

IN THIS ISSUE:



*Trips to Bespoke, Gloucester  
& Stroud Breweries*



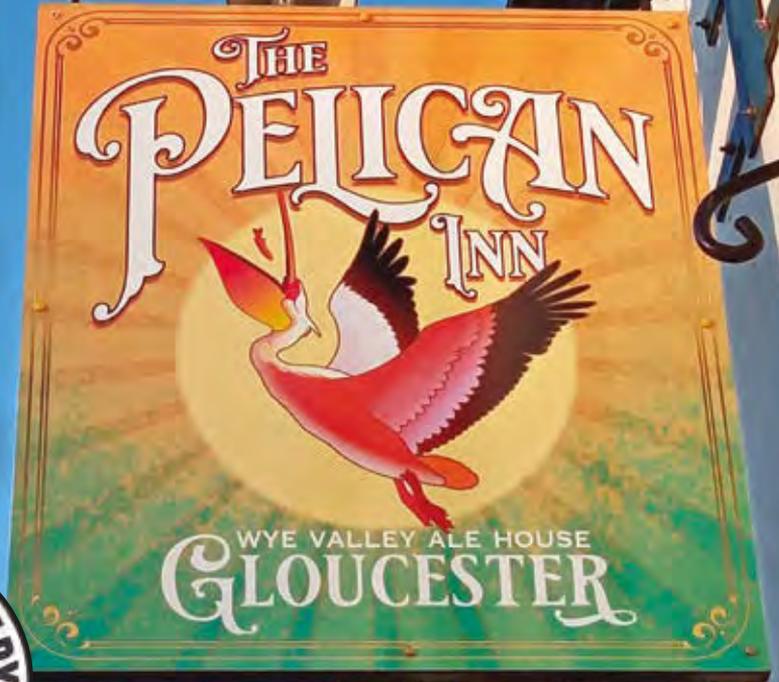
Campaign  
for  
Real Ale

**FREE**  
Please Take One

# the tippler

Autumn 2022

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



Front cover photograph competition sponsored by Stroud Brewery



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Campaign  
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# the tippler

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

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

## STROUD BREWERY FRONT COVER COMPETITION WINNER:

The wonderful pub sign over the door of the wonderful 'Pelican' in Gloucester, caught on a glorious sunny day in June by Sandra Hawksworth. Send in your cover pictures, see pages 8 and 44 for more details, and good luck!

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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, then please contact us at:

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

## CONTRIBUTION DEADLINES

For the next two issues, the deadlines will be  
the second Friday in November 2022 and February 2023

[www.gloucestershire.camra.org.uk](http://www.gloucestershire.camra.org.uk)



MMMM, IF ONLY I HADN'T TALKED TO HIM ABOUT THE COPENHAGEN INTERPRETATION OF QUANTUM MECHANICS AS APPLIED TO EVERYDAY OBJECTS...

I SAY GLADYS, IS THIS SCHRÖDINGER'S CAT SOME KIND OF NEW CRAFT BEER?

**LETTERS**  
to the  
**EDITOR**

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

## Editorial...



Blimey, there's plenty in this magazine! We're up to 64 pages with three regular competitions to win brewery tours and bottles of beer. These are proving ever so popular which is great to see, we must be doing something right to get so many entries.

The letters pages are getting well used, so keep sending your news and views, and there's plenty of news from around the county's branches and sub-branches. We try and bring you interesting articles from contributors who may not have taken the time and trouble to write in before, so why not try it yourself, send your copy and a few good images and we'll do the rest, Three Go East on page 46 is an excellent example.

Finally try and get out and get into pubs which are becoming scarcer and scarcer, there are now fewer than 40,000, having lost some 7,000 in the last 10 years, and still falling. Drink more beer in pubs and save them, they are a precious thing indeed! Cheers!

**Chris Leibbrandt**

WHEN YOU HAVE LOST YOUR INNS, DROWN YOUR SORRY SELVES,  
FOR YOU SHALL HAVE LOST THE LAST OF ENGLAND

FIND US IN



WHAT'S NEW

**TASTY THAI  
POP-UP  
TAKEAWAY**  
FRIDAYS  
4-8PM  
(IN BACK ROOM)

THE INDEPENDENT ALE & CIDERHOUSE IN THE HEART OF TEWKESBURY  
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# Letters to the Editor...

Chris,

While enjoying a pint at the Corinium Ales taproom on Saturday (Pliny the Elderflower, since you ask), I managed to complete the wordsearch on page 15.

Regarding the question posed by Pete Sheehy (Turks Head) about an entry in to Good Beer Guide, my understanding, as explained by my brother-in-law, who managed 32 consecutive entries in the GBG, from 1986 - 2018 with the *Odd One Out* in Colchester, is that the pub needed to be trading for at least a year, to be rated and recommended for an entry.

I'm not sure whether Mr Sheehy was referring to his pub in Southgate Street or the current one in King's Square (which I haven't had a chance to get to yet).

There was a similar situation at the *Oddfellows Arms* here in Cirencester, when Hook Norton bought the pub. The manager's cry was always "How, and what do I do to get into the GBG?"

It was explained to him by a (CAMRA) regular, basically the information that appeared on pages 26 & 27 of the summer Tippler. His reply was: "But I want to get an entry NOW!" He left under a bit of a shadow in 2011!

Thanks for the good work in producing the Tippler.

Regards,

**Rick Martin**

**Chris replies:**

**Hello Rick,**

**First of all, your entry is indeed correct, so well done.**

**On the issue of the Good Beer Guide entry, I think that your brother-in-law hit the nail on the head, with his succinct explanation, clearly he wasn't an 'Odd One Out'!**

**It's a funny one isn't it? A lot of confusion about how to become a local, regional or national Pub of the Year (POTY) and/or being entered into The Good Beer Guide (GBG). Basically the former (POTY) has a host of different criteria that go towards making a stand-out pub, so fill in the form below,**

**CAMRA's Pub of the Year Competition Promissure**  
**CAMRA PUB OF THE YEAR JUDGING FORM**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Region: \_\_\_\_\_  
Entry Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Web Page: \_\_\_\_\_

10 Points per Criterion x Weighting Factor. Max = 120

Category	Mark	Factor	Sub Total
1. Quality and Consistency of Product	(40)	(3)	
2. Presentation and Staff Knowledge of Product	(40)	(3)	
3. Service, Hygiene and Offering	(40)	(3)	
4. Cleanliness, Decor and Ambiance	(40)	(3)	
5. Consistency with CAMRA's Aims	(40)	(3)	
6. Overall Impression and Value	(40)	(3)	

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
Total Score: \_\_\_\_\_  
Judge: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**and the latter (GBG) just the criterion of good beer being served, fill in the forms below and hand them or email them in.**

**CAMRA National Beer Scoring Scheme**

Surveyor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of survey: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
Mem.No.: \_\_\_\_\_  
Pub: \_\_\_\_\_  
Location: \_\_\_\_\_ Score 0-5  
GBG County/Area: \_\_\_\_\_ (optional)  
Beer: \_\_\_\_\_

# Letters to the Editor...

**There are however a few caveats. Both of these are voted on by members, of course the POTY vote can be more difficult as it takes in a lot of subjective issues that not everyone will agree with. The GBG vote is a more binary issue, either they sell good beer or they don't, so it's all about the voting slips that are collected and the few aforementioned additional caveats that can, perhaps, affect some pubs:**

- **Pubs must have had the same Landlord/lady for the previous 6 months prior to selection period (Feb/Mar) to ensure confidence in continued beer quality.**
- **If a change of landlord/lady is expected to take place in the 6 months after the selection period this may exclude a pub being selected.**
- **New pubs or pubs re-opening after a long period of closure must have been open for 12 months prior to the selection period to be eligible.**

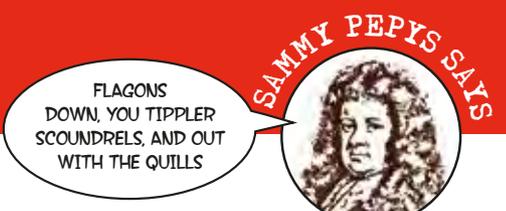
**Additionally, there are limited numbers that can be entered, so if a local branch is in the enviable position of having too many pubs to consider, it will come down to the numbers involved.**

**It's very easy to get the two mixed up, but one thing they both share is this: serving good beer!**

**Certainly, this will help members to explain when they are asked why a certain pub doesn't get a mention in either or both categories.**

Hi Chris,

Thanks for including the articles on the Forest of Dean Morris and the Hearts of Oak, Drybrook. I suppose my Gloucestershire Pubs website article is not time critical and will appear in the Autumn tippler? (It certainly is, see pages 26 & 27, what great work! - Ed.)



Interesting comments on my Wetherspoons article, I was anticipating some reaction, and it seems to have worked. I am planning to write another (possibly) controversial piece for the next edition - claiming that seeking out real ales in the 1970's was much more fun than it is now.

Was it a coincidence that yet another Tewkesbury based resident won the front page competition? I'm entering the next one!!!

Cheers,

**Geoff Sandles**

**Chris replies:**

**Thanks for the email Geoff, always good to get interesting correspondence.**

**Regarding the front cover competition, nothing would please me more than you winning it! The more the merrier, basically, a portrait image will immediately increase their chances. The competition was introduced to allow some of the regular critics of the front cover to contribute their own cover photographs. Despite being able to win some great prizes, my noisiest critics have never once sent in a photograph for consideration!**

**There are some basics to consider, firstly to use portrait and not landscape format. Next consider where the name and text is going to appear on the cover and fit your picture around it. See some basic guidelines on the next page. I don't care where they come from, it doesn't have to be in the county, but of course it has to be relevant.**

**Right then, ready for articles about the 1970s, beer might have been hard to find but great rock music wasn't! Also as many pictures as you want to send to try and win.**



# Letters to the Editor...

Dear Editor

I recently picked up a copy of Pint Taken Worcestershire's CAMRA magazine (not a patch on the Tippler). Inside, I was interested to find an advert from the Worcestershire's Tasting Panel looking for volunteers and offering to educate them on the art of tasting beer.

In light of the conversation in the last Tippler magazine, I would be interested to hear if there is a similar organisation within Gloucestershire's CAMRA. I am anticipating that CAMRA has this covered and the Tasting Panel works democratically in the same way that the branches do.

I suppose, that the misunderstanding that occurred between what was the criteria for the Good Beer Guide and The Pub of the Year, has raised my interest and left me wanting more information please.

I understand that not all members care about this sort of thing, but I think in the current climate we owe a duty of care to our diminishing number of public houses, to be open and transparent in all our dealing and perhaps to offer an opportunity to address any problems we find before anything detrimental gets published that could affect their

livelihood, and ultimately, our pleasure of their premises.

Of course, I also want to know where not to go so persistent problems should definitely be brought to the membership's attention. Unlike cake, I know I want my beer and drink it (ha).

Yours Faithfully,

**Ann Martin**

**Chris replies:**

**Many thanks Ann for another interesting letter. I'm not sure about Gloucestershire, but I've been having a look around the CAMRA website and you can find a lot of information as well as dates for in person and online tasting training by clicking this link:**

**<https://camra.org.uk/volunteers-area/training-for-volunteers/taste-training-and-beer-judging/>**

## FRONT COVER PHOTOGRAPH COMPETITION - A FEW GUIDELINES

Here's a quick guide to make sure that you are in good shape to win the front cover competition.

Once you've spotted your subject, there



are some basics to consider, firstly to use portrait and not landscape format.



Next consider where the designer can fit the name, text and logos are going to appear on the cover and try and fit your picture into that template.

You'll see that the winner this issue had worked this out and sent in an image that is, not only brilliant, colourful and clear, but it also fits the page template perfectly.



