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Summer 2023

INSIDE:

**A Royal Oak
in Gretton**

**The Art of
Craft Ale**

PROUD TO SPONSOR



28-30th JULY



The Magazine of the Gloucestershire Branches
of the Campaign for Real Ale



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CHILL OUT WHEN THE SUN SHINES.
BECAUSE LIFE IS GOOD,
TAKE ON AN ABUNDANCE MINDSET.
WHEN LIFE GETS SOUR,
PRACTICE THE ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE.
ENJOY THE LITTLE THINGS,
LIKE BALLOONS.
THEY COST MORE NOW,
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the tippler

The Magazine of the Gloucestershire Branches
of the Campaign for Real Ale.

The opinions expressed need not represent those of CAMRA Ltd., or its officials.

FRONT COVER: This fabulous piece of chainsaw artwork that has been created from the Oak outside the Royal Oak at Gretton. This great pub has plenty of real ale choices as well as a great restaurant and big garden for those lazy summer days. If you want to enjoy a meal, make sure you book...it's very popular!

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Got something to say?



Then please get in touch! We value feedback and news from around the county, so, if want to make a contribution, compliment or criticise, contact:

The Editor, The Tippler, 23 Theocs Close, Tewkesbury. GL20 5TX
chris@thetippler.co.uk 07977 157050

CONTRIBUTION DEADLINES

For the next two issues, the deadlines will be
the second Friday in August 2023 and November 2023



LETTERS to the EDITOR

Some of us old codgers are still happy to use the services of the Royal Mail, and we actively encourage all forms of (preferably printable!) communication. So get writing letters, sending emails and get your news, views and comments published!



Phew! What a Scorcher! to paraphrase some of our more eloquent red top tabloids. The magazine just gets bigger and bigger, now up to a record 72 pages.

This edition has plenty to get stuck into, with four competitions to win not only brewery tours and cans of beer, and meals for two, but also weekend tickets to the brilliant Linton Cider, Real Ale and Music Festival...not to be missed!

Once again, I'd like to thank all those who written to us, whether in the letters pages, news, views or feature articles. If you haven't written in before, it doesn't matter, send

your copy and a few good images and we'll do the rest. They are all very welcome indeed.

We rely on our great selection of extremely supportive contributors and advertisers, without whom, we couldn't get this magazine produced, we have a lot to thank them for.

Finally, make sure you get out and support your local breweries and fabulous pubs. Talk to the locals, engage in the community spirit and have a great time.

Maybe I'll see you out and about at the brilliant Tewkesbury Live Weekend a fabulous weekend event of music and pubs, I hope so!

Chris Leibbrandt

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PUB OF THE YEAR 2023 & CYDER PUB OF THE YEAR 2023



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WHAT'S NEW

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Letters to the Editor...

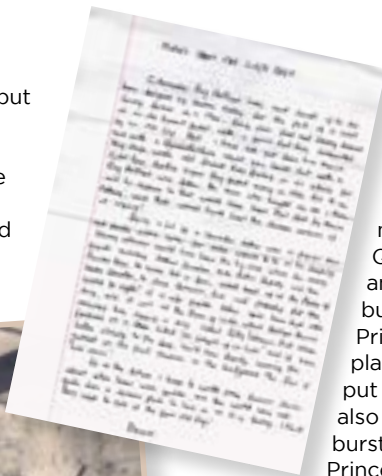
Dear Chris,

As a local cider maker, I thought it was about time I put pen to paper in what I hope could be a series of stories from the cider shed. So, here goes:

'Cidermaker Ray Hartland looks and sounds as if he has been designed by



central casting for the part of a West Country farmer in a 1940's Ealing film. Short and stocky, dressed in an old tweed jacket with a genial red face surmounted by an old cap that I have not yet seen him remove and with a Gloucestershire accent you could cut with a hay-knife.' Wrote old friend, Roy Bailey in an article for Cider Press shortly before Ray passed away in 1996. But to me, Ray Hartland was father, the man who taught me all I know, and his response to that would have been: "And still he knows nothing." Well, that would have been the cleaner version of it anyway!



Being a bit of a character father was a popular man and people would come for miles around to be in his company. Saturday afternoon would have been the best of the big day where his many friends including Arthur Quinlan, Mike Bolton, Deputy and the Butcher boys to name but a few, would meet up at the Prince of Wales in Staunton to play dominoes, pool and probably put the world to rights too! It is also possible father could have burst into song, and it was at the Prince of Wales, where Gwylam

Davies recorded him singing a song called 'Billy Johnson's Ball' which featured on a tape called 'All Brought up on Cider'. If you listen closely to the tape, in the background you'll hear Deputy winning the jackpot on the fruit machine. The joys of live music!

So, in the future I hope to write some funnier stories about when times were gentler and the world was not quite such a serious place to live in as it is today. I think they used to call it 'The Good Old Days'!

Derek Hartland

Chris replies:

Thanks a lot Derek, I guess as we all get older the rose tinted glasses will help us look back on halcyon days (I'm particularly thinking of great rock music of the late 60's and 70's). Well, enough of that, it's great to get a letter from a local producer, and even better, from a cidemaker. Cider and Perry are of course, part of the CAMRA campaign portfolio, and if I'm honest, not seen enough in the pages of the Tippler, so I'm already looking forward to reading the next one!

Letters to the Editor...

Hi Chris,

My working life has been in the building and construction industry and I enjoy architectural details. We have debated Wetherspoons and the The Regal in the past. It is tired, it has Gloucester folks in there (I can say that because I live in Gloucester), it is tacky but it does have some charm. That charm receives little appreciation, so I do my bit to rectify this by sending photos to you! The aeroplanes are a bit blurred from my phone zooming in, but they add to the atmosphere inside the building. Perhaps King Kong will be a future shot?

A broader topic, and a separate topic, will be financial viability this year. I enjoy an occasional quiet pint in Gloucester. There are a number of locations, so I spread myself around! Will they all be trading come Christmas? I was chatting to one of the publicans yesterday and matters were concerning. Should we all be trying to spend a few pounds more thinking 'use it or lose it'?

Stephen Hawksworth

Chris replies:

Thanks Stephen, well we both know there are both fans and detractors of Wetherspoons and what they do for the drinks and pub trade, you know my view is that they do a heck of a lot, but understand that their business model is not appreciated by everyone. Like a lot of other buildings around the country, The Regal is another art deco building that was vulnerable to 'progress'.

It would appear that the pub closures so far this year are slowing down, and they need to. I agree with you, let's get out and spread the love around, try a new pub a month and that'll both counter the silliness of Dry January, Stoptober and all those other ludicrous campaigns. If you want to donate to charity, go ahead, but not at the expense of our pubs!

FLAGONS
DOWN, YOU TIPPLER
SCOUNDRELS, AND OUT
WITH THE QUILLS



Hello Chris,

Please may I enter the Spring name-that-pub competition?

The pictured pub is unmistakably the Royal Oak in Prestbury. I had a fantastic lunch there during lockdown, when you were allowed to stay for the duration of a meal and no longer. The landlord ensured we had a pint before, with, in between, and after each of the three courses, and we were there for about six hours. It was probably the most convivial lunch out I had in 2020. On a later occasion, my cousin took us in there for a 'swift half' as part of an impromptu ghost tour on the way back from the Plough round the corner; somehow we ended up joining a Sainsbury's work do in the back building and convincing their DJ to play the Wurzels. I have no recollection at all of how we got home, but my friend, who has a fit-bit, assures me that between midnight and 2.30am we walked four-and-a-half miles. At the time we all lived less than half a mile away.

All the best,
Will

Chris replies:

Thanks Will for the polite request to enter the competition and the entertaining email about your fun memories of lockdown and beyond.

It put me in mind of a story a drummer friend of mine (sometimes known as Sam Spoons) told me about Viv Stanshall who on one occasion, when asked if he would like a pint of Elephant Ale, quipped in his inimitable style: "My dear boy, I only drink to forget."

Your meandering return home, following your impromptu do with the Sainsbury crew was clearly caused by a lack of a few pints of the aforementioned Elephant Ale!

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Letters to the Editor...

Dear Chris

I was shocked to read The Hunter (Tippler Spring 2023) report that Ye Olde Fighting Cocks, St Albans was no longer recognised as 'the oldest pub in Great Britain'; it's position having been usurped by The Porch House, Stow-on-the-Wold which was "certified as dating from 947 AD".

Well let me tell you, sir, that I have irrefutable documentary evidence, which PROVES that the 'Cocks' is older by more than a century and a half.

I hope that the attached photo will settle this unseemly dispute once and for all.

Paul Donatantonio

Chris replies:

Many thanks for the email, much appreciated. I see you've been scratching your head about this one in sunny Hertfordshire especially when this claim is once again in some doubt. A little research tells me that the earliest date for the pub being licensed is 1756.



Perhaps we could persuade a beer historian to put us right? I reckon there's a few in the 1000 - 1350 A.D. range that I can think of; maybe compile a top ten oldest pubs in England? It sounds like a proper bit of research is necessary involving visits and sampling real ale, surely there's a beer trail to be planned? Are there any earnest, hard working, beer swilling academics out there willing to take on the task?

On the other hand, and I am happy to be proved wrong, perhaps CAMRA already has this knowledge to hand and could share it...any volunteers?



PROUD TO SPONSOR



The Tippler is helping to sponsor this year's Tewkesbury Live Weekend, a FREE three day live music weekend throughout the town from 28th-30th July. Last year it was paid for through a post-Covid regeneration grant but this year it wouldn't be happening without local sponsorship, which is why we became involved. We want to see the pubs full!

Live music and good beer - and all free. What's not to like? Find out more at:

www.tewkesburylive.co.uk

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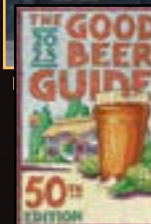


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THE HUNTER'S COLUMN



Our intrepid hero travels 'darn sarf' to hang out in the Costa del Crime with the Essex cognoscenti and celebrates the coronation. A story of the King and I and the Golden Dragon...

I didn't get an invite, but I didn't take it personally. Charles and I have never been close. It's not that we weren't bothered about each other, more a case of not wanting to bother one another. He'd got his sort of job and, when not signing on, I had got mine. In his predicament you don't really get a proper job, one just spends one's whole life signing on and taking the money. I'm not blaming him, not pointing the finger; I mean who wouldn't in his situation? The lad is just a bit younger than me, so I suppose I always took priority, and some royals don't like that. We weren't in the same class at school, not even the same school. From what I hear he went to a rough, outward-bound borstal/boarding school in remotest Scotland, north of the Cairngorms and just six miles north of Elgin. Easy to lose your marbles in places like that. Scotland, the land of the brave, is barely visible on weather forecasts, swathed as it normally is in Scotch mists and myths. I hope he remembered to take his pakamac with him.

No need for a pakamac in Marbella, where we happened to find ourselves on the day of the coronation, thanks to the generosity of our Welsh neighbours. There has been a Welsh connection to Charles for many a year. He was created Prince of Wales and Earl of Chester (geddit? Charlie Chester?) in 1958 but wasn't crowned by his mother until 1969 at Caernarfon Castle. They tend to keep it in the family these royals. Why the delay? Whether they couldn't find the crown, or the sceptre or Caernarfon was never

fully explained. He'll always be the Prince of Wales to me of course, like Prince Charming. You can't suddenly turn around after all these years and start calling yourself King Charming, it doesn't seem right. Once a knight always a knight, twice a knight is... enough to be going on with for now. It's like Ozzy, the Prince of Darkness, suddenly declaring



himself Ozzy the King of Darkness. Actually, I'm not sure why he hasn't, as he does seem prone to gross exaggeration; positively batty sometimes. I couldn't

see Black Sabbath suddenly turning around and calling themselves White Sabbath either. He'll always be Prince Charles to me, as a sign of respect and continuity, and I'll always be The Pauper to him. The Prince and the Pauper – we'd get along fine. Rich man, poor man, beggar man, thief; there's room for all on this levelled-up island of ours. But, I wasn't in the the sunny climes of our great kingdom, no,

'I was on the Costa Del Crime admiring all the Lamborghinis...'



I was on the Costa Del Crime admiring all the Lamborghinis and billionaire's boats that go along with the job. No land for paupers this, but luckily we had spotted a Lidl (kindness?) on the main drag. This is where we were going to head to, to stock up on drinks to toast Charles' recent promotion to the top spot in the family firm. Real ale isn't much of a go-er at the bottom end of the Iberian Peninsula. In some of the harbour cafes favoured by the Brits – both ex-pats and tourists – I spotted a few 'Oirish' bars with empty Guinness casks and Magners bottles stacked outside, so I didn't hold out too much hope of finding anything very exciting at the supermarket. There was limited choice. Heineken and some other local cervezas filled the shelves but I did spot something at the end. Nestling in a corner was a Gulden Draak, a Gilded Dragon. There's the



connection! A dragon – very Welsh, although this one turned out to be Belgian. Even better it was bottle fermented and 10.5%. Bingo! Royal Bingo! The day had been saved. I immediately contacted Charles to say that the coronation could go ahead. We had found some decent ale. The party

was on. We celebrated it on our balcony and in appreciation at our efforts, one or 2 VIP's dropped in to thank us. The Welsh Prince was to be 'toasted' by a dragon, just like in the fairy tales of old.

