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STROUD + TWO-NIGHT STAY AT THE
ROYAL HOP POLE TEWKESBURY!**



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for
Real Ale

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the tippler

Spring 2024

Inside:

**Tall Tales from
the Cider Shed
Brewing for
Climate Change**



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



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.
(E & O B) Errors and omission excepted.

FRONT COVER: Fresh beer, you can't get fresher than this! Inside Gloucester Brewery's Warehouse 4 where the kit is right next to the seating. With plenty to keep your entertained this is a taproom well worth a visit.

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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

NEW! CONTRIBUTION DEADLINES

For the next two issues, the deadlines will now be the
FIRST Friday in May 2024 and August 2024

www.thetippler.co.uk



CHANGE IS BREWING!



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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!



Well, here's the latest Tippler, 80 pages packed full of interesting articles, features, news and competitions.

Speaking of competitions, we now have five! There are, once again, three regulars to choose from all with great prizes, so get the entries sent in and see if your a lucky winner. Added to that we have a new prize crossword for those who like something a bit trickier to grapple with, along with the chance to win two weekend tickets to the fabulous Linton Festival - an event not to be missed.

All our regular features are here, along with some new contributors, letter writers and some that are a bit of a divergence from just beer and cider, but are still part of the fabric of this great county of ours.

Gloucestershire's pub, brewing, so now the madness of 'Dry January' is well and truly behind us, the real ale and cider community needs you and your support. With the warmer weather on the way, let's get out there and get drinking, taking part and saving real ales, ciders, pubs, breweries and other venues that are vulnerable to the bulldozer of 'progress'. Cheers!

Chris Leibbrandt

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& CYDER PUB OF THE YEAR 2023



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pouring today
on Facebook

Letters to the Editor...

Dear Chris,

Firstly, it's always a pleasure to find the latest edition in one of my favoured pubs here in Gloucester. The Winter 2023 edition is indeed packed full of good stuff.

I must comment on the 'Cider & Perry Man' piece on page 66 / 67. 'Gert Lush' has been around for a number of years, but despite my best attempts I have yet to identify its origins and heritage. My trail led to a private house in Gloucester - clearly it's not made here. Not one of the publicans I asked, nor the suppliers, could assist. It just magically arrives! I wonder why the people behind this product are shy of divulging the source...and such action always makes me wary of the product. Just saying! Maybe this is a project for a sleuth - I await a full report in due course!

Moving to the fine establishment that is Hartlands Cider, where the producer is clearly present at the farm, I would say this is the road to Corse and Staunton (if travelling west), the B4213. Travellers seeking this tippie would be disappointed if they attempted to locate it on the Ledbury road, locals regarding this to be the A438. I would like to add that I used to cycle out to Tirley during the apple picking season, and helped to fill many bags with apples (as well as pears) from the surrounding orchards.

I would get out more, but there is so much to read!

Ann Wooldridge

Chris replies:

Many thanks for the email, we're trying to get a bit more cider into the magazine, so I'm pleased it is creating a response.

It's a difficult one isn't it? Gert Lush seems to be made in Cheltenham, but I guess

anywhere in the county is good enough. In reality many of the cider makers are small outfits run by dedicated enthusiasts and we benefit from their enthusiasm and, very often, skills handed down from generation to generation. That these ciders are not mass produced we can only thank goodness as it keeps the diversity and parochial nature of the trade alive.

Hartlands is alive and well and as you say on the B4213 between Apperley and Corse Lawn.

Glad you're enjoying the read, maybe some would be cider sleuth can track down the source of Gert Lush, or maybe it's just great that it appears mysteriously when needed (as if by magic).

Cheers!

Dear Chris & Sirs and/or Miss/Mrs,

What a brilliant non-alcoholic, boozy read! Just picked up your latest bar read, brilliant, simply brilliant.

Have thoroughly enjoyed doing the wordsearch, haven't the foggiest or booziest as to what the answer is, even tried Mr Google, to bizarre to read what it could be.

However, onto the caption comp for the 'larger than average person' - trying to be politicly correct, which is not one of my strongest points - my below average alcoholic caption is:

"I may be ticklish but, please tap the right button?"

Hope this deserves a look through a beer bottle bottom or even pint glass for clarity and holding on for hope of winning and hoping I'm not too late?

Glad to have read the article on Vlad, also the fact about a Customs agent thrown down

Letters to the Editor...

a well, I'm married to an ex one of those - a Customs bloke, not a well!

Keep up the good work, I'll look out for the next one.

Julia Hartstill

P.S. we have a tap room in Newport (the one 'near' Cardiff) called *Weird Dad Brewery*, well worth a visit or recommendation. Thanks.

Chris replies:

Hello Julia,

Many thanks for the email and the enthusiastic welcome, I thoroughly approve of that!

I am curious to know where you found your edition of the Tippler, I know we have Newport postcodes in the county and you're only just down the road even if it's in another country.

I am glad also that you like the various competitions in the magazine, these are a great feature that allows the readers to get involved and win some great prizes. I have noted your gallant attempt at the answer to the Wordsearch and also your stab at the caption competition that will be judged at the end of February.

I am also delighted to hear your views on the varied content. It has taken some time to build up the various authors and content and I have to say I'm pretty pleased with the way it's all going, we have several regular, brilliant contributors. For all that, we are always looking for new authors and also letters, I like the letters pages and we are a bit of a rarity for CAMRA magazines in that we get them!

If you ever want to advertise with us, just let me know, after all, you're in the next county/country!

Cheers!

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



Hi Chris,

I was pleased to be mentioned in the Winter Tippler article marking the standing down from CBF duties of my former committee colleagues, Martin, John and Patrick. Very much the end of an era.

I attended the first festival in 1977 as a punter, the second by helping behind the bar, and then became festival treasurer in 1979 for 40 years until 2018. For some of those years I was branch treasurer too. Only one county branch in those days!

As CBF treasurer I was responsible for producing a business plan (a more recent requirement by CAMRA HQ), budgets, accounts, paying bills and paying in the takings (always just cash and cheques) until we began to accept card payments for ticket sales towards the end of my time - which of course still needed to be properly accounted for. John's detailed ticket sales spreadsheets were always an essential tool!

During each festival session I would be manning the token stand and dealing with requests and payment for any number of tokens, and, towards the end of every session, requests for small numbers to top up for that last pint or two. At the same time I would keep an eye on the adjacent CAMRA sales and CBF shirt stands. All these had to be brought to account too.

Then, after the evening sessions, I would convene a 'counting session' in the hall at Postlip where a group of us would count and double check the day's takings. I would then take them to the night safe at the bank in Winchcombe (subsequently in Cheltenham after the Winchcombe bank closed down). Sometimes a recount would be needed and so this could last well after midnight.

I couldn't have managed any of this without the invaluable help from a number

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Letters to the Editor...

of people, particularly Berni and Sue Rowe, Joe and Heather Hobbs, and Steve Harborne. Thanks also to other colleagues from the early days of CBF, namely Derwen Hinds, Norman Preece, and Colin Parker; and also to Jan McMillan, long time resident of Postlip Hall.

To finish, here are a few statistics from my time as CBF treasurer, for those who like this sort of thing:

Total profit made over the 40 years - £442,000. This averages out at £11,000 per year. Our best year was in 2009 where we made £26,000 (I can't quite remember what was special about this particular year!)

Of course, the profits were split 50/50 between CAMRA Gloucestershire and Postlip until 2017 and 2018 when the Cheltenham branch of CAMRA came on board and so the CAMRA share of the profits began to be shared equally between the two branches.

In 1989 we introduced 'Token Aid' where punters could donate their unused tokens to two nominated charities (which we changed each year). Normally, this would be one local and one national charity. For the period from 1989 to 2018, donations totalled £17,000.

In the period 1979 to 2018 around 2,500 beers from all over the country were 'on the menu' although some favourite local and popular beers warranted repeat appearances.

Finally, here's to another 40 odd years of CBF under the stewardship of Cheltenham CAMRA, and of course, the residents of Postlip Hall.

Geoff Rosam

Chris replies:

Hello Geoff,

Many thanks for the email and it's great to get some perspective on the brilliant job that has been done over the years with the CBF. Also highlighting the various members who made it all possible to continue to this day.

Anyone who has been to experience this wonderful event will be enormously appreciative.

Interesting the amount that's been given away in charity donations. On a personal note I always wonder why we feel the need to give to charity, why not just re-invest it in the event so we can keep it going with enhanced benefits? I am sure it helps us all sleep better at night.

What makes me sleep better at night is the continued health of CAMRA beer festivals that go on seemingly despite CAMRA HQ's insistence on making things difficult for those who spend a lot of their time organising things. I am pretty sure the silly levels of bureaucracy now indulged in will see the demise of a few festivals around the country. No doubt the insurance men, lawyers and accountants in HQ will have great fun checking all of the forms for errors. Such is the world we live in.

Cheers!

Hello Chris,

I'm wondering about the signage policy of Gloucester City's transport department. I recently took this photograph (below) of a



Letters to the Editor...

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



sign that I spotted on my way into town.

How keen cyclists like me and my middle-aged lycra-clad mates can get around in the fair city of Gloucester when we have this sort help, I don't know.

In the end I abandoned my quest and went off to the town on local transport, drowning my sorrows at the local hostelrys in the city. Luckily there are some great ones so I had a brilliant time despite the local council's highways department.

Widdley Braggins & friends

Chris replies:

Many thanks for the email, it's good to see that you made the best of a bad job and made your way to the pubs of Gloucester. Like many environmentalist friends of mine I am also worried about the amount of signage on our highways and byways, much of it superfluous and indeed, like the one you pictured, all a bit silly.

No wonder it drives us to drink.

Hi Chris,

I recently came across this old postcard (pictured above) of a street carnival, whereabouts unknown. The only clue is that the lamp over the door of the three-storey building in the background bears the words 'Red Lion Hotel'. I just wondered if you might consider publishing the image in The Tippler in the hope that one of your readers might recognise this fine old hostelry. It could be anywhere, but I'm guessing south of England.

Best wishes from Pembrokeshire,

Keith Johnson

Chris replies:

Hello Keith,

Many thanks for the email, and the image all the way from a beautiful part of the world.

There may well be an eagle-eyed reader out there who can help, not that there are many clues. With the 'Red Lion' being the most popular pub name in the country, it could be a bit of a task!

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Letters to the Editor...

Dear Chris

Now that we have got 'Dry January' out of the way, I did not take part personally, (*why would you? - Ed.*), I thought it might be useful to point out the health benefits of drinking beer, real ale in particular.

Two recent academic studies have concluded that beer consumption can have various and wide ranging benefits to the body's eco-system.

A recent study carried out by the Department of Micro-ecology at Dalian Medical University in China found that because beer is a fermented product it has many benefits. It is rich in dietary fibre and certain probiotics, essential amino acids, vitamins, trace elements, and bioactive substances that are involved in the regulation of many human physiological functions and support gut health by promoting the growth of beneficial bacteria. A balanced gut microbiome aids in digestion and strengthens the immune system.

The polyphenols in the malt and hops of beer are also important active compounds that interact with the gut microbiome. Previous studies have investigated how these beer bio-actives may help prevent arteriosclerosis, and heart disease, improve blood circulation and immune function, support antioxidant and anti-ageing effects, promote oestrogen production, confer cardioprotective benefits, and (in the current tense international climate - quite useful) reduce radiation damage.

A professor from Amsterdam University, Eric Claassen, went further by explaining that some strong Belgian bottled beers such as Westmalle Tripel and Echt Kriekenbier were even more rich in beneficial pro-biotics due to the fact that they undergo a secondary fermentation in the bottle and contain live yeasts.

What neither of these investigations point out, however, is that here in the UK we have a fantastic range of beverages of varying ABV that are unpasteurised and unfiltered and, therefore, possess the same health benefits of the continental bottled beers without the excessive alcohol content. This means we can enjoy great cask conditioned ale with the knowledge that they really are good for us.

James Brown

Chris replies:

Many thanks for the email and its interesting contents full of good cheer.

I suspect that most real ale drinkers would have been able to hazard a guess that it's all good for you, but without all of the scientific empirical evidence. I was musing to myself about the benefits of real ale after I had attended the Tewkesbury Winter Ales

Festival. Somewhere approaching 1,200 people attended over the three days, all drinking ambrosia and, as far as I know, not a cross word to

be heard in the place. If that isn't a medical benefit I don't know what is, just thinking about the social cohesion and the buzz-phrase of the moment: 'mental health', it has to be good for that!

I always wonder about statistics that are bandied about, particularly by those who have an axe to grind. Some are, unfortunately, partly driven by the nanny state where the majority of beer lovers are poorly affected by the small minority of people who have alcohol problems and who attract a disproportionate amount of bad press. Then again, what would the country be coming to if the media outlets spent their time printing and reporting good news stories? How would the masses be controlled if they just went around in a state of ignorant bliss? It doesn't bear thinking about.

'...beer consumption can have various and wide ranging benefits to the body's eco-system.'

THE INDEPENDENT PUB AT THE HEART OF THE COMMUNITY



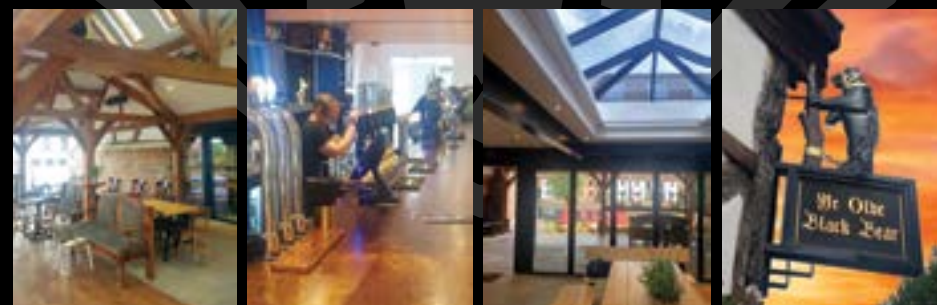
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THE HUNTER'S COLUMN



In which our intrepid hero visits Tewkesbury Winter Ales Festival and muses on a little known Ross-on-Wye pop star

Inferno Brewery took the first two places in the Best Gloucestershire Beer of the Festival in a blind (as opposed to blind drunk) tasting, by an extended panel of ale enthusiasts at the recent Tewkesbury Winter Ales Festival.

