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the tippler

Autumn 2023

Inside:

**Gloucestershire's
oldest Inn roars
back to life**

NEW

**Tales from the
Cidershed**



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



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 BECAUSE LIFE IS GOOD,
 TAKE ON AN ABUNDANCE MINDSET.
 WHEN LIFE GETS SOUR,
 PRACTICE THE ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE.
 ENJOY THE LITTLE THINGS,
 LIKE BALLOONS.
 THEY COST MORE NOW,
 BUT THAT'S INFLATION FOR YOU.
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the tippler



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

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

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

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Got something to say?



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

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

CONTRIBUTION DEADLINES

For the next two issues, the deadlines will be
 the second Friday in November 2023 and February 2024

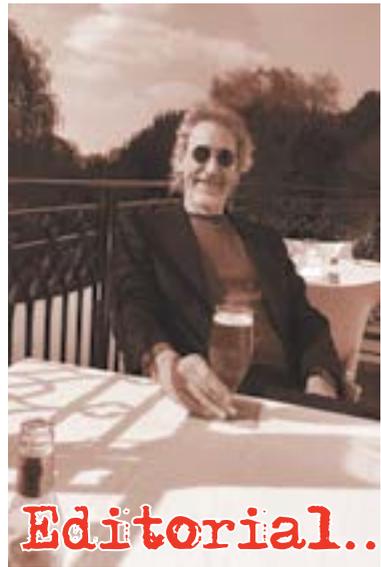


MMMM, IF ONLY I HADN'T TALKED TO HIM ABOUT THE COPENHAGEN INTERPRETATION OF QUANTUM MECHANICS AS APPLIED TO EVERYDAY OBJECTS...

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!



Blimey! Another whopper of a magazine coming in at 72 pages.

Once again, this edition has plenty to get stuck into, with three competitions to win brewery tours and cans of beer, and meals for two!

Once again, I'd like to thank all those who written to us, whether in the letters pages, news, views or feature articles. If you haven't written in before, it doesn't matter, send your copy and a few good images and we'll do the rest. They are all very welcome indeed. I have written down a few notes for contributors, guidelines as to what to send in the way of words, images or even illustrations.

I can't always promise to use them, but will take a careful look at each and every one.

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

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

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

Chris Leibbrandt

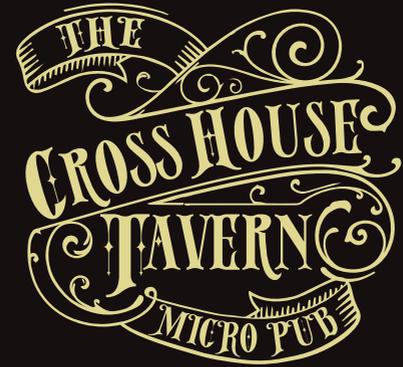


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Letters to the Editor...

Hello Chris,

Thought I'd get in touch again to let you know that we had a very enjoyable train trip to Gloucester yesterday. From Bristol, the journey only took 45 minutes, so we arrived at The Pelican, to find a beer festival in full swing. I tried the Wilde Child 'Migration Of Chronology' mild and Pomona Island's 'The Crazy World Of Half A' brown ale, both excellent and refreshing. We then headed over to The Turks Head to check out this recommended micropub, it was a friendly place with some intriguing decor. There was a fine 'Charrington Oatmeal Stout' from Heritage Brewing here, alongside several other decent options.

Feeling peckish, we decided on The Fountain for a filling, good value lunch washed down with a pint of Timothy Taylor 'Golden Best', not often seen around our way. To finish off, we took a walk around the sunny docks and found ourselves in TANK for a selection of delicious Gloucester Brewery keg beers, to keep us cool. All in all it was a great trip, and we are all looking forward to a return visit soon, to try The New Inn Hotel and the Linden Tree. Let's hope the weather is as pleasant next time too!

Whilst there I was also pleased to spot the the latest edition of The Tippler, so have sent in three competition entries.

Many thanks,
Kevin

Chris replies:

Many thanks for the email, it was great to hear how you got along in Glos., it sounds like you had a really good time, and of course timing is everything, arriving at a beer festival, can't really of wrong there! It's always nice when a plan (however loose) comes together. Keep us informed about the next visit, always good to hear from a satisfied customer.

You'll also be delighted to hear that your answers to the competitions are all correct, the caption contest has also been put into the collection for appraisal.

All I can say about those is: "Well done and good luck."

The following two emails cover broadly similar issues, namely the content of the magazine, the first an anonymous member of the trade and the second from a regular reader, Laurence Morton.