Gulden Draak is brewed near Ghent and there are five different beer styles, including the multi-international award winning "exceptional quadruple amber", which Lidl had kindly dealt me.

The brewers, Brewery Van Steenberge, state: "The new recipe based on 4 times more malt gives the Gulden Draak 9000 Quadruple (9000 is the city postcode) a deep golden amber colour and a slightly fruity aroma. Together with the soft and slightly sweet taste, this provides a beautifully rounded bouquet with notes of dried fruit... After the Battle of Beverhoutsveld in 1382, the fighters from Ghent took the dragon as part of the spoils of war and placed it on top of their Belfry... The dragon was there to protect them but also stood as a symbol of the freedom and power of the city."

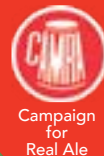
The biggest surprise of the coronation was that when I immediately conveyed my gilded luck to CAMRAdes in Tewkesbury, I received an instant reply, which included a photograph of a Gulden Draak sat on the Secretary's kitchen table, whilst they were celebrating too! And I'd gone all that way! Salud – er, no, not Brummie for salad but Cheers in Spanish. Just in case you find yourself there at the next coronation.



The Hunter



News from CHELTENHAM



Cheltenham CAMRA – Pub of the Year 2023

The Sandford Park Alehouse is once again Cheltenham's Pub of the Year. The 2015 CAMRA National Pub of the Year has been in new hands since 2019. The pub is now owned by the independent group Burlison Inns, who have continued to build the reputation of the 'Alehouse', whilst integrating their own style and philosophy along the way. The Alehouse hosts a variety of events throughout the year, from summer BBQs, Oktoberfest menus, and an annual Cheese & Cider festival.

The Alehouse appeals to a wide variety of people, with 10 cask lines, 16 keg lines, and extensive Belgian bottle beer, world beer and cider list; alongside a comprehensive wine and spirit offering. Designated drivers, and non-drinkers, have not been forgotten as the

pub offers the best low, and alcohol free, beer range in town.

The pub is dog-friendly, with one of the best (south-facing) beer gardens in the town, and with one of the few working Bar Billiard tables around.

Cheltenham CAMRA Chair, Rob Coldwell said: "The Alehouse is a destination pub, which attracts beer lovers and CAMRA members. It's a gateway to help visitors discover Cheltenham's great pubs, clubs, and breweries.

"Few pubs can attract customers across the age range, and differing tastes, like the Alehouse can. The Alehouse is once again a strong candidate, and we wish them well in the next round of the National Pub of the Year competition".

Cheltenham CAMRA – Cider Pub of the Year 2023

Cider and Perry are a side issue for many publicans. Carbonated national brands are ubiquitous, and frankly not very interesting. Not so at the **Jolly Brewmaster**, in Painswick Road, Cheltenham. The 'Jolly' is this year's Cheltenham CAMRA Cider and Perry Pub of the Year.

The left hand set of hand pumps are devoted to up to four real ciders and perries, plus another four keg ciders and a great bottle range behind the bar. Mostly from the southwest, and from small producers, the changing offering is a draw to cider and perry fans. The 'Jolly' will host their annual Cider &

Perry Festival in September, with music and a BBQ throughout the weekend.

"The Jolly Brewmaster is rightly known for the quality of their real ales", said Branch Chair, Rob Coldwell. "However, the other great British tradition, cider and perry making, is equally represented and very impressive. If you would like to taste, and to learn more about real cider and perry, then the staff at the 'Jolly' make great guides.

"We hope that their effort will be recognised as the 'Jolly' goes forward to the regional competition rounds".

Cheltenham CAMRA – Club of the Year 2023

The Motor Club is one of a massive 28,000 licensed CAMRA clubs in the UK. The CMC's winning of the CAMRA National Club of the

Year three times (in 2013, 2017 and 2020) is, by any measure, a major achievement. It is also a record number of wins for any Bar Steward in the history of the competition.

This year the Motor Club, once again, reached the final four of the CAMRA Club of the Year Competition. Sadly, the club did not win this year – that honour went to the Marden Village Club in Kent. However, Neil Way did win the prestigious Club Steward of the Year Award.

"Real ale is the bedrock of the CMC", said Branch Chair, Rob Coldwell. "The quality, range, and variety, continue to delight members and visitors alike. Even with Cheltenham's wide availability of real ale, the CMC can be relied upon to find new breweries and beers from across the UK. In addition, the CMC offers real cider and perry, and great keg and continental beers – all served with Neil's trademark humour and knowledge.

"Despite having a great selection of clubs in Cheltenham, the Motor Club remains the benchmark by which all others are judged. The Motor Club will now progress to the Southwest judging round with the best wishes of the everyone in the Cheltenham Branch.

Gloucestershire Beer of the Year returns...

In 2023, the 'Gloucestershire Beer of the Year' competition will be back, bigger and better than ever. Held at the Cotswold Beer Festival (Postlip Hall, near Winchcombe). The Cotswold Beer Festival organisers have invited Gloucestershire breweries to each enter two beers to the festival. They will then be judged on the Thursday Trade Night when brewers and landlords will celebrate the winners.

Responsibility for putting together the judging panel falls to Cheltenham Tasting Panel Chair Tony Lucas. "I am looking to balance the judges with CAMRA trained tasters, and big names from Gloucestershire's landlords and the local beer industry. This includes a confirmed, and highly respected, international beer judge", said Tony. "Judging blind is challenging but fun, and it will be run to the same stringent CAMRA style guide, and scoring system, as is used in the national CAMRA final competitions. That way we, and the local brewers, can have confidence in the result. The three top beers will receive a Gold, Silver, or Bronze Certificate".



There will be a total of over 100 different cask real ales to sample, plus a selection of canned craft beers, boxed real cider and perry. The festival runs from Friday 14th July to Sunday 16th July.

Postlip Hall is a stunning location to enjoy real ales, ciders, and local food. Bus tickets are available from Cheltenham or Winchcombe to Postlip Hall, parking is available on-site as are camping permits for the weekend.

The Friday Night ticket (7:00 - 11:00pm) is only £12. The £14 Saturday All Day ticket (12:00 noon to 9:00 pm), is great for families, under 18-year-olds go free. For those who want a relaxed summer evening at the festival there's a £10 Saturday Evening only ticket (4:30 pm - 9:00 pm).

The FREE Sunday ticket is a lucky-dip day of beers, ciders and perries. Some will have sold out, but there is plenty on offer and it's a great way to sample the unique atmosphere of this amazing festival.

For more information visit:
<https://www.postlip.camra.org.uk>



THE SANDFORD PARK ALEHOUSE 20 HIGH STREET CHELTENHAM GL50 1DZ

SUMMER BEER FEST

15TH - 18TH JUNE 2023

Come and join us for the ultimate summer experience at Sandford Park Alehouse's Summer Beer Festival from June 15th to 18th! With an outside bar, 15 delicious cask beers to choose from, live music, and proper beer food available! There's no better way to spend your weekend. Plus, CAMRA members can enjoy a special discount on all of our fantastic beers!

STARTS AT 5PM THURSDAY 15TH JUNE



**DOUBLE THE CHEERS, DOUBLE THE BEERS:
JOIN US FOR TWO EPIC EVENTS!**



CHEESE & CIDER FEST

21ST - 23RD JULY 2023

Join us for the biggest event of the year at Sandford Park Alehouse - the Cheese and Cider Festival from July 21-23! Enjoy an outside bar, live music all weekend, 10 delicious ciders to sample, and a selection of cheese boards to perfectly complement your drink.

We aim to make this festival bigger and better every year, so come and be a part of the fun! Plus, CAMRA members get a special discount on ciders. Don't miss out on this incredible event!

STARTS AT 5PM FRIDAY 21ST JUNE

DOGS ALWAYS WELCOME

**SANDFORD
PARK**

— ALE HOUSE —

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*'Friendly, traditional pub,
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racing; good atmosphere
while watching rugby.'*

*'Apparently, Ghosthunters
did a session here in 2012
– hopefully you don't meet
any spirits other than what
you're drinking!'*

*'Secret garden was
quirky and really nicely
laid out. Half an old
mini overlooking us
on a wall!'*

Discover Cheltenham's best kept Secret Garden



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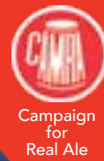
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Find us on





News from NORTH COTSWOLDS



Monthly Pub Walks

Held outside the Summer festival months. We have now completed 110 walks around our pubs in the North Cotswold area.

Generally 4 or 5 miles easy walking these are held monthly on the first Saturday of the month starting at 10:30 am from the pub car park returning at 12:30 pm for lunch.

We have around 80 pubs in the area and each one will eventually figure in the process. Reports on all walks are available on our website www.northcotswoldcamra.org.uk together with the route and photographs.

The next walks are as follows:

- No 113:** Sat 7th October
Sherborne Arms, Northleach
- No 114:** Sat 7th November
Plough Inn, Stretton
- No 115:** Sat 2nd December
Carpenters Arms, Miserden
- No 116:** Sat 6th January 2024
Hobnails Inn, Alderton

Call Roger Price on 01451 810305 or just turn up. Dogs welcome on leads.

FaceBook

A link to this site is on our web page <https://www.facebook.com/North-Cotswolds-CAMRA-the-Campaign-for-Real-Ale-in-the-North-Cotswolds-1022351584505679/?fref=nf>

Cycling Events

The programme includes 3 events in 2023. Spring Summer and Autumn. Dates to be announced. 20 mile events around GBG Pubs in N Cots area. Usually visit 5 pubs on route at a steady pace.

The spring event to Cirencester from Chedworth was held on 12th May. See website for details.

Motorcycling Events

We are also planning 3 motorcycle runs (approx. 80 miles on fine days) visiting scenic locations.

Day Away & Weekend Away

TBA

Spring Pub of the Year

TBA

North Cotswold CAMRA & Moreton CC

16th BEER & CIDER FESTIVAL

8th to 9th SEPTEMBER 2023

Friday 11:00 to 23:00 - £3 entry

Saturday 11:00 to 23:00 - £3 entry

CAMRA members receive beer token allowance

Moreton in Marsh Cricket Club

**50 Beers, 20 Ciders & Perries
Hot & Cold Food with Soft Drinks
Live Bands: Eden Bay, The Dropouts,
B Flats & Good Intent**

CAMPING & PARKING
see website
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FOR
REAL ALE



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BEER FESTIVALS 2023

21st Ale and Steam Weekend 16th - 18th June

16th Moreton Beer Festival 8th - 9th September

Further information on our website:
www.northcotswoldcamra.org.uk



News from NORTH COTSWOLDS



North Cotswold CAMRA – Pub of the Year 2023

The North Cotswold Branch Pub of the Year for 2023 is **The Bell Inn** in Moreton in Marsh.

Following analysis of beer scores and assessment visits, the Bell was acclaimed the winner over some strong opposition in the Branch Area.

The Bell is an 18th Century former coaching inn situated on the High Street is considered by many as the author JRR Tolkien's inspiration for the Prancing Pony, Middle Earth's most famous pub in the Lord of the Rings trilogy. The Pub has

undergone some refurbishment since the days of Tolkien including a map of Middle Earth on the wall. It also benefits from a large courtyard and beer garden with its own outside bar.

Congratulations to the current landlord John Longbottom who took over the pub in the summer of 2015 when it was struggling as an Enterprise Inn. Despite being tied to a pubco, now Stonegate, the choice of ale at the Bell has developed to include four regular beers. Timothy Taylor's *Landlord* is John's choice as a proud Yorkshireman along with Prescott's *Hill Climb*, Purity's *UBU* and North Cotswolds Brewery's *Cotswold Best*.

The pub started to become popular with ale drinkers and made it into the Good Beer Guide in 2018. It was then in the running for pub of the year over the past three years. In addition to the regular beers, guest ales

from North Cotswolds and its sister brewery Shakespeare are on most weekends and a very successful 'Cask Ale Week' gives a varied choice. The Bell has very popular live music most Saturday evenings and in the courtyard in the summer.

It has five rooms available and has food available most days.

As the only pub in the runoff for pub of the year that was not a freehouse, this is a tremendous effort by the team at the Bell.

Congratulations also to the other pubs involved in the branch pub of the year judging and the scoring was so

tight that three pubs were level as runners up.

The Bakers Arms at Broad Campden, The Eight Bells in Chipping Campden, and the Inn at Fossbridge who are all previous winners, the Horse and Groom at Oddington was also commended.



News from DURSLEY



Dursley & District Cider Pub of the Year 2023

Dursley & District Cider Pub of the Year 2023 is **The Salutation Inn**, Ham.

The pub is renowned for its large selection of draft and bottled ciders, mostly from local cider makers including, amongst others, Orchard Revival, Wild Cider and Ross Cider. The pub tries to keep a good range to cater for most tastes, from very dry to medium and sweet ciders. All of the ciders are 'real', that is to say they are seasonal and do not use concentrated or frozen apple juice to enable year-round manufacture.

The presentation was made to the landlord, Pete Tiley on 8th April, the date happened to coincide with the 10th anniversary of Peter taking over the pub, so it was a double celebration with

a large number of regulars and visitors there to enjoy the occasion.

As well as its renown as a cider pub, it was also the CAMRA National Pub of the Year in 2014. Both before and since winning that highest CAMRA accolade, it has won many awards both locally and regionally.