PORTRAIT IMAGE +  
TEMPLATE  
=  
FRONT COVER COMPETITION  
WINNER



# The Berkeley Arms

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2022  
**Tewkesbury  
CAMRA  
Pub of The Year**



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dog friendly

# THE HUNTER'S COLUMN



**Date: 9th August 2022, destination: Four Worcestershire pubs. Mind you, our intrepid hero gets stuck in the first, spending his time larkin' about with poems, pints and its very own Three Kings Kulture Klub...**

The Three Kings, Hanley Castle is a place of antiquated delight and is revered as a centre of culture, in all its meanings and spellings, by those who have the honour to cross its threshold.

A chalked barrel-shaped board listed the available four real ales and standing in the hole in the carpet in front of the lounge bar, one is immediately aware that one is standing in the exact same spot that many a thirsty country lad and lass have stood before - hence the hole in the carpet. Phil the



Bike and his treasure of a wife Chris had arranged a trip to four Worcestershire pubs, which started at The Three Kings. This home of royalty in its village green location boasts beaming architecture; a go-wild-in-the-country garden and smoke enhanced decor. It is a Good Beer Guide home, because of the consistent quality and price of its ales and relaxed conversation-enhancing atmosphere, to regulars and irregulars, from near and far. The atmosphere of a pub wasn't just down to the clouds of smoke that billowed everywhere in days gone by - it is of no surprise that we all have foggy

memories of the past - it is down to the clientele, who are subtly and sometimes not so subtly, directed from behind the bar by the management. Settling into one of the kings' settles I spied a leaflet, above the inglenook, of a centenary event. Was that a picture of Phil Silvers I had spotted? Was it Eric Morecambe, he eternally linked with Tewkesbury? No, it wasn't, although it did acknowledge the likeness. It turned out to be that of another Phil (to his mates, if he had any), Philip Larkin. Rated as one of the finest poets of the second half of the 20th century, Larkin has been described as 'a very English poet, with glum accuracy', having 'lowered sights and diminished expectations'.

He himself said that deprivation was for him "what daffodils were for Wordsworth". Humorous, direct and bleak, Mr Larkin comes with a government health warning due to his having traits of misogyny and racism that placed him slightly to the right of Genghis Khan.



His father, Sydney, was even further to the right of Genghis, being a man "who combined a love of literature with an enthusiasm for Nazism and had attended two Nuremberg rallies during the mid-1930s." He was also the town treasurer for Coventry.

The Kulture Klub met on the centenary of Larkin's birthday and, as it happened, my grandson's second anniversary. Larkin's most famous poem on parenthood, *It Be The Verse*, used the F word long before it became 'fashionable' and even compulsory in certain quarters. It was politely glossed over at the meeting, which was a portrait in itself of genteel English eccentricity, even if they weren't all English or genteel. There was a doctor; a scientist; an erudite biker; a trio of teachers and an elderly (we were all elderly) lady who edited the parish mag and before that had edited the Daily Telegraph crossword. There is many a cross word said at parish meetings and so her transferable skill must have come in very useful. Sue, the esteemed landlady of this mecca for ale drinkers, is also 'Chairman' of the Parish Council. How often do you see a Chairman's Report written out as a poem?

**"There was a doctor; a scientist; an erudite biker; a trio of teachers and an elderly (we were all elderly) lady"**

Good beer, good people and with a thick layer of quirkiness thrown in for free - the essence of the British pub. Pubs that we need to keep open. It's not the same in our everything-stops-for-tea rooms; not even in one of our cluster of coffee houses. Beer lubricates social intercourse and may well do the same for other types as well.

Phil the Poet was born in Coventry in 1922 and now has a pub named after him in the city. After having read a review of the pub, "good crowd of happy people" and a description on WhatPub, "Archetypal city centre pub, very loud and full of the pre-club crowd", I'm not sure that this maestro of misery would approve. To quote from 'It Be The Verse':

Man hands on misery to man.  
It deepens like a coastal shelf.  
Get out as early as you can,  
And don't have any kids yourself

Larkin's glum outlook on life was said to be grounded in his unhappy family upbringing. Was he happy in his misery? To look on the bright side, which wasn't his thing, at least one of his aspirations came true...

"I'd like to think... that people in pubs would talk about my poems". We did, Phil, we did and don't forget to smile next time.

The Hunter





# NEWS FROM CHELTENHAM



## CHELTENHAM PUB OF THE YEAR

### *The Jolly Brewmaster*

is Cheltenham Pub of the Year and has a proud record; the pub was local CAMRA Pub of the Year from 2006-13 and 2017-18. It was also runner-up as South West Regional Cider Pub of the Year in 2012.

The 'Jolly Brew' has now progressed to the South West judging stage of CAMRA's National Pub of the Year competition.

**Cheltenham CAMRA Chair, Rob Coldwell, and Clubs Officer Veronica Emery present the Pub of the Year Award to Miles Partridge at the Jolly Brewmaster.**



## RUNNER UP PUB OF THE YEAR

*The Angry Parrot* is Cheltenham's Pub of the Year Runner-up, the long-term dream of partners Paul Cook and Jo Hobbs, the 'Angry Parrot' micropub opened its doors on 10 March 2020, just ten days before the first National COVID lockdown. Because of its cosy interior the pub stayed closed for 469 days. Despite this setback the 'Parrot' has bounced back to win the runner-up spot against stiff competition. The pub currently opens from Thursday to Saturday only.

**The Angry Parrot's Paul Cook and Jo Hobbs proudly display the Pub of the Year Runner-up award.**



## CHELTENHAM CLUB OF THE YEAR

**Cheltenham Motor Club** Wins Cheltenham Club of the Year. Cheltenham Motor Club know that, despite winning CAMRA National Club of the Year in 2013, 2017 and 2020.

**Cheltenham Branch Chair, Rob Coldwell, presents the branch Club of the Year Award to Cheltenham Motor Club steward, Neil Way.**




**CHELTENHAM MOTOR CLUB  
CAMRA NATIONAL CLUB OF  
THE YEAR 2013, 2017 & 2020**

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# REAL ALE FINDER APP.

Do you have a favourite brewery or beer? Do you have trouble tracking it down, or worse still find out that you have just missed it at one of your locals? Frustrating isn't it?

This is where the Real Ale Finder App really helps: available free on Apple iOS and Android. The App works both as an inventory and marketing tool for pubs, and as a simple interactive tool to keep track of what's on at your local, and to alert you to favourite breweries and beers as they come on in pubs near you.

The first screen shows you all the local pubs listed on the App. Simply select a pub and it displays all the cask and keg beers, ciders and perries currently available. There is an option to show what is in the cellar waiting to come on.

The page shows beer colour and ABV% and whether the beer has recently come on. If you want to find out more about the pub there is a WhatPub icon that loads the pub's WhatPub page.

Selecting a beer brings up tasting notes and a list of all pubs currently stocking that beer. Pubs also have the option of displaying the beer price, if they wish. In addition pubs can display bottles, cans and non-alcoholic beers.

You can also search using an interactive map which shows pubs nearby, or you can select an area that you are planning on visiting. There is also a page for pubs to publicise events and festivals.

A useful section allows you to select, and build a list, of your favourite breweries and beers. Once done REAL TIME notifications

are sent out when an ale (or brewery) you are interested in becomes available nearby, or when a favourite pub has a new ale on. That way you need never miss a favourite beer again.

Free to use for both pubs and beer drinkers, the Real Ale Finder provides inventory management, tools (including an option for in-pub TV display and social media updates), reports for pubs, and up to date information (with push notifications) for real ale drinkers.

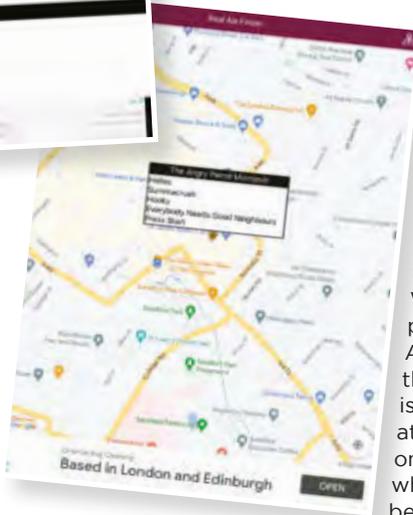
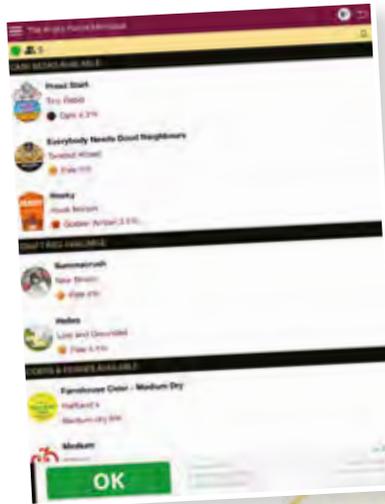
Although popular in the Midlands and the North, Real Ale Finder only has a toehold in the South West at the moment. As chair of the Cheltenham Tasting panel I have found this App helpful in locating the breweries and beers which panel members need to score for the Champion Beer of Britain Award, and for writing up tasting notes. Currently only four pubs

locally are using this App – three in Cheltenham and one in Tewkesbury. However, it is notable that both of Cheltenham's Wetherspoon pubs use Real Ale Finder, and the pub group is pretty smart at introducing online tools which they believe adds business. It would

value to the be nice to see more pubs sign up across Gloucestershire as a valuable aid to real ale drinkers, pubs and breweries.

**Tony Lucas**

Chair Cheltenham Tasting Panel



## ST GEORGES VAULTS

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# NEWS FROM NORTH COTSWOLDS



## Monthly Pub Walks

We have now completed 105 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](http://www.northcotswoldcamra.org.uk) together with the route and photographs.

The next walks are as follows:

**No 106 - Sat Oct 1st - Green Dragon, Cowley**

**No 107 - Sat Nov 5th - Fossebridge Inn, Fossebridge**

**No 108 - Sat Dec 3rd - Sherborne Arms, Northleach**

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

## Facebook

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

## BEER FESTIVALS 2022

**20th Ale and Steam Weekend 27th - 29th May**

**15th Moreton Beer Festival 9th - 11th September**

Further information on our website:  
[www.northcotswoldcamra.org.uk](http://www.northcotswoldcamra.org.uk)

## Cycling Events

We have a couple of great cycling days out planned:

**Fri July 1st - 1st Moreton Cycling Tour** - from Moreton to Shipston and back. A cycle route that takes in another five great pubs and a brewery.

**Thu Aug 11th - 4th Broadway Cycling Tour** - from Broadway to Evesham and back. A cycle route that takes in another five great pubs.

## Motorcycling Events

We are planning 4 motorcycle runs (approx. 80miles on fine days) visiting scenic locations.

## Day Away 2022

Our Autumn day away will take place on Saturday 24th September we have a visit to Swindon. When we get there, we'll be enjoying a tour of GBG pubs. Details TBA.

## Weekend Away

TBA

## Spring Pub of the Year

TBA



# PUB OF THE YEAR 2022

## The Mousetrap Inn - Bourton on the Water



North Cotswold Branch are pleased to announce our Pub of the Year is the Mousetrap Inn situated in the Lansdowne Bourton on the Water. The Pub has been a regular in the Good Beer Guide over the past few years and was runners up in the last competition pre-covid.

The pub has showcased local ales on its three hand pumps, changing regularly and featuring any breweries special brews available. Popular with locals who wish to escape the tourist filled village centre and discerning visitors who seek out The Mousetrap for its Ales, Craft Beer and food.

The Voting teams from the Branch who visited on different days were impressed by the quality and choice available.