Dear Chris,

I'd been looking forward to reading an article about Gloucester POTY or Gloucestershire POTY, are these in the pipeline or did I miss them in previous editions? I would hope the Tippler was proud of its winner or at least feel obliged to mention it after announcing the winners for Stroud, Dursley, North Cots, Tewkesbury, Cirencester and Cheltenham in the last two editions. Is there a reason for the omission? I think it's fair to hope that your readers might want to know about it.

A word about the Pub News? I'm struggling to see the relevance of open mic nights, Elvis Tribute acts and discos in a magazine about real ale pubs. The lack of pub facts seems almost insulting to those venues.

We love the Tippler, please don't let the narrative in pub news be about rumour and vague, ill researched 'facts'.

I'm sorry to moan, I realize there's lots to consider when compiling the magazine and you must rely on others to

write articles which you feel obliged to print. Much of the content is excellent. Letters to the Editor, Dodgy Ticker, Cider and Perry Man as well as some excellent articles this edition on Coping with Covid and Donningtons pubs. I'm more than slightly miffed that a magazine likes yours doesn't want to shout from the rooftops

'I fear that opinion and prejudice is driving your magazine to promote the same pubs each time...'

Letters to the Editor...

about a pub that is currently still the best CAMRA pub in the county since 2020 and I fear that opinion and prejudice is driving your magazine to promote the same pubs each time, even one's who fail to make it into the GBG each and every year.

Dear Chris,

I hope you found the various CAMRA magazines that I posted to you of interest. Having visited the counties in the north, south east and west and others closer to home in recent months, I thought you'd like to see what around a dozen other CAMRA branch magazines look like. I can honestly say that none are a patch on the Tippler, either in quality or in quantity - we're very lucky to have you as our editor.

Hopefully there are some articles in those magazines that would be of interest to you and the Tippler's readers. The article on how beer prices have changed over the years and compare to prices of yesteryear when adjusted for inflation caught my eye.

We're also very lucky to have some great breweries in Gloucestershire but would it be possible to expand the brewery news? The Summer 2023 edition only had articles on two breweries, one of which is based in Wiltshire. I'd welcome updates from the likes of Batlledown, Cotswold Lion, Clavell & Hind, Deya, Donnington, Gloucester, Goffs and Uley to name a few.

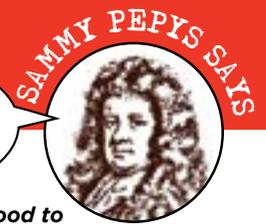
Looking forward to Tewkesbury Live - we'll be visiting the Black Bear now that it's finally open - and to the Autumn 2023 edition. Thank you for all the time and effort you put in.

Cheers
Laurence

Chris replies:

Many thanks for the email contributions, it was great to hear so many positive comments about the magazine. We are always looking

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SCOUNDRELS, AND OUT
WITH THE QUILLS



to improve and it's good to 'benchmark' ourselves against other magazines to make sure that we're doing our best, and of course to see what we could do better. It is my intention to have the biggest regional CAMRA magazine by Christmas, that edition will be the two year anniversary of going completely commercial, not a bad effort I reckon.

Moving on to the other criticisms, it's always possible to expand the Pub and Brewery news, this does, however, rely on the pubs, breweries and any other interested parties and readers sending me information. It's free editorial coverage and I always try and encourage pubs and breweries to send in their stories.

One of the issues is, of course, social media, a lot of newer companies rely, almost to the exclusion of other marketing channels, on facebook, twitter, instagram etc. On the plus side, it is very cheap and it means that these production companies concentrate on what they're good at i.e. brewing beer rather than pesky marketing and its constituent elements of advertising and promotion.

Social media is rarely of particular interest to the socio-economic demographic that contains a majority real ale drinkers. The truth is that there are a lot of people who don't use or have any interest in it at all.

I have to say that I am not obliged to print any article, I use articles that I think give us all a wide spectrum of interest to real ale drinkers and pub goers. These may not include anything about beer!

I would, however, agree with anyone who thinks the magazine is getting Tewkesbury-centric. I live there and it's difficult not to but I'll always look to publish material from all over the county.

As one of the sponsors of this year's Tewkesbury Live event, I attended as many pubs as I could get to over the three days. Happy days indeed!

Letters to the Editor...

Hi Chris,

So, here's a tale of two pubs, or even a Tale of two Red Lions. One in Newent and the other in Ampney Crucis

That pub in Newent which opened and closed rather quickly was the former Red Lion. It was to be called the *Wye Valley* with fine dining after extensive refurbishments; it opened and closed within weeks. Apparently the new owners ran out of money.