Since taking on the pub, Pete has reinstated the brewery and now has a very good reputation locally for producing a very good core range of beers from pales through to stouts and porters. He also brews a regularly changing number of seasonal and other beers using a variety of different hops from around the world. His beers are available not only in the Salutation, but also in a number of other local pubs in the county and beyond.



DURSLEY CAMRA
PUB OF THE YEAR
2023

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News from The FOREST OF DEAN



Campaign
for
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Mummeration for the Coronation

"If you should see me walking in the street, walk on by"... that would be sensible and sound advice on any other occasion should I be seen again wearing blushed purple make-up, a fetching purple pleated skirt, fuchsia pink blouse, purple laced cardigan and shocking bright pink shoes. I certainly made an effort for the coronation of King Charles III and Queen Camilla. But I wasn't the only strange character turning heads. There was also the Bishop of Blaisdon, The Marquis of Harpur, Ruary the Ruardean Bear, Robin Goodfellow, a good doctor, the Kingsholm Drummer and yokel character Jolter. Madness, they call it Madness.

The Forest of Dean Mummers performed their specially written play for the Coronation on the Bank Holiday weekend of the Coronation. On the Friday we performed at Jolters Press in Mitcheldean. This cider house is located on the second floor of the building that was once Francis Wintle's Mitcheldean Forest Brewery. Jolters Press is usually open only on Fridays, but for cider devotees the place is a hidden gem and well worth visiting. An array of ciders stacked in boxes offering everything from the driest to the sweetest ciders which can be blended to create unique tipples. The audience, after supping a few pints, may have been bemused (and quite possibly disturbed) when the bearded and beer-bellied Lady Ludmilla entered the bar and began the Mummers Play in a high-pitched voice.

Mummers plays are folk plays performed by troupes of amateur actors which are traditionally all male. Mummers have their roots in

the distant past, but were prominent in the medieval period where the mummers' plays were a popular pastime for the poor and provided much needed entertainment. Think of a mixture of Monty Python and Blackadder combined with a pantomime and you might get an idea of what's going on. Or maybe not...

On the day of the Coronation, we had a busy schedule. We had an invitation to perform at the Drybrook Street Party. This celebration for King Charles and Queen Camilla was held on the carpark of the Hearts of Oak pub. Our performance followed the Drybrook & District Male Voice Choir. The crowd were in for a contrasting shock! Our play features a scene when Ruary the Bear is accidentally slain by a glancing blow during a fight between The Marquis of Harpur and yokel miscreant Jolter. It had been raining and the ground was wet. It was a good job that provision was made for the Bear to lie



down on a conveniently laid groundsheet. It was almost as if we knew the plot in advance. Sustenance for the bear, and other members of the cast, came in the form of Wye Valley Brewery ales, including their offering for the coronation.

Then it was on to the White Horse in Mitcheldean. The beers on offer here were St Austell *Proper Job* and a coronation beer brewed by Greene King. A group of male regulars, clearly enjoying the spirit of the occasion, took a liking to Ludmilla, the Lady in Waiting... but she had to politely tell them to wait. She had an eye for the young attractive barman, but the attraction clearly wasn't mutual. It was probably the beard that put him off! It would be tempting to say we were chased out of the White Horse, Benny Hill style, but we were not.

Our next call was the Littledean House Hotel in Littledean (where else?). Access is through the archway into the rear of the building and the pub is adorned with assorted local history and brewery memorabilia, including a nice Stroud Brewery enamel sign. It's something of a hidden gem. The beer of

choice here was Wye Valley HPA. The Bishop of Blaisdon and the good Doctor were keen to recommend and endorse the quality of the product. Ruary the Bear was happy just meeting his friend... a carved bear.

For some reason, the Forest of Dean Mummers enjoy almost legendary status at the White Horse in Upper Soudley and it is no exaggeration to say we were greeted like heroes, or was it zeros. Mike and Suzanne, mine hosts, had even laid on complimentary sandwiches and snacks which went down a treat. Performing the play in a confined space was somewhat challenging, but that is the price to play of widespread fame – extending up to the Pludds and back again! Bespoke Brewery *Beware of the Bear* was enjoyed by Ruary the Bear.

I joined the Forest of Dean Mummers last year in time to join them perform their traditional Christmas plays. It has been an unexpected feast of fun, and for someone who has always avoided fancy dress parties for fear of personal embarrassment, it has also been a complete personal enlightenment.

Geoff Sandles



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THROTTLE CLUB

Turks Head Regulars Out Trying The Local Establishments - Casually Lapping Up Beer

The 'Throttle Club' is a social drinking boys and girls club with only one rule: Behave!

Having got the King safely crowned, we decided The Throttle club should celebrate with a "Right Royal Pub Crawl" in honour of His Maj!

So the very next day, the Sunday, our gallant band met at The Rotunda, at the top of Montpellier in Cheltenham to begin our epic journey. First off was something to wet the whistle, and *Jester 4* was on the bar looking eager. There was an intake of breath at the Cheltenham prices for us poor Gloucester folk but nevertheless it was lovely. And a fine pub it is as well!

So the plan was simple. Make our way back to Gloucester on the No.10 bus, stopping at every pub for refreshment. I mean, what could go wrong?

As the journey was just beginning we risked the top deck so we could enjoy the lovely views - mainly of the edge of the Cotswolds, where the beer is even pricier than Cheltenham. Luckily the driver was on our side and pointed out that the first pub, The Bell at Shurdington had closed! Shame, but we toiled on to the next stop: The Cheese Rollers.

There we met Shaun, the new landlord, a very cheerful guy he is too. We dived in to *Doom Bar* and *Butty Bach* while Shaun told us all about how sad he is that the closest pub to him has shut...crocodile tears probably! But he's doing a fine job there with welcoming food for families to enjoy.

Then it was out for the bus again to The Cross Hands. I remember this as an old Whitbread house but now its

one of these 'Eat the family, bellybuster' type places with not a skinny person in sight.

A swift Greene King Pint then Christine blew her bloody whistle to alert us to move on.

When we got our 'old knackered persons bus passes' out someone, not me, missed the step getting on, so we thought it best to stay downstairs.

Three minutes later we arrived at a pub I used to run The Victoria in Brockworth. Sadly no ales here as it was its first day of opening after having been closed for a while. The pub as usual was full of the 'usual suspects', but it was like I left yesterday instead of in 2008. It was "Hi Peter, hows things?" from faces that looked familiar but older. Christine blew her bloody whistle again and ordered "Bottles of

Dog" all round... 'Fingers' (South African Ian, I shan't explain how he came by the nickname) had to have explained to him that Dog was *Newcastle Brown*, the reason why remains a mystery. (*It's a phone where I come from darn sarf - Ed.*)

An argument between the northerners and southerners amongst us arose because the bottles were nicely chilled - which those from north of Birmingham thought was a sacrilege!!! However we all managed one, and nobody got into a fight with the locals: Result!

Whistle time again, and those of us without the benefit of a colostomy bag visited the facilities, as these double deckers don't have them! We trundled down the road to The Royal Oak and Wagon and Horses. I can't remember which was which, but they are again 'Brown food' houses, so we all behaved like grown ups, had a swift one and headed for the newly refurbished Englands Glory just in Gloucester.

There we started on *Proper Job*, followed by *Hobgoblin Gold*. And very nice they were too. Redoak, the company have done a lovely job on the pub. We thought it looked a bit posh for us, but the landlady - Cat (as in mieow) was lovely. We stood around admiring

the view and Cat took our photo (well our Band of Brothers, we gallant few, who were left).

I must say, though its rude to comment on a lady's hair, but I think she dyes it. I'm pretty certain. Unless, of course, her mum had purple hair too! So then we sat in the lovely and sunny beer garden talking nonsense.

Some brave souls wanted to walk all the way back to The Turkey Shed (Turks head) but not me, it was at least ten minutes to get there.

So as saddoes, we sat in the window watching for a bus. It's only a 40yd dash to the stop but I think between us there was one suspected heart attack, two sprained groins and one pair of suspiciously damp trousers!

Safely back in Glos some went home, some ran away to sea and the rest of us started dreaming of the next outing where the witch can blow her bloody whistle.

I think maybe Brizzle or Worcester deserve us next. Who knows?

Pete Sheehy



The Fleece Inn

11th Anniversary Beer Festival

Friday 21st - Sunday 23rd
July 2023

Chapel Lane, Hillisley GL12 7RD
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FREE ENTRY

22 Real Ales & Local Ciders
Live Music Every day
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DOUBLE TOP!

Tewkesbury CAMRA – Pub of the Year & Cider Pub of the Year 2023

Tewkesbury CAMRA's Pub of the Year for 2023 is The Cross House Tavern on the High Sreet in the middle of Tewkesbury.

Owner Laurence Mills was delighted to receive his certificates from Tewkesbury President Chris Slade at a packed presentation evening in mid-April.

A pub in the making since April 2019, Laurence bought the premises with no idea of what lay behind the white plastic walls and suspended ceilings of the old phone shop, but he found old beams under the ceiling and victorian tiles behind the cladding - even an old iron stove in the back room.



He sourced matching tiles (from Stoke-on-Trent) for the front room, found oak panels under the paint in the middle room and managed to turn a plastic mobile phone

shop into a micropub with a genuinely old-world atmosphere. As well as a wide range of beers from the barrel, you'll now find toby jugs on the shelves, b&w period photos and 70's beer mats on the walls.

But beware - no lager. The wifi password 'DONTDOLAGER' sums up his attitude to the dreaded lager - question him at your peril.

As well as the ales, The Cross House serves seven or eight local ciders, all from the barrel of course.

This is not the first time CAMRA has recognised Laurence's efforts. In 2019 he received a 'Special Award for Pub Conversion' and a in 2020 an award for 'Lockdown Hero' - he stayed open throughout the pandemic, offering takeaways throughout when the pub itself was forced to close.

The Cross House Tavern has become a true community hub and long may it continue.

Pete Adams



Laurence Mills (l) and Chris Slade (r)

More Variety at The Nott

The Nottingham Arms in Tewkesbury recently received a CAMRA Award to acknowledge their 'Fantastic Effort to Increase Beer Variety.' Great credit goes to Landlady Rachel Langdon, who has been listening to her customers to ensure that there's something for everyone in this popular town pub. Well done Rachel!



Angling for Moore



Described as an angler, raconteur and wit, the Tippler's resident fisherman, Courteney Moore Lately, set off to mix pleasure with beer and fishing in the rural setting of *The Watersmeet* in Hartpury

I'd been past this unassuming hotel and fishery goodness knows how many times when my son was at the Gloucester Academy, but never seemed to have time to go and give it a go.

It's a number of years since then and the upcoming celebrations were a great excuse to pop in. The celebrations I mention are not the coronation, but July 4th, no, not that date celebrating our colonial friends throwing off the shackles of good taste and launching into a world of rabid capitalism. No! This is a far more important date, the 50 year anniversary of Tom and Eve Ring buying the old brickpits at Hartpury. Owned and run by the same family, current owners Tom and Gail Ring took over Watersmeet from Tom's father, Tom.

I'd like to think it wasn't merely my normal incompetence, other people were having some nice carp, I wasn't catching. With the fish not having it, (I am normally greeted by regulars telling me "You should have been here last week, they were climbing up your rods and tearing the bark off trees.") For loads of detailed and up to date fishing information about the venue visit: <https://www.fisheries.co.uk/fishing/watersmeet/>

I decided to pop into the bar and see what else I had been missing: food! The meals in this place are amazing, great value, enormous and all home made, it's no wonder they sell out at weekends, bank holidays and mothers' day for example, so always best to book.

The aforementioned celebrations will be worth a trip out to this rural idyll, only a few miles from Gloucester, you'd never know the city was so close.

There'll be plenty going on for everybody, if it's just a decent pint of beer overlooking the main lake, being entertained by the very friendly ducks and swans or enjoying the great food on offer, there'll be plenty to celebrate, for more information nearer the big day, take a look and visit: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Watersmeet-Country-Inn/159018567442869>



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**It's back.....Linton Festival!
Herefordshire's best loved music,
real ale and cider festival returns on
30th June to 2nd July 2023.**

Set in the grounds of The Alma Inn, a repeat winner of CAMRA's Herefordshire Pub of the Year, in the pretty rural village of Linton, this year's festival promises another fourteen top class acts. Ranging from rock and pop to rhythm 'n' blues, there's something for everyone. Not to mention over 40 real ales and ciders plus a selection of locally sourced food to soak them up!

What makes this festival so unique is that it is entirely volunteer run and raises thousands of pounds for local charities each year. Last year's 20th anniversary event was a sell-out, donating £16,000 to organisations including HELP Appeal, Mind, Hope Support Services and DEC Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal. This summer, the bar has been raised even higher.

**music,
real ale
& cider**

Dave Lambert, Linton Festival chair:
"Linton Festival is a not-for-profit community event run by a committed team of volunteers. Since the first festival in 2001, we've raised over £135,000 for local charities. Last year will certainly be hard to beat; after all, it's not every day you see Freddie Mercury hoisted above a festival stage on a cherry picker! But with the line-up we've got in store, we're confident you won't be disappointed, and we can't wait to bring people back together to listen to some brilliant music, drink some good beer and raise some more money."