The festival is widely acknowledged by the real ale cognoscenti (not all with beards and sandals), as being one of the best winter-ales-only events this side of Beer Heaven. Inferno's Sloe Burner made the knockout blow at a punchy 6%, and the second spot was taken by their Cherry Hot, at a similarly punchy 6%. Ale drinkers of the town, which lies alongside two major rivers, the Severn

and the Avon, count themselves extremely fortunate to have such a highly rated brewery 'on tap' at the White Bear on the Bredon Road. Open over extended weekends – best to check times. There are in fact three rivers in Tewkesbury (Town Anthem: "River Stay Away From My Door"), as it is the River Swilgate which curls its way around the abbey, having emerged from the confluence of two smaller brooks originating in Bishops Cleeve and Cheltenham. It may all well contribute to the quality of water in Tewkesbury, which is, of course, the main ingredient of ale, at 90 to 96%. It also contributes to its abundance in the town, where in times of flood the White Bear is known to get its feet wet! We don't wish it to become a 'dry' town, but if the peoples of Bishops Cleeve and Cheltenham could hang on to their own water, I could sell my flippers. Having moved into Tewkesbury from a town near the southern slopes of the

Lickey Hills a couple of decades ago, and with the combined rivers sometimes knocking on our door, I feel so much like a 'proper' local that I've started developing webbed feet. Useful in a flood, of course.

The ale of the festival, judged by it being the first to sell out, was Bristol based Wiper and True Brewery's Endless Love, at a fairly sensible 4.8%. Numbered 70 out of the 70 ales available, it would have been tucked away in a corner of the serving area and so didn't

jump out at me when I wandered in. Although, the description may have put me off a bit – "one of the most classic styles of craft beer... Malt base

has lots of Vienna and Munich... with Simcoe and Chinook hops for smooth satisfying bitterness". It was light in colour too when I was seeking out something dark and roasty with coffee and liquorice flavours. I'll pay more attention next time.

Endless Love? Was it a nod to Lionel Ritchie and Diana Ross's 1981 hit? And talking about hits, anyone who did boldly go to beer no. 52, a 15% chocolatey, marshmallowy, coconutty, 'Christmas reminiscence' from Ross on Wye's Motley Hog Brewery would surely have experienced one. For the faint hearted there was a Motley back up in Imperial Hog at a mere 11%, which "contains coconuts" and delivered a "Christmas cake finish".

The brewer definitely sounds like a winner – on the coconut stall at the local fair. Motley must have cornered the local coconut market. I recently visited Ross. One to return a couple of pints i.e. half firkins to Motley Hog's

micropub, The Tap House, and two to see a jazz (we all have our weaknesses) gig at the Corn Exchange.

What further drew me to the venue, which is on the back of the King's Head Hotel, was that it had its own brewery, stood proud twixt bar and stage. It is the home of Corn Ales, set up in 2022 by friendly head brewer, Robert, and serving a range of ales, including an Irish Boy Stout, at a tasty, dry 4.5%.

The town couldn't have been named after Diana, but she could well be the patron saint. The original Man of Ross was John Kyrle (1637 – 1724), a philanthropist and major benefactor to the town.

Ross on Wye had its own resident pop star at the time when Diana and Lionel were climbing up the charts – 'Fritz' Fryer. Fritz ran an antiques and lighting shop in the town and was originally from Blackburn, where his mother ran the Salvation Army and his father was a church organist.

But Fritz was looking for other doors to knock on. I never met him, but we did go into his shop many years ago where I was surprised to see a gold record on the wall. I learnt that Fritz had got together with a school mate, in the skiffle boom of the mid to late 50's which progressed

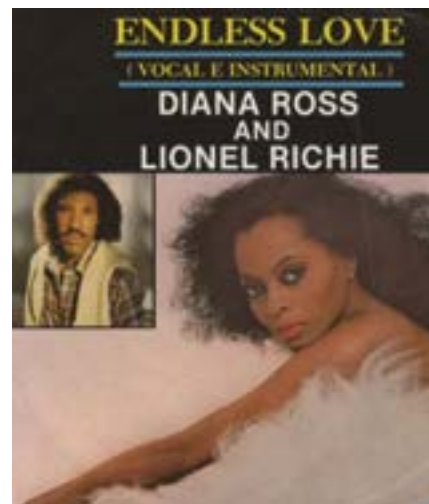
into the Beat Boom of the 60's and formed The Four Pennies, who went on to have a no. 1 hit with the self-penned Juliet. Li and Di only got to no. 7 in the UK with their endless loving.

Fritz went on to work in a recording capacity with such diverse artistes as Marty Wilde, Dusty Springfield, Clannad, Horslips, Motörhead, Stackridge and even the early Queen.

He helped set up the famous nearby Rockfield Studio, where Black Sabbath, Hawkwind and Queen, to Simple Minds, Iggy Pop and Robert Plant, and later Oasis, The Stone Roses, The Charlatans, Manic Street Preachers, Coldplay and "Old Uncle Tom Cobley and All" have recorded.

Fritz has passed on. His company still exists in Ross but no plaque on the wall yet. Only at the local dentist's.

The Hunter





News from NORTH COTSWOLDS



Monthly Pub Walks

Held outside the Summer festival months. We have now completed 113 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 114:** Sat 5th October
Plough Inn, Stretton
- No 115:** Sat 2nd November
Carpenters Arms, Miserden
- No 116:** Sat 7th December 2024
Hobnails Inn, Alderton

Call Roger Price on 01451 810305 or just turn up. Dogs welcome on leads. Non CAMRA members welcome. Walks are subject to weather and walker numbers.

Day Away

In planning stage. A Saturday by public transport. Visiting GBG Pubs in a local town or City See website for details. Provisionally Oxford.

FaceBook

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

Cycling Events

The programme includes 3 events in 2024. 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 Summer run was held on the 18th August from Broadway to Evesham and return. The Autumn run on 13th Oct from Bourton on the Water to Stow and Oddington area was deferred.

Motorcycling Events

We are also planning 3 motorcycle runs (approx. 80miles on fine days) visiting scenic locations. Started in Spring 2024.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

20:00hrs Wednesday 27th March at the Bakers Arms broad Campden

BEER FESTIVALS 2024

22nd Ale and Steam Weekend 14th to 16th June
16th Moreton Beer Festival 8th - 9th September

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

North Cotswold CAMRA & GWR

22nd GWR STEAM & ALE WEEKEND

14th to 16th JUNE 2024

10:30 to 18:00 (Fri)

10:30 to 19.00 (Sat) to 16:00 (Sun)

Winchcombe & Toddington Stations

50 Beers total-15 at Toddington
Hot & Cold Food with Soft Drinks

CAMPING near station at Winchcombe

Come by Train: Extra trains for this event. Broadway open!

Frequent trains will operate between Cheltenham RC and Broadway

Additional early and late trains on Saturday

See timetable on GWR Website.

A train ticket on the day is required

or you need a platform ticket for entry.

Plenty of car parking at Toddington



www.northcotswoldcamra.org.uk



27 Not Out

Was everybody 'appy?
You bet yer life we were.



Dambusters at lunchtime



1st – 3rd February 2024

After last year's post-Covid rising from the ashes, the twenty seventh Tewkesbury Winter Ales Festival took place this year across it's more usual time of the first weekend of February.

If it ain't broke, why change it?

The formula was the same as ever: The Watson Hall, 70 unusual beers brewed only in winter and gathered from all over the country, a well-seasoned Tewkesbury CAMRA groundcrew working on autopilot, paper airplanes, dambusters and the Town Band on Saturday lunchtime and and of course, Six Nations rugby on both Friday and Saturday (absent last year).

Following an unprecedented amount of online interest during late January we were pretty sure it was going to be another success, and so it proved.

This year's beers were a diverse selection from Durham to Cornwall from an easy 3.8% to a testing 15%, all chosen by our one and only beer-maestro Ian Mence and guaranteed to test, tease, trouble or trounce the tastebuds.

As a new initiative, our beer of the festival was to be the barrel that ran out first, which turned out not to be (as expected) the 15 percenter (*Motley Hog*, *Snowball*), but oddly, one of the two beers we included due to a late change of supply, *Endless Love* from Bristol based *Wiper and True*.

Gloucestershire Beer of the year was chosen as ever by a panel of eight blind(?) tasters and went to *Sloe Burner* from Tewkesbury's *Inferno Brewery*. (NOT rigged!)

Given the new CAMRA rules regarding takeaways and giveaways (i.e. strictly none), perhaps the most pleasing aspect of the festival was the lack of beer that went down the drain on Sunday morning – we estimated less than two barrels in total. Great result.

When the dust settled

Positives? Another massively friendly and well attended event. As last year, we had roughly 1200 through the doors without a hint of trouble. A big thanks goes to Becky and her team at the Town Council for not only helping us jump through all the relevant licencing hoops on the way but also for installing the new cinema style screen and projector - the rugby looked brilliant on it.

And almost as an aside, it was a bumper weekend for town pubs and hotels. All rooms booked out and some very full pubs and restaurants. The inescapable truth is that (say it quietly) *CAMRA is good for the town...*

Negatives? Sadly the Rockchoir on Friday night couldn't be heard properly due to the stage acoustics (sorry folks). And then there was the absurd amount of Health & Safety documentation that came through from CAMRA just ten days before the event - no less than 32 time consuming forms to be filled in, to be precise. Our branch H&S Officer Phil is a senior NHS Health and Safety man in his day job and tells us he has nothing like that amount of form-filling day-to-day.

We are aware that, sadly, red tape is making CAMRA branches think twice about hosting beer festivals and we'll be having that conversation ourselves about next year.

It may be desirable for the GBBF but like many, we feel that the work it engenders is well and truly over the top for a relatively small volunteer-run event such as ours.

Watch this space.

Pete Adams

Chairman, Tewkesbury CAMRA



Thai Street Food?
You've gotta be joking



No growlers allowed?



Not all hard work...



What can I do you for sir?...



Aircraft technicians at work



Wales v Scotland - spot the wig



The other half of the beer is behind you...

46th Cotswold Beer Festival

Planning in Full Swing!

Friday 18th July to Sunday 21st July

Planning is underway for the 46th running of this legendary beer festival: still in its original home at Postlip Hall and Barn. Even better news is that, despite rising costs everywhere, this year's festival ticket prices are being held at last year's prices. The festival runs from Friday 18th July to Sunday 21st July.

In its stunning Cotswold location (between Cheltenham and Winchcombe) you will be able to enjoy over 110 casks of the finest real ale and 40 carefully chosen ciders and perries. The organisers hope to keep the beer and cider prices close to last year, despite the increased costs that breweries have endured recently.

Festival buses will run to and from Cheltenham and Winchcombe, and bus tickets can be purchased alongside festival entry tickets.

Entertainment will include live music, both in the barn on Saturday and outside in the gardens. You can relax and relish a picnic in the garden, sharing a pint with friends, whilst children enjoy ice cream and the bouncy castle.

This year's festival again hosts the Gloucestershire Beer of the Year competition. Gloucestershire's great breweries will have their beers judged by a panel of experts, then you will have the opportunity to taste the winning beers and see if you agree with the experts.

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.

Our FREE Sunday ticket gives you a great risk free introduction to the Cotswold Beer Festival. Entry to the festival and buses really is 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.

Under 18-year-olds go free with Saturday All Day tickets. Tickets will be available from:

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

in due course. Buy early to avoid any disappointment.

DAY	EARLY BIRD PRICE	STANDARD PRICE
Friday (6 - 11pm)	£10	£12
Saturday all day 12 - 9pm	£12	£14
Saturday evening 4:30 - 9pm	£8	£10
Sunday	FREE	FREE



NEWS FROM DURSLEY



The Dursley sub-branch meet regularly on the last Tuesday of the month to discuss local matters, our pubs and breweries and to enjoy the beers.

All are welcome and details of meetings are on the Dursley & District CAMRA website. Several of us will be visiting Tewkesbury again this year, unfortunately the cost of hiring transport makes it too pricey for many of our members, so we will be making our own way there. Also plans have been made to attend the Bath Beer Festival in February.

The Dursley Pub of the Year 2024

The Old Spot Inn, Dursley, is the 2024 Sub Branch Pub of the Year. It has been in the Good Beer Guide for 30 consecutive years. It was also the Runner Up in the CAMRA National Pub of the Year competition in 1997, just two years after its first appearance in the guide.

This pub has been in the CAMRA Good Beer Guide since 1995, just a couple of years after Ric and Ellie Sainty took on the old Fox & Hounds (known locally as the Dog & Fox) and transformed it into the Old Spot that we know today.

Most of the records were lost in the handover to me by our previous Chairman, but I have evidence that it has been our sub branch Pub of the Year (POTY) at least 10 times. It has been the Gloucestershire POTY five times, the SW Regional winner some three times. It was the National Runner Up in 1997, it was the CAMRA Champion Pub of the Year in 2007, and a finalist in 2013.

Ric and Ellie were the first winners of this accolade (as the Old Spot) and the sorely missed Steve Herbert won several awards when managing the pub with Belinda, and now Will Sutton has carried forward the trend, this being the second win under his stewardship.

It is worth pointing out how we arrive at our Pub of the Year, and beyond. Each year sub branch members complete surveys of our area pubs, giving marks for its likelihood of being in the Good Beer Guide, by marking its welcome, its support of CAMRA through

displays of local CAMRA magazines, past copies of the GBG, window stickers and other paraphernalia; but mostly the quality of the beer and how its kept and served. These surveys are collated and each year members can vote for their favourite pub based on a list of the top six pubs in the area. This decides on our POTY.

At the same time the other sub-branches go through similar procedures to select their POTY, and these are all checked against each other to arrive at the Gloucestershire POTY. It



then moves on to the regional POTYs and so on up to the National winner.


So, without boring you all further, I'd like to present this certificate and hope they can find a small piece of wall somewhere in the pub to display it amongst all of the other famed certificates and plaques!

Well done, Old Spot.

**DURSLEY CAMRA
PUB OF THE YEAR
2024**



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DURSLEY**
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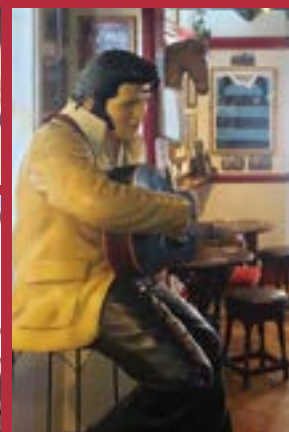
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News from FOREST OF DEAN



Campaign
for
Real Ale

The Forest of Dean sub-branch of Gloucestershire CAMRA remain surprisingly active, with more members joining us for our weekly pub visits.

The socials or weekly jollies continue throughout the winter months, perhaps understandably frequented by only the handful of core active members. We've recently visited the Red Hart at Blaisdon (Christmas Jumper night), White Horse at Staunton, Forge Hammer at Lydbrook and the Cock Inn at Blakeney. The Cock Inn survives and remains a community hub. We also visited the New Inn at Ruspidge. This pub had been closed for a considerable time and the future was uncertain. Geographically it

is located in the lower part of Ruspidge, a straggling linear village, so it was heartening to see on our Thursday visit the pub was doing a roaring trade with locals.