**Branch Chairman Rojer Price with Pubs Officer Martin Jones present Adrian Jones the winners Certificate.**

Joint Runners up for Pub of the Year were the Seven Tuns at Chedworth and the Horse and Groom at Upper Oddington.

**Warren Turner of the Horse and Groom at Oddington with Runners Up Certificate**





# NEWS FROM TEWKESBURY



On Thursday 18th August the Tewkesbury Branch of CAMRA held an Extraordinary General Meeting at the Inferno Brewery pop-up at the White Bear.

There was one item on the agendum: to fill the roles of Branch Chair and Secretary.

At the recent Annual General Meeting all of the necessary roles were filled so it was just a case of welcoming new candidates for the job.

Luckily, the impasse was overcome and the new incumbents, along with the other officers appear on the following list.

Noted in the minutes was the great appreciation of the branch members for the steadfast and valuable work that the outgoing officers had taken on in the last few years. Now that we are well and truly out of lock-downs and Covid, we can look forward to the Branch

getting back to its busy self with plenty to report on the state of the branch's area. Not least the great kick start that the pubs in the town centre got from the highly popular Live Music Festival mentioned overpage.

## LIST OF TEWKESBURY BRANCH OFFICERS

**Chair - Chris Slade**

**Secretary - Pete Adams**

**Treasurer - Chris Comens**

**Social Secretary - Steve Kisby**

**Membership Secretary - Bill Hunt**

**Pubs Officer - Pete Goodger**

**Webman - Ian Mence**

## Pub News

Friday 22nd July to Sunday 24th was the set of essential diary dates for the town as this marked the first Tewkesbury Live, a free, three day music festival in your favourite pubs and venues throughout the town centre. First mooted years ago, this celebration event has been a long time coming!

Quite simply, it was a brilliant three days that were well worth the wait. It brought residents and visitors out in droves to enjoy the music, great variety of real ales and fabulous party atmosphere. Around 70 bands, singers, choirs and others put on a great show over the three days in over 20 venues.

Pretty much every town centre pub had an act on at one time or the other, the curious exception was the *Royal Hop Pole Hotel*, which was an oasis of calm amongst the febrile music goings on. *Ye Olde Black Bear* opened its newly landscaped garden and gave us a taster of what to expect with the full opening, it'll be a massive asset to the town's real ale scene. Strangely, where we expected it to continue to be open in the summer months,

it closed immediately after the event. The pubs that put on events were: *The Albion, The Anchor, The Bell Inn, The Berkeley Arms, The Boathouse, The Britannia Inn, The Cross House Tavern, The New Plough, The Nottingham Arms, The Tudor House Hotel, The White Bear* and *Ye Olde Black Bear*.

A truly special effort on the part of all the publicans and organisers. The great news is that it has already been confirmed that we'll be having another next year. Cheers!



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# NEWS FROM GLOUCESTER



## MAKE MINE A DOUBLE!



### **Gloucestershire CAMRA Pub of the Year 2022 Gloucestershire CAMRA Cider Pub of the Year 2022**

#### **Mike Hall celebrates 10 years at The Pelican**

When Wye Valley brewery invited Mike Hall and his wife, Louise, to view The Pelican in March 2012, there was little likelihood that they would take it. Mike had been running The Bell, in Leominster for the previous seven years with no ambition to leave. The Pelican was closed, windows shuttered, roofers crowded the pub roof and the overgrown garden was receiving its first haircut in a very long time. It was going to take a lot of effort to get this place off the ground, but significantly, the brewery had already begun a sympathetic £70,000 refurbishment. The pair instantly fell in love with the pub and with a tremendous

amount of work, they would throw open the doors just three months later.

Historically, The Pelican had been owned by Arnold Perrett, West Country Ales, Whitbread and Banks's. Poor trading, and an unshakably poor reputation, had seen it fall into disrepair. Wye Valley Brewery at this time were still growing their pub estate and as they turned their attention to Gloucester, the location of the Pelican seemed the perfect fit. The pub is beautifully placed: behind the cathedral, opposite the priory ruins, and a stone's throw from Kingsholm rugby stadium, yet tucked away from the main strip of city pubs.

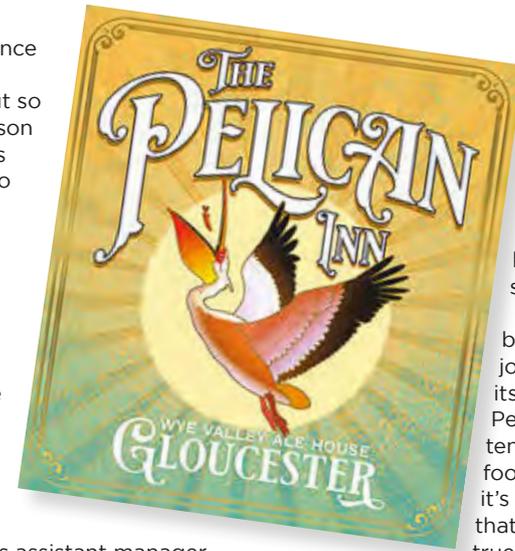
Mike knew the importance of the location. Customers would have to seek you out so you'd need to create a reason to visit The Pelican, and his reason was always going to be real ale.

The landlord's journey had begun in Quedgeley in 1997, but it was in Ross-on-Wye the following year that he began to learn the art of serving quality cask beer. The Crown & Sceptre offered six real ales and had been Herefordshire Pub of the Year (POTY) in 1995. Mike served his apprenticeship there as cellar manager and later, as assistant manager before he took the manager's job at The Riverside in 2001. He immediately began turning its fortunes around, offering real ale, front and centre.

Wye Valley Brewery tracked his success back then and it seemed inevitable that the two would combine at some point, perhaps most surprising, was that it would take until 2012 for their stars to align.

Trading The Pelican up was a careful process, the key was to be patient, and luckily the brewery was patient. The reputation needed to change drastically, this doesn't happen overnight or with a brewery breathing down the landlord's neck. Mike Hall and his staff were single minded in their vision of a real ale haven in Gloucester. The oft quoted "if you build it, they will come", (to paraphrase Ray Kinsella from the movie, Field of Dreams) was never more appropriate.

Rugby fans began arriving for home matches and through their forums, the news of a new real ale pub spread. Cyclists and local beer drinkers began to rediscover the pub and enjoy its new direction. CAMRA recognized a new City POTY in 2014 and the awards followed regularly thereafter. As trade grew, more hand pumps were installed, beer festivals were held and the choice of beer and cider expanded. It now sits at over 100 cask, keg, box, bottle and cans available at any time. In 2022, The Pelican became Gloucestershire POTY for the second time and



also county Cider champions too. After ten years at the helm, we asked Mike what his plans were for the future. "It's been a great first ten years, but I'm just getting started".

The Pelican has been on an incredible journey throughout its 400 year history. Perhaps these last ten years are only a footnote in time, but it's within that decade that the pub became a true asset to the city of

Gloucester: a fantastic destination for the discerning beer drinker. And yet, despite the delightful beer garden, the open fire, the ten beer engines, the logistically impossible beer festivals, the traditional pub atmosphere with modern beer styles. Despite all these things, the thing I like the best. No lager!

# WE NEED YOUR HELP

## WE NEED NEWS!

If you have any pub news at all (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!

[chris@thetippler.co.uk](mailto:chris@thetippler.co.uk)

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I	I	A	O	R	M	O	N	D	L	Y	W	A
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T	O	A	A	L	L	E	B	R	M	E	I	S
Y	A	W	L	I	A	R	D	N	A	R	T	S
F	K	I	N	G	S	H	E	A	D	S	O	R

**Beehive**

**Bell**

**Buthay**

**Cobblers**

**Falcon**

**Fleece**

**Fox Inn**

**Greyhound**

**Hog**

**Kings Head**

**Lamb**

**Mount**

**Mousetrap**

**New Inn**

**Ormond**

**Pelican**

**Plough**

**Railway**

**Retreat**

**Royal**

**Ship Inn**

**Star**

**Strand**

**Swan**

**Tivoli**

**York**

- 1 Find the listed Gloucestershire hostleries in the grid (open before the COVID lockdown).
- 2 They can be horizontal, vertical or diagonal, forward or back.
- 3 The unused letters create an advertising slogan used by Courage in the 1970s.

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# NEWS FROM STROUD



## PUB OF THE YEAR

It was a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon at the Prince Albert on Saturday, 2nd July when landlords Lotte Lyster and Miles Connolly were presented with Stroud CAMRA's Pub of the Year certificate for 2022.

"The pub was relaxed and welcoming and everyone - whether real ale drinkers or not - rejoiced in the pub's success and came together to toast the Albert's richly deserved victory," reports Tim Mars, Stroud CAMRA's Pubs Officer. "The Albert is back on top after the Crown at Minchinhampton came from nowhere to snatch an unprecedented victory last year."

The Prince Albert won the Pub of the Year ballot of Stroud CAMRA members by a landslide.

- Prince Albert (Rodborough) 83
- Ale House (Stroud) 50
- Crown (Minchinhampton) 49

"This was a stunning comeback for the Albert," observes Tim Mars, "which won in 2020 by just one vote over the Ale House - our Pub of the Year for the previous six years, an unparalleled run - but lost out last year to the Crown. Richard Terry, the former manager of the Crown, sent his congratulations and best wishes to Lotte and Miles, a sign of the genuine friendship and esteem that exists between the landlords of two such very different establishments."

Local brewer Richard Taylor of the Fresh Standard Brew Co., newly relocated to the Merretts Mill Industrial Estate outside Nailsworth and whose beers are often found on the bar at the Albert, was among the many celebrities, Stroud characters and Rodborough residents who turned out to celebrate the pub's win.

"The Albert did us proud on the beer front," adds Tim Mars. "On handpump were Tiley's Ordinary Bitter (3.8%) from the Salutation Inn at Ham near Berkeley, Easy Peasy (4.0%) from 3D Beer, Timothy Taylor Landlord (4.3%), Bristol Beer Factory's Optimist (4.4%) and Young's Special (4.5%). The quality of the ales is a tribute to the cellar skills of Lotte and Beaver's daughter, Ruby Stephens."

This was also the year when the Prince Albert's legendary May Bank Holiday Beer Festival returned in triumph after a two-year hiatus due to lockdowns and Covid-19 regulations. "The festival has been running since 2008," says Tim, who also serves as Alefinder General to the event. "We started with 14 nine-gallon casks of beer and now we're up to around 36—all strengths, all styles, all colours."

For many it was also a chance to see the pub's smart new inn sign, a tribute to Thomas the Tank Engine author and former Rodborough resident the Rev W Awdry. It was painted by Stroud signwriter Eleanor Harper.



Photo: Matt Bigwood

"The Albert now goes forward with our blessing to the next round," Tim continues, "to compete with all the other Gloucestershire CAMRA sub-branch nominations for the title of Gloucestershire CAMRA Pub of the Year."

The winner of that round goes on to compete for the prize of CAMRA South West Pub of the Year."

So far, three Gloucestershire pubs have scooped the title of CAMRA Pub of the Year. The Sandford Park Alehouse, Cheltenham in 2015, The Salutation Inn, Ham in 2014 and The Old Spot Inn, Dursley in 2007.

The Albert is a lively, cosmopolitan, Cotswold-stone inn below Rodborough Commons that has been run by the same family for 26 years. It is a Stroud institution with a unique character - managing to be simultaneously bohemian, homely and welcoming, with a challenging colour scheme and a big reputation for live music. There's also a log fire, offering warmth and welcome in winter. Art exhibitions and themed nights are held, including quizzes, backgammon, crib, scrabble, folk music, stand-up comedy, open mic nights, live bands and even political hustings.