Topping the bill are three outstanding headline acts, beginning with Think Floyd on Friday night, described by Nick Mason himself as "brilliant". Dubbed as "the best Blues band in the world", King King will line the stage on Saturday and Quo Connection will close the festival with their high-octane show on Sunday.

Festival goers can really make themselves at home for the weekend at Linton with full camping facilities available within a short walking distance of the festival site, including showers and free parking. Hot home-cooked breakfasts made to order will set you up for the day head.

A weekend pass costs £104 (camping from £15) and day tickets are available for £26. See www.lintonfestival.org for full details.

See www.lintonfestival.org for full details.

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**Just answer
this question!**

The Tippler has a pair of weekend tickets (worth £208) to give away. To be in with a chance of winning this fantastic prize, just answer the following question:

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to be included in the Prize Draw

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LINTON FESTIVAL
30TH JUNE - 2ND JULY 23
Music, Real Ale & Cider Festival

FRI 30TH	SAT 1ST	SUN 2ND
Think Floyd	KING KING	Quo
BEN POOLE BRAVE RIVAL	WHEN RIVERS MEET LAURENCE JONES THE GUITAR ICONS BEAUX GRISS GRISS AND THE APOCALYPSE THE DUSK BROTHERS	HENRIK FREISCHLADER ELLES BAILEY THE CINELLI BROTHERS JAMES OLIVER

Run by a team of enthusiastic volunteers, the festival returns for its 21st year. Taking place in the grounds of The Alma an idyllic country pub, it has everything you could want. A 3 day festival, 14 bands, local food, beers & ciders, a camp site and free parking!

for ticket information see our website www.lintonfestival.org



The Tegestologist

Welcome to a series all about Tegestology, the little known term for the collection of beer mats. Our man has a lot, over 40,000 to choose from, so get serious because beer matters!

In the last article we had reached Cheltenham, now we head off west for a few more of our great Gloucestershire breweries that have beermats to their names.

Brewhouse and Kitchen have several brewpubs around the country including three in our region in the Brewery Quarter, Cheltenham, Gloucester Quays and Clifton, Bristol. Of these, the only one to have issued mats is B&K at the Quays in Gloucester. They are more like coasters really, being made of plastic, and were only for sale in their on-site shop. Collecting that way can become quite expensive, but the temptation to cross them off my 'wants list' was just too great. Here is one of the set of 12 depicting Propulsion IPA in recognition of Sir Frank Whittle's local production of the jet engine, though it could equally have been a propeller from the Dowty stable. Unfortunately, the mats don't mention the brewery location, unlike others from the south coast, but the brews should make it quite obvious.

Just across the canal lies Gloucester brewery with its own taproom, and the only

self-serve beer station in the county. Alas the machine can't dispense cask beer (there is no alternative for elbow grease), and they no longer have beer engines from their previous location (around the back), so one has to go over the canal to their Tank pub. They haven't issued any mats for a while, surprisingly since they could promote their new location and kit. This one reflects the 2015 rugby world cup being held (in part) at Kingsholm in 2015.



Heading over to the Forest, we have seen a changing of the guard, with several respected brew houses closing and new ones starting up. The most recent to have matted is appropriately the Forest Brewery, just outside of Lydney. Here is their only mat to date from last year when they commenced

trading after lockdown. I have not been to their taproom yet, but looking forward to that now summer is here.

Bespoke Brewery was located on the old Rank Xerox site in Mitcheldean, which in turn used to be Wintles Steam Brewery until it



closed in 1930. Following a change of hands, Bespoke are now in Littledean and run a tight little ship there. Most of the original brews still exist, and can be found around town. I used to imbibe at Dick Whittington's in Southgate St., which sadly is currently closed. This is mat #6 from 2014, and shows another saying 'Running the Gauntlet' on the reverse. I wonder how many lucky souls were saved by this contraption?

Here is the final one from Clavell & Hind's set of four mats. They make some lovely brews, for 'Highwaymen', originally in Birdlip, but by now (I hope) they are brewing at their new location with new owners, Cellar Supplies, not far from the Gloucester Old Spot at Piff's Elm. There have been several series of 'Wicked Lady' mats and beers over the years. In the 1960's there was an eponymous drink, whose mats described the antics of famous 'wicked ladies' from Nell Gwynne to Lucrezia Borgia. This mat celebrates Katherine Ferrers, a Cotswold highwaywoman.

Heading north, this is the one and only mat from Inferno Brewery in Tewkesbury. Here is the perfect example of the state of affairs in the industry at the moment, where the number of breweries in the UK is perhaps surprisingly static at around 2300, but pub numbers are declining. Inferno have their taproom (and occasional nano brewery) in the old skittle alley of the White Bear, which itself



has been closed for some years. There are good beers and good music here on alternate weekends.

I'm finishing this jaunt around local brewery mats in Winchcombe. Goff's opened their brewery near the steam railway in 1994 and this is their first mat from the same year, depicting what was their flagship ale, Joustier. These days Joustier is harder to find but it

seems that their Cheltenham Gold brew is everywhere. I'm sure this is not just because of the horse racing festival, but I bet it helps boost sales! Indeed, their last mat was for Gold in 2019 which you'll still find in quite a few pubs. I suspect their next mat (and beer?) will be a special one for Goff's 30th anniversary in 2024 - Doesn't time fly?

Russell Murfitt



WE NEED NEWS!

If you have any pub news at all (starting up, being refurbished / taken over etc), then let us know. Similarly, breweries are coming and going, starting up, being bought out, merging with others, and we want to know all about them. It only takes a few lines to the editor and he'll do the rest!

chris@thetippler.co.uk



WALKING BACK TO HAPPINESS...



On Friday 14th July to Sunday 16th July, the now legendary Cotswold Beer Festival is returning to its home at Postlip Hall and Barn, celebrating good beer and good company.

This unique festival, run entirely by volunteers, gives the warmest of welcomes to beer beginners and beer buffs alike. It's a stunning location to enjoy real ales, ciders and local food in the company of good friends and friendly hosts.

The beautiful backdrop of Postlip Hall, barn and gardens offers festival-goers a choice of ways to enjoy the weekend. Soak up the buzzing atmosphere and live music in the barn, or enjoy a picnic in the gardens, sharing a pint with friends, while the children enjoy ice cream and the bouncy castle.

This year's festival sees the return of Gloucestershire Beer of the Year. The counties great breweries will have their beers judged by a panel of beer experts. Why not taste the winning beers for yourself, and see if you agree with the experts.

The Friday Night ticket (7:00 - 11:00pm) is only £12. Friday night is ideal for beer buffs, where connoisseurs and beginners alike can sample the widest range of real ales and ciders that the festival has to offer. To announce the start of the Festival weekend we'll have toe-tapping live music boosting the enjoyment of the night.



The £14 Saturday All Day ticket (12:00 noon to 9:00 pm), a time to bring all the family (under 18 year olds go free) is so popular it can sell out. So buy your tickets early to avoid disappointment. For those who want a relaxed summer evening at the Festival there's a £10 Saturday Evening only ticket (4:30 pm - 9:00 pm).

Our FREE(!) Sunday ticket gives you a great risk-free introduction to the Cotswold Beer Festival, entry to the Festival and buses really are FREE - although you will need to buy a souvenir glass if you want a pint! The Sunday ticket is a lucky-dip day of beers, ciders and perries. Some will have sold out, but there is plenty on offer and it's a great way to sample the unique atmosphere of this amazing festival.

We have early bird tickets, which give a discount price to those that plan ahead, visit:

<https://www.postlip.camra.org.uk>



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Friday 14th - Sunday 16th July, 2023

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PRIZE WORD SEARCH

Gloucester Brewery are proud to sponsor the increasingly popular Tippler word search.

You have a chance to win one of four brewery tour tickets for two, a brilliant prize that comes highly recommended.

There's a lot more than you think going on at this truly fascinating dockland brewery.



D	T	A	E	R	T	E	R	S	A	Q	T	U
A	E	F	R	E	I	A	H	N	T	N	R	T
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H	R	X	M	L	P	F	A	O	D	L	R	E
S	O	I	I	I	U	E	M	T	N	I	A	W
G	H	N	N	O	T	S	A	Y	O	D	H	T
N	K	N	N	N	S	B	I	F	M	S	E	R
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R	L	A	L	E	W	P	L	O	U	G	H	K
I	B	G	O	H	B	S	N	C	R	O	W	N
Y	R	E	W	E	R	B	E	L	B	M	E	K
N	E	W	I	N	N	G	T	I	V	O	L	I

**Bell
Black Horse
Crown
Fox Inn
Hog
Kings Head
Lamb
Mount
New Inn
Ormond
Plough
Ram Inn
Red Lion
Kemble Brewery**

**Retreat
Royal Oak
Ship Inn
Snooty Fox
Star
Swan
Tippits
Tivoli
White Hart
Yew Tree
York**

- 1 Find the listed Gloucestershire hostelrys in the grid (open before the COVID lockdown).
- 2 They can be horizontal, vertical or diagonal, forward or back.
- 3 The unused letters spell out the definition of a regal serving of beer, according to Autolycus in the bard's The Winter's Tale

Send your answer in ASAP to chris@thetippler.co.uk and win ONE of FOUR BREWERY TOUR tickets available to lucky winners.

The ART of Craft Ale

Whatever you may feel about Craft Ales, they're here to stay and the cans have become a colourful addition to our barscapes. We asked Pintsy, our mysterious artist-in-residence, to put down his foaming flagon of cask ale and enlighten us all on where all this outrageous creativity has come from.

Craft Ale. Cold fizzy new-world stuff or an exciting addition to the world of beer? Who cares, let's talk about the art.

As a graphic designer and lifelong beer enthusiast, I've loved the explosion of creative branding on beer cans in recent years. No longer do you need to visit the Tate Modern to see what's happening in the art world, just head for your nearest bar and check out the tins. (*Good thinking - Ed*). Psychedelic art, street art, pop art, minimalist, it's all there.

So where and why did it all happen?

The first cans of beer were introduced in Britain in the 1930s, but it wasn't until the 60s and 70s that canned beer became truly popular. Back then, can designs were generally quite simple and functional, with a focus simply on making the cans easy to stack and transport.

But along came the mighty CAMRA, fuelling a growth in the microbrewery industry

and an explosion of interest through the 90s and 00s in beer with more flavour and character.

Small, independent breweries appeared across the country and started experimenting with more eye-catching designs for their beer cans. There was a lot of competition and they were looking for a way to stand out.

One of the earliest examples of craft beer can art in Britain came from BrewDog, the Scottish brewery founded in 2007 and now sold worldwide. BrewDog's cans featured bold designs that used bright colors and eye-catching typography to grab the attention. They also used irreverent, tongue-in-cheek language such as 'Punk IPA' and 'Hardcore IPA.' All very confrontational, and the can designs only helped to underline the message that they were young and different.

BrewDog's strategy proved to be a hit and other breweries soon began to follow suit.



One notable example, quick to realise that creating your own art sub-form could be profitable, was Beavertown Brewery in London (founded, incidentally by Logan Plant, the son of *that* Led Zep hero Robert).

Designed to tap into a younger audience, Beavertown's cans featured intricate, detailed illustrations inspired by the world of comic books and graphic novels, using eye-catching colors and deliberately wierd typography to make their cans stand out. Think trashy B-movie posters. And in a curious reversal of influence, Beavertown can-art even found it's way onto a wall near the brewery.

Other breweries quick to jump on the wagon were Northern Monk, Magic Rock and Cloudwater Brewing, all of whom now have wide exposure.

Locally, Gloucester Brewery's recent rebrand has given their cans a bold, clear branding to reinforce their 'Earth Conscious

Brewing' message, Stroud Brewery has focussed on their organic credentials, even giving their cans a textured gritty feel, whilst DEYA in Cheltenham stand out through their seemingly random but street inspired cartoon work - tellingly, the importance of their artist is underlined by introducing him as part of the team on their website.

Where next? These new-world beer artists are undoubtedly helping to connect a fresh and much younger audience with craft ales, only a few years back seen by many to be the preserve of the pipe-and-slippers brigade. The market is growing, evidenced by ever more of these colourful pieces of art appearing in supermarkets, and this can only be a good thing for the industry.

Maybe these beer artists are the natural successors to Roger Dean and all the other album cover artists of the 70s. They herald a new order for beer - inclusive, fun, urban. As the creative director at Beavertown put it: 'With skeletons and aliens you don't have to worry about gender, race or age, it is what it is.' Hear hear to that.

So whatever your feelings about the complexities of IPA infused with peaches and cream, just open your eyes and enjoy the artistry of Craft Ale. Before, of course, going back to that foaming flagon of cask ale.

Pintsy

'...in a reversal of influence, Beavertown can-art found its way onto a wall near the brewery'



A ROYAL OAK IN GRETTON

Not King Charles III but King Charles II

Wow. That's the first reaction on seeing what the Royal Oak at Gretton (near Winchcombe) decided to do with the signature oak tree standing at the front of the pub.

The tree had unfortunately died, was going to be chopped down, but now stands as a reminder of the story which all England's 'Royal Oak' pubs are named after – namely, that on being defeated at the Battle of Worcester in 1651, King Charles II fled to Boscobel in Shropshire, where he apparently hid from the Roundheads up an oak tree for a whole day.

