and some people muttering that 1p off a pint will make no difference – as mentioned above,

increases in beer duty having stopped has in fact resulted in a significant saving on each pint of beer you buy in most pubs. Research for CAMRA has found that the price of a pub pint will now be more than 20p cheaper than it would have been had the beer duty escalator remained in place. This has been during a period when, for many people, incomes either fell or stagnated. The same research for CAMRA has also shown that the price saving has not only had a major impact on the price of your pint but also significantly increase the sales of beer which has coincided in a renaissance in real ales with new beers and even more new breweries opening in recent times. Another result will be fewer pubs closing.

It is a shame therefore that *some* breweries, pub companies and pubs seem to have misheard the Chancellor when he said that the rate of beer duty has *decreased*. Local food and drink journalist Mark Taylor recently expressed some surprise when writing about a pub in Clifton charging over £4 a pint for a standard bitter. Sadly, as many of the readers of Pints West will know, the £4+ pint is far from rare in Bristol and there are a number of pubs, not just in affluent Clifton, that charge over this amount for a pint. I am not talking about strong ales here – but 'best bitter' strength beers at around the 4.0% or 4.2% mark.

I contend that many real ale drinkers are a little price sensitive. Many have told me that they will not be visiting such and such a pub again because the beer is too expensive. I fully appreciate that pubs have different levels of overheads and, to an extent, you may be prepared to pay a little extra for beer in a swankier pub than a basic boozier. Nonetheless, some prices appear to be extreme. Are these pubs driving away good customers with these prices? Or perhaps they will simply say: this is our offering, take it or leave it.

Like many others, I want good value for money. I want pubs to survive and the licensees to make a decent living. Of course, rental charges imposed by some of the pub companies have an impact on this issue.

I am not expecting cheap, but simply a fair price for a well-kept pint. The pubs that offer this will get my custom more often than those that charge what some might say is disproportionate prices.

Pete Bridle

Solution to the crossword above

Across: 1 Lidl, 3 Innovation, 9 Nobs, 10 Neat spirit, 12 Lord Mayor, 13 Issue, 14 Draughtly echo, 18 Black diamond, 21 Crumb, 22 Nephritis, 24 Malt liquor, 25 Hale, 26 In suspense, 27 Odes. Down: 1 Landlady, 2 Doberman, 4 Neady, 5 Otter Head, 6 Amphitheatre, 7 Inrush, 8 Nunez, 11 Smugle bales, 15 Technique, 16 Portland, 17 Odysseus, 19 Scampi, 20 Quilms, 23 Pious.

Devon Pubs – A Pictorial Retrospective



DEVON PUBS

A PICTORIAL RETROSPECTIVE

ANDREW SWIFT & KIRSTEN ELLIOTT

①

With pubs such as the Bridge at Topsham, the Tom Cobley at Spreyton and the Pig’s Nose at East Prawle, not to mention Ye Olde Cider Bar in Newton Abbot, Devon is a county that should be on every CAMRA member’s visiting list. Now Kirsten Elliott and Andrew Swift have compiled *Devon Pubs – A Pictorial Retrospective*, a meticulous and often nostalgic look at the wealth of inns and pubs the county once supported.

From moorland taverns to ancient coaching inns, and from harbourside hostleries to backstreet beerhouses, the history of Devon’s pubs is as rich, diverse and colourful as that of the county itself. Over 450 of Devon’s pubs – some

long gone, some still thriving – feature here in archive photographs and tales from the past.

At times the book seems like a lament for a golden age of pubs before the days of pubcos and ‘change of use’ planning applications. The sad stories of the Toby Jug at Bickington, or the Yeo Vale Hotel at Lapford are enough to make any CAMRA member weep into his or her beer.

The book features nine pubs which, to forestall applications for change of use, locals succeeded in having designated Assets of Community Value. Unfortunately, two of these were overturned on appeal, and other cases have currently reached stalemate. Three have reopened, however, after high-profile campaigns, including the Tally Ho! at Littlehempston near Totnes, which, after a successful fund-raising appeal, is now Devon’s first community-owned pub.

Despite the gloom and doom, there is still much to celebrate, thanks to those individuals who, in these most trying of times, maintain traditions of cheer and hospitality, lubricated by local ale and cider and fortified by fine food.

The book also looks at the history of cider making, Devon’s lost breweries, church house inns, the folk song revival and Uncle Tom Cobley and all. There is even an investigation into what constituted the famous (or possibly infamous) Devon White Ale.

To all who know and love the county this book is an indispensable companion to its pubs, both past and present. Devon has some of the best pubs anywhere, and if these journeys into the past inspire you to explore – and defend – what remains of the county’s pub heritage, the authors will have achieved their objective.

1. The **Bridge Inn** at Topsham (the only pub the Queen has visited by special request) features on the front cover of Devon Pubs.