Pizzas, burgers and ice-cream are served from a new kitchen adjoining a large covered courtyard. Stairs lead up to a walled garden with an elegant cruck-framed shelter. Children and dogs are not only welcome but usually very much in evidence.



Everyone out to toast the Albert's triumph! Front row left to right: Tony Hill (chair of Stroud CAMRA), landlords Lotte Lyster and Miles Connolly (Prince Albert), Tim Mars (Pubs Officer of Stroud CAMRA). Photo: Bill Hicks

The Prince Albert achieved national fame when it was one of four pubs featured on the BBC2 series 'Saving Britain's Pubs' presented by top chef and publican Tom Kerridge. The first programme aired in November 2020. Filming of the programme was interrupted and the series curtailed by the first Covid-19 lockdown on 23 March 2020 when all pubs were ordered to close.

Tim Mars

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# www.gloucestershirepubs.co.uk

In this feature, Geoff Sandles tells us how, after over 20 years of work, he and Dave Hedges moved their his monumental archive of information onto the internet. This amazing resource will be of interest to CAMRA members both here and outside the county, infrequent browsers and historians alike...

In the year 2000, fellow CAMRA member, Dave Hedges, and I shared the same enthusiasm to create a website devoted to the history of pubs in the county and began work on www.gloucestershirepubs.co.uk . As a pure labour of love with no financial remuneration for our efforts, this task was always going to be a challenge, with thousands of pubs, past and present, to research, document and put on line. The task was truly daunting as the description of pubs was to encompass the original boundaries of Gloucestershire that now extend into South Gloucestershire and even parts of Bristol. Yet the Gloucestershire Pubs website set out what it intended to do with widespread acclaim. It was particularly appreciated by genealogists researching their family histories as the website gave the names of thousands of landlords that were resident at the pubs.

To use the common analogy of painting the Forth Railway Bridge, much of the information was outdated as soon as it was

put on-line. With pubs closing permanently at an alarming rate, it seemed wrong to be reading up-beat descriptions of pubs like the Harvest Home in Greet that had been subsequently raised to the ground.

As much as the information on existing pubs was becoming irrelevant, Dave and I decided to take the opportunity to completely revise the entire content of Gloucestershire Pubs early in 2020 and we made steady but diligent progress uploading the new look Forest of Dean section, and made a determined effort in updating Cheltenham Pubs. Unfortunately, it soon became apparent that this approach was also flawed and moving the website forward to document the pubs in other areas of Gloucestershire was going to be a massive and sadly unachievable task.

With the webhosting and domain name renewal approaching Dave and I had to decide whether we wished to continue with the project. Inputting fresh data onto Gloucestershire Pubs had stalled and our

**'..after 22 years of diligent work, we didn't want our efforts to come to nothing...'**

enthusiasm to work on the website had diminished. A more flexible way of working was required that made updating easier. After 22 years of diligent work, we didn't want our efforts to come to nothing so, with fresh impetus, the website is once again being rebuilt. By using WordPress the layout can be more flexible as it no longer requires specific geographical areas to arrange the pub information. There is a search function that should be useful, yet that is far from perfect.

If, for example, you wish to browse pubs in Cheltenham it would be a fruitless activity to type the word Cheltenham in the search function as hundreds of references to the Cheltenham Original Brewery would



content of the website will feature over a thousand Gloucestershire pubs, past and present. There are probably another thousand or so public houses to be added to the website and there will be some familiar pubs that are not yet featured. Because of the flexibility of the website design, I can now add pubs on request. Contact me if you would like a particular pub added. If there are any mistakes, I would also appreciate your input.

As the website is purely a labour-of-love we receive no income. It is free from commercials and annoying pop-ups. Dave and I are both CAMRA members and love our real ales, but we aim to describe all pubs without any prejudice. At the time of writing Gloucestershire Pubs has had 16,000 hits.

I have also a successful Facebook Group called Gloucestershire Pubs which currently has 3,000 members. This also focuses on the history of pubs in Gloucestershire, but it is a useful forum for pubs to freely promote their activities within one common group.

**Geoff Sandles**

pop up. Likewise searching specifically for pubs in Stroud would bring up unwanted references to the Stroud Brewery Company. However, by contacting me through the contact function on the website I will be able to offer help should you be unable to find the pub you are looking for.

There is a lot of work to do, but the updates are being put back online at a steady progress. By the time you read this the

# PETE THE PIRATE POPS INTO CHEPSTOW

**Pete Sheehy, owner of the Turk's Head in Gloucester gets out and about and heads for sunny Chepstow for a day out.**

So, we gathered at Gloucester train station last Sunday for the 10.50am to Chepstow. A couple of the more eager amongst us had a livener on the train, after all it is a 20 minute journey not to be wasted.

We arrived about ten past eleven, so it was off to the only pub open at that time on a Sunday, The Bellhanger (Wetherspoons). They had their usual array on and we were pretty evenly split. Doom bar for the youngsters (30 to 45) and Abbot for the grown ups. Curiously, the pump prices said 2.10p but we were charged 2.19p. Not wanting to get chucked out for complaining. (Is company policy is to deny all complaints?) Anyway, it was all very tasty.

Then it was round the corner to the Five Alls. There, we had Reverend James and Titanic Iceberg. Both very nice at £3.50 a pint, not bad at all. The lovely barmaid let us all squeeze behind the bar for a photo opportunity! See below.

Then it was a trudge up the hill to The George (why people built on hills I will never

know). There it was, the ubiquitous Butty Bach or HPA. Two minutes in The George and someone knocked a full pint onto the 'Kitty (money) Keeper'. She being Christine, the only female foolish enough to come and now soaking wet. Amazingly the barman brought over a replacement pint - amazingly free of charge, and a bowl of olives to cheer Christine up!

Then off to the Coach and Horses where there was sadly no real ale, just two hand pumps both on cider. We all felt this was too risky so moved on to the The Queens Head micropub for Gorge Best, Blackheath Stout or Chinoogan. All of which were pronounced lovely.

Sadly, due to train cancellations, Covid, shortage of leaves on the track or something similar, it was the 5:00pm back to The Shire. The Station hotel in Gloucester had no ales so it was in to town to finish off the day. But that's a tale for another day.

It looks like Tewkesbury by bus next! Can they take the shock? Which first? The Berkeley or Cross House. Decisions, decisions old chap...

**Pete Sheehy**



wetherspoon

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**The Fleece is the only pub in the village of Hillesley, which has a population of around 600 and is located some 15 minutes drive north of the M4/J18 off the A46. Ten years ago, five families underwrote the purchase and 120 members of the community became shareholders in the Hillesley Pub Company Ltd. The freehold purchase was completed in June 2012 and with overwhelming local support from the village. So, ten years after, we have new landlords who are one year in...**

Mykel and Rebecca Cameron arrived back in the UK in May 2021, with their two children, Macintyre and Summer. (Pictured here, Macintyre missing the photo shoot.)

They had made the decision, two years previously, to leave Mykel's native country of South Africa and set their sights on running a pub in rural England.

Some progress had been made, whilst still in South Africa, and as soon as they landed and slid straight into the dreaded 10 day COVID quarantine, they started firing off applications to the pubs they had already shortlisted, with The Fleece Inn in Hillesley being top of the list.

Hopes were raised when they received a call, whilst still in quarantine, regarding their application for The Fleece Inn but, at that stage, there were other applicants already taking part in the application process.



Mykel and Rebecca then spend the next three months driving all over the south west to view other pubs, but none quite ticked all the boxes and fitted the bill. At that stage they were starting to feel a bit despondent and wondering if they had made the right decision.

In early August 2021, they received a call from one of the directors of the Hillesley Community Pub to enquire if they were still looking for a pub and, if so, would they be interested in continuing their interest in The Fleece Inn.

I don't think you could have seen two people move quicker with regards driving down from London to view the pub, interview with the board and submit the business plan and application!

To their delight, their application was successful and the next record breaking move took place with Mykel and Rebecca taking residence on 31st August, 2021 and opening the pub on September 2nd, 2021 with the generous assistance of the outgoing landlord, Rod Undy.

They knew that they were facing challenges post-Covid with many hospitality venues looking at uncertain futures. The bold decision was made to return to seven days a week opening times, all within the first couple of weeks of re-opening.

Then, to add to their woes, Covid hit both Mykel and Rebecca and they had to isolate for another 10 days above the pub, but the retained team continued to help to support

and keep the pub open every day. Within a couple of months, they re-opened the kitchen in November, with a newly recruited chef.

The beginning of September 2022 sees Mykel and Rebecca complete their first year as landlords at The Fleece Inn and what a lot has been done in that year!

The regular acoustic and vinyl nights have restarted, they have hosted live music, charity cook off evenings, craft markets, and many more events. The culmination being the reintroduction of the annual three day beer and cider festival, which ran in mid July.

Because of COVID, this was the first festival for a couple of years, and it was also a fitting celebration of the

10th anniversary of the community buying the pub. Mykel and Rebecca put on three days of live music, entertainment and food with 27 real ales and 10 ciders showcased over the three days, bringing the festival back in style!

There was a presentation from the organisation Pub is the Hub too. For more on the organisation and the pub visit: <https://www.pubisthehub.org.uk/case-study/the-fleece-inn/>

Early in September they are planning the next celebration which will be for their 1st year in the pub, a year that has flown by! This is going to be the first of many as Mykel and Rebecca continue to champion real ales. They have six hand pumps on pretty much seven days a week, and they're looking forward to continuing the success of The Fleece Inn as a true community pub.



# DEAF BOY WANDERIN' JOHN



**This time we sent our reluctant whistlin' bluesman from deepest Bromsgrove, (Deaf Boy) Wanderin' John, down into the southern reaches of the County to see what he could unearth. We wondered if we'd ever see him again but he found his way back . . .**

**Five miles of hills, woods, an ancient hillfort and some of the most beautiful parts of Gloucestershire starts (and finishes) at the lovely Old Crown Inn in the heart of Uley, a delightful Cotswold village and home to the brewery of the same name.**

Leaving the Inn behind (reluctantly), I walked across the village green and headed uphill on the B4066, following the road until it bent left up Crawley Hill. I turned right and used a track that led towards Mutteral Farm.

Approaching the first house on the track, I turned left and climbed over a stile into fields and a wood-lined valley.

Following the path that crossed a small stream via a footbridge, I kept the stream on the left as I headed up the valley. As the woods on both sides closed in, I turned left and entered Toney Wood through an easily seen stile.

Now for a spot of loin-girding, as the walk continued up a steep slope that climbed to the top of the valley. My relief was breathlessly

joyful as the path skirted a garden and ended in a stone stile. I took great care as a busy road is immediately on the other side of the stile. I found it easier to cross the road, turn left and use the wide verge to walk up to a crossroads half a mile onwards (ignore a turning to Nymphsfield).

At the crossroads, I walked straight over to a wide verge where there was a Cotswold Way marker post. I turned right and walked to another C.W. marker post that took me to a path down some steps into the remains of an old quarry. The shattered face of the quarry was an incredible sight and worth the walk on its own. More importantly it led me to Coaley Peak. This is just the place to celebrate the all-encompassing views of the Vale of Berkeley and beyond with a well-earned libation.

I retraced my steps to the crossroads, passing the two marker posts and headed straight ahead in the direction of Uley. After approximately 200 yards I took a path going down into the woods, marked by another C.W. marker and a small Woodland Trust sign that is the entrance to Coaley Wood.

I followed a steep, tree-lined descent through a huge avenue of towering beech trees. Carrying on down the slope to a split in the path, I took the C.W. marked route. A five-barred gate blocked my path, but again I took the left-hand path following the Cotswold Way

Eventually the path led me out of the woods, where I turned left by a metal gate and then

sharp right to a wooden gate that ran parallel to the adjacent Uley Road.