It may not be the actual tree he hid in, which is more than 70 miles away, but well done the Royal Oak at Gretton for having the vision to turn the sad demise of a 200 year old tree into something new and celebratory of a rather endearing story from our royal history.

Sculptor Simon O'Rourke took only six days to create it and there's even a relief of a Roundhead sculpted into the bottom of the tree. Great job.



HEARTS OF OAK IN DRYBROOK



CORONATION CELEBRATIONS

The Hearts of Oak is a real Forest community pub in the centre of Drybrook.

The Coronation of King Charles III gave the whole village the opportunity to come together and celebrate in style.

'The Hearts' as it is fondly known put on

with other village groups, landlady, Sarah, laid on diverse offerings of entertainment, food and drink.

On the Coronation Day Sarah and her team were supported by the over 55's group making tea and coffee, the Army Cadets ran car parking, the local charity shop sold soft toys, the village youth group ran games, the school and local choirs sang and they were all hosted by 'the Hearts'.

There was a real fear in the village that our local would close permanently after Covid but Sarah and Tom came along with enthusiasm, determination and a willingness to get stuck in. Add to all of that some of the best kept Butty in the Forest and you have a community pub success story. Drybrook is happy and not that dry!

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The Big News is that we're helping to sponsor Tewkesbury Live, an amazing THREE days of (free) live music throughout Tewkesbury from 28-30 July. It was good last year, it'll be great this year!



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Our hard work has not gone unnoticed - Tewkesbury CAMRA have presented us with a Special Award to recognise our considerable efforts to increase the variety of real ales we offer. Thanks folks!



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Gloucestershire & Stroud CAMRA: Cider Pub of the Year 2023 – make mine a double!

It was a day of glorious sunshine when Stroud CAMRA presented Sammy McKie of the Carpenters Arms, Westrip, with a framed certificate recording her pub's triumph as our Cider Pub of the Year for 2023.

It proved a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon and both the pub and garden were heaving. The pub was relaxed and welcoming and everyone - whether real cider drinkers or not - rejoiced in the pub's success and came together to toast the Carpenters' richly deserved victory. Quite a turnaround for a pub which was not so long ago closed and at risk of being lost to a residential conversion.

The Carpenters is not just Stroud CAMRA Cider Pub of the Year, but has triumphed in the next round to be declared Gloucestershire CAMRA Cider Pub of the Year. So we have a double award-winner and it was a double presentation, with Andy Frape, chair of Gloucestershire CAMRA, presenting the certificate on behalf of the branch.

This is the first time any of our award-winning pubs - whether for Pub of the Year, Cider Pub of the Year or Club of the Year - has gone on to scoop the Gloucestershire CAMRA gong. The pub beat off formidable competition from pubs with a long-established reputation for real cider like the Salutation at Ham, the Pelican in Gloucester

and the Dog House at Coleford, to take the title of Gloucestershire CAMRA Cider Pub of the Year 2023.

Which just goes to show what a good job Sammy and her team at the Carpenters have done in such a short space of time since she bought the pub in 2019.

The presentation was at 5:00pm on Saturday 13 May following the Randwick Wap. Along with the impressive usual range of up to 12 local ciders there were many rare and tasty additions as the pub held a cider festival to celebrate the award. There were 50 varieties of cider on offer from local producers like Day's Cottage from near Gloucester and Orchard Revival from Dursley. Several cider producers were present to offer wisdom and enlightenment on all things Pomona.

Aside from (officially) the best range of cider in Gloucestershire, for those who



preferred other libations there were three real ales and all the usual suspects behind the double-sided bar that serves both the lounge and the public bar. A special food offer in the form of pork and apple baps was available which went very nicely with a flavoursome pint of real cider.

The Carpenters is a whitewashed stone-built pub located on a steep hillside with spectacular and panoramic views over Stroud, from Rodborough Fort to the Bear Hotel and across to Selsley, and all along the valley towards the River Severn. It is the flipside, if you like, of the views you get from the Black Horse at Amberley.

The Carpenters now goes forward with our blessing to the next round, to compete with all the other CAMRA south west branch nominations for the title of South West CAMRA Cider Pub of the Year. And so on until one pub out of a shortlist of four is crowned national CAMRA Cider Pub of the Year.

This is quite a turnaround for the 'Carps', which was once closed and risked being lost to residential. It was advertised for sale and Neon Homes bought the pub and built two houses on part of the car park. It was

eventually advertised as for sale freehold at £300,000 or to let on a free-of-tie lease. The sales prospectus omitted to mention that the Cotswold Way ran close by.

Now, despite spiralling energy bills, the pub is doing very well according to owner and licensee Sammy McVie. "We bought the pub in 2019, then we had Covid nearly straight away which was quite stressful. But we are going great guns and people seem to be loving it. We are starting to see the light at the end of the tunnel. We spend so much just to pay the electricity bill at the moment and we are just keeping our head above water. We have turned it around despite Covid and the cost-of-living crisis."

Which just goes to show that it's not all bad news on the pub front and that a village local in a rural location at the edge of an urban area can triumph against the odds over property speculators intent on converting any pubs they get their hand on to residential in order to achieve a higher return.

That surely deserves another toast!

Tim Mars



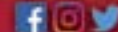
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DEAF BOY WANDERIN' JOHN

This time we find our wandering wordsmith stumbling between Donnington's pubs deep in the Cotswolds, whose beers have clearly inspired him to new literary heights

What can be better than a walk between pubs? Well, this six mile walk creates the opportunity to sample the delights of not one, but TWO pubs. So, it's up to you dear reader, whether you start and finish at The Farmer's Arms in Guiting Power or The Black Horse in Naunton.

I opted for The Farmer's Arms in Guiting Power, a Cotswold village that remains virtually untouched by builders of 'executive houses', due to the manor being bought by a benevolent landlord, Raymond Cochrane. He formed the Guiting Manor Amenity Trust to look after the village when he died. The Trust owns 67 of the houses in the village, including a some rented out as affordable housing to local people who would otherwise have to leave the village.

The initial part of the walk goes past the Trust's administrative building. The name Guiting Power is believed to come from an Anglo-Saxon word, *Getinge* meaning rushing, a reference to the nearby River Windrush. The *Power* part is a corruption of the medieval lords of the manor called *Le Pover*.

But less of this linguistic nonsense and back to the walk, which turns past the Trust

office and down towards a valley with a stream babbling down towards the Windrush.

Climbing up the other side of this valley, stick to the hedge line and do NOT wander straight across the top field. The track now leads you through more of this lovely Cotswold countryside to the tiny hamlet of Barton, where the path briefly strays on to a road. A bridge crosses over a little valley. Your reward for getting this far is a fairly strenuous slog up a track that leads surprise, surprise, to an industrial landscape, slap bang in the middle of an AONB. Why are Cotswold villages so picturesque and colourful? It is because they are stoned! (*Ouch -Ed*).

Anyway, you'll walk past a Cotswold stone quarry that boasts some of the most attractive slag heaps in the West of England.

The quarry road connects with a lane – ignore the sign urging you to go left and instead go right onto the lane. After about 300 yards take a left-hand track which rises up to a truly magnificent hilltop walk, overlooking a wide, open panorama. It is recommended that time be taken just to stand still and gaze at the view, or to quote W. H. Davies (*The Supertramp*): "What is this life



Naunton Dovecote

if full of care, we have no time to stand and stare." So MAKE time!

From these dizzy heights, the walk plunges downwards into Naunton and The Black Horse pub. Another unspoilt Cotswold village with a delightful pub, not to be missed. It is a Donnington Ales pub with the usual range of real ales on draught.

Once your thirst has been quenched, cross the adjacent River Windrush and follow the riverside path through scenes of rural peace and tranquillity, not exactly a preparation for stumbling on Naunton's hidden treasure, an incredible 16th century, four gabled dovecote. One of the largest dovecotes in the country, you would imagine the doves would be the size of Golden Eagles, but luckily this is just a local rumour designed to keep 'townies' guessing. The dovecote is reputed to have over 1200 holes, slightly less than the 4,000 holes the Beatles found in Blackburn, Lancashire.

Dragging yourself away, continue walking along the river bank, before taking a hilly road out of the village passing the church. Fortunately, you do not have to climb to the very top of the hill as the path branches right, back into fields.

Across the valley is a horse training stable with the fences set at an angle that suggests the horses jump uphill, good practice for the finishing slope at Cheltenham. This section is now part of the Gustav Holst Way – apparently it was these paths he used to walk which



inspired him to compose his greatest work, the Planets Suite.

The final part of the walk takes you towards Guiting Power's church, seen getting closer across rolling countryside. Traditionally, where there is a village church, then the village pub will not be far away.

Before getting to the pub though, there is one last activity, courtesy of the zip-wire in the village playground, a great way to take the weight off your feet.

At this point I should mention that in 1962, 100 villagers, lead by the landlord waving a shot-gun, ejected members of the British National Socialist Movement from an illegal camp near the village.

The present incumbents welcome walkers with the right (political pun clearly intended) kind of arms, open ones. The Farmer's Arms is another of Donnington's 19 pubs where I enjoyed a well-kept pint of Cotswold Gold. The food is worthy of awards for the quick, friendly service and the much larger than average servings. It's highly recommended and a lovely way to relax after quite a gruelling walk.

Deaf Boy

'What is this life if full of care, we have no time to stand and stare.' So MAKE time!



Farmers Arms, Guiting Power



Black Horse Inn, Naunton

In Search of Robin Hood

In which five Merry Men and one Maid Marian set out to Lincoln in search of good cheer and quaffable beer



It all started as most great adventures do with a meeting of like minded souls in the pub. Fancy a trip to Lincoln I said? It's got a castle, a cathedral and Robin Hood wore Lincoln green. Got to be some decent pubs..

DAY ONE

So on thursday March 30th, five of us set off from Tewkesbury for Lincoln – Dave G, Geoff, Justin, my good lady Sue (aka. Maid Marian) and me, Cornish Alan.

On the way we dropped in to the Dambusters Inn at Scampton, the home of the famous 617 squadron during WWII. Situated at the end of Scampton's runway, our sortie to the bar included Dwarven Steel (3.8%, Shadow Bridge Brewery, Barton upon Humber), Cathedral Gold (4.3%, Milestone Brewery, Cromwell) and Yorkshire Blonde (3.9%, Ossett Brewing Company, Ossett). Five then became six as Suffolk Dave joined us from Felixstowe.

Settled into our hotel in Lincoln, it was time to eat. Plan A was the Ritz, once a cinema but now a Wetherspoons. Shock horror there

was NO ALE there due to the handpulls being out of action! Plan B was walking into the city centre in search of the Cardinal's Hat, a pub hopefully with both beer and food. Well beer yes, but food was limited to a cheese platter. Still, the beer looked good so we stayed, Suffolk Dave and I going for Adnams Mosaic (4.1%) and Salt Brewery's Suede stout (4.8%) chosen by the rest.



We found that elusive food in Lincoln's second Spoons, the Square Sail, and as soon as we'd eaten we moved on to what was one of Lincoln's best pubs, the Tiny Tavern, a micro pub with five handpulls and, for us, one of the best beers of the weekend, Wellbeck Abbey Brewery's Burning Firedog stout (4.3%) – the cheapest too at just £3.

Booted out at 10pm (early closing, the bane of micro pubs) we spied another micro pub, the Imp and Angel just across the road. This one was still open so we indulged in a nightcap of Wickham House's Old River End Porter (5.5%), brewed in someone's garage so we were informed, and very nice it was too. Also



At The Strugglers: First of the day

sampled were North Brewing Co's Vanishing Point, a blonde ale at 3.8% and another Wellbeck Abbey beer, Admiral Keppel at 4.3%.

DAY TWO

The plan was to visit the pubs in Lincoln's cathedral and castle quarter, our main aim being the award winning pub the Strugglers Inn, presumably named after the struggle to get up the VERY steep road to it. We arrived just after opening and the place was already heaving. Most of us started with a cheeky 5.5% stout from Wellbeck Abbey called Sligo, an oatmeal stout (the most expensive pint of the weekend at £5.20). Also supped were Salamander's Goliath (5.2%) and Great Newsome's Prickly Back Otchen (4.2%).

With so much choice we plumped for a second round of Pricky Back Otchen, Shadow Bridge's Wrath of the Gods (4.5%), Salamander's Goliath, Ashover's Eureka (3.7%) and Timothy Taylor's Landlord. Good pub, that!

Leaving reluctantly, around the corner we found the Victoria, a Batemans pub with not only three of their brews on offer – XB, XXB and Gold- but also Adnams Ghost Ship. Most opted for the XXB but Suffolk Dave, of course, had to go for the Ghost Ship. A quick burger for sustenance and we were off again for a second visit to the Cardinal's Hat. Adnams Mosaics, Salt's Suede and Thornbridge Jaipur IPA if I remember correctly (*Bit hazy now? Ed*).

Next on the list was the Dog and Bone, another Batemans pub slightly outside the city centre. As well as XB and XXB, they had Yellow Belly (3.9%) and, unusually, cask Tetley's Original 4.3%.

To end the day it was back to our favourite Tiny Tavern again where we were getting to know some of the locals. The banter was good and a couple of excellent new beers were on offer, Brentwood Brewery's Marvellous Mild (3.7%) and Vale of Glamorgan's Best (4.4%).