Andy Tubb has decided to step down as Social Secretary for the branch although he will continue to be an active member of CAMRA. The Forest of Dean branch owe a huge debt of gratitude to Andy as his enthusiasm as Social Secretary has, against all odds, maintained a weekly programme of social meetings.

The Forest of Dean Pub of the Year 2024

The Forest of Dean Pub of the Year 2024 is the Hearts of Oak in Drybrook. Members of CAMRA and pub locals met at the pub on Tuesday 30th January to present landlady Sarah Gibson and her son Tom with the certificate.

It was in 2021 that the Gibson family saw potential in the previously unloved and closed village pub and, after much cleaning and refurbishment, opened the Hearts of Oak again in January 2022. It was not long before their efforts came to the notice of the local CAMRA branch because of the cellar skills of Tom, serving Wye Valley *Butty Bach* in perfect condition. 'Butty' is the biggest seller, but a second pump is reserved for other beers in the Wye Valley core range including their seasonal specials. Rotating guest beers from independent and regional breweries are dispensed from the third hand-pump. Branch chairman Geoff Sandles said: "The Hearts of Oak is a proper homely community local where people can either come in for a chat, join in the weekly charity quiz or just sit in the corner reading the paper with a well-kept pint of real ale. It's dog friendly, with two warming log fires, traditional pub games, and a TV that

is not obtrusive." Sarah is also a wonderful cook, but the food served is simplistic yet delicious traditional pub fayre rather than pretentious gourmet haute cuisine. Sarah and Tom have put the Heart back into the village. There's even a pop-up post office in the car park on Thursdays.



HEARTS OF OAK

Spring Beer Fest

FRI 24TH - SUN 26TH MAY

MAY 24	Mike Walsh - 6pm	FRI
Mike is a music fanatic with a wide range of influences from hip hop to folk music. He uses different styles to create his own sound and likes to add a unique touch to the covers he performs.		
MAY 25	Georgia Sherwood - 3pm	SAT
Georgia is a very versatile artist who performs a wide range of covers!		
MAY 25	The Drift - 6pm	SAT
The Drift is a new and exciting band crashing on to the current music scene around the south west of England. Their music is a fusion of rock, reggae, funk.		
MAY 26	2coustix - 4pm	SUN
From chilled out classics to full on anthems 2Coustix - perfect for any event!		
MAY 26	OCD - 7pm	SUN
Red Hot Rock, Rhythm & Blues covers with a the occasional Punk number thrown in.		

20+ Real Ales & Ciders

The Hearts of Oak, Drybrook, GL17 9EE

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Good Beer Guide 2024 - Forest of Dean Pub of the Year 2024

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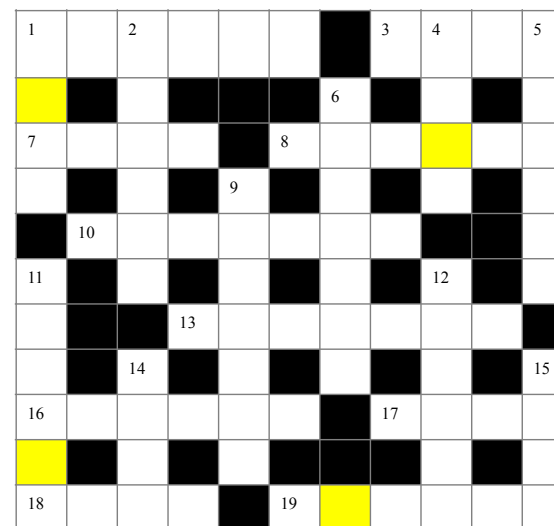
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NEW FOR 2024

We've got a brand new prize crossword sponsored by Rich Energy where you can win one of our brand new and soon to be coveted Tippler Tee Shirts.



PRIZE CROSSWORD



What you can win

Want to be the envy of your friends and drinking buddies?

We'll get this crossword filled in and sent back and you could win one of the brand new Tippler tee-shirts. This is the first of the Tippler 'merch' (*apologies for the jargon - Ed.*) that will be coveted by many.

The first in the brand new series of puzzles this has been set by our corvid avian friend 'Maggie', like its namesake setter, it's a bit tricky, so good luck!

Rearrange the yellow squares to find a brewery.

ACROSS

1. Beer carrier (6)
3. Not an exciting place to live (4)
7. Headless girl has an energy field (4)
8. Colin's crowbar is smart (6)
10. Greek play met changes (7)
13. Catch English drum (7)
16. First coat can teach children to read (6)
17. Name change in prayer (4)
18. Moisture in sound amplification (4)
19. Conflict spotted in European capital (6)

DOWN

1. Scheme to put beginner in the pot (4)
2. Try air mix, it's unusual (6)
4. Naval return is endless molten rock (4)
5. International organisation in drug-induced high with root veg (6)
6. Ruddy hot (7)
9. Nan fell and broke her wash cloth (7)
11. Hurried and done up (6)
12. President's winning cards (6)
14. Solid business (4)
15. Find fresh start in plane wing (4)

Send your entries, either email, or by old-school post, to the Editor at:
The Editor, The Tippler, 23 Theocs Close, Tewkesbury. GL20 5TX

Send your entries to

chris@thetippler.co.uk

WHY NOT ENTER A COMPETITION

WE'VE GOT LOADS TO WIN!

NEW! TIPPLER TEE-SHIRT IN PRIZE CROSSWORD - SEE PAGE 23!

BREWERY TOURS TO GLOUCESTER BREWERY - SEE PAGE 35!

BREWERY TOURS TO STROUD BREWERY - SEE PAGE 45!

TWO WEEKEND TICKETS TO THE LINTON FESTIVAL - SEE PAGE 53!

TWO NIGHT STAY FOR TWO AT THE ROYAL HOP POLE HOTEL - SEE PAGE 67!

SEND YOUR ENTRIES TO chris@thetippler.co.uk



The Stroud Pub of the Year 2024

The Ale House is Stroud CAMRA's Pub of the Year for 2024. On an unseasonably warm and sunny February afternoon, Stroud CAMRA presented landlord Nigel Crofts with a framed certificate recording the pub's triumph.

The presentation took place at 3:00pm on Sunday 18 February, with the service of the pub's famed Sunday lunch winding down and in the supposed afternoon lull before the regular weekly 'Sado-Masochistic Quiz' at 8:30pm. But the pub was very busy with diners, regulars and CAMRA members there to celebrate the Ale House's success in the ballot for Pub of the Year.

The Ale House topped a shortlist of three pubs in a ballot of local CAMRA members, comfortably beating last year's winner, the Prince Albert on Rodborough Hill, and the Crown & Sceptre.

This is a triumphant come-back for the Ale House, which reigned supreme as Stroud CAMRA Pub of the Year for six years between 2014 and 2019. In 2020 the Prince Albert finally took the top spot, before being unexpectedly toppled by the Crown

'The Ale House's success will come as no surprise to anyone who's been there. It is an ale-drinker's Mecca.'

at Minchinhampton, which seized the throne in 2021 during Richard Terry's all-too-brief stewardship. The Albert reclaimed the title in 2022 and held it for two years before the Ale House returned to the fore in 2024.

Lotte and Miles Lyster Connolly, landlady and landlord of the Prince Albert, asked to take part in Sunday's proceedings so as to 'pass on the baton' to Nigel—a remarkably generous gesture and a sign of the genuine friendship and mutual esteem that exists between the two establishments.

The Ale House's success will come as no surprise to anyone who's been there. It is an

ale-drinker's Mecca, an all-year-round beer festival, officially the best pub in Stroud and one of the finest in the county.

The Ale House now goes forward to the next round, to compete with the other Gloucestershire CAMRA sub-branch nominations for the title of Gloucestershire CAMRA Pub of the Year for 2024. The winner of that round goes on to compete for the prize of CAMRA South West Pub of the Year—and so on until one pub out of a shortlist of four is crowned national CAMRA Pub of the Year for 2024.

So far, three Gloucestershire pubs have scooped the supreme title of CAMRA Pub of the Year:

- **Sandford Park Alehouse, Cheltenham (2015)**
- **Salutation, Ham (2014)**
- **Old Spot, Dursley (2007)**

The Ale House boasts an ever-changing selection of nine beers on handpump, which runs the gamut of styles, colours and strengths, from fixtures like Burning Sky Plateau (3.5%) all the way up to guests like Tiley's India Pale Ale (6.5%). And all at very competitive prices, starting at £3.70.

It is quite a feat to keep nine real ales in tip-top condition, but landlord Nigel Crofts manages it day after day, week in, week out. Nigel comes from a family of hoteliers and publicans and previously ran award-winning Good Beer Guide-listed pubs in Ipswich, Hitchin, Chelmsford and Hertford, so he knows the business inside out. He runs the Ale House like a pub-lover rather than a landlord and keeps a range of ales to appeal to enthusiastic and discriminating ale drinkers—because he is one himself.

He is first and foremost a cellarman and there are no corners cut. The beer lines are properly and thoroughly cleaned between every cask, even at hectic times when the temptation might be just to flush the lines with water and get the ales back on—an all too common practice, even in Good Beer Guide-listed pubs.

The Ale House does not stock any so-called 'craft' keg beers. Aside from ideological considerations, Nigel believes they would inevitably impact on the turnover of his cask ales. In the long run the number or quality of the real ales on offer would be bound to suffer.

Local ales from Tiley's plus a cider and perry are always available, supplemented by an adventurous and catholic range of guests from breweries up and down the country, including Arbor, Fyne Ales, Howling Hops, Mallinsons, Salopian, Saltaire, Tiny Rebel, Thornbridge, Vocation, the list goes on. A dark beer (mild, porter or stout) is always available.

This daily cornucopia is supplemented by two themed beer festivals over the Spring Bank Holiday weekend and to coincide with the Stroud Fringe at the end of August. These festivals showcase beers from a specific area - London, Manchester, South Yorkshire etc., and have gained an enthusiastic and appreciative following, with people travelling many miles to sample a unique selection of beers from new and established microbreweries.

The Ale House occupies magnificent premises—a grade-II listed building built in 1837 for the Poor Law Guardians. The bar occupies the double-height top-lit former boardroom with two smaller rooms adjoining. It is far and away the finest pub interior in Stroud with elegantly proportioned, well-lit, high-ceilinged rooms heated by antique-style

radiators and a blazing log fire in winter. The walls are painted in rich colours and display paintings by local artists. The small patio courtyard is a suntrap in summer. A restored 1932 bar billiards table is a popular recent addition.

The Ale House is not only extremely dog friendly, but also home to a wide range of societies, meetings and clubs, including a writing group and the Stroud Radical Reading Group. Nigel himself presides over the fiendishly difficult Sado-Masochistic Ale House Quiz ('bring your own flagellum') which draws a near religious following on Sunday evenings.

A board outside proclaims 'The Ale House - where the art of conversation rules'. And so it does, but live music also features at the weekend. House bands include the Achievers and, once a month on Thursday, world-class jazz from Dave Ayre and friends.

When he's

not pulling pints or keeping an eye on the ales in the cellar, Nigel is also chief cook and bottle-washer, preparing from scratch a 'perky' chilly and a signature range of curries - if it says 'spicy' on the menu, prepare for an endorphin rush! - together with other less challenging dishes. The portions are extremely generous and very good value. Home-made soup and freshly prepared sandwiches are also available, while the Sunday roast is 'superb' and 'outrageously good value' (according to one satisfied diner).

Perhaps the last word should go to the customers. This is what they say on the pub's Facebook page: 'Very welcoming. Friendly staff and really good beer at really good prices'; 'Love this place, staff are really friendly and welcoming!' And finally, 'You won't find better beer or a better bunch of people in Stroud'.

I'll drink to that! **Tim Mars**

Stroud CAMRA Pubs Officer



Tony Hill (second right), chair of Stroud CAMRA, presents the Stroud CAMRA Pub of the Year 2024 certificate to landlord Nigel Crofts (second left), cheered on by the previous year's winners, landlords Lotte and Miles Lyster Connolly of the Prince Albert, and Stroud CAMRA members

(Credit: Michael Gallagher)



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 we reckon he knows what he's talking about . . .

Well, it's a happy new year as I write this, but you'll all be thinking of Easter bunnies and springtime beers when reading it. So as the nights are drawing out I have a few mats here from breweries where the lights have definitely gone out.

So I'll start quite a while back with the Festival brewery which used to brew at the Kingsditch Trading Estate in Cheltenham around 18 years ago. OMG scary when written down! The owner, Andy Forbes went on to set up Cotswold Lion brewery with Jon Kemp in Coberley then moved to Hartley farm. However, Andy has just announced his retirement, so we'll see whether the brewery continues. Here is one of their mats from 2008 which was produced in conjunction with the British Beermat Collectors Society's (BBCS) 48th anniversary and catalogued as #6.

Another more recent closure is the Hillside Brewery just off the A40 near May Hill. It was a great location for parties and still operates as a venue, but no longer brewing. This is their

only mat from 2014 and printed on thick shiny card - which is great till it gets wet and warps.

Here are a couple from Gloucester/ Cinderford which challenges the taxonomy in everyone's collection. Hawthorne with an e, started in 1978, (the same year as the much more well-known and successful Butcombe brewery). They originally brewed at the Norfolk House hotel (still on Bristol road) but moved and closed in 1983. Hawthorne did a couple of mats with a common front (pictured) and either a blank reverse, which BBCS denote as 1/0, or one with a list of brews on the reverse, '1/2'. For reference, a mat with the same front and reverse is listed as 1/1 in the mat catalogues.

The Hawthorn (no e) from Cinderford commenced in 1985 and ceased in 1987, issuing their only mat mid-term. It's a 1/2 mat.

You might be surprised to read that there is such a thing as a beermat catalogue. Indeed, every British beermat is catalogued as they are found/discovered. This relies upon collectors reporting any mat they come across, because breweries or printers have



no need for it. Historic exceptions are Guinness and Imperial Tobacco whom, in the 1950's, gave their mats a sequential serial number which can be used to identify the year of issue. Latterly, Molson-Coors and Greene King have added numbers to mats but these are more like stock code (Stock Keeping Unit (SKU) number) than anything one can logically follow (*I bet the warehouse staff can - Ed.*).

There are upwards of 60,000 different UK mats advertising beer, with around 1,000 added each year. There isn't a number counter on the file so I can't be sure. There are also catalogues for cider mats and various other beverages. Other countries have their own numbering systems too - it's a serious business keeping tabs.