The path now led me towards another Cotswold gem, namely Uley Bury Hillfort. This is a very large Iron Age Settlement dating from 300BC and although visitors are not allowed inside the walls, the walk took me to the right at the entrance to follow the surprisingly extensive ramparts around the site and enjoy breath-taking views of the Gloucestershire scenery on every side.

About three-quarters of the way around, by the side of a tree growing on its own mound, I took a path leading down off the side of the plateau. Swinging right onto this narrow path, I descend until I met a junction of paths by two gates. I took the right-hand path marked C.W. Circular Route, which guided me through another small wood. Just down from the gates, I found a way-marked sign and went right onto a permissive path.

Leaving the wood behind, I descended straight down the hillside to a stile that gave access to a lane leading to the road that ran through the village. I turned left and slowly walked up the slope, passed the Village Hall and thankfully, the Old Crown Inn was on the left.

I received a warm welcome from Kate Morgan, the landlady, (who has recently returned from running a hotel in the French Alps to reclaim the family pub). The exterior and interior have undergone a radical refurbishment that has further enhanced the elegant, uncomplicated atmosphere of the bar and eating area. An added bonus is that Kate also brought her French chef back to work in



**'I drank a pint of the appropriately named Gulp'**

**Start/Finish at The Old Crown Inn, Uley**

the kitchen, so there is a definite continental flavour to the cooking. The pub has Butty Bach and H.P.A. as its home beers, with three guest beers that are changed on rotation.

At the time of my visit, I drank a pint of the appropriately named Gulp, an English I.P.A. (ABV 4.8%) from the Frome Brewing Company, which proved to be as thirst-quenching as the name suggests and popular with the local customers. The meal at lunchtime was beautifully cooked, well-presented and, much like your author, generously proportioned.

The walk was strenuous, but the scenery was totally exhilarating. At the end I was very glad that the Old Crown Inn provided a great place to eat, drink and talk over the trek!



Uley Bury Hillfort



The Old Crown Inn at Uley



# Pub News from The FOREST OF DEAN



## PUB OF THE YEAR

The Forest of Dean sub-branch have just awarded the Real Ale Pub of the Year 2022 to the Red Hart at Blaisdon. The award was presented by the sub-branch secretary Martin Hillier (seen here on the left) to Sharon Hookings the landlady and her husband Rakesh. The sub-branch awarded the prize in recognition of all the work that they do to make sure this is a great local with not only attractive interior but a warm and welcoming outside too. Their dedication to providing a varied and well kept range of real ales is much appreciated and to add to all of the foregoing, they also have a range of quality food offered in a lovely country pub environment.

The event was attended by local CAMRA members and the Gloucestershire Branch Chairman Andrew Frape.



## CIDER PUB OF THE YEAR



On the left of the photo is the new chairman of the sub-branch, John Fox seen here presenting the prize certificate for the Cider Pub of the Year 2022.

The CAMRA Forest of Dean sub-branch to the Doghouse pub in Coleford. Our hearty congratulations go to Greg, Vicky and their wonderful staff for keeping their ever changing range of ciders in such excellent condition.

In addition to the cider options, The Doghouse also serves a good range of real ales, craft beers and lager.

Members of the sub-branch also had a presence at the pub during the ever popular Coleford music festival that took place on the 9th and 10th of July.



## A TASTE OF THE FOREST

A new monthly beer tasting evening gets underway in Coleford

**Simon and Debbie Jones run the successful Forest Deli in the centre of Coleford and apart from stocking an amazing cheese selection, among other things they also sell locally sourced beer and cider.**

You can buy bottled beers and cans from Two Tinkers Brewery in Lydney, Bespoke Brewery in Littledean and beers from the Forest Brewery now based at Taurus Craft.

They have now started a monthly beer tasting evening, and the brewery chosen on a hot summer's evening in August was the Twisted Wheel Brewery in Warrington, Cheshire. Fortunately the cans were nicely chilled and Simon introduced a variety of different styles for sampling. There was a strong Double Indian Pale Ale (DIPA) at 8.5% ABV - 'I'm Actually Mortified By It' which belied its strength. Dividing opinion was a fruity raspberry infused sour ale called Purple Haze, not to my usual taste but really refreshing in the heat. Also tried was a 'one off' beer dedicated to the Aussie TV Soap 'Everybody Needs Good Neighbours' and a West Coast IPA, 'Bittersweet Sympathy'.

Twisted Wheel Brewery is only two years old, a business established during Lockdown. Despite the shaky start Twisted Wheel now enjoys national distribution through orders made on their website. Although the bulk of production goes into cans, the occasional cask ale may appear.

The Cheshire town of Warrington used to be known as the home of Greenall Whitley Brewery and Tetley, both long closed. How times have changed. Brewing is firmly back in Warrington, but the styles of beer could not be more different. All Twisted Wheel's beers are unfiltered and have a natural haziness. I wonder what the head brewer of Greenalls back in the 1970's would have thought of that! "What, no finings!"

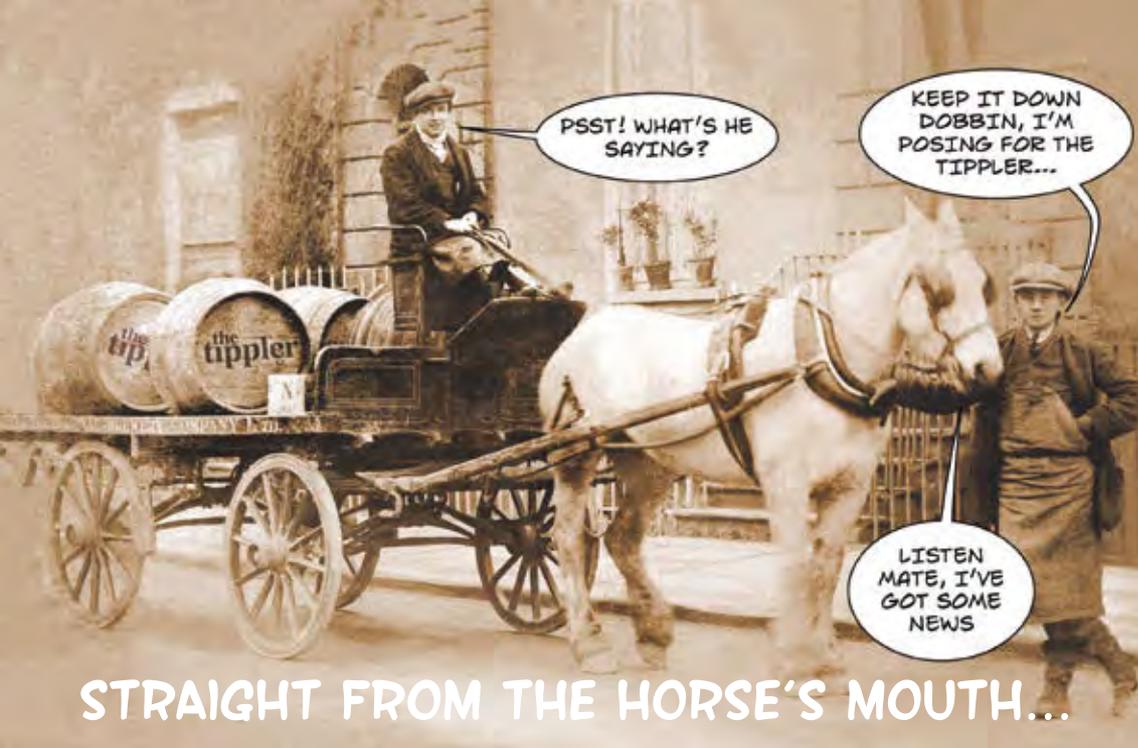
Thank you Simon and Debbie at the Forest Deli for an introduction to the products of Twisted Wheel. I look forward to the next featured brewery.

**Geoff Sandles**



Available at The Forest Deli:





## STRAIGHT FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH...

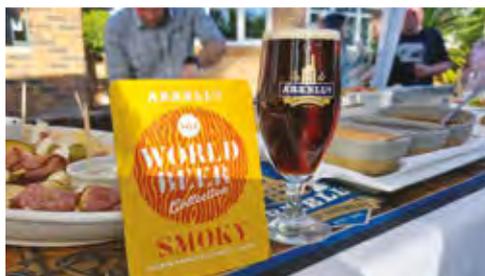
## BREWERY NEWS



**Arkell's Brewery** has planned a new series of beers, starting with the perfect beer for the summer season: 'Smoky'

Smoky was launched at The Sun Inn on a gorgeous summer evening where beer flowed and the BBQ was smokin!

The World Beer collection is based on beer styles from around the world, giving the brewing team a chance to get creative with hops and techniques popular in other countries, that are not seen so often here.



Head Brewer, Alex Arkell, frequently offers drinkers new tastes and flavours, all hand made in their traditional tower brewery.

First to be launched is 'Smoky', a cask beer in the traditional Bavarian style known as Rauchbier, which is a smoky beer. In fact, all beers around the world would have been smoky like this before the rise of commercial brewing, as all the barley would have been dried over open wood burning fires. This drying imparts a woody smoky flavour into the barley that comes through into the beer. Nowadays, the barley is dried using gas which imparts no flavour at all. In Bamberg, Bavaria, however, they still like to smoke their malt.

Alex Arkell, head brewer commented: "We've sourced some beech wood smoked barley for this beer which imparts a delicious complexity from the blend of sweet and savoury. Think of perfectly browned bacon or lightly aromatic campfire aromas washed down with a gentle malty best bitter. While unusual, this beer is a fascinating insight into how we have all enjoyed beer 100 years ago. Seemingly exotic and of a German origin, there is a rich history of English beers with this smoky flavour."

## BREWERY NEWS

**Battledown Brewery's** Tap room is now open on Fridays from 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm and Saturdays from 12:00pm to 5:00 pm, serving beers on tap, as well as teaming up with Sibling Distillery for gin lovers.



**The Bespoke Brewery** in Littledean offers a unique and exciting place to eat and drink in the Forest of Dean. Charming, rustic and reminiscent of city centre taprooms and breweries;

The Bespoke Brewery offers a genuine and authentic take on dining and drinking in the Forest. (Pictured below right.)

Nestled in the heart of the Forest of Dean, you'll find yourself tucked between barns, in a neat and tidy farmyard. With farm kit either side of you, and chickens roaming freely, this is a unique and vibrant place to visit, and a truly delightful place to enjoy some local offerings. The bar itself is fully stocked, with a good range of local ales, beers, lagers, ciders, spirits and soft drinks as well as a great range of snacks too.

The Church Farm Kitchen's in-house catering team, offers a small changing menu revolving around great beer-matched food. Quality and locally sourced meats, breads, condiments as well as British potatoes for the fries, equal an offering that resonates with the local suppliers alongside the customers. Sample menus would include, quality burgers, gourmet hotdogs, pulled meats and even tantalising toasties. This simple menu has been a winner with customers, some even suggesting they're the best burgers in the Forest!



The Brewery Tap is open from 4:00 pm on Fridays and Saturdays, and the kitchen currently open from 6:00 pm -check their social media for more details.

Meanwhile their Mitcheldean Tap (below) continues to grow in its new surroundings on the family farm with an ever increasing calendar of events. That isn't to say by any means that the brewery has lost sight of it's origins in the old Wintle's brewery (now The Mews) over in Mitcheldean. Since reopening at the start of the year, local residents have flooded back to enjoy the mix of live music, local produce and friendly and engaging atmosphere.



"After a tough time in the industry with the pandemic it was time to take stock. I moved with my partner to the Forest where she grew up. Having lived all over the west country, it's a home away from home. Even if it does have it's quirks," jokes Jon Edwards, the Tap manager.