DAY THREE

Day three was a trip to Newark on Trent by train. Only 20 minutes away, this town has a castle, great architecture and, as we found, some great pubs.

First call was the Flying Circus, an entertaining Monty Python themed pub. Keg beer prices were an eye-watering £6 to £10 a pint, but fortunately the cask beer was



'The 'Just Beer' micropub...lots of banter, no machines or TV - great!'

a lot cheaper. Quaffed beers were Stancill Brewery's Stainless (4.3%), Brains Reverend James (4.5%), Thornbridge's Brother Rabbit (4%) and Astryd (3.8%).

Out of the Flying Circus and into The Organ Grinder, the famous Blue Monkey Brewery tap. Not much from the outside but plenty of character inside. We found a cosy back room to settle in, sampling Guerilla stout (4.9%), PG Sips (4%) and Infinitely (4.6%), the latter being awarded excellent marks on our highly subjective group scale.

And so to the Just Beer micropub, small and busy. Lots of banter, no machines or TV – great! There were plenty of unusual beers too – Red Car's Jazz, Doncaster Brewery's Rebellious Monk stout (4.5%), Beach Hut Brew New Zealand Pale (4.5%), Brew21 Brew by Numbers Pale Ale (5.2%) and Uttoxeter Brewing Co Aotearia Pale Ale (4.9%).

The Fox and Crown, a Castle Rock pub on the market place, finished our tour of Newark with Crepes of Wrath (6%) by Penick Brewery and Castle Rock offerings of Elsie Mo (4.7%) & Our House (3.6%).

Then a train back to Lincoln and a nightcap in the Tiny Tavern before turning in. The unanimous verdict was that Newark won hands down as destination of the weekend.

Sunday morning it was a careful drive back to Tewkesbury for a well earned rest. We hadn't found Robin Hood, or any pub named after him, but we had found a lot of that elusive good cheer and quaffable beer.

Cornish Alan

CIDER & PERRY MAN



In this new series of articles, the newly appointed Cider Representative for Cheltenham CAMRA keeps us up to speed in the world of cider and perry in Gloucestershire, being a county surrounded by West Country giants in the field (or should that be orchards?)...

Quite a bit of water, or should I say cider, has gone under the bridge since our last magazine. I mentioned the award for Cheltenham Cider Pub of the Year, but have since realized that the Tippler, covers of course, all of Gloucestershire.

However, not every branch has a cider award and in fact it appears to be only Cheltenham, Stroud and Tewkesbury that have made the awards, despite the fact that the other areas of Gloucestershire has several good cider pubs. *(It seems that your message is getting through, see page 19 for Dursley & District's award - Ed.)*

In Cheltenham there were several close contenders and The Jolly Brewmaster shaved it by a short head from The Sandford Ale House, and The Strand. The Jolly B normally has four real ciders served in traditional still style and another three or four of what I call keg ciders. Recently they had a perry on draught which is rather rare, although I personally prefer the greater flavour of cider.

On the subject of perry, one of the leading local exponents is Severn Cider,

who are situated down in the bottom of The Forest of Dean, just outside Newnham. By a slight coincidence I once ran a business called Severn Plywood, but that's history and nothing to do with cider or perry. So, I was saying, my son Nick, remembered this coincidence just



organized a voucher for me to pick up a mixed case (of perry, not plywood) from them.

The photos for this article come from the ciderworks, which is one of the oldest cideries in Gloucestershire. They appear to do little business in what I remember as the 'On Trade' that is to pubs, but are strong on bottles to all sorts of shops and catering businesses, including local Co-op stores. This is a rather crowded market, with the larger suppliers like Westons and Dunkertons jostling for space on the shelves, who often offer extra inducements which the smaller suppliers find difficult to match. Severn Cider production is all pasteurised and the bottle stock carbonated. However, their bag in box production (some smaller sizes for home consumption!) is all traditional still ciders and perries, as is normal, and I think, more appealing to true cider fans. The Perry comes from a variety of tree called *Blakeney Red*, which is very local to them and makes a fine example.

I met up recently with Tewkesbury based

Martin Raven, who is organizing all the Cider entries for the forthcoming Cotswold Beer Festival at Postlip, which is on 14-16th of July. I have volunteered to help on the first day, so apart from serving all you thirsty folk, I shall hope to try a few myself, but not all of them, which should be well into double figures!

The Jolly B also has it's own festival at the beginning of September, date TBC, but licensee, Danielle, says that there will be lots of unusual brands, that they will offering and trying out, before making their final choices.

Lastly, I am still wanting to hear from other cider aficionados out there so that we can all meet up as a group, and maybe organize a trip to Gloucester and The Pelican, (plus others?) where I hear that they have a very good range on offer.

Guy Volwes

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A big Welcome back to Tippler readers from the REAL GOOD CIDER HQ, home of THE COTSWOLD CIDER COMPANY

What has this year's Spring meant for a cider maker and his company?

Well, The Cotswold Cider Company is all about the full flavour of natural cider and that means honouring and working in partnership with the seasons. Indeed, being tied to nature's yearly cycle is one of the most gratifying parts of the job. As you know the spring has been long and cold with pub gardens staying off-limits for longer than in recent years. However, the delay in warmer weather has been respite for the trees, with rainwater refilling the water reserves, making up for the deficit in the ground and allowing recovery from the stress of last year's drought. What does this mean for our sweet golden nectar? Well, though the weather's been cold the blossom has been solid - we've had no frosts or storms to scare it away - and a good fruit set hopefully bodes well for an abundant crop.

Here at Real Good Cider HQ we've used the change in season to do some innovating. We'd become increasingly aware of the demand for a mid-range cider on keg, something that sits between **No Brainer's** dry and cloudy and **Sideburns'** medium toffee popcorn, something exemplary of the Cotswold in The Cotswold Cider Company. As the long Spring has done its thing, so as cider makers have we: **Cotswold Prime Cider**, medium/dry, 4.6% is our just launched premium cider! An easy drinker and quintessentially stylish,

Cotswold Prime Cider is the classic expression of our craft cider. A fine bite on the tongue with layers of soft spice and baked apple, enticing you into a refreshing calm that reflects the exquisite landscape and serene beauty of our Cotswold region. It's a satisfyingly indulgent and instant classic - The Cotswolds in a glass. Cotswold Prime Cider is available in keg and 500ML bottles.

And that's not the only new kid on the block. Earlier this Spring we created and launched our first lo-alc cider: **Phantom Of The Orchard** - a flavour haunted 1% cider, authentically made and brimming with character. Borne out of the rise in 'no and low' alcoholic beverages Phantom Of The Orchard aims to provide light refreshment, ghosting alcohol but maintaining the body of the orchard. Unlike others on the circuit this isn't sparkling apple juice, it's a real *bona fide* cider made from a 100% cider apple juice fermentation. We strove for a 1% ABV so that the drink actually tasted like the real thing - which it is and does. Described as 'impressively full-flavoured' by customers Phantom is a must try - your new lo-al sidekick for the summer.

As always, a big shoutout to CAMRA for promoting the 'real stuff' - keep asking for us at your locals! Or ask Rory (Cider Maker) for more info on: 01793 762312. Order online on the website below.

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SCRAPING THE BARREL

with Ernest and Verity Dregg

Six years ago, Ernest and Verity Dregg, retired snipers and fleet street hacks swapped their life as anti-woke, unreconstructed bigots and gossip columnists opened their dream pub. We find them hard at it on Wednesday 24th May...

"I see Boris is in the doodoo again, more argey-bargey during lockdown, what a likeable rascal eh? Just doing what everybody else was during the pandemic, bending the rules in between trying to run the country, and of course make sure him and his mates got loads of tax payers' hard earned cash, what a guy!" Exclaimed Ernest.

"Yes, the fine, upstanding faction of the tories reckon it's all a conspiracy to get him into trouble, that's what the Moggster is saying to the BBC, it's all those grumpy people in the cabinet office trying to slur him by following the rules, what a ridiculous concept for the government to work under! Mind you, I reckon he doesn't need any help there, he's such a lot of fun, I wonder when we can have him back in charge and get the country back on its knees?" Commented Verity, working hard to tidy up the Victory after all the fun and frolics of the last few weeks. "It's just been one thing after another, coronations, local elections, bank holidays, and great news about inflation too! Down by 1% - brilliant! No wonder the Mugsborough Temperance Society (seen here queuing for the new beer from the

Victory Beerworks) were in again last night, they just love our new zero alcohol beer!"

"Our new beer? Well they're wrong there, aren't they? The clue's in the name '**Victory TarTen**' black as a road surface and 10.1% ABV. I made it using road shavings, Capstan Full Strength, some rough shag, coffee and 85% dark chocolate and prunes, the Tewx beer monsters are loving it! The Temperance mob are getting confused with the other new one, **Victory 2T** (Zero Tolerance) that I am brewing up for the local church, same colour, but unlikely to cause riots. I knew our new micro-brewery would be a big hit. Even better, we've moved the refugees into an old barn, converted into a load of bedsits and put the rent up, it's all going our way, I just can't figure out why the local elections went so badly for us and our true-blue patriotic tory chums."

Verity was losing the will to live, Ernest droning on in the background with his messianic views on how great the Government is. She carried on trying to get the Victory back to being ship-shape, the recent parties had been brilliant for the pub, especially the subsidised food they had been serving up.



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SCRAPING THE BARREL



money, and if they can't afford the rent, they get housing benefit, so we make even more money, the banks make money, and the pesky workers are put in their place, what could be better?"

"Yes dear, I'm sure it'll work out brilliantly, not like Prince Harry trying to buy police protection, apparently it's quite difficult to buy the police off, well that's what the BBC story says," replied Verity, "we've never had any trouble though have we dear? Mind you, I thought the new voucher scheme we had to keep them from investigating us was

a bit oversubscribed, the local police went mad for it, started a riot for tickets amongst themselves."

"I know you're not really listening," muttered Ernest, more to himself than to Verity, "but did you see the brilliant news of the record number of migrants?, lucky the Home Secretary has such an iron grip on the numbers, her scheme of sending them to Rwanda for a holiday is bringing them in droves, it's all so great!"

"Yes dear, Suella Braverman, she's got those figures to a record level, she might be good, but is she, as Tina would have said: 'Simply the Best'?"

That scheme of getting down the food banks before the nurses was working out a treat, ingredients were as cheap as chips.

"They're playing right into our hands!" exclaimed Ernest, "I see the Bank of England have put up the base rate again it couldn't be better!" Commented Ernest to a hard at it Verity. Doesn't she ever stop? Ernest wondered to himself.

"I don't see how," commented Verity, "surely that'll just put up the cost of just about everything, especially our mortgage payments."

"You don't get it do you? They're doing us a favour, it's like this: so the undeserving working class, who shouldn't be allowed to own property as they can't be trusted with it, won't be able to keep up their payments, it's perfect."

"I still don't get it, why is that good? I suppose they'll be in here on the 'Victory' gin that we water down for them, so there's going to be more pints being pulled, what else could you be on about?" asked Verity, not really interested in the conversation, she was still thinking about that highly athletic chap from the Mugsborough Temperance Society...

"Look, what I'm saying," said Ernest, "is they won't be able to pay, they'll get their houses repossessed by the bankers who'll then sell them to more deserving clients, like us, so we can then rent them back at even higher prices. It's a perfect system: we make



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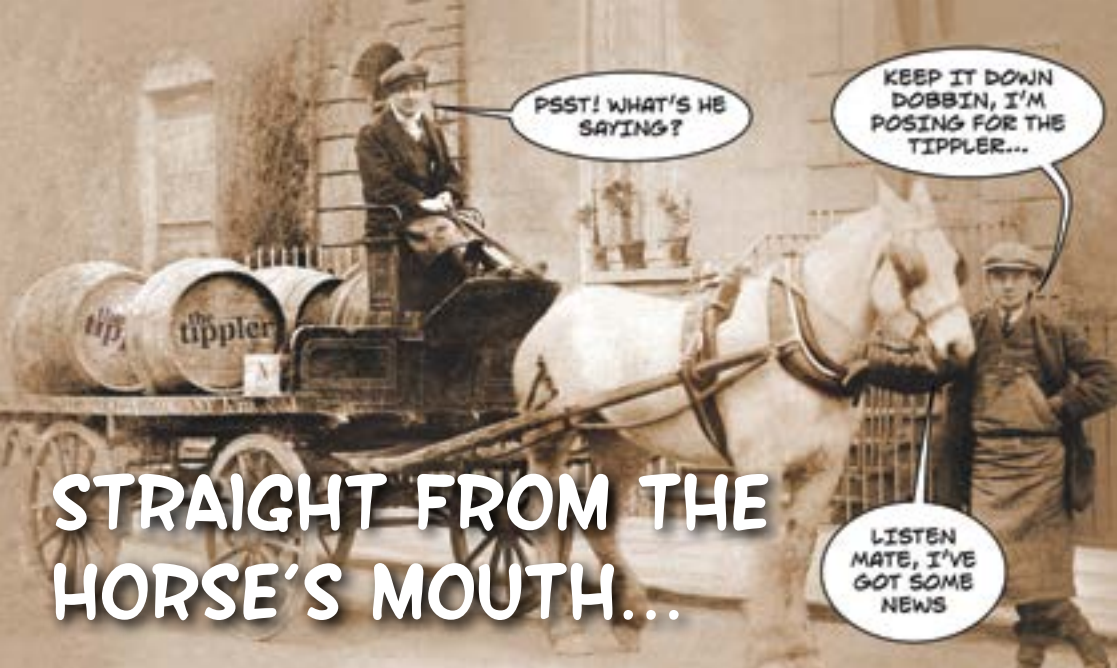
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STRAIGHT FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH...