Moving over to Cirencester, there used to be a brewery in Brewery Court: no surprises there! The eponymous brewery ran from 1887-1937 when taken over and closed by Simmonds, but alas didn't issue any beermats. In 1983, however, Cellar brewery took up residence in their old buildings as part of the local craft workshop enterprises, way after the original brewery shut its doors for the final time. Cellar rebranded in 1985 and closed in 1987 after a relatively short spell, but long enough to issue their one and only mat, pictured. Cotswold brewing started at the site in 1988 but barely lasted a year. A few barren years passed till Twelve Bells, Corinium and Force came along.

The Force brewery had a small tap room on the outskirts of town, and was set up by an ex-RAF officer, hence the name. They were credited with two mats, this being the second



from 2017, although I believe the first was issued by their London distributor rather than the brewery itself. Put it this way, the gaffer denied any knowledge of it; that won't be the first or last time that has happened.

There are often instances when a brewery orders a reprint of a mat, yet what they get is slightly different. When collectors spot it, companies are adamant its 'not new' - well it is to us! Above is an example of such a mat Evans Evan Bevan Ltd #3 with the printers name Tresises in blue and then red #4, a year later in 1955.

It is also quite common for pub landlords and staff to not notice different mats on their tables at any one time. I know! It's hardly a priority for them. This is especially true for sets of mats, where different brews or a numbered series exist. These are still issued, despite the end of the halcyon days of the 80's, when mass produced collectors sets from the likes of Courage, Ind Coope and Whitbread were commonplace. I'll be showing examples of these in the next issue.

If you wish to see more images of the breweries behind the mats, may I recommend a series of books by Tim Edgell & Geoff Sandles entitled, amongst others, Gloucestershire Pubs and Breweries. (ISBN 0-7524-3524-8. Another SKU for your collection!)

Russell Murfitt



RICH ENERGY: A Driving Force

"It's been a hard road, but what doesn't kill you makes you stronger, right?" So says the iconoclastic William Storey, a man who has a knack of upsetting establishment norms.

"Hackneyed terms like disruptor are a bit naff but with Rich Energy we certainly have a product and brand we think is superior to the market leader; and given the big boys have repeatedly tried to put me out of business I think we have something exceptional" he continued. "I am always looking to advance things and that often involves a bit of a 'Mohammed meeting the mountain' kind of scenario."



The look of a 1970's heavy metal roadie aside, he is no stranger to controversy. I first met William some seven years ago at a swanky football get together ahead of the 2017 world cup. After chatting to some celebrities we quickly established that neither of us were ageing rockstars and made off to a very nice London pub and after a couple of decent pints he announced that he was looking to buy a Formula 1 team. No small ambition, and, after losing out on acquiring Force India he became a title sponsor of Haas. The F1 establishment, however, wasn't ready for a newcomer to upset the apple cart; it's fair to say they made his excursion into the pinnacle of motorsport an extremely difficult one. Rich Energy Haas being faster than Red Bull in the first F1 test at Barcelona went down very badly with the Thai/Austrian Energy drink giant as did Storey's public statements of having a superior product.

In 2019, along with the onset of the COVID crisis, defending various lawsuits became a normal part of his working week. Red Bull, energy drink producer and F1 competitor and others looked to sue Rich Energy out of existence, and they nearly succeeded.

"It's fair to say, with some proper British understatement, that this was a pretty

challenging time for me and my company, I nearly lost count of the number of lawsuits I was involved in. A small company fighting against nearly unassailable odds: a classic underdog. As it happens, we prevailed in nearly every one and I am still here, but they nearly brought me to my knees and I've learned valuable lessons. In the intervening period I changed tack and put my efforts into growing a data systems company and that supported me in rebuilding Rich Energy."

Rich Energy teams have also managed to win British Superbikes, Ducati Championship and British Touring car titles in the last two years. "I'm back in the game," he stated. "We have a top quality, premium product that tastes great and has the ability to seamlessly replace the market leader. Consumers prefer Rich Energy but navigating barriers of entry is an ongoing challenge. For example, a very large UK



brewery chose Rich Energy as their preferred energy drink for around 2000 pubs until Red Bull turned up with a seven figure listing fee to gazump us."

William's company's Lazarine recovery is noteworthy. Now, with a fast growing order book and some national customer brands involved in its distribution, Rich Energy is rolling out across the UK.

"We're primarily targeting independent pubs and pub chains that can establish our brand in their outlets, and by the way, as a long term real ale drinker I love pubs. They can easily swap to this great product and British brand, make more money and stand out from the competition. The cans have that timeless black and gold livery that everyone will come to recognise as a statement of quality."

Chris Leibbrandt



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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!

It was time again for The Throttle Club outing. It's now naughty to use the term 'pub crawl' these days, so outing it was to be.

Now, (and luckily) The Turks Head Inn has acquired a narrow boat. This lovely craft has been cunningly renamed (unlucky) 'The Turks Head' omitting the word Inn, in case a passer-by tries to buy a beer from us!

Our first outing on the beast was on the Sunday of The Gloucester Folk Festival. We gallant few met early at The Turks to listen appropriately enough to sea shanties by The Gloucester Diamonds to get us in the mood before we went out - great band: we all sang along.

We brought a new boy along (Lee on the left in the photo) for an outing with the grown ups. The beers we had on that day started with *Jailbird Pale* 3.9%, *Parkway Grandslam* 4.2%, and for the brave boys *Jester Brew 27* a 5.3% stout. Wow, good start!

After all the victims gathered, we set off for a quick one in the newly opened Hop Kettle in the docks, They had *Dog Star PA* 4% and *Red Star* at 5.2%. Reasonably priced and very tasty, a nice surprise as none of us had tried them before.

The talk around the bazaars is that this end of the Docks is great, and I couldn't agree more. Also handy for the boat!

Suitably wettened (? - Ed.) we started the engine and, singing something vaguely nautical, set off for the ten minute sail to The High Orchard - a newish Marstons foodie type of house just down the canal. The barman who had not a mark of life upon him had *Directors* 4.8% and *Pedigree* at 4.5%. Being a grown up I went for The Directors to remind me of Plymouth, those far off college days, brewery in town, 12p pints etc. The yet to shave amongst us stuck to *Pedigree*. Predictable but nice.

Christine (the blonde) blew her whistle, so we trotted back to the boat. With no one yet wet (on the outside) we sailed for The Bell at Frampton. It seems though lovely, that we'd left Gloucester a lifetime ago, but it was really only one and a half pints of our cloudy emergency barrel! Arriving there I instructed our gallant crew to behave as there were lots of neat grown ups in their Sunday best. So we bravely sat outside with *Butcombe Rarebreed* 3.8% and *Original* at 4%. The view of the Green was splendid and made us feel all 'Countryish'.

Then, sadly, it was homeward bound. Next stop (after another murky pint and some near misses with other boats) was The Pilot at Hardwicke. An old pub, it was built in a

time when Englishmen could be bad...

So we moored up. Still no one wet. Inside for two old reliables. *Doom Bar* 4% and *London Pride* 4.1%. Lovely pub, but as skipper (me, white hair) felt I should try out 'the Conveniences'. On re-entering the bar I announced "What a dump,

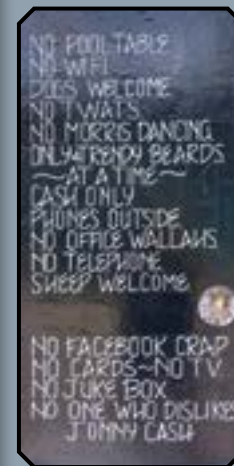
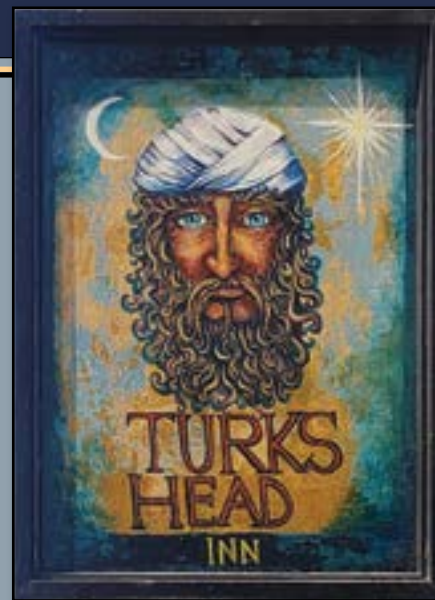
it took two flushes." After a pint of each I instructed everyone to use the loo as it was a good half hour to home and they weren't filling up mine.

So off we sailed again. The sun was soon to go down, and selfishly, the bridge keepers having homes to go to, no longer doing 24hr shifts. Bring back Queen Victoria (the woman, not the pub).

Sailing into Gloucester's magnificent docks - best seen from the water - we re-entered the inner basin. A smarty pants said: "Now I know why God found excuses not to come here." Does he not know about Gloucester's monasteries? So it was over the side for him. Boy was it cold pulling him out!

And that was the Winter outing on the pub's ew boat. Come Easter The Severn beckons (but not bikinis)...

Pete Sheehy



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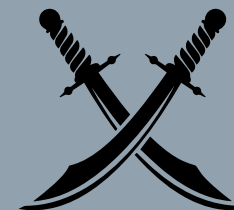
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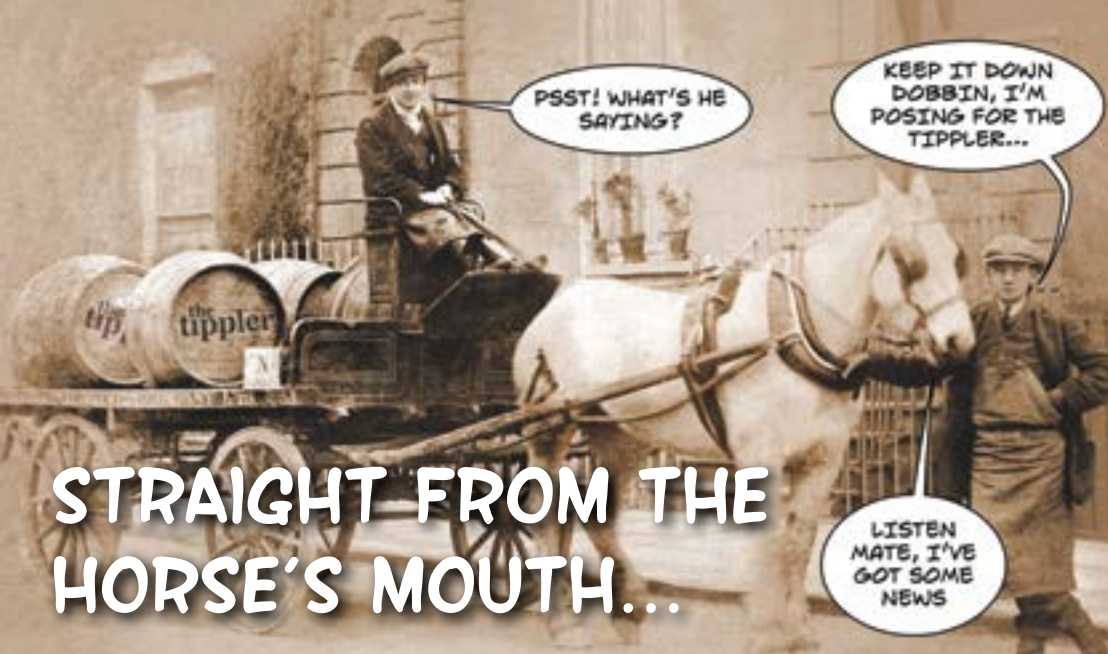
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- 1 Find the listed Gloucestershire hosteleries in the grid (open before the COVID lockdown).
- 2 They can be horizontal, vertical or diagonal, forward or back.
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STRAIGHT FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH...

BREWERY NEWS

Arkell's Brewery over the years, have delved into single hop and single malt beer collections, indulged in fruit flavoured beers (*Tinge of Ginge* being a stand out favourite), trialed celebration beers, classic styles, more modern styles, and even brewed a bread based beer. In the brewhouse, they try to be led by our loyal drinkers' preferences and trends, while also developing their own knowledge and brewing skills.

For 2024, they are, once again, introducing a number of brand new, one off beers alongside a few returning favourites. Sir Noel Ale is a Christmas must have, and *Spring Hopper* has also cemented itself as a regular seasonal favourite, but the timeless *Kingsdown* is making a comeback. First brewed in the late 1960's, and once a staple feature at Arkell's, locally this one is always extremely popular.

Next there are three brand new recipes for 2024. First up is *Summer Saison*. They brewed their first Saison style beer in 2022. Saison is a traditional style of beer where wild natural yeasts ferment the sugars, giving the

beer unusual spicy and intense fruity flavours. Saisons were seasonal beers in the old days, where brewing was done in the cold winter months to control the fermentations and then drunk in the warmer summer months during harvests.

As the weather turns, anticipate their *Winter Warmer*. his beer will be chocolaty, velvety and indulgent, perfect for sipping by the pub fires. To add a twist to this dark stout, they're introducing some chocolate orange.

Between these two seasonal brews, they're planning to release another first from Arkell's - a collaboration... or 'collab' if you're a cool craft brewer! Beginning with a gentle introduction to collab brews, they thought they'd keep it in the family and work with Johnny Arkell at Donnington Brewery. They have a particularly unique spring water, giving Donnington beers a distinctive character, which they're hoping to replicate. The beer style will be a dark lager. In German, these are known as Dunkel, hence the beer's name *Donkels*. Clever?...maybe they should stick to brewing!

Clavell & Hind's thriving brewery taproom has, due to the popular demand of the local drinkers increased its opening hours and is now open Thursday to Sunday.

Cotswold Lion's Andy Forbes, the owner of Cotswold Lion Brewery has retired, and consequently brewing has now ceased. The brewery is currently mothballed, and discussions are taking place regarding its future. Cheltenham CAMRA wish Andy a happy retirement and thank him for the wonderful beers he has produced over the years.

DEYA are internationally recognised for their high-quality keg and canned live beers. Increasingly short runs of DEYA cask beers have appeared at their impressive taproom, at beer festivals and occasionally at local pubs.

Now their first (and flagship beer) *Steady Rolling Man* is to be made available in cask, nationwide. It's good to see that DEYA acknowledges the importance of the cask ale heritage.

Lucifer Brewhouse have had *The Double Fuggle* brewed and available in the Star in Wotton-under-Edge, reports are that it was well received by the local aficionados.