"I love the atmosphere at the Tap and I'm committed to showcasing all that the Forest has to offer. It's open from 4:00 pm to 11:00 pm Thursday, Friday and Saturday. There's always people to chat to, along with the great beer and food."



DEYA Brewery's old site, Unit 33/34 on the Lansdown Industrial Estate, just around the corner from the new DEYA brewery and taproom, has been re-purposed and is now a dedicated Mixed Fermentation Taproom. The walls are lined with oak barrels, in which mixed fermentation beers are aged for months or years. Alongside delicious mixed fermentation beers the taproom offers natural cider, natural wine and a couple of clean crisp beers from the mainstream DEYA range.

The new DEYA brewery and taproom is available for private hire as an event space. Although closed for the summer, the taproom will reopen in September, on Fridays and Saturdays only. Check their social media for details.

# STRAIGHT FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH...

## BREWERY NEWS



**Goffs Brewery** have reported a busy few months, not least their annual birthday bash on the 6th August. Celebrating 28 years of brewing in Winchcombe with Beers, Beats & Burgers! The brewery would like to extend their thanks to everyone who came along to join them, it was a great day.

They said goodbye to Sam, the brewer, who has moved back home to Norfolk, but has stayed within the industry. They then said hello to Burt who has joined us as Lead Brewer. Burt has a wealth of experience including Hook Norton, Flowerpot, Wadworth and more recently Clavell & Hind. They are super excited to have him on board, even though his taste in music is suspicious!

Look out for a new beer coming soon, the autumn including a Chilli & Chocolate Fudge Stout! Keep your peepers peeled!



**Lucifer Brewhouse** in Wotton-under-Edge has increased its output and its beers can now be found in a number of pubs in our area, and also in Cheltenham, Bristol and Nailsea.



**The Severn Brewing Company** has now departed from Leyhill and has stored its equipment in the hope that they may be able to start brewing in the future. In the meantime, their beers are being brewed under contract.



**Tiley's Brewery** at Ham, near Berkeley, are the recipients of this year's Beer of the Festival Award at The Cotswold Beer Festival held recently at Postlip Hall. It is only the second time that this award, given to the beer which sells out first, has

been won by a Gloucestershire Brewery. For the record, the previous occasion was when Cotswold Spring Brewery, of fond memory, was brewing Nik Milo's OSM (Old Sodbury Mild), which scooped the prize.

This time the accolade has gone to Tiley's 4.1% Simcoe Pale.



Pete Tiley, owner of the Brewery, had this to say:

"We're absolutely thrilled to have won Beer of the Festival at the Cotswold Beer Festival! It's a huge credit to our head brewer Florean Hodgkinson who has been producing fantastic beers here at Tiley's since he joined us at the end of 2019. We're only a very tiny brewery, brewing out the back of the Salutation Inn at Ham in order to supply the Sally as well as a handful of quality local pubs such as the Stroud Alehouse and the Cheltenham Motor Club amongst others - pubs which really know how to keep and serve great cask ale! Our focus has always been on brewing the best quality, highly drinkable cask that we can and always with our trademark crisp, bitter finish. I guess as the first beer to sell out at the Cotswold Beer Festival, Florean really hit the mark with this one!"

## PUB NEWS

Sadly, like a lot of the country, the pub news in the Dursley area is not good reading. They have lost a few of our pubs over the lockdowns for a variety of reasons. The **Lammastide** in Brookend at the start of the

# STRAIGHT FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH...

## PUB NEWS

first lockdown; we lost the **Major's Retreat**, Tormarton because of the retirement of the owner, but still hope in may reopen in the future. Next to go was **Cosimini's London Bar** in Berkeley, closely followed by the **Pear Tree** in Charfield. We were particularly upset about the last which had been our Pub of the Year for the two half years it was allowed to open during the pandemic.

The future of the **Berkeley Arms** at Purton is unclear. The owner has demolished the small bar and enlarged the entrance into the back room, which casts doubt over its status as a CAMRA listed Historic Interior. We await developments.

Three pubs have recently been renamed: The Buthay in Wickwar is now known as the **Fox & Maple**, Dinnywicks in Kingswood is now

**The Village Inn** and Hoggies in Lower Wick has reverted to an old name, **The Pepper Pot Pub**.

Our Pub of the Year for 2022 is the Royal Oak in Cromhall. The certificate was handed to the pub in February, and it is intended to present it formally during their Beer Festival in August.



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Thursday	12pm - 11pm
Friday	12pm - 11pm
Saturday	12pm - 11pm
Sunday	12pm - 9pm

Monday	No Food
Tuesday	6pm - 9pm
Wednesday	12pm - 3pm & 6pm - 9pm
Thursday	12pm - 3pm & 6pm - 9pm
Friday	12pm - 3pm & 6pm - 9pm
Saturday	12pm - 3pm & 6pm - 9pm
Sunday	12pm - 4pm

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**Pub of the Year 2022**  
Dursley and District Sub-Branch of  
Gloucestershire CAMRA

# SCRAPING THE BARREL

with Ernest and Verity Dregg

**Ernest and Verity Dregg, retired snipers and fleet street hacks have swapped their life as anti-woke, unreconstructed bigots and gossip columnists to open their dream pub. In his last article for the Tippler before his untimely death, Nick Waloff, beer lover, *bon viveur*, international CAMRA activist (he set up CAMRA Canada) and great friend tells the heart-warming tale of their great new idea: a British Restaurant, the ultimate retro eatery...**

Ernest and Verity Dregg, proud licencees of 'The Must Grumble', surveyed the scene of the 'morning after' in their domain. It was now Day Fourteen in The Post-Brexit Very United Kingdom.

An empty bottle of 'Victory Gin' protruded from the bin under the bar counter. The music system was quietly playing an old song, 'My Madness Offends' – one of Ernest's favourites.

"We've got all we ever wanted," said Ernest solemnly, addressing no one in particular, it made him feel good just saying it. Very good. He puffed out his chest even more.

All the EU nationals who had formed most of their staff had finally departed back to those strange little countries they had come from. No wonder the place was so quiet. At last, we're alone. Britain against Europe! We'll show them!

He pulled out a crumpled, faded copy of the cover of 'Private Eye' magazine, one he had treasured for so long.

It showed The Queen, our Most Gracious Queen, sitting at a dinner surrounded by strange looking Middle Eastern potentates with what looked like bar towels on their heads.

The heading simply said: 'Her Majesty graciously consents to endure the stench of foreigners'. Need one say more? Ernest thought to himself.

Behind him the menu chalk board laconically stated: 'Yes we have no pizzas! Potato and Parsnip Pie Special again!'

"And again and again and again," said Verity to no one in particular. "Those customers – they need to understand seasonality, proper British seasonality."



queueing just like her mum, Ada.

European imports soared in price, and she was pretty sure she knew who was hoarding it locally. A thriving black market had already sprung up in Mugsborough in just a few days.

"I've had a Big Idea," said Ernest. "We're going to set up a 'British Restaurant' in this pub. None of that foreign rubbish – garlic's out, so's olive oil, and as for European wines, forget it! We're going to make the very most of the Best of British."

Verity looked at him adoringly. Ernest was always so right. But what on earth was a British restaurant?

Ernest had always been an secret admirer of PG Wodehouse, and now at last it was something he could draw upon to the full. Pork pies and scratchings would replace silly fripperies like tapas and tapenades. All that 'gastro-rubbish' was going to be consigned to the dustbin of history, he decided to himself.

And none of those stupid EU regulations. Food safety had got out of control. No one

# SCRAPING THE BARREL

with Ernest and Verity Dregg

was going to push him around again. Why not even introduce imperial pounds and ounces again, just to keep a new breed of customer?

So, it was going to be British beers only, and British wines, whether people liked them or not. He had secretly slurped his parent's 'British Sherry', called Armadillo, in his distant youth. It was time to reintroduce it.

Lagers would have to go as well, he reflected. They only encouraged people to spend their holidays in Europe, and now the patriotic thing would be to make the most of the worsening British climate with staycationing year after year.

"What is a British restaurant?" Verity asked suddenly.

Ernest had seen old pictures of them as a child. Part of wartime Britain, they had been invented by his hero Churchill. Serried rows of trestle tables, people grateful to get any food,

pictures of Churchill, wrecked German bombers and 'Careless Talk Costs Lives' posters everywhere.

A prominent picture of Prime Minister Johnson would certainly inspire the troops. A friend of his had told him how Henley-on-Thames' shopkeepers had patriotically clubbed together in the mid-2000s to ensure that every shop on the High Street there had a flattering oil painting of Boris on an easel in its window.

Customers' reactions to it would soon sort out if they were One of Us, or One of Them.

Better still, they could bring their own food. As long as he could check at the door that it was 100% British.

Now there's a great selling point, he thought proudly.

**Nick Waloff**



# A COTSWOLD TREASURE



North Cotswolds Branch had the privilege of a guided tour of the historic Donnington Brewery in August. On a lovely sunny afternoon, 15 members gathered by the brewery mill pond where branch chairman Roger Price showed off his love of fishing by feeding the trout in the lake with used grain from the brewery causing the water to boil with hungry, flapping fish.

We were then greeted by brewer, Andy Driver, (pictured left) who gave us a brief history of the building. There has been a brewery at Donnington since 1865, when Richard Iles Arkell started brewing beer alongside the family farming enterprise. The building itself dates to 1291 when it was one of the mills of Broadway Manor. The brewery has since been in the hands of members of the Arkell family until the present day. When you're entering the brewery, you are stepping back in time, as much of the layout and equipment are as they were when brewing started in 1865.

Andy took us through the combination of barley, malt and hops that make their signature beers, BB, SBA and Cotswold Gold. He explained that they very much brew to demand and on average they do two or three brews a week. The recent increase in demand

for golden ale has seen the Cotswold Gold now matching sales of the BB in some of the busier pubs. We then climbed to the top of the building to study the copper where their unique spring water is pumped up to be boiled with the malt and grain. Following the brewing process we then camebered down through the building to the water wheel that drives the various wheels and pulleys to help the beer along its journey to the casks.

Once we reached the bottom of the brewery, where the casks are ready for distribution to the pubs, we all got a free taste from each of the three beer casks. We were joined by the brewery peacock who can normally found strutting about the premises as if it's a member of the Arkell family.

We finished the tour with Ale and Steam Festival Director, Alan McLellan, presenting Andy (seen above) with a certificate to celebrate Cotswold Gold winning Locale of the Festival this year. Thanks to our branch treasurer, Dawn Harrison, and her husband Dick who is the brewery BLO for organising this fascinating tour of the most traditional of breweries in its stunning location.

# Cotswold Beer Festival 2022 The 44th Festival - at last!

On a hot weekend in July the 44th Cotswold Beer Festival finally happened. We had started planning in January 2020 but of course that ran into the sand, though not before we had achieved one of the most difficult steps in any of the planning - we had created a logo, a slightly comical swan! We started again even more optimistically in 2021 but eventually by May of that year we had to admit defeat once again.



Finally, this year the swan took to the air. A swan unable to get off the ground is a clumsy thing but once in flight it glided serenely over the grounds of Postlip Hall as it was always meant to and 1500 lucky customers enjoyed its flight.

We had nearly 100 beers, many from Gloucestershire brewers and also featured Welsh brewers. We also had 20 different ciders and perrys all from within the county. For the first time we had beer only in firkins so we could award Beer of the Festival to the first beer to run out. That was won by Tiley's Simcoe Pale Ale which ran out at 1.15pm on the Saturday. This was only the second time a Gloucestershire brewer has won the Festival award. Can anyone remember the first? Cotswold Spring OSM when Nik Milo was brewing there in 2014. Cider of the festival was Core Cider from the Craft Cider Co and the Perry award went to Severn Cider with their Blakeney Red.