2. *The award winning Tom Cobley Tavern at Spreyton (under its original name of the White Hart) features on the back cover. The book also has the true story of Uncle Tom Cobley.*

3. Some pubs go from strength to strength. One is the **Turf Inn** at Exminster, which defies the argument that you must have good road access. You can sail, walk or cycle to it, but you cannot drive to it.

4. *This pub was lost many years ago – the London Inn at Hallsands, which collapsed into the sea. Off shore dredging operations by the Admiralty are believed to have caused the catastrophe.*

5. The bad news ... the once busy **Yeo Vale Hotel** at Lapford, seen here in the 1920s. It was built shortly after the railway came, but also attracted trade from motorists on the main Barnstaple – Exeter road, which explains the petrol pumps. It now stands closed and forlorn after an application to convert it to a private house was dismissed in 2007.

6. *The good news ... the Bolton Arms at Littlehempston, renamed the Tally Ho in 1952, is today, South Devon’s first community pub.*

7. And one for the cider drinkers – two coaches bearing members of the Cork Club set off from the **Cider Bar** in Newton Abbot in 1911. The club – like the bar – is still going strong today.

The book costs £15 and can be ordered from www.akemanpress.com or by cheque, sending it to Akeman Press at 58, Minster Way, Bath BA2 6RL. Postage and packing is free in the UK.



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. 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)

CAMRA Membership Benefits

165,000 members and growing!

For just £24* 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.
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CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE

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For more on your CAMRA Membership Benefits please visit 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 the CAMRA website for updated and details of current offers.

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- 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.

CAMRA Young Members



Since taking over as Young Members Co-ordinator for the CAMRA Bristol & District branch in the summer, I've tried to arrange at least one event a month, and it's been great to make new friends and catch up with people who I've not seen for a while. I'd like to think it's my winning charm and boyish good looks that are attracting people to these events, but it's far more likely to be the new and improved communications tool that CAMRA HQ have given me access to.

September started with a Saturday afternoon visit to the great beer festival at the **Gryphon** (the Plum Porter was my particular favourite), and later in the month we were invited to the reopened **Surrey Vaults** in Surrey Street for an entertaining and enjoyable 'Meet the Brewer' event hosted by the Dorset Brewing Company (DBC) from Dorchester.

In October, a few of us met at the **Brewhouse & Kitchen** on Cotham Hill to start a Kingsdown crawl which wound its way to the **Highbury Vaults**, **Beerd** and the **Green Man**, where we stumbled into a folk music night and found ourselves involved in a rousing rendition of "What Shall We Do With The Drunken Sailor?". The music theme continued at our next port of call, the **Kingsdown Vaults**, which was hosting an open mic night (although all the Young Members had apparently left their singing voices in the previous pub), before the hardcore among us ended the night on Dove Street to check out both the **Hare on the Hill** and the **Hillgrove Porter Stores** (where the Indian aromas made us regret arriving too late to check out the curry pop-up kitchen that they were hosting that week).

November hosted two events, with a well-attended and laughter-filled evening meal at **Mathilda's Chilli Bar** in Haymarket Walk (between the bus station and The Bearpit) where the great chilli dishes and deep fried pickled gherkins (even more amazing than they sound) were perfectly complimented by bottled ales from Wiper & True and New Bristol Brewery.

The second event of the month was an 'Introduction to Beer Tasting' event at the **Brewhouse & Kitchen**, led by Helen Featherstone and featuring a special guest appearance by their head brewer Mark Wainwright. At this event we learnt all about why the beers we love so much taste as they do, as well as why some beers don't taste as they should do. A good time was again had by all, and it appears there are a number of budding Tasting Panel members amongst us. Our thanks must go to Helen, and also Mark and Pete Edmonds (no relation) at B&K for their continued support.

Us young(ish) members will no doubt get involved with the main branch's Christmas social and Christmas crawl (albeit with more of a youthful spring in our step), and may well have a Christmas event of our own if the calendar permits.

Looking ahead to 2016, watch out for more events such as brewery trips and crawls outside of the branch area (even if it's only as far as Bath). For more information, email badyoungmembercontact@gmail.com or follow @youngBADales on Twitter.

Stephen Edmonds



Young(ish) Members enjoying Wiper & True and New Bristol Brewery bottle-conditioned beers at Mathilda's Chilli Bar

Yummy Scrumpy in my Tummy!



An open letter from Talisha Mills in Leeds to her friends in Bristol & District CAMRA.

Talisha was on the branch committee for two years in the role of Young Members Co-ordinator (now superseded by Stephen Edmonds) before returning to her roots up north recently.

'Ello BAD CAMRA!

I see you have forgotten me already – judging by the lack of birthday cards that made it up 'ere from t' South West. OK, ok... Some of you posted on my Facebook wall – thank you! I 'Liked' your comment didn't I?!