In April, **Stroud Brewery** will release its latest special: *Oaty A/e*, a 4.2% pale ale, brewed using malt from the Cotswolds and



100% UK-grown Harlequin hops, which have a characteristic fruity pineapple flavour. The oats create 'a rich and smooth feel to this beer which is well-balanced and bursting with

flavour' according to website, Untappd. As well as new beers, the brewers are looking to the past - the public's being asked to choose four beers they'd like to see resurrected as part of the Brewery's 18th birthday celebrations this June. Results will be announced on their social media. In March, Stroud Brewery's latest Sustainability Impact Report will be released to coincide with B Corporation Month, outlining what they've done during 2023 to reduce their environmental impact and promote social benefit. The report will be available on their website.

Tiley's Brewery continues to brew excellent beers using a variety of interesting hops such as Simcoe, Mosaic, Centennial and Motueka in

its pale ales, whilst the *Ordinary*, *Special* and *ESB* bitters are of the classic British style. On the darker side, the *Brown Porter*, *Mild* and *Stout* are considered excellent by aficionados of the dark side. The beers are, of course, available in The Salutation Inn in Ham, and can often be found in other local pubs in the area.

Uley Brewery brewed its *Severn Boar* which was well received over the Christmas period, and made an appearance at the Tewkesbury Winter Ales Festival where the last cask was featured. *Pigor Mortis* is still available in some local pubs and worth looking out for.

Their brewery tours are well worth a visit and are held on the first and third Thursday of the month at £20.00/head between 6-8pm. Also the Friday night sessions in The Forge (the brewery tap room) between 3-8pm have been well attended.

PUB NEWS

The Bakers Arms at Broad Campden is on the market with present lease holder retiring in the Spring. It will remain open during the ownership transition of this well loved multi award winning pub.

It has been a very difficult few years for our pubs and we urge members to support them or lose them. As winter recedes please get out there and use them.

The Bayshill, St George's Place, is under new management.

The saga of the **The Black Horse** in North Nibley rumbles on. A new landlord, Mike, has taken it on. With a pedigree in pub management, he already runs two pubs in Bristol and **The Bell** in Avening. As with the Bell, he is planning to go into business with an Indian associate who will run an Indian restaurant in what was the residents lounge from the start of February. Current opening hours are Tuesdays to Sundays, 3-11:30pm.

The Clock Tower, Charlton Kings, closed for several week to undergo extensive refurbishment.

The Craven Arms at Brockhampton remains closed but is up for sale. The Save our Pub Group formed by the villagers has made purchase offers. Readers are requested to support the pub if this happens. This is one of

our very best pubs and currently a significant loss in a great walking area.

The **Dog House** Micropub (not to be confused with the award winning pub in Coleford with the same name) is the only licensed premises in the town.

The Farriers Arms at Toddenham has sold after several years closed and will reopen after refurbishment. This was an excellent country pub and this is great unexpected news.

The Fern Ticket (ex Swan) is still closed in Cinderford town centre.

The Fox in Hawkesbury Upton is up for sale.

The Golden Lion in Cinderford is set to reopen as a traditional themed pub in February. Under efficient and strict management, could become a great asset for Cinderford, possibly offering real ales.

The Hearts of Oak is the Forest of Dean CAMRA Pub of the Year. It was a close call between the **Dog House** in Coleford and the Hearts of Oak in Drybrook. The final decision was clinched by just one vote with last year's winner taking runner-up position to.

The Hoptician, the proposed new micro pub in Dursley is still in limbo with nothing to report, but it is hoped it is to open early this year.

The Restoration, High Street, Cheltenham, reopened just before New Year under new management.

The Rising Sun Community Pub at Woodcroft has won the accolade of the CAMRA Pub Saving Award 2023. The press release from HQ states, correctly, that the pub is near Chepstow. However, what is not made clear is that Woodcroft is in Gloucestershire and the nomination was submitted by the Forest of Dean Branch. Congratulations to the Rising Sun for this amazing achievement.

The Royal, Charlton Kings, has been taken over by the Five Ales, Bath Road. The team at the Royal is moving to manage the Exmouth Arms, Bath Road.

The Royal Oak in Cromhall has now closed completely, and the freehold is understood to be on the market. Hopefully it will remain as a

pub, being the only pub between Falfield and Wickwar and Charfield and Rangeworthy.

The Seven Tuns at Chedworth has closed. This is a great loss to this area and hopefully a new tenant may reverse this. Watch this space.

Greene King's Hungry Horse outlet, the **Severn Springs** at Coberley, is now shuttered. There is no news regarding the future use of this building.

The historic Grade II-listed **Sudeley Arms** first opened in 1826. The Sudeley will be renamed '**The Airs and Graces**' (rhyming slang for races) and is set to open in March, following a 'full Dodo style revamp'. The revamp will feature Dodo Pub Co's signature style but with a slightly different food offering. The pub is freehold and will create 15 new jobs in the community. The cask beer offering is unknown.

In club news, the **Cheltenham Motor Club** once again reached the final four of CAMRA's National Club of the Year 2023. A multiple winner, it just missed out to Marden Village Club in Kent. This is the second consecutive year that the club in deepest Kent has won this prestigious award.



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Tall Tales from the Cider Shed...

When you work on a farm with animals, it's always difficult to go on holiday, because as every good farmer will tell you, the animals must always come first.

In his lifetime, Father only had a couple of long holidays, but in truth he was happiest at home with his friends and family. So if you can't have a holiday, you try and get odd days off, and when Father had a day off he certainly enjoyed them.

Gloucester Market on a Monday was a day he always looked forward to, where there would always be a couple of pints with his farming friends in the Bell and Gavel. And if we weren't too busy on the farm, we might stop on the way home for a drink at the Red Lion with his old friend Mrs Mitchell, or a pint with his old sparring partner Bill Sykes at the Haw Bridge.

Father also liked his cricket and we would always try and fit in a few days at the Cheltenham Cricket Festival, which is somewhere I still try to go on my summer holidays!

But a big day in Father's calendar was the Three Counties Show at Malvern. Back then the show was held on a Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Father always liked to go on a Thursday, the reason for which will become clear as this story unfolds.

Come Showday, the sun always seemed to shine, There was Father, Deputy, Arthur Quinlan, me, our brother David (the driver) and three containers full of cider. Mother got to look after the cider sales and the farm in our absence.

In those days you could always get a few complimentary tickets to get into the Show so that was obviously a good start. Once in the Showground, the first stop was at Cheltenham

Commercials, where we would be greeted by Don Griffiths who would get the first container of cider and we would have our first food and drink of the day.

After Don's we took the next container of cider to Ellis Dawe. Here we might see our tractor mechanic Ted Franklin and once again have something to eat and drink. Driver David had been looking around the Show, but he would meet up with us for the big lunch at West Midland Farmers.

With the time of day getting on, the last stop of the day would have been Father's favourite Butcher's Oils, where, for years, he had told them that all five of us were related, which wasn't true but we went along with the story and they treated us like kings. We could probably have had whatever we wanted to eat and drink... they certainly deserved their container of cider.

By now Father would have been in full flow with his stories and jokes getting better as the day went on. But all good things come to an end with

the time now heading for 5 o'clock, word was going around, that this being the last day of the show, they were selling the flowers off cheap!

Having not spent a penny at the show, apart from the gents' toilets, now was the time to look big and spend some money! And by the time we'd bought Mother flowers, Arthur had bought flowers for his wife, and Deputy had bought Fuchsias for his mother, David's car boot was full to the brim with flowers.

A good day had been had by all, but if the weather forecast was good for the coming week, and it normally was, then the hard work of haymaking was just about to begin.

Oh the fun of farming!

Dereck Hartland

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

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...and we had fun **volunteering** at the recent **Tewkesbury Winter Ales Festival** - thanks to **Tewkesbury CAMRA** for organising it!

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The Pub Whisperer

In an occasional series about local pub life, entitled 'The Pub Whisperer', we're looking for readers to make regular contributions even if they're new to writing. Bob Jeffrey, pub enthusiast, historian and social commentator, continues...

After the Party

Christmas and New Year is over at the Rotunda. We are entering a dark time. At 7.30 one evening there are seven customers and two staff. The staff have to put on the juke box and the level of sound is pleasant and the selections are from 30 years ago. It's blissful if you like your local to be a quiet place where one can talk at a normal volume and discuss serious issues such as the quality of the ale. This pub, like all of them in Cheltenham, has been packed in the run up to Christmas and company parties make as much noise as they can; loud reunions with friends add to the party atmosphere. It was manic for a month, but now it's over it's the total opposite. Cheltenham festivals maintain a momentum of activity but there is a quiet period between Xmas and the Horse Racing festival and, strangely, in mid-summer after the jazz, music and cricket until the literature festival and the opening of the race season. It's a varied and enjoyable life here in Cheltenham.

A town Community pub

It's nearly 6pm in a popular boozer. The music is loud, but we can just about have a close conversation. The TV has two screens in the back bar and one in the main bar, all showing football which hardly anyone is

watching. The back bar has eight groups and all except one are occupied by people aged over 50. One pensioner arrives in the bar and is disappointed not to find a seat. Even the young couple are joined by one of their parents, who buys them a drink, singing along to the pop song. The younger woman begins to carry out a sitting dance. A group of three women find a corner seat clutching wine glasses. Another group contains a woman with a large necklace and heavy attractive coat, all are over 60 and the pop music maintains the jollity. Another group is made up of post 60's with one of them rocking to the beat. Nobody watches the football.

As the dogs wander around

Groups engage with each other as they stroke the dogs that wander as far as their leads will carry them and owners follow them round the pub making new 'friends' as they go. This is a close community. The heavy beat is also present in the main bar, but with fewer people, mainly male drinkers who again ignore the football and chat loudly to reach above the beat of the pop group. It is a juke box pub where punters put on the music but the publican steps in to ensure it is maintained. "We must have a party feel at the weekend," says the manager and puts money in the

'The manager enjoys life and so does everyone who frequents it at the weekend.'

juke box. In one of the younger groups is a young boy who plays with his tablet. And still, nobody watches the footy. The manager circulates cracking jokes, clearing glasses and carrying out table service as well as taking selfies of any group who ask him. One of the older well-dressed groups slip out for a smoke leaving their drinks on the table while the guvnor pretends to dance away to carry out his table service. This is a real old-fashioned boozer where people know there is a welcoming atmosphere and a party one as well. The manager returns with a bucket of ice and a bottle of white wine and serves it with flourish and the 60+ party giggle and laugh. He then gets us a drink and brings the machine to pay for it and the loud music plays on relentlessly. The manager enjoys life and so does everyone who frequents it at the weekend. At 18.30 he puts on his anorak and leaves the pub in the capable hands of his staff. Chance to get the music turned down? However, we stick it out enjoying the life we came to Cheltenham to imbibe. Another pensioner couple arrive and run into other pensioner friends. The music continues to dominate and nobody watches the football.

A Consummate Bar Leader

She is a tall confident woman who is the longest serving bar person. She organises everything, it's intensive periods of managing hundreds of meals and groups galore. She: fills the log fire; manages the reservation system; is the go-to for all staff; negotiates with the kitchen; entertains public bar regulars and keeps them all under control with wit, humour, warmth and respect. She is the pivot around which all of the pub revolves, and the owner and managers devolve total responsibility and faith in her competence, charisma and organisation to ensure success for the pub is everlasting. She has warm relationships with all the staff, and they support one another, taking their model from her. One gets the feeling they have enormous respect for her.

She will give as good as she gets, and the regulars love her for it. They have a wonderful bar relationship which is mutually respectful and enjoyed by both. She can withdraw into her own world when busy, she slips upstairs for a 'break' when necessary and is 'not to be disturbed'. She is on top of everything and appears self-sufficient, a characteristic required of a great pub co-ordinator.

wetherspoon

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Sharpen your pencil, as well as your wits, and come up with a suitable caption for this excellent if rather unusual pub sign.



This chap is having a problem with his work/life balance, Beer or butchery? He must have been witness to plenty of pint and leg pulling (and not just the piglet) in his time.

What's he got to say about the goings on in this Gloucestershire pub and real ale scene?

Thanks go to the staff at the Butchers Arms in Sheepscombe for the use of image of this fine pub sign.



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DEAF BOY WANDERIN' JOHN

With apologies to readers of a more sensitive disposition, our Spring Walk finds your Wandering Wordsmith completely obsessed with Bottoms

This 6.5mile walk is beloved of mountain goats and lovers of Bottoms! Looking at the map, I was intrigued to find so many Bottoms in this area: Waterley Bottom, Spuncombe Bottom and Tyley Bottom, the origin being Old English for broad river valley or valley floor, although my research states that there is a Flash Bottom in Staffordshire.

The walk starts from The Black Horse Inn in North Nibley. You can't miss the village, just head for the big tower on top of the Cotswold Escarpment.

Straight away I climbed the steep track leading to the Tyndale Monument, erected in 1866 as a memorial to a local man, William Tyndale, who translated the Bible into English. This displeased the church and numerous cunning cardinals so much, as they feared the peasants would become revolting if they could read the Bible in their own language, that they martyred poor William in 1536. Perhaps they forgot that universal education didn't arrive until much later and ordinary people couldn't read anything, whether in Latin or English.

As I left the monument, the weather was clear and sunny and the views from the base of the tower were amazing, so the views from the

top should be incredible. I should have checked more carefully as, by the time I returned, the Michael Fish effect had occurred. Cue cloud and rain and a complete wipeout of any views.

I walked through a nearby wood and somewhere in the middle I was faced with a Clapham Junction of different paths. I used my native cunning (and satNav) and took the path that led me downhill to Pitts Court and, rather incongruously, a public phone box.

I walked down a quiet, narrow lane and realised that the New Inn was nigh. Dear walker, a word of advice, at the time of writing, the pub had gone into 'hibernation', but do check because, if awake, the New Inn is a delightful watering hole, complete with its own vineyard.

The lane leads to the Waterley Bottom area, but I branched off following the footpath up the first of many hills towards Ashen Plain Woods – just trees to me, but contact our beloved editor for further information, latin tags or any other arboreal details, as he is not only our humble editor, but the Tippler's resident and knowledgeable Treeman.

I was now in deepest, darkest, wooded, hilly Gloucestershire, a bucolic delight as yet unspoilt by ambitious developers from the 'smoke'.

My excitement mounted as the route now led towards the 'jewel in the crown', the walk along the Cotswold Escarpment.

The appropriately named Wotton-Under-Edge and the Severn Valley opened out in front of me, even spotting the towers of the first Severn Bridge in the distance, as I marvelled at the Strip Lynchets on Coombe Hill, a very curious sight: a hill terraced as a result of medieval farmers ploughing along the contours of the hill to create flat areas for crops.

The local rumour that the farmers all had one leg shorter than the other, so they could stand up straight on the slopes, although patently untrue, would have been a very useful genetic adaptation for them.