BREWERY NEWS



This year, **Arkell's Brewery** are celebrating - so spring into action and join Arkell's Brewery's Anniversary Ale Trail in 2023. During their special anniversary year, celebrating 180 years of continuous brewing at the original site founded by John Arkell, the family brewery are challenging drinkers to visit as many Arkell's pubs as they can; spread across Wiltshire, Gloucestershire, Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Hampshire. The trail will be hosted on Cask Marque's CaskFinder App.

CaskFinder is a free app that you can download on your mobile. Once you've downloaded the app, you register and join the Arkell's trail. You don't have to visit every Arkell's pub to win prizes, with prize points at 10,20,30,50 and 75 scans. Just start clocking up your visits and if you scan all 85 Arkell's qualifying pubs you will win the top prize! Prizes include limited edition 180th polo shirts, bottled beer, overnight stays, meals out, and a private brewery tour with Head Brewer, Alex Arkell.

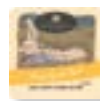
Alex Arkell, sixth-generation of the Arkell family said "We're really excited about this ale trail. It celebrates so many things; our milestone anniversary, the Great British pub, and interesting, fresh beers, produced by our local brewery. We want people to venture out of their

STRAIGHT FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH...

comfort zone, show support and rediscover the charm of authentic pubs and a fresh selection of delicious beers."

The app allows you to record your visit to the pub, learn about beers and rate the ones you try, and - best of all - win prizes too. Simply locate the Cask Marque Certificate of excellence in the pub and scan the QR code to collect scans and win prizes.

A selection of other special activities are planned for 2023 during the brewery's 180th year, these include weekly brewery tours for the public - bookable online (<https://www.arkells.com/tour>), and a Big Birthday Bash on 16th September with live music and lots of beers to sample.



The **Bespoke Brewery** has enjoyed a good start to 2023. The Tap Room in Littledean has been busier than ever, and has yet more plans for expansion - currently open

Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 4pm, the proposal of Brunch, Coffee and Cakes is currently under works - so keep an eye out. The Brewery is to be rearranged to maximise indoor seating, comfort and experience, all in the charming and authentic rural brewery environment.

The brewery has also developed two new beers over the past six months and added a lager in to the range too.

Soul of Wit, is a 4.6% Belgian style Witbier, with notes of orange peel and coriander, has been enjoyed by all, and *Drown Before You're Drunk* a 1.2% ABV small beer, whilst still in developmental stages, has proven to be a very popular beer, with some work still to do.

Finally, *Czech Twice, Cut Once* a 5.2% Czech style lager has been incredibly successful, lagered for 12 weeks, this beer has a great depth of flavour, a full body to boot.

The Brewery has a full calendar of events, check them out on their facebook page, to highlight a couple of upcoming key dates, their Summer Festival is on the 7th and 8th of July and their Octoberfest is on the 29th and 30th of September.

PUB NEWS

News from the Cheltenham Pub scene isn't that great, our correspondent tells us that **The Montpellier Wine Bar** has been bought by the Hatton Group, who also own **The Beehive** in Montpellier, and is currently being refurbished prior to reopening.

The **Fiore Lounge** has opened on the former market site on Bath Road. It is part of the Lounges group and does not sell real ale.

The **Greatfield** has a new landlady, and the real ale selection has improved (now with four hand pumps).

The Old Spot, on Tewkesbury Road has been put up for sale as the owner Simon Dawes plans to retire. The asking price is £1.5 million.

The bad and sad news is that the **Beehive** in Prestbury no longer serves real ales.

Several pubs are currently closed, looking for new management including **The Sudeley Arms**, **The Merryfellow** (in Charlton Kings) and **The Bell** in Shurdington.

The Cheltenham CAMRA Tasting Panel met recently at the Inferno Brewery Pop-up Bar, behind the old White Bear pub in Tewkesbury. Five beers were tasted (two pale ales, one IPA, a cinder stout, and a wheat beer) and scored for Champion Beer of Britain potential. All the beers were in excellent condition and the variety of styles was very impressive.

The panel will meet again in June, at the North Cotswold CAMRA 'Ale and Steam Festival', Winchcombe. July will see the panel form the core of the judging panel for the 'Gloucestershire Beer of the Year' at the Cotswold Beer Festival, Postlip Hall, on July 13th.

In Tewkesbury, **The Canterbury** is being refurbished ahead of re-opening in June.

Ye Olde Black Bear is slowly but surely making its way towards opening and will no doubt play a leading role in the forthcoming Tewkesbury Live music weekend. In fact nearly every pub in town will be a part of this great event that gets the whole town buzzing.

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STRAIGHT FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH...

PUB NEWS

Sandford Park Alehouse in Cheltenham is running a Summer beer festival from 15th - 18th June with some 15 cask ales featured as well as 16 keg lines inside too. This festival coincides with the 5th June being International Beer Day and the 18th being Fathers' Day. You can also enjoy a CAMRA discount at this festival, so happy days all round!

On the 21st - 23rd July they are also hosting their regular Cheese and Cider Festival, which is also part of their CAMRA discount scheme, so get down there and enjoy 10 bag in the box ciders and an abundance of cheeses.

As a dog friendly pub, you can also benefit from Tail Wagging Tuesdays, every Tuesday bring in your dog and get your first pint FREE! It's only one pint per person, if you have two dogs bring in another person! Tuesdays between 5pm-9pm

At the associated **Bath Road Beers**, Cheltenham, they're holding their 5th BIRTHDAY BASH. The official birthday is the 28th but they're hosting a party on the 24th at the shop. Open invite - beer pong, snacks and their exclusive collaboration brew with Arbor Ales (they created the beer, designed the can and its name.) Join the party on the 24th from 4pm, it's a chilled event but free beer for the beer pong winner!

The Willow, the new Fullers Pub at Bourton on the Water, opened in April 2023, has been well supported by the many visitors.

Our secret scribbler in Gloucester, in some police reports sometimes known as the 'The Gloucester Gossiper' has sent in the following:

"So the news about town. Whos up, who's down, who's in or who's out?"

The Station Hotel this fine old drinking establishment is again closed, but a little birdie tells me its yours for a mere £800k!

Moving over to **The Imperial**, the new couple have made a pretty good start. They had an Elvis tribute the day after the

Coronation (another King?), the great news is it was sold out...a very impressive start!

Moving along Northgate St., **Cafe Rene** continues with its open mike nights on Sundays. Some nice singing etc., from Luke (the hairy barman) but the numbskull on the electric organ who said The Coronation was toss wasn't clapped. Silly boy.

The Cross Keys - or should I say 'The Cross Landlords'. It seems someone's been telling people Steve and Bushy are leaving! Not so, thus the Cross Landlords, or at least slightly peeved!

Down into Bull lane is **Angie's** - the city of Gloucester's smallest pub. Fred has retired or moved on to other things and its being run by Ryan, a mere lad (about 30 I guess) who is very keen and was till recently an Ice Cream man! Wow! So he obviously knows about keeping things cold...

Out onto Westgate St., first **The Sword** (Craft Union) which had some lost tourists in last week. At least I guess they were tourists as they had their own teeth and hair! Then up the alley to **The Fountain** which must be looking forward to the summer with their lovely beer garden.

The Old Crown has closed to become flats. Gary the landlord has moved up to run the **Robert Raikes' House** on Southgate St. Just opposite is **Dick Whittington's** which is still closed and recently suffered a small fire to add to its woes.

Along the alleyway to **The Docks and Fosters** on Victoria basin has again recently closed, this time with no 'To Let' sign outside.

Across the bridge to **The Tall Ship**. Music can be heard some Saturdays. A fine conversion and even though the chalkboards outside states 'Great Food' (which it used to serve) it's only regularly doing Sunday lunches.

The Whitesmiths, over the road has discos Friday and Saturdays which are very popular, lastly down the Southgate St., to the **Baker Street**. A big boozer, the sign over the door says 'Cask Ales' but Sherlock would have a hard time finding real ale, but live bands Saturdays help!"

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REQUIEM FOR JOANNA

In late 2005, two men headed for London in a hired white van with the uncomplicated task of bringing a piano to Stroud . . .

This is the account of how that mission was never completed and it lightly sketches-in some of the background factors which, at the outset, doomed the expedition to failure.

The unsuccessful journey was to change utterly the piano's life. If there had been high notes in its London days, many more had been middling, ordinary piano days like those of its provincial cousins, whose ivories were more often dusted than tickled and dampened at intervals by the tears of disenchanted children whose fingers refused to do what they were told.

It was never much to look at, upright and respectable enough, but there was little to suggest that it was intended for the Rodborough home of a former Archway pupil who was a supermodel at the Storm agency, featured in film and on television and whose uncle was moving to New Zealand but wanted to sell the piano to his niece for £200.

Much less, was there anything in its appearance to suggest that one day it might be played by Mick Jagger's brother? Or that, around its unassuming presence, the stunning duo of Emily Barker and Lukas Drinkwater (below) would fall in love, or one night, that it would be played, with both hands, by the monumental Tankus the Henge (below right).

But, to set the scene, as many readers were not yet eighteen in 2005. Those that were,



and lived in Stroud, rarely talk about the event that took place in early July at the stroke of midnight where Walkley and Rodborough hills meet. Nor is it kind to quiz them on the subject. Wounds may have healed, but the knowledge that cataclysm can overwhelm in an instant the sunniest of days, still infects their nightly rest.

To be honest, it wasn't the fire itself that traumatised folk. Thankfully, the family and Jasper were professionally made safe. Lotte had to be person-handled through an upstairs window by vigorous firepeople. (To this day, Miles is alert for that look, a dreamy, pensive, thrumming anticipation, which occasionally lights her eyes and he immediately gathers the household matches.) No, not the fire but the five months the pub was closed. Five months!



Some folk took to driving to Bear Hill or to Brimscombe Corner just to avoid the dread reminder. None was more relieved when the pub reopened in November than the two men in the rented white van, who, conscious of precious lost time, had been making as many visits to the place as their domestic relationships would tolerate. This is essential to bear in mind when, within just minutes of the successful completion of their mission from London, the driver noticed the Albert was open. Conversation was unnecessary. As soon as the van came to a stop the passenger had his door open and his course set.

It may have been something that was said, a question perhaps, or something that just struck both men as anticlimactic about taking the piano downhill the next two hundred yards to its scheduled destination. It may have been the beer and conviviality. It may have been that Miles mentioned the pub's piano had incinerated in the conflagration. Whatever the trigger, it gradually dawned on all those involved that they were standing in the obvious, the proper, the most appropriate home for the London joanna.

The piano had arrived in time to feature in the annual gathering of The Prince Albert Carol Concert. For this prestigious event, the landlords commissioned a thorough inspection and overhaul of the instrument. Not that the two men felt much remorse about depriving the uncle of his £200 but, when it was discovered that the piano had not only become very lowly strung but it had a persistent tendency for its G string to snap, they felt no guilt whatsoever.

Doug Barnes, the blind tuner from Spillmans, worked on its innards, as did Crimea Butler-Downton in turn and for the better part of seventeen years the piano has seen active service, tickled by generations of playful children, tested by hardened musicians, liberally moistened by beer and seriously sniffed round its pedals by dozens of dogs.



Now, shunted from the Albert's bar into the courtyard, it's noiselessly nearing its final bar, awaiting its final movement. Has it had a good life? Are there still some faint good vibrations quietly quivering in its metal frame? Can it still feel Meg's fingers crafting a seasonal symphony, still sense the humans gathered round, the ever distancing laughter, the silent cheers?

Few pianos have a CV to match it but another will take its place, more deliberately this time, and it too can be guaranteed a long and lively life in that extraordinary public house, The Prince Albert of Rodborough.

I have so many standout musical memories of nights spent at The Prince Albert but my favourite was a night with duo Jacob & Drinkwater. They played a blinder of a set and at some point after the crowd went home, Lukas Drinkwater, Tobias Ben Jacob and myself picked up the instruments and gathered around the pub piano.

We gravitated to Neil Young songs – mostly from the Harvest record – all singing along in harmony with piano, double bass and acoustic guitar.

Miles and Lotte sang along too, drinks in hand, tears and laughter and the dogs weaving about us. A spark was ignited between two in the party that night (hh mmm, clears throat) and a wedding a few years later on the banks of the Blackwood River in Bridgetown, Western Australia (my hometown).

Thank you old pub piano – Emily.

Emily Barker

'The piano had arrived in time to feature in the annual gathering of The Prince Albert Carol Concert.'

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NAME THAT PUB COMPETITION



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Five Pub Pandemic Stories

Pub historian, local pub enthusiast and social commentator, Bob Jeffrey, gives an overview of how five pubs both in town and rural, coped and how they have fared in the post-pandemic world

INTRODUCTION

The publicans of five pubs were interviewed about their Pandemic experience, all in the Stroud area: The Ale House (**AH**), The Crown and Sceptre (**C+S**), The Prince Albert (**PA**), The Butchers Arms (**BH**), Sheepscombe, and The Woolpack (**WP**), Slad.