Anyway (my birthday is October 28th for future years' notice) back to Ale! Or should I say Cider?!

Yes, I should! I kicked off my Birthday Week (you had a whole week guys... just saying) with a tutored cider tasting wit' 'Leeds Lot'.

Yummy Scrumpy in my Tummy! October was CAMRA's Cider Month after all!

Yorkshire based *The Real Cider Company* ran the tasting, held in Leeds CAMRA 2015 Cider Pub of the Year, *Mr Foleys*.

On the night the award was presented to manager, Jason, where the pub was commended on its outstanding results when drinkers used the same judging criteria to that of the national campaign. *Mr Foley's* came out on top when service and welcome are considered. Its range of 24 ciders and one mulled cider positively meets the category of quality and range and CAMRA members feel it identifies with the aims of CAMRA. And one of CAMRA's aims is to get people drinking real ciders and perries again.

This got me thinking back to many a Bristol and District branch or committee meeting when this item arose on the agenda. Any news from the Apple and Pear Product Liaison Executive (APPLE!) the Chair would rosilily ask. Not a word – you could hear an apple drop in the far off distance...

And now I can already hear the grumblings of those readers who are actively supporting The Real Cider and Perry Campaign – well fair play to ya. I can only hope the apple isn't falling too far from the tree and your friend, family and foe are having a sample now and again, or always, too!

The tutored cider tasting was excellent. 5 ciders, 1 perry and an apple brandy to knock your socks off!

The discussion was inspired. Do you know the origins of cider? The similarities between cider and beer? The art of cider making?

If you don't already then perhaps you soon will. I am hoping to bring The Real Cider Company and their informed selection to the Young Members of BAD CAMRA in the near future.

It has been suggested to "Your young(ish) friend", Stephen Edmonds (who didn't wish me happy birthday either!), and he was going to put it to a vote. The results should be in now so hopefully I'll be seeing you guys soon!

Until next time my lovelies!

Your absent friend,

Talisha xxx

Important reminder

The Bristol & District and the Bath & Borders branches are now both using the CAMRA email system as the main method of communicating directly with members.

If you are a CAMRA member please make sure that you provide CAMRA with your current email address.

Go to www.camra.org.uk and log in with your CAMRA membership number and check that your contact details (including your email address) are up to date and that your preferences are set to 'Allow Email'.

Thank you.

Bristol & District CAMRA

Web: www.camrabristol.org.uk

Twitter: @CAMRABristol

Facebook: [Camra-Bristol-District](https://www.facebook.com/Camra-Bristol-District)

Bath & Borders CAMRA

Web: www.bathandbordercamra.org.uk

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Severn Vale sub-branch diary and contact

Severn Vale CAMRA is a sub-branch of the Bristol & District branch. It 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.

- **Fri 11 Dec:** Old Spot, Dursley, 12:30.*
- **Wed 16 Dec:** sub-branch meeting, Boar's Head, Aust, 8pm, followed by survey visit to another nearby pub.
- **Fri 8 Jan:** Old Spot, Dursley, 12:30.*
- **Wed 20 Jan:** sub-branch meeting, Black Horse, Thornbury, 8pm, followed by survey visit to another nearby pub.
- **Fri 12 Feb:** Old Spot, Dursley, 12:30.*
- **Wed 17 Feb:** sub-branch meeting, Anchor Inn, Oldbury on Severn, 8pm, followed by survey visit to another nearby pub.
- **Fri 11 Mar:** Old Spot, Dursley, 12:30.*
- **Wed 16 Mar:** sub-branch meeting, Fox Inn, Old Down, 8pm, followed by survey visit to another nearby pub.

*Due to further rural bus service discontinuities, future trips to the Old Spot from Thornbury are in peril (thanks, Severn Vale Transport Ltd). See article elsewhere for more information. Please contact us before making the trip.

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 and/or email us at SevernValeCAMRA@gmail.com.

Weston sub-branch diary and contact

- **Fri 18 Dec:** Annual Seasonal Ales Crawl, visiting 5 or 6 pubs in the WsM town centre offering a Christmas/Winter beer. Meet 7:30pm at the Criterion, Upper Church Road, then venues to be decided on the night. Contact Laurie Jackson on 079442910525 for details if you can't make the start but wish to join us during the evening.
- **Wed 13 Jan:** GBG visit to WsM town centre pubs. Meet Cabot 8pm.
- **Sat 30 Jan:** GBG visit to Uphill by bus from WsM. Meet Town Hall 12 noon.
- **Sat 20 Feb:** GBG visit to Wells by 126 bus from Alexandra Parade, 11am.
- **Sat 12 Mar:** Minibus trip to Somerset pubs (tbc). Additional events may be added. For updates see our Facebook page or email the socials contact below.