We made a number of changes this time, mainly being suitably cautious about the

Covid risk that hasn't gone away yet, if it ever will. We had to limit the number of tickets and sell them only online. So they sold out several weeks ahead of time and that caught some people out. We also had no music inside the Tithe Barn to avoid having crowds gathering there. This was regretted and we do know how disappointed some people were. The Tewkesbury Town Band played as always, but outside in the large marquee.

The Festival organisers are already planning improvements for the 2023 event – so put the provisional dates in your diary **Friday 21 July to Sunday 23 July 2023**. Those dates will be confirmed in the next Tippler. Shelter, whether from the sun or from rain, has proved vital and the call for more live music on Saturday has been heard. For visitors looking to leave their cars at home, we can confirm that the Winchcombe and Cheltenham buses will return to their separate routes next year

If you'd like to join the Festival team and introduce the festival to a new generation please email: [mzparker@btinternet.com](mailto:mzparker@btinternet.com).



Happy drinkers wend their way home on the Saturday

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CELEBRATE RESPONSIBLY FARMED  
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# FRONT COVER COMPETITION



Now, the technical part, most images in cameras that are made for digital work are set in 72dpi (dots per inch) of colour, which is great for Facebook, texts etc. It's not, however, much use for printing on paper, where you need to use 300dpi. So set your cameras and phones to the biggest number of pixels you can, FHD 1280 x 1080 or WQHD 2560 x 1440 and take your pictures. Make sure you remember to take pictures in **PORTRAIT FORMAT**, that'll give you the best chance of winning and appearing on the Tippler's front cover.

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Send your entries, either email, or old-school prints, to The Editor at the address below.

NOTE: Judges decisions are final and images chosen may not represent venues within the county.

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or by post to: The Editor, The Tippler, 23 Theocs Close, Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire. GL20 5TX

# Three Go East

Three hopelessly optimistic adventurers set out for four days of hoptastic research in and around the Teeming Towers of Cambridge



Back in May this year, I (Nev), my partner Sue and our mate John decided to attend the Cambridge Beer Festival.

All arrangements were made and hotel booked, only to hear a couple of weeks prior to setting out that the Festival was cancelled! Oh well, let's go anyway! Turned out to be a great decision. The bare facts are that we managed 23 pubs in the four days we were there, with some notable highlights well worth a mention.

We based ourselves at a Premier Inn on the outskirts of Cambridge and on arrival set out to find a few pubs at that end of the city.

The Maypole in Portugal Place seemed a good starting point. A great selection of ales

and once we mentally adjusted to the big city prices (never let fear of bankruptcy spoil your fun), we really enjoyed it. We visited quite a few on that first afternoon including The Champion of the Thames, The Elm Tree and The Free Press - all well established GBG inclusions and deservedly so.

## DAY TWO

A train to Norwich, which turned out to be a great place to visit. First stop The Fat Cat. A bit of a trek out of the centre but well worth it. A full range of their Fat Cat beers plus a fantastic range mostly from East Anglia, including Oakham and Crouch Vale. We loved this place and used up quite a bit of

the day enjoying the atmosphere (and ale) in this delightful pub.

Working our way back involved dodging the rain in any pub that was open. Happily, we managed to find The Murderers/Gardeners Arms on Timber Hill - apparently the original name was The Gardeners but after a domestic dispute with the landlady being killed by her estranged husband in 1895, the popular name became The Murderers. A very impressive range of beers (to die for, you might say) on offer, including a few by the local Wolf Brewery.

'Never let fear of bankruptcy spoil your fun'



The Nutshell (reputedly the smallest pub in Britain) & The Murderers/Gardeners

## DAY THREE

Off to the lovely town of Bury St Edmunds, the home of Greene King. First stop, Oakes Barn. Great, friendly town centre pub with six real ales including Oakham, Woodefords and Crouch Vale - another place it's easy to spend time in. On the way to the obligatory visit to The Nutshell we called into the old Corn Exchange to see what a wonderful job Wetherspoons have done with this important building. Another excellent job and a new lease of life to the former site of the Beer Festival of East Anglia.

The Nutshell claims to be Britain's smallest pub. It is cosy, I have to admit. Only two beers on (they would be struggling to fit more in), both Greene King, but both in first class condition.

No visit to Bury would be complete without a stroll down Hospital Road to The Dove. The term 'proper pub' is possibly overused these days but this really is a proper pub. Six handpumps, ale juggled from the cellar if need be, a good selection of ciders and not much else. But lots of customers, friendly staff and a top landlord. (And not a pint over £3).

## DAY FOUR

So, last day and the rest of Cambridge to explore. Started with a taxi ride out to Chesterton to coincide with opening time at midday at The Haymakers. First class pub, a Milton Brewery house, another brewer that produces a full range, so something for everyone. We thought that, at that early hour the place would be pretty quiet, but not so. A local company was holding some sort of bonding session. I would love to work for them, the place was buzzing by 12.30!



The Dove in Bury St Edmunds- what's not to like?



Spoilt for choice at The Cambridge Blue

Next stop was back into the city to The Cambridge Blue in Gwydir Street.

I'd been there a few times before and always considered it a drinkers paradise, but that day was paradise tripled - the main bar housed ten double badged handpumps (extra beers were available from the back room), whilst in the back garden there were about 30 casks racked up in festival style, plus at least 20 ciders!

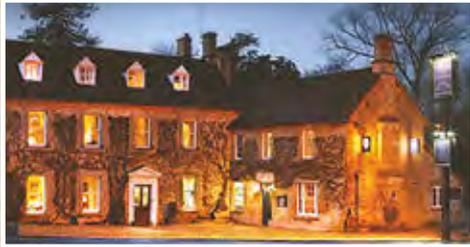
Officially this was part of the Cambridge Beer Quarter Festival, run over six venues in that part of town. The Cambridge Blue was very much the focal point, what a brilliant effort by them. Difficult to move on from there, but we decided to support some of the other festival venues. One we really enjoyed was The Geldart, a very lively street corner pub popular with just about everyone. (Particularly unusual handpumps, each one a different musical instrument, giving some very tuneful beer!)

So there **was** a beer festival in Cambridge after all. Glad we found it, eventually.

Cheers all,

**Nev, Sue, John**

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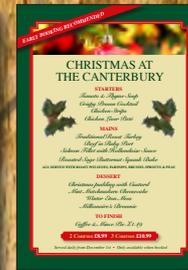
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NICK OF TIME DESIGN



## Stroud Brewery champions cask beer as the 'Greener' option

As we all sweltered in the heatwave, there won't have been many of us that didn't contemplate climate change. The message from the experts is clear, we're in a climate emergency and we can't keep pumping carbon dioxide (CO2) into the atmosphere. The challenge, however, is how do we become more sustainable and not have to give up all the things we enjoy which includes supping a pint of beer?

It is up to us to become eco-warriors, and pubs can be part of that! Helping your customers make better choices by knowing more about how beer is made, how it should be drunk, and stocking sustainable products is a great start. This is why Stroud Brewery is championing cask conditioned beer; they know cask beer produces fewer than half the CO2 emissions of a non-returnable bottle beer.

So, what makes cask beer so much more sustainable? There are a number of elements that contribute to total CO2 emissions, and these include growing the raw materials, the brewing process, packaging, distribution and trade, which can all be positively impacted when managed properly.

Let's start with the raw materials used in beer which provide a high proportion of the carbon emissions. Using locally sourced, organically grown barley and hops helps to

reduce emissions, something Stroud Brewery is very passionate about. They know it's kinder to the planet as well as helping insects, birds and animals to thrive. They only work closely with organic farmers who are already taking huge strides to reduce their climate impact.

Next to consider is the brewing process, which is responsible for a small proportion of the total carbon footprint, brewers need to make the right investment decisions to achieve carbon neutral production over the next decade. Again, Stroud Brewery have been doing this for years. Their focus on cask conditioned beer supports the environment as it's less demanding, requires less refrigeration and produces its own carbon dioxide during conditioning.

Once the beer is made, packaging can account for between 5 and 45% of the total footprint depending on the type of package chosen. Recyclable bulk units such as casks and kegs have a smaller carbon footprint, while small pack beers in bottles and cans require more resources and energy even when taking account of recycling. Within the pub industry, cask wins hands down due to lower dependence on chilling and carbon dioxide production.

Stroud Brewery produce beer across all formats and have chosen cans over bottles

as again these 'win' when the environment is prioritised. This also helps to satisfy consumer tastes as the unfiltered, pasteurised beer delivers a better quality Stroud Brewery product. Keg plays an important role in the portfolio as it allows for a larger range of styles of beer, again to meet consumer demand, they do, however, encourage the sale of cask beer whenever possible.

Finally, distribution and retailing accounts for around 15% of the total carbon footprint and can be mitigated by:

- Drinking local beers in local venues.
- Using electric vehicles and distribution hubs to reduce transport miles.
- Minimising the energy required for cooling and storing beer in trade.
- Cask beer requires less cellar cooling and is dispensed without any gas pressure.

Results show a pint of cask beer releases around 1/3 of the amount of harmful climate change gases when compared to the same beer sold in a non-returnable bottle. How we travel, store, and consume the beer is important to consider and drinkers can influence their carbon impact. They can stay local and walk or cycle to the pub. They can be encouraged to drink a pint of locally brewed cask conditioned beer, served at ambient temperature (10 - 14°C), through a hand pull with no added CO2 as this is the most environmentally responsible option.

It is clear that cask beer is king for taste, supports traditional brewing methods and should be the choice of environmentally savvy pubs and consumers. It is up to all of us to take responsibility for the planet so we can all continue to enjoy a pint of craft cask beer in our local.

Stroud Brewery, established in 2006 and based in Stroud, is one of the largest organic breweries who's mission is simply to make great tasting, ethical beer and bring people together to create positive change.



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# NAME THAT PUB COMPETITION



On yer bike! You'll find this transport system has made its way from page 5. It's a fine feature that's adorning an alleyway outside this stylish town tavern? But where?

Hint: Old school, cosy and definitely does not do lager!

## WHAT YOU CAN WIN

**WINNER - 2 x BREWERY TOURS + 12 bottle case**

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Send your entries, either email, or by old-school post, to the Editor at the address below.

NOTE: Judges decisions are final and images chosen may not represent venues within the county.



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or by post to: The Editor, The Tippler, 23 Theocs Close, Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire. GL20 5TX

# DODGY TICKER?

THE CONTINUING TALES OF A BEER COLLECTOR

## In this edition our tick box hero wonders if choosing 'safety first' at beer festivals is a dangerous thing...

### Beer Festivals

This is an article that I have been keen to write for some time, but the lack of beer festivals in the past couple of years has meant it has had to be delayed. Luckily though, by the time this appears in print, the annual timetable of wonderful beer festivals should be back to some sort of normality.

I really love beer festivals. Just like the proverbial kid in a sweet shop, I get very excited at the prospect of lots of new beers from new breweries, all available at the same time in the same place! Beer festivals are a lot of fun – and, of course, for a beer collector they should provide rich pickings.

Beer festivals are very friendly affairs. You can go with friends or on your own, there are always interesting people to talk beer

with. At the 2019 Tewkesbury Winter Ales Festival I sat next to an interesting chap called Bob, who had travelled up from Devon to judge the ciders. We got talking about lots of beery topics and he was very knowledgeable. Six months later I happened to be perusing a copy of News and Brews, the magazine of South Devon CAMRA, when I read about that very conversation in a piece written by their Chairman, Bob Southwell, aka The Grumpy Old Man. That made me chuckle.