I followed the path around the hill and the panoramic views continued to open out, before walking onto a promontory on which Brackenbury fort and ditches stand. On my last visit, the undergrowth was being cleared, but the two deep ditches protecting this Iron Age fort were easy to pick out. I added a further 750 metres to my route by walking around the outside, which gave



me a very good understanding of the size and importance of this place.

Looking down towards the Vale of Berkeley,

I shuddered to think how unlucky you would be if ordered to attack this well defended fortress.

The way ahead was clearly marked by the Tyndale Monument and a gathering of storm clouds. By the time I reached the base of the tower, rain had started to fall. Ah well,

only 121 steps to the top of this 111 foot tower, surely worth it for the views?

Unfortunately, that glorious view of South Gloucestershire was denied me, but a subsequent visit on a clear day showed me the quintessentially beautiful west country landscape surrounding me.

A steep descent and a welcome pint of real ale and meal in The Black Horse Inn was a fitting conclusion to one of my favourite walks.

Deaf Boy

'I shuddered to think how unlucky you would be if ordered to attack this well defended fortress'



The Black Horse Inn, North Nibley; The Tyndale Monument; The Strip Lynchets

Brackenbury Fort



News from FOREST OF DEAN



Campaign
for
Real Ale

The CAMRA Pub Saving Award 2024

On Saturday 3rd February Peter Bridle, CAMRA South-west regional director, joined local members, campaigners, and locals at the Rising Sun at Woodcroft to present the Save Our Sun Group with the prestigious Campaign for Real Ale Pub Saving Award.



Perched high above the River Wye on the Gloucestershire side of the river, the Rising Sun in Woodcroft is in the Forest of Dean District although not far from the Welsh border and Chepstow. Peter Bridle told a packed pub: "The pub saving award is recognising people who come together to save a pub that would have otherwise been demolished or put to another use. We give this award out every year but in 2023 we had more entries than ever before, showing the dedication of communities and campaigners to save their pubs and what they mean to those communities." Such was the case with the Rising Sun which closed in 2011 and was bought by a company in Chepstow with the understanding that it would remain as a community pub. Villagers became suspicious when little activity was taking place on the pub, and ultimately an application was submitted for change of use. The Save Our Sun Group was formed in 2013 to keep an eye on the planning process with the aim of saving the pub. It was clear from the outset that a lot of money had to be raised just to fund the legal process through court appeals, etc. Luckily planning officers at Forest of Dean District Council realised

that some applications were deliberately submitted to make the pub unworkable, such as the conversion of the entire upper floor for residential use. An asset of community value was secured, and, after nearly a decade the developer finally agreed to sell the now run down property as a pub. A massive share raising initiative was launched by the Save our Sun group to meet the asking price of £325,000. Aided by a government grant of £175,000 the Save Our Sun group were given the keys to the property in March 2022. After



Save Our Sun Committee Chair Michelle Hayes and CAMRA Regional Director Peter Bridle with committee members Eleanor Windsor, Stuart Archer and Neil Bedford

a thorough refurbishment undertaken by volunteers, the Rising Sun shone bright again in Woodcroft opening in October 2022.

Dr Michelle Hayes, chair of the Save our Sun Committee said: "Thanks to the local community who believed in us and came with us the whole way. My amazing committee were incredibly dedicated and put hundreds of hours in. It really restores your faith in humanity. Thank you CAMRA, it's such an honour."

Although in a far-flung corner of Gloucestershire, the Rising Sun is well worth a visit. Regular and well-kept beers from Wye Valley Brewery and Kingstone (from Tintern). Excellent home-cooked food. Ideal for exploring the Lancaut peninsular, Wintours Leap and Offas Dyke path.

<https://www.gloucestershirepubs.co.uk>
Search for Rising Sun, Woodcroft

The Good Beer Company

Nestling in the Frome river valley about halfway between Thrupp and Chalford, if you look, you'll find a family business that specialises in delivering quality craft beers from around the UK to beer festivals, landlords, private parties and beer lovers who enjoy trying new and interesting beers.

The company focusses on three areas of the beer delivery business. Supplying pubs and landlords is key, each month they offer a different range of quality beers that are in their cold store and ready to be delivered just when they're needed. The Good Beer Co. pride themselves not only on their scheduled collection of their empty casks, but also their in-depth knowledge of cellar management which can be made available on request.

If you're a landlord looking to import some of the finest cask ales from around the UK to your bar, or want to make and enquiry about

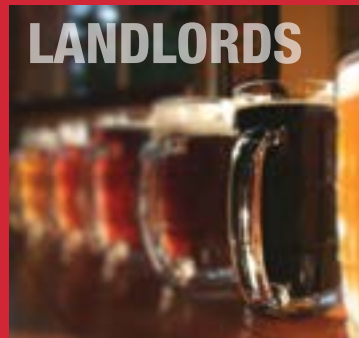
when they could deliver, get in touch.

Beer Festivals are their speciality as anyone who visited the Tewkesbury Winter Ales Festival will attest. With the drive and passion for putting together a wonderful variety of beer. Because they have so many years of experience, they can do as little or as much as you like, providing racking for the beers, tapping and venting, or just supplying the casks and letting you do the rest.

If you are thinking of planning a beer festival or you are looking for a wider variety of beer to boost your existing beer festival then look no further.

Finally, their 'Beer Festival In a Box' is their way of bringing that beer festival experience to you in the comfort of your own home. They release a new box every month so you get a variety the different beers and breweries that to experience.

LANDLORDS



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Landlords

We're here for you! Each month we offer a different range of quality beers that are in our cold store and ready to be delivered when you want them. We collect our empty casks and can support your cellar management on request.

Events

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for more information – we'd love to hear from you.



EVENTS

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The ART of Beer

There I was, wondering what to write next about art and beer when I happened upon a rather unusual confluence of the two in a science journal from last year . . .

The story comes from Denmark, home of the beer-and-blood-thirsty Vikings of course, but less well known for their artists.

So lest you've forgotten your Danish art history, you may remember that the years 1800 to 1850 were a particularly prolific period in Scandinavian painting and came to be known as 'The Golden Age of Danish Painting'.

What is perhaps less well known is that this coincided with a particularly prolific age of Danish boozing, partly because river and well waters were deemed so unsafe and partly because the industrial revolution which swept Europe in the 19th century led to brewing on a far larger scale than before, (By 1900, Denmark had over 300 breweries within a population of only 2.5 million people.)

This new scale of brewing led to a correspondingly large amount of brewing byproducts which then had to be disposed of somehow.

Historically, most byproducts of the industry served as animal feed, but here comes the unexpected bit: contemporary texts suggested that some artists started using these byproducts to size their canvasses (in this context, 'size' is a sealant applied to a raw canvas to stop it being rotted by the oil in paint). Not so surprising maybe? Artists have long been keen on the odd bevy or two and have always been notoriously penniless so any way of saving a bit on a painting is bound to be jumped upon? (would've been when I was at art school anyway).

So just last year a group from the Royal Danish Academy analysed minute paint samples from ten 'Golden Age' paintings. They discovered proteins from brewer's yeast

'...beer quite literally supported the Golden Age of Danish Painting.'

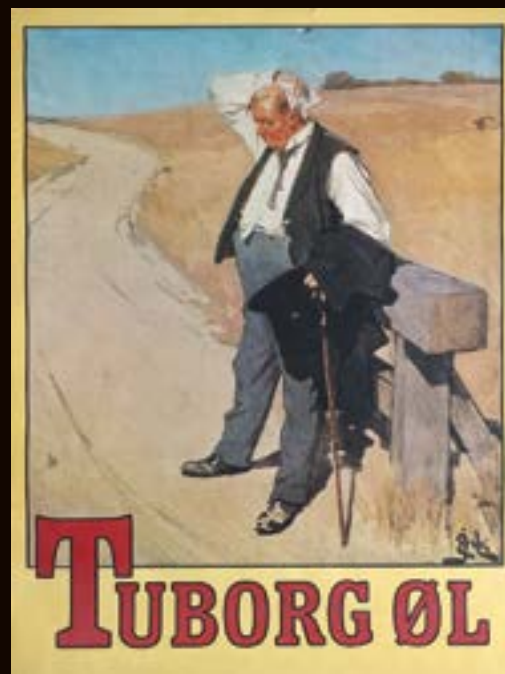
*Christen Schiellerup Kobbek:
'View from the Loft of the Grain Store'.*



in seven of the paintings, whilst wheat, barley, buckwheat and rye proteins, all staples in the beer-making process, were also present in the samples.

What's more, the group went on to create a similar mixture from modern-day brewing byproducts and found it to be a good substitute for traditional primer. Who would have thought? Useful stuff, this beer.

The theory is that brewers sold their byproducts to art institutions, who then passed them on to artists as a sizing material for their canvasses.



Still thirsty after 123 years

A poster for beer but not a beer in sight, just a chap who looks as if he'd kill for one.

Brilliantly conceived, Tuborg's 'Thirsty Man' was painted for a competition in November 1900 to celebrate Tuborg's 25th anniversary. It didn't actually win but one of the Tuborg directors liked it so much it eventually became their most famous piece of advertising.

Now give that man a beer for goodness sake, he's waited long enough.

Roll the drums, start the fanfare, bring out the Danish flags, there we have it – confirmation that beer quite literally supported the Golden Age of Danish Painting.

Appropriate Pairings?

All of which gave pause for thought -what a marketing opportunity that could be these days. Pair the artist with an appropriate beer and it could be unforgettable.

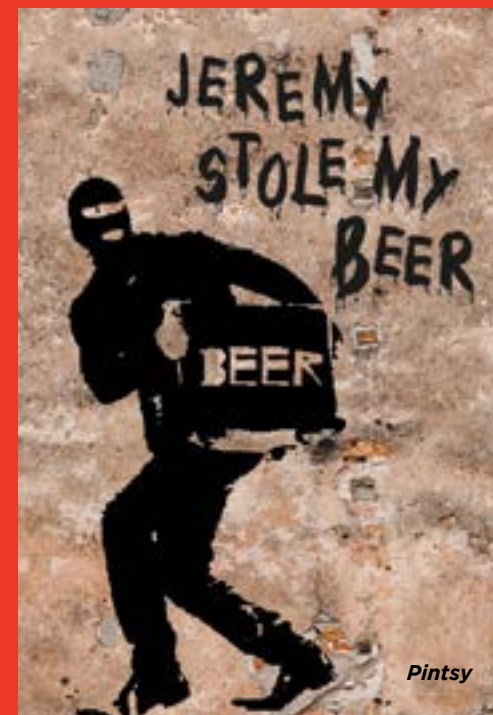
Salvador Dali sponsored by Bespoke's 'Going off Half Cocked', Picasso sponsored by Hop Union's 'Skallywag', Van Gogh sponsored by Uley's 'Pigs Ear', Mark Rothko sponsored by Sharps Doombar.

Just a thought.

Moral of the story

If you're planning to forge a Danish Golden Age painting, make it authentic – pour a pint of beer on the canvas before you start.

Stay alert, I may be appearing on a wall near you



LINTON FESTIVAL

nr Ross-On-Wye

5th July
- 7th July
2024



Herefordshire's best loved music, real ale and cider festival returns on 5th to 7th July 2024.

Set in the grounds of The Alma Inn, who, once again have won CAMRA's Herefordshire Pub of the Year, this year's festival is back with a crash, bang and wallop showcasing some of the biggest acts today in rock, rhythm 'n' blues. With something for everyone, the line-up features an exceptionally high-quality array of 14 artists, not to mention around 40 real ales and ciders and delicious locally sourced edible treats waiting to be washed down!

It's not just the music and the beer that makes Linton Festival so special. Did you know it is entirely volunteer run? Its sole purpose is to raise money for local charities and those who have benefited most recently include HELP Appeal, Parkinsons UK, Alzheimers Research UK and Herefordshire Mind, to name just a few. Over the years, organisations like these have received a grand total of nearly £150,000 from proceeds donated from the event.

Dave Lambert, Linton Festival chair said: "We've got some huge names coming to Linton this year and our festival goers are in for a real

ride! If you're not here for the weekend, you're missing out. As many know, we run this festival to provide people with great music and beer but our ultimate goal, in between all the fun, is to raise money for charity. Last year the Committee were proud to donate £10,000 to our nominated organisations. When you come to Linton Festival you help us to continue supporting organisations who so vitally need our help."

The headliners need little introduction, beginning with Talon on Friday night. Rising from their humble beginnings, Talon has become the most successful touring Eagles tribute act. Revered by their peers and loved by their fans, this world class seven-piece band are a phenomenon and they'll be bringing the timeless Eagles back catalogue with them to Linton.

Saturday welcomes Band of Friends celebrating the music of the late, great guitarist Rory Gallagher! This is not a tribute to Rory, more of a celebration of his life and music which covered all parts of the globe and produced some of the greatest rock and blues albums of the 60's, 70's and the 80's.

The roof will really explode when our final headliner hits the stage on Sunday evening...

**music,
real ale
& cider**

Ruby Turner! Soul, gospel and R&B, her career has included success as a solo artist and touring alongside Jools Holland. Maybe you've seen her at London's Ronnie Scott's or perhaps you remember her days in the 80's Culture Club. Ruby's voice is out of this world and she'll be wrapping the festival up with an almighty showdown!

Festival goers can really embrace the festival vibe with full camping facilities available all weekend within a short walking distance of the festival site. There's hot showers, free parking and hot home-cooked breakfasts made to order to set you up for the day head.

Owing to popular demand, this year there are more plots available than before, but don't hang around...space sells out fast.

**WIN TWO FREE
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**Just answer
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The Tippler has a pair of weekend tickets (worth £230) to give away. To be in with a chance of winning this fantastic prize, just answer the following question:

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Send your answer to
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to be included in the Prize Draw

**A weekend pass costs £115 (camping from £17) and day tickets are available for £29.
See www.lintonfestival.org for full details.**

LINTON FESTIVAL

nr Ross-On-Wye

5th July
- 7th July
2024

FRIDAY 5th

TALON

THOMAS ATLAS BAND

CROW BLACK CHICKEN

SATURDAY 6th

BAND OF FRIENDS

THE JUKE JOINTS

THE BLUE LENA

CHANTEL MCGREGOR

CATFISH

MISSISSIPPI MACDONALD

Sunday 7th

RUBY TURNER

ERJA LYYTINEN

WILLE & THE BANDITS

CHRIS BEVINGTON

JAMES OLIVER BAND

Music, real ale & cider festival
Proudly Raising Funds for Local Charities

ORGANISATION
Line-Up subject to change

CASK CHRONICLES

With Alex Jordan

In a brand new series, we recruited Alex Jordan, Head Brewer at Clavell and Hind to talk about all things brewing and beer. In this feature he introduces himself and the brewery in the first of his Cask Chronicles.