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

Socials and Pints West contact:

weston_camra@googlegroups.com

WsM contact for other matters:

Mark Hirst – ogrekhirst@hotmail.com

Facebook: [Campaign for Real Ale Weston-Super-Mare](https://www.facebook.com/Campaign-for-Real-Ale-Weston-Super-Mare)

Bristol & District branch diary and contact

- **Wed 2 Dec:** Survey/explorer trip, west Bristol. Depart Cornubia 6.45pm.
- **Tue 8 Dec:** CAMRA members get-together, Bar des Amies, Whitehall Road, from 7pm.
- **Wed 9 Dec:** Committee meeting, Gryphon, 8pm.
- **Sun 13 Dec:** Christmas social, Golden Guinea, from 5pm (food at around 7pm).
- **Tue 15 Dec:** Gloucester Road Christmas crawl, starting 6.30pm at Wellington, or at Drapers Arms (new micro-pub) if open by this date. Contact on day Pete Bridle 07973 201307.
- **Thu 17 Dec:** Bristol Beer Festival organising meeting, Gryphon, 8pm.
- **Sun 3 Jan:** Westbury Wobble. First pubs Mouse and Victoria, 12 to 1.15pm. Contact on day Andy Gray 07710396015.
- **Wed 6 Jan:** Survey/explorer trip, north Bristol. Depart Cornubia 6.45pm.
- **Thu 7 Jan:** Bristol Beer Festival organising meeting, Gryphon, 8pm.
- **Sat 9 Jan:** BADRAG annual review gathering, Surrey Vaults, 2-5pm (see page 11).
- **Wed 13 Jan:** Committee meeting, Gryphon, 8pm.
- **Thu 14 Jan:** Bristol Pubs Group meeting, Surrey Vaults, 7pm.
- **Tue 19 Jan:** Survey/explorer trip, Mendips. Depart Cornubia 6.45pm.
- **Sat 23 Jan:** Survey/explorer trip to Weston-super-Mare by train, details tbc.
- **Wed 27 Jan:** Branch meeting, 8pm, venue tbc.
- **Sat 30 Jan:** CAMRA ladies' social, No 1 Harbourside from 1pm (see page 16).
- **Wed 3 Feb:** Survey/explorer trip, east Bristol. Depart Cornubia 6.45pm.
- **Wed 10 Feb:** Committee meeting, Gryphon, 8pm.
- **Tue 16 Feb:** Survey/explorer trip, across city north. Depart Cornubia 6.45pm.
- **Thu 18 Feb:** Bristol Beer Festival organising meeting, Gryphon, 8pm.
- **Sat 20 Feb:** BADRAG mini-fest at New Inn, Mayhill (see page 11).
- **Wed 24 Feb:** Branch meeting, 8pm, Severn Vale area, venue tbc.
- **Sun 28 Feb:** GBG selection meeting, 12 noon, Brunswick Club (tbc).
- **Tue 1 Mar:** Bristol Beer Festival organising meeting, Gryphon, 8pm.

Please check our website (www.camrabristol.org.uk) or sign up to our yahoo group for the latest information and more details on any of the above events, as sometimes events can change after press date – or email Andy Gray at camrasocials@btinternet.com for the latest information. Please note that any coach and brewery trips must be booked in advance, either by email, or in person at a branch meeting.

If you would like to receive no-obligation details of forthcoming Bristol & District branch events, simply go to the branch website (www.camrabristol.org.uk) then click on 'Contact Us'. This takes you to the branch contacts page, then just click where it says 'Click here to join our email news list'. It's as easy as that.

Andy Gray (Social Secretary)

Bath & Borders branch diary and contact

- **Thu 3 Dec, 8:30pm:** A mini crawl of the Julian Road area in Bath, starting at the Marlborough Tavern, then the St James Wine Vaults, then on to the Chequers (Rivers St).
- **Tue 8 Dec, 8pm:** the GBG meeting at the Fromeway, Radstock.
- **Thu 17 Dec, 8:30pm:** A social at the Three Dagers, Eddington, Wiltshire.
- **Tue 22 Dec, 8:30pm:** A pre-Christmas social at the Bath Brew House, on James Street West.

See www.bathandbordercamra.org.uk/events for further dates.

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

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



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CAMRA's on-line pub guide, totally free to CAMRA members and non-members alike, and written by drinkers like you!

The **whatpub.com** website is CAMRA's first ever on-line 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! And you too can get involved by updating the details of the pubs you visit to make sure **whatpub.com** remains the most up-to-date and complete on-line pub guide out there!

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**, and let us know any details which need to be updated. The more drinkers tell us, the better and more useful resource **whatpub.com** becomes. If you use **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! 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**, 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.



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** 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**), 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.)



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 la crème that make the Good Beer Guide. So please, visit **whatpub.com** and make sure we've got the details of your local spot on!