LOCKDOWN

The first lockdown was in March 2020. The **PA** used the time to build a strong case for lowering their tenancy rent rise. Their case gained a reduction from 25% increase down to 19%. All the extra administrative work has now become embedded into their management culture.

Secondly, due to their inclusion in a four-episode TV programme, focusing on pub businesses, their pub company upgraded the pubs infrastructure, and a new kitchen was quickly installed enabling it to be used during the second lockdown to sell and deliver meals.

The publican of the **AH** was able to do building work in the bar and decorating it. He replaced all the beer lines and decorated the empty cellar.

The **WP** used the time complete a dining room extension and kitchen using the £50K loan from the government.

The **C+S** and the **WP** added a shop to their outlet, with the latter ceasing trading in second lockdown, but the **C+S** (right) carried on and the pub hasn't had a day's closure since July 31st 2009. "We were open as a shop but also selling beer and when we weren't allowed to sell it, we delivered it."



The mask obligation began in Sept 2020, alongside the rule of six and 1 metre distancing.

The meal and a drink compulsory rule introduced in November effectively led to table service. The Ale House, with eight ale pumps and a long bar – a wet led pub – allowed 'bar flies' to hover. The table service operation was an anathema to this bar culture. Staff enjoyed talking to regulars about their lives and pampering their dogs, but there was no time to do that during table service; they only had time to say hello, take their orders, take them their drinks, and then rush to serve the next table.

The **PA** had a 'welcoming table' inside the main door, as required by law for 'contact and trace'. The data storage meant more administrative work, but the pub was never contacted about a 'Covid customer'. However, they got some rude reviews on Google with some calling them Nazis.

The government 'Two for one meal to helpout' after re-opening was successful for The **PA** for their new pizza business, but for the **WP** it was a disaster. "There were hordes

of people, mainly from out of the area, all rather grumpy and demanding fish and chips. Everyone lost their rhythm and joy doing the job, so we stopped it after one day."

Customers had to have a meal to get a drink. "Dave had a Scotch egg in his pewter mug and poured it on to his 'food' plate, it sat there next to his pint. He put it back in the mug when he left."

However, the **BA** benefitted from the table service operation as it raised their efficiency and profits as well as staff gratuities – customers had tabs and paid a tip whereas previously they paid only for their order at the bar. The 'host' for the pub session was now able to determine where customers could sit, making the most of slots before and after reservation times. The staff took back control of their service.

POST COVID CHANGES AND CONSEQUENCES

The **WP** extended dining room developed more of a restaurant feel with tables set up for dinner by 5pm with flowers and wine glasses, a specialist menu without fish and chips and good wine. However, the publican saw it as, "a pub foremost, which happens to have good food."

After their financial review the **PA** decided to only have music on a Sunday and Monday night and charge for entry, whereas previously it had been free at the weekend. The other nights they now provide food, and they make a profit from that as well as the music. The Covid period gave them the time to create a new business and increased profits.

However, our 'wet' pub, the **AH** was not so lucky. After restrictions were lifted in the

summer of 2021 footfall was slow. There were a lot of people who were very cautious about coming out. It has become difficult to plan, for example, doubling the size of the cellar, until profits return to those prior to the pandemic.

The **C+S** is still supplying meals, about ten takeaway Sunday lunches and meal deliveries to a couple of people who are house bound. If they don't sell all the curries, they are put in the freezer and available to pick up and takeaway during the week.

The pandemic affected pub opening hours for the better in terms of profit and mental health. The Ale House Publican realised that traditional pub hours were not working so it is now closed at lunchtimes Mon-Fri saving money. The **BA** began all day opening except Wednesdays. The three family members who run the **PA** have it ensured they all get plenty of time away from the pub.

The overall impact of the pandemic was worse for the **AH** (below), as for other town wet led pubs. The **PA** and the **WP** were lucky in that they were already committed to significant renovations, so they used the time productively. The **C+S** survived because of the shop and meals service and increased its community participation. The managers of the **BA** used the table service and distance obligations to ensure the pub was more efficient and productive but after reviewing their family life during the lockdowns left hospitality altogether in Sept 2022.

We should be wary of generalising about the impact of the pandemic on pubs for they were very varied in this small study.

A much longer version with more 'colour' is to be found at the Stroud CAMRA website.

Bob Jeffrey



PODGY TICKER?

THE CONTINUING TALES OF A BEER COLLECTOR

In this edition our tick box hero considers the lure of the dark side: is the force to resist the dark path with you?

I'm not sure how many Tippler readers are Star Wars fans, but some may remember Yoda's words on his deathbed, warning Luke not to succumb to the dark side: 'If once you start down the dark path, forever will it dominate your destiny. Consume you, it will.'

I doubt that Yoda had an imperial stout in mind when he uttered this warning, but it sometimes seems that there is a not-so-secret conspiracy out there to turn drinkers away from dark beers. Just take a moment to think about the bars you have frequented recently – lots of pale beers in a row with a token beer from the dark side if you're lucky. That is, of course, almost certainly down to customer demand – most drinkers only want to drink pale beer, so that is exactly what publicans put on. However, those who shy away from the dark side are missing out on some brilliant beers. As a collector, I can't afford to miss out on a whole range of beer styles just because of their colour, but I must admit it took a few years of training to convince me to like them all.

First of all, what do we mean by dark beer? Some readers will be aware that there are scales for measuring the colour of our beer. Americans use a measurement called SRM (Standard Reference Method), whereas in Europe the measure is EBC (European Brewing Convention). Both these scales are based on Lovibond colour units and will give a number between zero and 40+. The Lovibond scale was created in 1883 by a British brewer of that name. Even with a lovely scale, however, we still need to decide at which point a beer crosses to the dark side – is it 22 or 25 or 30? So, I shall use a simple rule of thumb (or rule of hand if you prefer): I will consider

a beer to be dark if you cannot see your hand on the other side of the pint glass when you pick it up. This is not fool-proof, many readers will point out I am sure, because pale beers can these days be so hazy that they are opaque, but it will have to do for now.

What makes our beer dark? Malt is the source of most of the colour, of course. The darker the malt, the darker the beer will be and darker malts are created by 'drying' the grain for longer or at a higher temperature, a bit like keeping your bread in the toaster



for longer. Barrel ageing can also affect beer colour and occasionally an adjunct used by a brewer might darken it too, but these methods account for only a very small proportion of dark beers.

There are quite a few different dark beer styles. Dark lagers are perhaps uncommon in the UK, but in my opinion much more interesting than their pale counterparts. Try a schwarzbier, dunkel weizen, bock or doppelbock. Belgian dubbels, tripels and quadrupels can also be dark, as can barley wine, a rarely brewed style these days. However, the styles that most people would associate with the dark side are porters and stouts. Historians think it likely that the very earliest beers – brewed in Mesopotamia and Ancient Egypt – were probably relatively pale. Much later, dark beers became common in Britain and continental Europe probably because of the rather crude kilns used for drying the malt, which tended to result in darker roasts. Hence, the early popularity in Britain of porter and, later, its stronger cousin the stout porter.

Then there is the black ipa! The name itself is confusing, of course – how can it be both black and a pale ale? Well, it can't, it isn't a pale ale, it is most definitely on the dark side. However, it will have some of the taste profile of an ipa, because of the addition of heaps of hops, usually American hops with their big bold flavours. Drinking a black ipa is an interesting, but perhaps a little confusing experience. I generally find it less interesting than drinking a good ipa or a good porter or stout. For those who want to taste the black ipa effect, Loch Lomond brew a lovely ipa called Bravehop and a dark version called Bravehop Dark, which uses the same recipe except for the inclusion of chocolate malt. Drinking them side by side will allow you to experience the effect that a change of malt has on the resultant beer.

As beers on the dark side are brewed using darker malts, it is no surprise that these beers have a much

PODGY TICKER?

THE CONTINUING TALES OF A BEER COLLECTOR

more prominent malty profile when tasted. With pale beers it is hops that take centre stage, whereas dark beers allow malt to be the star of the show. This means that beers on the dark side will provide more flavours of caramel, roasted nuts, coffee, liquorice, chocolate, crusty bread or stone fruits. Stouts, in particular, can vary tremendously in flavour profile, from the intense coffee bitterness of a dry stout, through the more balanced full-bodied maltiness of an oatmeal stout, to the creamy sweetness of a milk stout with its added lactose.

It is not possible for me to say exactly how many of the 11,000+ beers in my beer list have been dark. However, out of the last 100 beers added to the collection, 72 were pale and 28 were on the dark side. If we consider this pattern to be representative of the entire collection, then it would suggest that somewhere around a quarter of the beers I drink are dark. This clearly doesn't simply reflect availability, since I am a fan of the dark side and will frequently choose dark beers over pale alternatives. I think it likely that my tastes have changed a bit as I have got older – my younger self was certainly more of a fan of the lighter side.

Here is a table of some of my favourite beers from the dark side (not in any particular order apart from alphabetic):

Arbor Breakfast Stout	– 7.4% oatmeal stout
Brass Castle Bad Kitty	– 5.5% porter
Brew York Tonkoko	– 4.3% milk stout
Lervig 3 Bean Stout	– 12% imperial stout
Loch Lomond Silkie Stout	– 5% oatmeal stout
Magic Rock Dark Arts	– 6% stout
New Bristol Cinder Toffee Stout	– 4% pastry stout
Northern Monk	
Sticky Toffee Strannik	– 10% imperial pudding stout
Siren Caribbean Chocolate Cake	– 7.4% pastry stout
St Austell Mena Dhu	– 4.5% stout
Thornbridge Strawberry Lucaria	– 4.5% ice cream porter
Tiny Rebel Stay Puft	– 5.2% marshmallow porter
Titanic Plum Porter	– 4.9% fruit porter
Wiper and True Milkshake	– 5.6% milk stout



PODGY TICKER?

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Today, modern Guinness is brewed in over 40 different countries and the beer is available across most of the globe. UK drinkers currently consume more of the stuff than any other country, even more than Ireland, although I was surprised to find that third on the list is Nigeria. You may have already guessed from the tone of this paragraph that I am not a Guinness fan, but please feel free to write to me if you are – I would be interested to hear your reasons why it is worth a second look. The Guinness you will be served in your local pub is, of course, not real ale. However, until the 1960s it was, and earlier than that, so the stories go, it was often served using two casks – one containing older, less lively beer and the other fresher and therefore more lively beer. The barman would need to pour from the first cask to about two-thirds of the way, let it rest for a while and then top up with beer from the second cask. Many people have suggested that this history is the only reason why Guinness is still often served with a double pour. The modern version is filtered and served using a mix of

carbon dioxide and nitrogen and surged from a special tap to create its distinctive creamy head. How I would love to be transported back to a time when cask Guinness was served as a live product – I have a feeling my opinion of it would change dramatically as soon as I took the first sip!

If you don't generally consider choosing beers from the dark side when they appear on the bar before you, then I would urge you to take the plunge and give them a go. Not instead of drinking paler beers, but as well as. The flavours they can give you provide something that is a real contrast to those fruity flowery hop-forward lighter brews. It's not that the dark side is better, necessarily, but it is definitely different and as a collector, different is always good!

Pete Searle

Most of these are regular brews, with only two or three on the list being unusual or retired beers no longer available. I have tried to include a range of styles and strengths, but the fact that 5 out of the 14 have an ABV of 6% or higher and half of them are sweetened by the addition of lactose in the brew are indicators of my own personal tastes. Your list of top dark beers will undoubtedly be different. Let me know if you think I've missed out a real stonker.

As this is an article about dark beer, it would be remiss of me not to write at least something about the stout which is drunk most around the World (over 10 million pints each day, apparently!): the beer most people know simply as Guinness. You cannot argue with the success of this dark beer. Arthur Guinness started brewing in Dublin in 1759.



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North Cotswold Branch Email: Roger Price on chair@northcotswoldcamra.org.uk
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Tewkesbury Branch Email: chair@tewkesbury.camra.org.uk

Business Meetings are first Thursday bi-monthly.

Meetings are listed here - <https://tewkesbury.camra.org.uk/diary>

For further details please contact Pete at secretary@tewkesbury.camra.org.uk or Steve by email on: socialsecretary@tewkesbury.camra.org.uk or visit the website www.tewkesbury.camra.org.uk

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Dursley Sub-Branch Email: dursley@gloucestershire.camra.org.uk

Meetings on last Tuesday of the month at 8.00 pm. Call: Peter Corfield, Chair, on 01453 844952.

Forest of Dean Sub-Branch Email: forestofdean@gloucestershire.camra.org.uk

Meetings every Thursday night for a social at 8.00 pm. Please check on Forest of Dean CAMRA Facebook page. Call: John Fox on 01291 689493

Gloucester Sub-Branch Email: gloucester@gloucestershire.camra.org.uk

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Stroud Sub-Branch Email: stroud@gloucestershire.camra.org.uk

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Contact is Philip Burton. Anyone interested in Stroud meetings should contact us by email at secretary@stroud.camra.org.uk and ask to be added to our email list.

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