Clavell and Hind brewery has recently reopened under new ownership and have a brand new facility at their new site location in Elmstone Hardwicke, between Cheltenham and Tewkesbury. The brewery was re-installed, and expanded after its move from its previous home in Birdlip.

Clavell and Hind are now partnered with Cellar Supplies a local wholesaler, who list accounts and pubs across Gloucestershire, Worcestershire and even as far as South Wales! We are growing our sales week on week and expanding production to meet the requirements. We are brewing on a 20Bbl or 4000 litre system which produces batches of 75 casks of the ever expanding range of traditional Cotswold ales.

There are three core real ales to choose from. *Blunderbuss*, our flagship cask, is a delightful 4.2% pale ale, packed with crisp citrus and hedonistic hop flavoured tipple ready for any drinker.

Next up is *Coachman* at 3.8%, it's our light and refreshing ale which pleases with fresh peach and caramel flavours to balance a perfect golden ale – ideal for lager drinkers who are looking to transition to the real ale appreciation side of beer drinking.

Then comes *Liberty* is our highest alcohol content brew, weighing in at 4.8% which makes for a perfectly balanced juicy and hoppy IPA. It pulls a lightly spiced bitterness and hot-side hops deliver a citrus and floral aroma.

To those reading this, my name is Alex Jordan – I'm the head brewer at Clavell and Hind. Along with my assistant brewer, Jack, we take great pride in crafting the freshest, newest beers available in the local area. We both have

years of experience behind us, including SIBA, a Level 4 Brewing apprenticeship and have a real thirst for great traditional ales. We are extremely pleased with the products in our range right now – but the good news is it's due to expand soon... so keep your eyes on your local's taps!

I was approached by the Tippler's editor, to write a regular feature for this brilliant little magazine. Every issue, I'll be writing my thoughts on the brewing industry and commenting on what's new, exciting beers, new breweries to keep an eye

out for and make recommendations for great beers from further afield too.

Don't forget people... *Savour the Flavour!*

Make sure to come and visit the new taproom and taste our brilliant beers at:

Clavell and Hind brewery, Elmstone business park, Cheltenham, GL51 9SY.

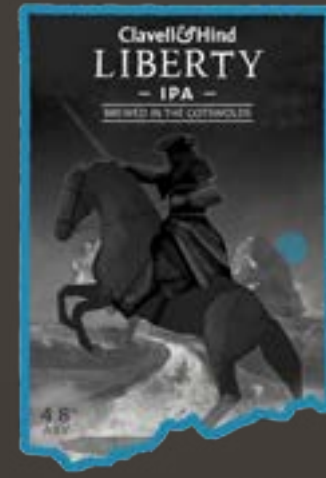
Alex Jordan

C&H



Clavell & Hind

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CIDER & PERRY MAN



In this series, the cider representative for Cheltenham CAMRA keeps us up to speed in the world of cider and perry in and around Gloucestershire...

It seems only yesterday that I was writing about going down to Bath on a 'Cheltenham Ale Trail'. The train trip needed a change at Bristol, and that was fine until we got on the London train to find it standing room only.

When we got off at Bath, we then had to queue to leave the station, only to discover that it was the first day of the Xmas shopping festival in Bath!

Struggling through the crowds we arrived at the lovely little **Coeur de Lion** pub to discover that they only had mass market cider available, so with that, I abandoned the main party, and went off on my own voyage of cider discovery. My next stop was also on the main party itinerary and was the lovely little **Old Green Tree**. They just had on a dry BiB (bag in box) cider from Honey's Cidery in Midford, which is just to the south of Bath. For the first cider of the day it was a bit of a sharp shock to the system. My trip then took me on a longish walk up to the top of Walcot Street where the much larger and rambling **Bell Inn** was opening a bit late. They had two BiB available, which thanks to poor information from the bar staff, I drank in the wrong order. The first was a Bristol cider called Sixer which was a medium full bodied example and this

was followed, with another local cider, from near Timbury, south of Bath, called Willows, which was rather dryer with some 'bite' and quite similar to the Honey's cider.

My main port of call was to find **The Bath Cider House** which turned out to be high up above Walcot Street, via a hundred steps(!) to a block called Bladup Buildings. This used to be a night club amongst other previous businesses, and was certainly spacious. They can apparently have up to 75 ciders available

in one form and another but on any one day have a third of that available, of which half will be BiB, and the rest keg or bottled.

Talk about spoilt for choice. The bar staff were very knowledgeable and suggested that I kick off with their own, in-house cider, called Bath Gold. You couldn't miss their shining big tanks in the background, but I wondered where the apples came in. The barman was quick to explain that the apples originate from further down in Somerset near to Shepton Mallet and the juice is then matured for up to eight months before being transported up to Bath and blended into different styles. The Bath Gold was medium and slipped down a treat. There was quite a lively crowd in the bar, some watching a main football match, but not too

'...but I wondered where the apples came in.'

loud, and then I noticed the pizzas. They were rather large, and turned out to be for sharing, but cider does give you quite an appetite!

I finished off my lengthy stay with two more Somerset Ciders. Firstly, 'Scrummage' which is another medium, made down in Long Sutton, nr. Langport and then lastly, Hecks Medium, from that long established maker, which I had tasted before. This was an amazing visit and if it wasn't for having to find the way back to the station, I could have stayed even longer. Certainly craft cider is definitely thriving in Somerset, and *The Bath Cider House* is absolutely 'Beating the Drum'

I keep on thinking that I should sample more Gloucestershire ciders, and The Cotswolds does cover much of Gloucestershire? Just before Christmas, I was due to have a lunch with a friend who lives over in Faringdon, and then remembered The Cotswold Cider Company, who had been on my radar for a while. I thought that they were based in Coleshill which is also outside Faringdon in Oxfordshire, but it turned out that their warehouse was in Highworth which is just in Wiltshire. All quite confusing, but once on a quest!

I made an appointment with the owner Rory, and as ever, with cideries, things turned out to be rather different from what I expected. Cider makers, inevitably start very small with fruit from local orchards, but then as they expand, they find they need more juice than they can produce. Since the mass brand large nationals do not now use so much actual apple juice there has now become an opening for independent juicing companies. (viz for

Bath Cider House) I soon became aware in my conversation with Rory that his business was quite similar to Hogans up in Warwickshire, which I had covered in an article for this magazine last year. They both have a similar large portfolio, with The Cotswold Cider company producing an amazing range of up to 17 different brands, including some unusual fruit ciders with catchy names. I bought a selection of bottles but also said that I would like a few litres of their still cider, which were advertised as being available in plastic litre bottles. He then said that he would have to decant those from BiB containers. These were 10 or 20 litres in size, so rather too large for my modest home consumption. I guessed that the litres might not last for as long as in a sealed BiB, but it was soon enjoyed without too much delay.

Since, once again, there was no sign of actual apples in his modern warehouse, I did ask about provenance, and lo and behold, it appears that his (overflow?) source is the same as Hogans, which comes from Worcestershire, just to the east of Malvern, at Castlemorton. I was also rather pleased to discover his best selling brand, Yellow Hammer, behind the bar, at one of my favourite locals in Cheltenham - **The Railway Tavern**, where the cider accompanied the Thai food rather well.

Just after Christmas, I managed to fit in a little holiday to the New Forest and found an unusual Cidery over there but the details will have to wait until the next Tippler.

Guy Vowles

WE NEED
YOUR HELP

chris@thetippler.co.uk

WE NEED NEWS!

If you have any pub news at all to share (starting up, being refurbished / taken over etc), then please let the editor 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!

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9 X GLOUCESTER CITY CAMRA PUB OF THE YEAR, GLOUCESTERSHIRE CAMRA PUB OF THE YEAR 2020-2023,
SOUTH WEST CAMRA PUB OF THE YEAR 2022, GOOD BEER GUIDE 2014-2024, CASK MARQUE 2012-2024



Widden Beer Club started life in 2018 at Tank in Gloucester as 'Rebel Beer Club', regularly bringing together a collection of local beer lovers with the aim of tasting and talking about as wide a range of beers as possible.

Following the start of the Covid lockdowns, the beer rebels went underground, hosting virtual club nights over Skype with deliveries by Mark Elton (of Widden Rugby Club - hence the name change).

In 2023, The Pelican (the Peli) and its accommodating landlord, Mike, started hosting one of the catch-ups each month on the first Thursday, followed soon after by Ryan at The Drunken Duck (formerly Angie's, just off Westgate Street) holding one on the third Thursday. For £20 you could taste six different beers, with a meal, and get the chance to provide your personal rating to the Beer Club's legendary ledger. We've not even mentioned Friday night tastings at Widden, or the club trips! From keg to cask, pales to sours, Radlers to Imperial stouts - if you've got a beer, and we can get hold of it, we'll taste it and rate it.

Reviewing December to early February, the club ran four nights at the Peli (including an American beer special), two at the Duck,

two at Widden (including the Xmas party) and a club trip to Planet Caravan in Cheltenham for an Ominipollo tap takeover. Conversation amongst our 40 or so attendees covered rum distilling, New Zealand trips, Red Dwarf, long lost Gloucester pubs, the gap in the market for beer festivals on a Monday, and of course, the highs and lows of supporting Gloucester Rugby Club. The club sampled over 50 beers and was well nourished with hearty meals

including American style hot dogs and mutton curry (big thanks as always, to Melton's Smokeshack, for the food).

I wouldn't want to bore you with a

score for every single beer, and unfortunately I only made five of the nights, but I'll give you a taste of the best we had, plus a sample of something a bit different...

Let's kick off with the different. You'll never not discover something new with beer club - in the last 12 months I've been introduced to pastry sours, Russian imperial stouts and a raspberry and milk sticky lolly pale.

Edinburgh's Vault City brewery *Pear Vanilla and Cinnamon Swirl* (6.8% pastry sour) was a cracker in December, and think you'll agree it sounds pretty interesting. Heavy fruit, fabulous texture, but could have been a bit more sour. Club members gave it an average score of 8 out of 10.

For the best I've picked four of our strongest scorers, which I think also give you a good idea of the range we regularly sample.

'...if you've got a beer, and we can get hold of it, we'll taste it and rate it.'

In fourth place, *Voyage* from Track Brewing in Manchester (8% double IPA). The word that came up most was 'dank'. Is it dank? Was it dank? What is dank? Who is dank? We think it was dank. 8.1/10.

In third place a very unmild dark mild from Moon Gazer brewery in Norfolk. *Bouchard X Anniversary Ale* (10%!) had a big flavour with lots of kick, and great banana undertones. 8.4/10.

In a very close second, with two of our group giving it a maximum 10 out of 10, *Centaur Army* from Nottingham's Neon Raptor (12%). A huge peanut, caramel and chocolate imperial stout, "That is pure chocolate," said some, but I said: "It could do with more body to get a maximum from me." A massive 9 out of 10 from the club.

The biggest scorer was from a mere 2,500 miles away. Öö from Pohjala in Estonia was a glorious imperial porter (10.5%). Smooth for something that strong it was a great way to kick off January (good thing mine wasn't dry). A huge club score of 9.2/10! Two of our highest ever scores in the first two months of the year!

If you, like us, are a beer adventurer, and are willing to listen to some bad takes on great beer, search for us on Facebook (Widden Beer Club) or ask at The Pelican or The Drunken Duck, and we might see you soon! Cheers!



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CHECK OUT TEWKESBURY CHALKBOARDS ON 



Tapping into Success

It's fair to say that the Tewkesbury Brewing Company has started with a bit of a bang, with fairly instant success winning the Dark Beer of the Festival at Tamworth CAMRA's September beer festival.

Although the company has been regularly brewing from its current site just outside of the town for less than two years, their efforts have not gone unnoticed, nor indeed unrewarded.

Showcasing one of their beers at the latest Tewkesbury Winter Ales Festival (TWAF), they are not afraid to look at different flavours and styles, although at this event the awards just eluded them. Darryl Tanner, the owner of the brewers talked about the festival and the town itself.

"I've been to plenty of beer festivals, doing a lot of research, afterall you have to keep up with the modern trends. TWAF isn't your average beer festival, the audience is made up of pretty hard core ale experts and it's very heartening to know that what you're producing is being appreciated."

Speaking of appreciating his offering Darryl isn't content to just brew the beers, he is also planning to set up a tap room so that drinkers can get the beer direct from the brewery. Something that came to mind over the winter and we all had time to look into the future on those long dark nights.



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The letters pages often highlight a bit of an issue that many members will be unaware of, that is the inclusion of their favourite pubs in the not only Good Beer Guide, but also nominations for the seasonal awards for Pub of the Year, Club of the Year and Cider Pub of the Year. So the following article from CAMRA HQ highlights how we go about getting our views and votes to count...

Beer Scoring and the Good Beer Guide

You are probably aware of the 'Good Beer Guide', CAMRA's flagship publication which lists the best pubs in the UK. But what you may not know is how those pubs are selected to appear in the Guide.

The answer is that it is largely via beer scores submitted by CAMRA members from all over the country. So, if you are a CAMRA member you can send in beer scores, if you've ever wondered why your favourite pub isn't in the Guide, this may well be because you, and others, haven't entered scores rating the quality of beer there. By beer scoring, you can contribute to the process of selection of pubs that go in the Good Beer Guide.

How do I score the quality of the beer?

You don't have to be an 'expert' to begin scoring your beer. However, it is not about your personal favourite beer receiving the highest scores! You may try a beer that isn't to your normal taste but what you need to consider is the quality of that beer, how well the pub has kept it and served it and score it according to the general guide below. It is a simple 0 to 5 point system, with half points being used if your opinion of the beer falls between two categories.

- 0. No cask ale available
- 1. Poor. Beer is anything from barely drinkable to drinkable with considerable resentment.
- 2. Average. Competently kept, drinkable pint but doesn't inspire in any way, not worth moving to another pub but you drink the beer without really noticing.
- 3. Good. Good beer in good form. You may cancel plans to move to the next pub. You

want to stay for another pint and may seek out the beer again

4. Very Good. Excellent beer in excellent condition. You stay put!

5. Perfect. Probably the best you are ever likely to find. A seasoned drinker will award this score very rarely.

How do I submit my scores?

In order to submit your scores, you need to login to CAMRA's online pub guide www.whatpub.com either on a computer or by smart phone. Here you will find a list of over 55,000 pubs from all over the UK. In order to start submitting scores via *What Pub* you need to:

- 1. Login. To do this you need your membership number and your CAMRA password.
- 2. You can then search for your pub by name. Be careful here as there are many



What Pub, Beer Scoring and the Good Beer Guide

pubs in the country which share the same name. My advice is to search by the pub name and the town or postcode. The What Pub smart phone web page also gives you the option to search for real ale pubs nearby, very useful if you are in an unfamiliar town.