The Red Lion in Ampney Crucis is the other pub and it was a great surprise to me when I drove past it and saw it open. I decided to have a pint, I'm so glad I did, it's a parlour pub, like going back to the 1940's or WW2 for those who were about then. A young lady (it's all relative!) now owns it, and she serves the beer not from a bar, but from a lone pump. She is open from Thursday to Sunday lunchtime I believe, opening at 4.00 pm and closing at 10.00pm on Thursday, Friday and Saturday. It's been closed for I think about 6 or 7 years and re-opened two months ago. A great little parlour pub for a conversation over a pint.

I'm surprised you didn't know of the re-opening - I would have thought the CAMRA membership down Cirencester way would have informed you directly.

I'm not a member of CAMRA but will inform you of any relevant pub news or pertinent issues if you like.

Cheers,
Wayne Morris

Chris replies:

Many thanks for the news, much appreciated. Despite not being a CAMRA member, I am pleased to see you are reading the magazine and feel moved to take the time to write in. It's what makes the

magazine what it is. There's always time to join, it is after all the biggest pressure group in the country.

As for the Red Lion in Ampney Crucis, once again, I can only print the news that I get. Anyway, I'll be visiting this one shortly to possibly sort out a longer story.

Hello Chris,

I'm not much of an historian but I wonder if any of your readers could help me out. When did the phenomenon of fist fights on the top of moving trains lose its appeal? Years ago, it was a regular feature in many black and white movies. Why not these days? Is it the electrification of the west coast line that has done for this noble art form?

I am glad, however, to see the latest Indiana Jones movie brings back this exciting form of pugilism, it certainly increases the 'edge of the seat' entertainment value. So much so that, after watching it, I was forced to seek out the relative peace and harmony of a real ale pub for some calming best bitter.

G. R. Appler

Chris replies:

Many thanks for the email Geoff, I think you'll find that this art form suffered a great loss of suitable venues when, back in the early 1960's, Dr. Beeching closed many of the country's black and white branch lines. The upside was, of course, the introduction of the exciting range of technicolour to the mainlines that were left.

I guess the lack of 'railway' pubs these days means that, as a spectator sport, it is difficult to see a decent bout, although I hear that the slow train from Kingham to Charlbury might be a favourite amongst the county's more combative lawyers.

Letters to the Editor...

Dear Chris,

I never considered myself to be much of a cider drinker, having never really found one to be worthy of a second flagonful - until a few years ago.

Touring around the Cotswolds in my campervan, I spent a few nights in the beautiful town of Tewkesbury, and whilst planning my next move, spotted 'Hartlands Farmhouse Traditional Cider' on the map, little more than a cock-stride away at Tirley. As someone who prefers to buy directly from farms, brewers, honesty box stalls and the like, naturally I had to visit.

I was met by the wonderfully friendly Dereck Hartland, who kindly offered me a glass of cider. At the first sip, I discovered the real reason that God had given me tastebuds. This was a cider like no other. And the perry was just the same. I was hooked.

Since that day, I have made many return visits, even extending journeys to Dorset and Somerset just so that we can pop in to Hartlands along the way for more supplies.

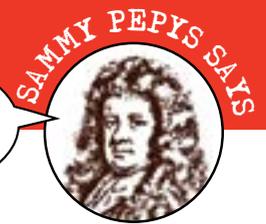
I have been to other cider farms in the surrounding counties and beyond, and as I raise my glass, family members wait in anticipation knowing exactly what my next words will be: "It's not as good as Dereck's."

As a Yorkshireman, I have no dog in this fight, so can speak to you from my heart without bias. People of Gloucestershire, you are so lucky. You have the finest of apples and pears, which are turned into what must be the world's best cider and perry by the magic of Mr Hartland.

Dereck, rather than saying: "and still he knows nothing" as you wrote in the last issue of The Tippler, I'm sure your father must be proudly smiling down at you and saying, "That's my boy!"

Mark Elliott
(Yorkshire)

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WITH THE QUILLS



Chris replies:

Many thanks for the email Mark, what a good thing you popped into Hartlands. A local producer who really knows his stuff and, as anyone who has visited will tell you, he's not encumbered by modern-day technology. This is cider as it should be.

I have now spent nearly as many years in Gloucestershire as in my native county of Kent, I guess I am still undecided about the apples and pears, they're both great.