Before I going to a festival I like to prepare, most festivals produce a beer list online a week or so before the event – and this is the time when the excitement builds for me, because I get my first indication of how successful a collecting trip it is going to

be. I will often produce my own spreadsheet detailing the beers I plan to taste, I use that to record them on the day – simply by filling cells in the spreadsheet in colour: it's a lot simpler in a busy beer hall than writing in the programme!

A beer festival should be a showcase of beer, so getting the selection right is vital. A festival should try to appeal to as many different types of drinker as possible, which means having a mixture of styles and strengths, local beers and those from afar, old favourites and never-heard-of-before beers. Get the beer selection right and you will get large crowds of diverse drinkers with diverse tastes, all consuming and conversing together and going away happy, vowing to return again next year.

There should be a decent proportion of local beers. Some people will have travelled many miles to get there and will expect some local beer. If I go to Winchester Beer Festival, I will be sorely disappointed if I am not faced with a fair sprinkling of beers from Hampshire breweries. Most festivals get this right – sometimes even having a separate bar for the local brews. Many festivals have special, one-off or new beers from their local breweries. This must take a fair degree of co-ordinating and I applaud them for it.

Some beer styles hardly get a look-in at festivals. Sours and saisons are particularly uncommon, as are beers with more unusual additional ingredients. But surely this is exactly where these beers should be getting a showing? The vast majority of beers at festivals will be session strength, with perhaps one or two token stronger beers.

**'... A beer festival should be a showcase of beer, so getting the selection right is vital...'**



make an effort to include beer collectors as well. For a festival offering 100 beers (that's a mighty event to organise and my thanks go to all those who give up their time to do it), I do not think it is unreasonable to expect some new or unusual beers amongst the selection. I have a general rule of thumb that says that if 5% of the beers at a festival are new breweries for my collection, that

The exception to this is Tewkesbury Winter Ales Festival, where a large proportion of the beers on offer would be described as stronger – 37.5% of them at 6% ABV or more in 2020. Low alcohol beers are even rarer at festivals. This may reflect the fact that there are still few of them out there, but again, isn't a festival exactly the sort of place for these beers to be showcased?

A few festivals will have beers on a theme. The Alehouse in Stroud has, in the past, held two festivals per year and each consisted of about 20 beers from a specific geographical area of Britain. For a collector, this is great – I can sample a range of Cumbrian beers without having to travel all the way to the Lake District! The Cotswold Beer Festival tends to have a regional focus to some of its beer choices each year too. Tewkesbury Winter Ales Festival always has a preponderance of darker stronger winter beers, brilliant because those are exactly the sorts of beers that are all too often overlooked. The now long-gone summer festivals at the Golden Heart at Nettleton Bottom always had a theme to the beer names – one year animals, another maybe castles and knights.

Having a theme is a bit of fun and perhaps a few more should try it, but ultimately the question for a collector is: How many new breweries and new beers will be available to me?

If those who organise the beer at festivals are to consider all their customers, they must



represents a really good festival. Anything more than 5% is exceptional and anything less than 5% is a little disappointing. Some festivals clearly go out of their way to find beers for collectors. I have been lucky enough to visit Oxford Beer Festival on a couple of occasions and both times was blown away by the wide choice of new beers from new breweries – in their case more than 10% of the beers on offer were from new breweries for my collection, this is quite exceptional.

# PODGY TICKER?

THE CONTINUING TALES OF A BEER COLLECTOR

I am a great fan of the Tewkesbury Winter Ales Festival and am rarely disappointed by their beer choice. In 2020, for example, 5 out of the 80 beers were from newbies, representing 6.25%. I appreciate that some festivals have a different philosophy. The Cotswold Beer Festival is seen as a celebration of local beer and people visit from all over the country to sample Gloucestershire breweries' beers, so I am never surprised when I find no newbies there. Cheltenham Real Ale Festival events have been similar and there has not been a new brewery for my collection at any one of them! Compare that to Moreton Beer Festival or Winchcombe Ale and Steam, festivals with smaller total numbers of beers, but where I consistently find unusual breweries on offer.

I fully appreciate that there are readers who will be getting cross now: how dare he criticise when he doesn't lift a finger to help organise or run our festivals! I understand this feeling entirely and all I can say is that by the time you read this, I will have retired as a teacher and am really looking forward to committing fully to supporting CAMRA as an active member at festivals from now on. Planning the beer list sounds like a dream role and I will willingly get stuck in to this when the time comes - as long as my help is needed of course. But the whole point of my writing in this magazine is to stand up for collectors and all those who enjoy sampling more unusual beers and if I don't say anything, then who will?

I must reiterate that my star allocations are NOT overall ratings of these beer festivals, but merely a measure of how collector-friendly they are. Visitors will judge a festival on many things, including the food on offer, how good the loos are and how many seats are available to rest weary legs. It is probably only obsessives like me who will make a decision about whether to attend or not based primarily

on the adventurousness of the beer list.

My message is really a simple one: please can the beer selection at every festival take into consideration (at least to some degree) beer collectors like me. If Oxford and Tewkesbury and Moreton and Winchcombe Ale and Steam can do it, then surely it is possible for all festivals?

After all that whacky-sounding beer with a weird name from a new brewery in North Wales that you decide to take a punt on, might just end up as the beer of the festival!

**Pete Searle**

CAMRA EVENT	TIME OF YEAR	APPROX. BEERS	RATING
Tewkesbury Winter Ales Festival	Winter	80	☆☆☆☆
Gloucester Beer Festival	Spring	100	☆☆
North Cotswolds Ale & Steam	Spring	30	☆☆☆☆
Cotswold Beer Festival - Postlip	Summer	80	0
Beer on the Wye	Summer	100	☆☆
Great British Beer Festival	Summer	900	☆☆☆☆
North Cotswolds Moreton Beer Festival	Autumn	40	☆☆☆☆
Swindon Beer Festival	Autumn	100	☆☆
Great Welsh Beer Festival	Autumn	100	☆☆☆☆
Oxford Beer Festival	Autumn	140	☆☆☆☆
Cheltenham Real Ale Festival	Autumn	100	0
NON-CAMRA EVENT	TIME OF YEAR	APPROX. BEERS	RATING
The Pelican in Gloucester	Two per year	30	☆☆
Stroud Alehouse	Two per year	20	☆☆
Gloucester Farmers' Club	Autumn	80	☆☆
Green Hop Festival	Autumn	30	☆☆
Three Kings at Hanley Swan	Winter	30	☆☆☆☆

### BEER COLLECTING RATING FOR FESTIVALS

% newbies	rating
zero	0
up to 2.5	☆☆
more than 2.5	☆☆☆☆
more than 5	☆☆☆☆
more than 7.5	☆☆☆☆
more than 10	☆☆☆☆

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**Cheltenham Branch** Email: [chair@cheltenhamcamra.org.uk](mailto:chair@cheltenhamcamra.org.uk)

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](http://www.cheltenhamcamra.org.uk)

**North Cotswold Branch**

Email: Roger Price on [chair@northcotswoldcamra.org.uk](mailto:chair@northcotswoldcamra.org.uk)

or call 01451 810305 and 07850 429630.

For more details see website [www.northcotswoldcamra.org.uk](http://www.northcotswoldcamra.org.uk) or the Facebook page: [pagehttps://www.facebook.com/North-Cotswolds-CAMRA-the-Campaign-for-Real-Ale-in-the-North-Cotswolds-1022351584505679/?ref=nl](https://www.facebook.com/North-Cotswolds-CAMRA-the-Campaign-for-Real-Ale-in-the-North-Cotswolds-1022351584505679/?ref=nl)

**Tewkesbury Branch** Email: [chair@tewkesbury.camra.org.uk](mailto:chair@tewkesbury.camra.org.uk)

Meetings on third Thursday of the month at 8.00 pm.

For further details please contact Steve on 07583 740986 or Bill by email on: [socialsecretary@tewkesbury.camra.org.uk](mailto:socialsecretary@tewkesbury.camra.org.uk) or visit the website [www.tewkesbury.camra.org.uk](http://www.tewkesbury.camra.org.uk)

**Cirencester Sub-Branch** Email: [cirencester@gloucestershire.camra.org.uk](mailto:cirencester@gloucestershire.camra.org.uk)

Meetings on second Tuesday of the month at 8.00 pm. Call Rob Tough on 01285 851194

**Dursley Sub-Branch** Email: [dursley@gloucestershire.camra.org.uk](mailto: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](mailto: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: Dave Fleming on 01594 543856

**Gloucester Sub-Branch** Email: [gloucester@gloucestershire.camra.org.uk](mailto:gloucester@gloucestershire.camra.org.uk)

Meetings on second Wednesday of the month at 8.00 pm. Where bookings are essential or for further details please contact Margaret on 07908 699809 or 01452 551400; by email on: [gloucester@gloucestershire.camra.org.uk](mailto:gloucester@gloucestershire.camra.org.uk) or visit the website [www.camraingloucester.org.uk](http://www.camraingloucester.org.uk)

**Stroud Sub-Branch** Email: [stroud@gloucestershire.camra.org.uk](mailto:stroud@gloucestershire.camra.org.uk)

Meetings on second Wednesday of the month at 8.00 pm at the Ale House, Stroud.

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

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**Branch Contact:**

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01451 810305 and 07850 429630

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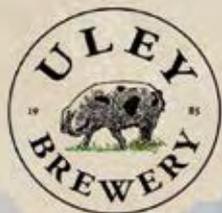


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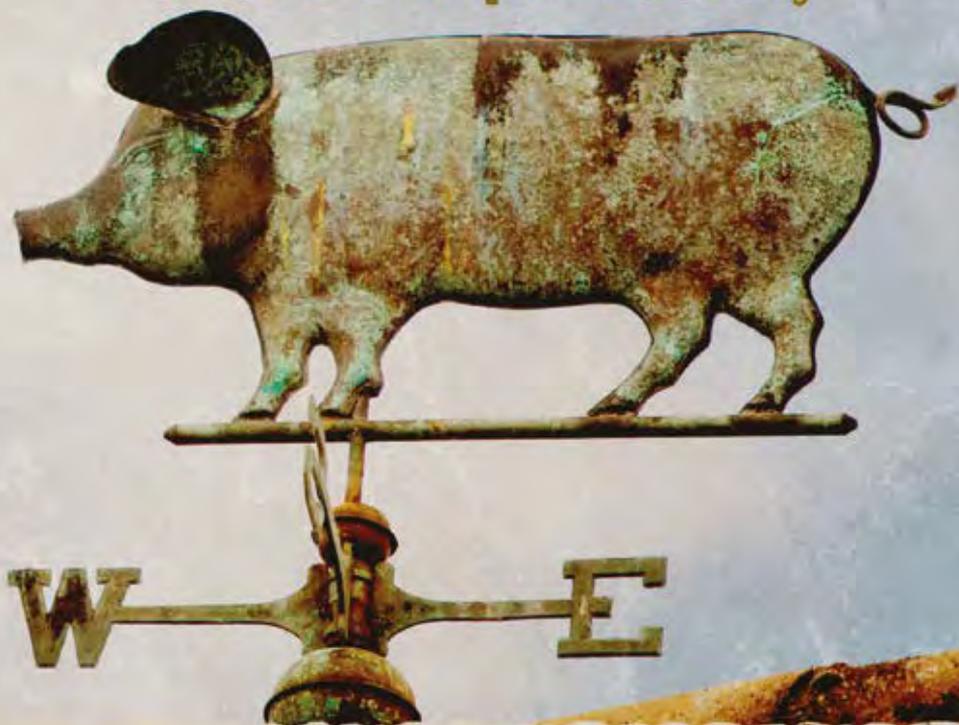


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