'...it is not about your personal favourite beer receiving the highest scores...'

3. Once you have found your pub a 'Submit Beer Scores' box will appear on the right hand side of the screen (or on the tab bar underneath the pub photo if you are using a smart phone).

4. Simply fill in the date and your score then as you begin typing the brewery name should automatically appear underneath where you are typing. You do not have to enter the name of the beer you are drinking but if you wish to do so once you have entered the brewery name you should be able to click on the arrow in the beer box and a dropdown list of that brewery's beers should appear. In some cases, the beer you are drinking may be new or a one off by the brewery so may not appear on the list, if this is the case you can simply type in the beer name. Select the correct one click 'submit score' and your score will be entered into the database.

It is as simple as that. An added bonus is that it will keep a record of your scores so you can look back to see what beers you have had and how you rated them if you want.

This article by Sonia James-Henry originally appeared in Mersey Ale. Thanks to Sonia and magazine editor John Armstrong for giving permission for it to be used by other branches. If your branch has any questions about beer scoring, please do visit:

www.camra.org.uk/nbss

Brett Laniosh, NBSS Coordinator

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For the old analogue dinosaurs like the editor, you can access the CAMRA website, and with a little exploring, download and print a sheet of 10 of the scoring cards shown below. Fill them in and get them sent to your local secretary or pubs officer who can make sure they get to the right place - Ed.

CAMRA National Beer Scoring Scheme	
Surveyor	_____
Mem.No.	_____ Date of survey ____/____/____
Pub	_____
Location	_____
GBG County/Area	_____ Score 0-5 _____
Beer	_____ (optional)

CAMRA National Beer Scoring Scheme	
Surveyor	_____
Mem.No.	_____ Date of survey ____/____/____
Pub	_____
Location	_____
GBG County/Area	_____ Score 0-5 _____
Beer	_____ (optional)

CAMRA National Beer Scoring Scheme	
Surveyor	_____
Mem.No.	_____ Date of survey ____/____/____
Pub	_____
Location	_____
GBG County/Area	_____ Score 0-5 _____
Beer	_____ (optional)

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Beer	_____ (optional)

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DODGY TICKER?

THE CONTINUING TALES OF A BEER COLLECTOR

Our tick box hero girds his loins, gets brave and tackles the sticky subject of Casks, Kegs, Bottles and Cans...

On the face of it, an article about beer packaging sounds rather dull. However, I have had to really gear myself up for this one as I have no doubt that the mere mention of the word 'keg' will have many CAMRA members seething.

Now, before you stop reading and swear never to go near a 'Dodgy Ticker' article again, please bear with me as I try to explain why the method of storage does not have to define the beer within – 'keg' does not have to mean 'bad'.

First of all I should remind you that my collection is all about draught beer – that's casks and kegs. I have always drunk beer from bottles and cans, and still do, but the focus of my collecting has always been draught. Indeed, I only started recording bottles and cans, in a completely separate part of my spreadsheet, during COVID, when draught beer was largely unavailable. A quick search of the collection finds that nearly 82% of the total draught beers recorded were from a cask. This is over 30 years of collecting, however, and it is likely that my current drinking would show

a higher proportion of keg beers. Of the small number of bottles and cans recorded since 2020, just over 81% of them were cans.

Many modern pubs and bars, as well as a selection of draught products, will offer an increasingly wide range of bottles and cans. Mike Hall from the Pelican in Gloucester explained his thinking to me in this way: "I chose to offer cans for the same reason I began offering keg beer. It became harder and harder to ignore the beer that was being put into kegs and cans. Once I'd realised that I was denying myself some of the best beer around, I began looking deeper into the 'why' and found only outdated opinions on what is and what isn't good beer."

A bottle or can provides a convenient carryout package, which is easily opened, but at the same time delivers the protection that the beer within requires. Beer bottles traditionally have been made using brown or dark green glass, which helps to prevent a beer becoming 'skunked'. Light is a catalyst in the skunk reaction, in which alpha acids from the hops break down and react with

the sulphur content in the beer to produce a chemical called MBT – this smells similar to a skunk's secretion!

For many years, canned beer was considered inferior, because the brew inside the can took on a slightly metallic tang from its packaging. However, modern cans use lining technology which seems to have removed this problem entirely. It would be interesting to set up a taste test to compare the same beer poured from a can and a bottle to see if any differences are discernible at all. Many brewers are now turning to canning in preference to bottling, since a can is lighter, more easily stacked and recycled, completely protects the beer from sunlight and provides a larger surface for artwork and marketing. Many breweries pride themselves on producing creative and striking can designs and I'd be surprised if this hasn't already become the basis for some beer enthusiasts' collecting.

Most of the bottles or cans you buy will contain beer that has been filtered and pasteurised and is no longer a live product, therefore cannot be termed real ale. However, both types of packaging can and are used for real ale too. This is more common in bottled beers and you will often see them labelled as bottle-conditioned. If you do not wish to drink the sediment from a bottle-conditioned beer, you need to ensure the beer has had time to settle and then pour carefully. Such beers used to be accredited by CAMRA under the 'Real Ale in a Bottle' scheme. Then along came Moor Brewery in Bristol, who were the first to have a can conditioned beer – essentially real ale in a can. In 2022, CAMRA launched a new scheme, One to Try, which has taken the place of 'Real Ale in a Bottle'.

I think it might be useful at this point to take a paragraph to remind readers what the term real ale means. CAMRA defines real ale as live beer, that is beer that, when first put into its final container, contains at least 0.1 million cells of live yeast per millilitre, plus enough fermentable sugar to produce a measurable reduction in its gravity while in that container, whatever it may be. In other words, for a beer to be regarded as real ale it must continue to undergo some fermentation (often referred to as conditioning) in its final container. Many modern brewers will leave

DODGY TICKER?

THE CONTINUING TALES OF A BEER COLLECTOR

their beers unfiltered and unpasteurised as they feel to do so removes crucial flavour. This means that there may be sediment in the can when you pour out your beer – but this is not to be confused with real ale. Most beer in cans is not real ale.

For me, drinking beer from a bottle or can is simply no match for a draught product. There is nothing finer than a glass of freshly poured cask conditioned beer. But what about keg beer? How is it different and is it something to avoid at all costs?

Cask beer is easy to spot on the bar as it requires a handpump. The beer itself is not pressurised in the cask, so the handpull is required to work the pump that pumps it into



your glass. This means that the cask requires a hole in the top for air to take the place of the beer being pumped out. This also explains the shorter shelf life of real ale – as soon as a cask has been tapped the air going in will start to add contaminants to the beer, particularly bacteria which can quickly lead to off flavours.

Beer stored in a keg does not need to be pumped out. This is because the keg itself is pressurised, so the beer pours freely when a tap is opened. Traditional kegs are linked up to a gas supply (usually carbon dioxide or a mixture of carbon dioxide and nitrogen), which flows into the keg and forces the beer out. This addition of gas to the keg itself gives the beer a characteristic fizz. This type of dispensing is what prompted the creation of CAMRA in the early 1970s as huge factory-scale production of tasteless keg beers was threatening the very existence of real ale brewers in the UK. Hence the bad name that the word 'keg' still has with many CAMRA members. This type of keg is still very common. They are popular with publicans as the beer has a much longer shelf life than real ale, due to the fact that the keg is not open to the air. Also, keg beers are easier to handle. The live nature of cask beer means it is more sensitive to mistreatment and its storing and serving requires staff to have a level of skill that is not required with kegs.

In recent years, however, the clear distinction between cask and keg has become somewhat blurred. New styles of keg have emerged, such as the KeyKeg, which do not allow the pressurising gas to make contact with the beer. Essentially these kegs work by having a second layer, often a plastic bag, inside the keg. The pressurising gas is forced in between the bag and the keg, so it still forces the beer out, but does not change the nature of the beer. So, real ale in a keg is perfectly possible. Purists will argue that a KeyKeg does not allow any air to come into contact with the beer and this contact can be a good thing, particularly when a cask is first tapped to dissipate any of the odd flavours and aromas that can sometimes develop during conditioning. However, it can also be argued that some beer styles are better suited to a KeyKeg. Highly hopped



IPAs, saisons or sours often serve better at a higher carbonation and need to avoid losing any hop aroma to the air before hitting your glass. Some of them are better colder too and this is where a KeyKeg can shine. I'm sad to say, however, that the Keykeg is not environmentally friendly at all, being entirely made of plastic and currently not reused – this seems barmy in the modern age and surely needs to be rectified.

You may have noticed that many casks and kegs have bands of colour painted around their middle. This has for many years been the traditional way of telling which brewery the container belongs to. A brewery would deliver its beer to a pub and then return to pick up its own barrels. This system, however, is becoming less common, with the introduction of new schemes such as ECask and Kegstar. This relatively new way of delivering beer means that the barrels themselves are not owned by the breweries, but by the delivery companies and a landlord simply needs to

ring up to arrange the collection of a pile of ECask or Kegstar containers, no matter which brewery they originally came from. I think this should be applauded as it seems a more efficient and environmentally friendly method of delivery since it reduces the travel miles. It also means landlords are more likely to be able to get hold of more obscure beers from faraway breweries, which is definitely a good thing for any collector.

Finally, just a word about wooden casks. Real ale casks were, of course, originally all made of wood and each brewery would need a team of skilled coopers to make and maintain them. Nowadays, a handful of breweries still distribute some beers in wood – e.g. Samuel Smith and Theakston, both in Yorkshire. Theakston are one of the only breweries to employ a full-time cooper. His name is Jonathan Manby and he is the last apprenticed brewery craft cooper in the country. The brewery can supply their famous Old Peculier in wooden casks. When I visited the Great British Beer Festival at Olympia last August, there was a small selection of beers available in wooden casks, mainly beers from the Netherlands. The ones I tasted were great. Considering the modern trend amongst brewers for using wooden barrels for ageing their beer, perhaps a few more might

'Nowadays, a handful of breweries still distribute some beers in wood...'



return to using more wooden casks, but I suspect the difficulty posed in keeping them clean from one brew to the next might be prohibitive. There is an organisation dedicated to trying to save this tradition: the Society for the Preservation of Beers from the Wood. If you are interested in learning more about breweries still producing wooden casks, there is a list on the Society's web site.

I would like to offer my thanks to Mike at the Pelican, who was kind enough to let me poke around in his cellar – a place that most beer drinkers rarely see. He had this to say about breweries and their packaging decisions: 'With all the different options,

it's easy for breweries to make judgements based on convenience and cost and I'm not sure all

of them make the right choices for the right reasons. However, when breweries consider the right packaging for the right product, then they are likely to give consumers more of what they want in a way that only increases the quality. For example, lower gravity beers in cask (customers drink more in one visit), slower selling beers in keg (they keep fresher for longer) and more unusual, imaginative beers in cans (giving landlords the option of buying in smaller volume).'

I hope that you will now feel a bit more informed when you are faced with ordering a beer at the bar. Maybe you will also, like me, not consider a keg beer as necessarily 'bad'. There are plenty of keg beers I would never touch with a proverbial barge pole and cask real ale will always be the true king of beer for me, but if I were to shy away from everything in a keg, the collection would suffer greatly!

Pete Searle



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Stroud Brewery and Organic Hop Trials: Brewing For Climate Change



Citrus, pine, spice, tropical fruits – hops add a whole range of flavours to beer, giving each one its own distinctive personality. Believe it or not, hops weren't introduced into brewing until Mediaeval times and, prior to this, a whole range of botanicals were used.

It's hard now to imagine beer without hops, so integral are they to the whole brewing process. However, the future of hops is looking precarious as climate change alters the conditions in which these notoriously difficult-to-grow plants thrive. They already grow just within a narrow geographical range around the world (the 45th parallel in case you're interested) and their genetic diversity has declined through the consolidation of farming post-World War 2, and the growth of the dominating breweries of the time.

You're probably thinking that all sounds a bit grim. Don't despair, help could be at hand. Cue the Innovative Farmers Organic Hop Trial – a three year on-farm trial which has been growing and testing hop varieties to find those best able to cope with the changing conditions, and which can be grown organically without pesticides and herbicides. Since pests and diseases will thrive in future warmer temperatures, and are well known for developing tolerance to chemical treatments, these hop varieties would also benefit the

non-organic farmers too.

The Innovative Farmers' Organic Hop Trial has brought together members of the hop supply chain, including breeders, merchants, growers and brewers, to combine their expertise and encourage shared learning. Farmers cannot operate in isolation of the market and end users, and the market cannot disconnect from the farmers' production and supply.

Innovative Farmers is part of the Duchy Future Farming Programme, funded by the Prince of Wales's Charitable Fund through the sales of Waitrose Duchy Organics products.

For the past three years, a number of hop varieties have been grown on the East Sussex and Worcestershire farms, and analysed for a range of characteristics including yield, their disease tolerance, vigour, growth patterns, and suitability for brewing.

The three-year trial has now drawn to a close and, in mid March, the group will once again convene at Stroud Brewery to sample beers made using the five hop varieties currently showing the most promise. These are limited edition brews of only three (30l) kegs for each variety, with 1 keg of each made available in Stroud Brewery's taproom to test the public's reaction. So, if you're in the Stroud area from late March, do drop in and judge them for yourself!

The members of this research group are:

Greg Pilley,

Stroud Brewery, Group co-ordinator and Brewer

Will Rogers,

Charles Faram, Hop Merchant/Technical expert.
(Charles Faram is a grower-owned hop breeder, which sells about 70% of the UK's hop crop)

Peter Glendinning,

PGHops/Charles Faram Hop Development Programme, Research Agronomist

John Walker,

Tedney House Farm, Worcestershire, Grower/Farmer

Tom Upton,

Woodlands Farm, Rye, East Sussex, Grower

Isi Mackintosh,

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Meetings on second Wednesday or Thursday of the month at 8.00 pm.

Call: Rob Coldwell 07752 740488 For more details see website www.cheltenhamcamra.org.uk

North Cotswold Branch Email: Roger Price on chair@northcotswoldcamra.org.uk
or call 01451 810305 and 07850 429630.

For more details see website www.northcotswoldcamra.org.uk or the Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/North-Cotswolds-CAMRA-the-Campaign-for-Real-Ale-in-the-North-Cotswolds-1022351584505679/?fref=nl>

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Business Meetings are first Thursday bi-monthly.

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

For further details please contact Ian at secretary@tewkesbury.camra.org.uk or 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: Geoff Sandles on 07504 533557

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 Tony Hill. Anyone interested in Stroud meetings should contact us by email at chair@stroud.camra.org.uk and ask to be added to our email list.



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