I lived in a village 'in the sticks', being surrounded by the hop fields. The biggest difference in the rural landscape are the orchards, Kent's apple and pear trees are managed to around 8ft tall whereas Gloucestershire's seem to be a bit more 'unmanaged', and sport a remarkable amount of mistletoe.

Wherever you find it, give local cider a chance, maybe you will find one that is "as good as Dereck's."



Letters to the Editor...

Dear Chris,

Apart from a love of cider and real ale, I am also a keen walker, and have recently latched on to your articles by Deaf Boy Wandering John - what a moniker! Friends of mine have often said to me: "What is more important to you - the pub or the walk?" and my answer was invariably: "It's a close run thing!"

I often organize long theme walks for Cheltenham Rambling Club, and after DBWJ's latest Donnington walk, I am now going to start on circular walks around the pubs. There is a *Donnington Way* walking book, but this originated from 1991, and was then reprinted in 2012. The estate was then at a lower level with just 15 pubs compared with rather more in its earlier days. Subsequently, The Coach and Horses at Ganborough has succumbed to become a private residence. However, after Claud Arkell's decease, the brewery was acquired by his nephews, and there has been a slow but steady policy of further acquisitions, although a number of these are now outside The Cotswolds, with pubs in Upton upon Severn, Bredon, Shipston upon Stour, and Castle Eaton, which is near Cricklade, and right into Arkell's home territory.

It must have been obvious, after Claud Arkell's untimely death, that the larger Swindon brewery could have easily swallowed up the brewing capacity at Donnington. Luckily they didn't, because to any real ale fan there is no comparison, in that the Donnington Ales have far more character. What is a little interesting, is that when I was recently at the White Lion in Shipston, I ordered a pint of BB without looking, only to be told that it wasn't on. Amazing, since BB has to be the yardstick for Donnington beers, I was then told that the relatively new 'Gold' was now the best seller.

I really do love the Donnington pubs, in that they represent former country life in the Cotswolds, with no pretension, and good value. These days you can also get some really good food in many of them and at reasonable prices too. What more could one want for!

Cheers!

Guy Vowles.

Chris replies:

Hello Guy and many thanks for the email. There are a lot of real ale drinkers that are walkers, and living around the Cotswolds, you can see why.

Some, like Deaf Boy are full on Led Zeppelin fans and love to ramble on, and believe me, he does, often enough to get most of us dazed and confused, a bit like he is after 12 pints. Mind you, he is also a keen bird watcher and is always on the lookout for something bustling in the hedgerow.

You made some interesting points about the Arkell's dynasty around this part of the world and there may be a few real ale who would disagree about the character of the beers. Both of these fine old breweries date back to before 1850 and have real character and it would be a hard hearted man not to agree with the claim that Donnington's is one the country's most beautiful brewery.

Both with great family traditions, it seems to me that we have the best of both world's here. As a marketing man, however, I am a little tired of the relentless move away from real lovely chestnut bitter to all these trendy golden and amber ales, but if it increases the market, then why not?

Dear Sir/Madam etc.,

I would like to say how much I enjoyed the 'Man stuck up tree' summer edition of The Tippler, with its wide variety of both articles and contributors. Particularly so, the article from the Dodgy Ticker and his passage to the dark side. I found it very informative and, like your beer collector, would have loved "to be transported back to a time when cask Guinness was served as a live product." We must, of course, not forget to mention John Purser here, the Tewkesbury brewer, who first brewed Guinness for Arthur in Dublin. It occurred to me that if anyone could get the

Letters to the Editor...

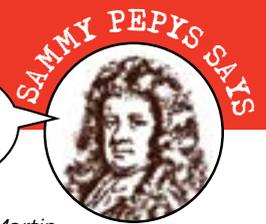
current owners of Guinness, Diageo, to brew an original real ale version of the black stuff, it would be Mr Marmite himself, Tim Martin. With his clout in the industry and previous family connections to the Guinness Company (his early years were spent in Northern Ireland and his dad was the "Guinness rep in Derry"), there may be no better person than his honourable self, to persuade them into brewing a real Guinness. I sent off an email and this was his reply:

Dear Bill,

Many thanks for the letter and information. Real Guinness sounds very optimistic from what I know of Diageo. What the academics call an "oxymoron". Thanks for your efforts at Tewkesbury which are greatly appreciated. Best wishes.

TIM

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(Dictated by Tim Martin via dictaphone & issued in his absence)

Tina Coppitters
PA to Tim Martin, Chairman

Well, no luck there, but it taught me a new word!

Cheers,
Brummie Bill

Chris replies:

Many thanks for the email Bill. Interesting stuff there, and like the previous letter, isn't it funny how the world of brewing is such a small one? How lucky we are to have so many characters in the game, creating such a wonderful thing that is real ale, long live its diversity, and let's have a pint!



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THE HUNTER'S COLUMN



Our intrepid hero gets stuck in a success stricken pub with no beer, thinking about nose driven pipe music, churches and pubs, no wonder there were so many miraculous visions in the past...

There's Nothing So Queer...well, maybe there is these days, but I'm talking about the old days, when there was nothing so queer as... "a pub with no beer."

I've heard northerners say that "There's nowt so queer as folk," but I don't object to the odd mandolin and accordion, although on the grounds of hygiene I tend to avoid the Paraguayan nose flute. The nose flute is said to have originated in Polynesia, BCE, although these nasal extensions existed throughout many cultures from Tonga to Timbuktu. BCE stands for Before Common Era. That was before people started buying The Daily Star, shopping at Poundland (yes, I've seen you there too) and face morphing on TikTok. In New Zealand, as it wasn't then called, the Maori were particularly nosey and skilful, making theirs from a variety of materials, including wood, the stems of gourds and whale's teeth. Whilst the Paiwan (above) of Taiwan would 'baiwan' and get one free! I kid you not. Almost true, in the sense that they



weren't satisfied with one pipe but doubled up to have one for each nostril. Now that is queer. A Pub With No Beer was a song made famous by country singer (although he was available for gigs in towns as well) Slim Dusty. Slim used to ride the Outback long before

Crocodile Dundee had even thought of leaving Scotland, and had a hit with the song in Australia, the USA and the UK, where it spent 15 weeks in the Singles Chart, peaking at No. 3 in 1959. It did so well for Slim that he followed it up with The Answer To A Pub With No Beer, Sequel To A Pub With No Beer and The Pub That Doesn't Sell Beer. He knew when he was on a winner, even if the pub didn't.

There are eight verses to this ditty, which The Dubliners enjoyed so much they included it on their 1976 compilation album, 'Drinking & Wenching' - those were the days!

**Oh it's-a lonesome away from your kindred and all
By the campfire at night we'll hear the wild dingoes call
But there's-a nothing so lonesome, morbid or drear
Than to stand in the bar of a pub with no beer**

**Now the publican's anxious for the quota to come
And there's a far away look on the face of the bum
The maid's gone all cranky and the cook's acting queer
Oh what a terrible place is a pub with no beer**

It was in The Tudor House Hotel in sunny Tewkesbury that the song sprang to mind. We had called in the previous week and, like a lot of venues in the town, the Tudor had been hit hard by Tewkesbury Live, a very successful free music event, which emptied a lot of

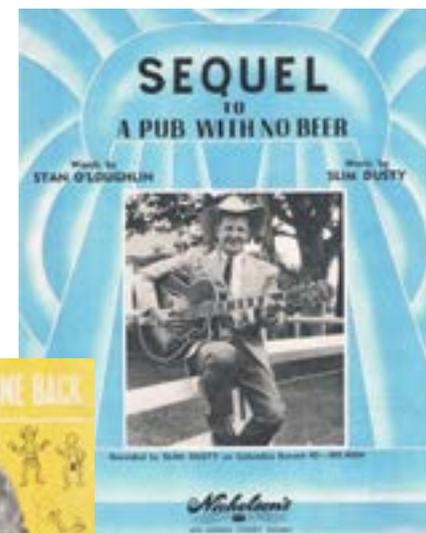
cellars in the town. The second time we called in, the beer was being delivered the next day. When we called in two days later, there was a problem with the pumps and they were awaiting an engineer. The fourth verse goes like this:

**Then the swaggie comes in smothered in dust and flies
He throws down his roll and rubs the sweat from his eyes
But when he is told, he says what's this I hear
I've trudged fifty flamin' miles to a pub with no beer**

Slim steered us in the right direction all those years ago. There is an answer to a pub with no beer and, would you believe it, it has come along in the form of the Churches Conservation Trust. I kiddeth thee not.

The Churches Conservation Trust is a national charity protecting historic churches at risk. Not from the pagans or anti-Christ's, just weather and neglect. Churches where the flock have, well, flocked off I suppose, to pastures new. Sacrilege apart, they do a fantastic job and this year have truly entered into the spirit (wine and ales) world.

The Old Black Lion in Northampton is a Grade II listed pub dating back to the 16th century and it stands next to St Peter's church, which dates from the 12th century and is Grade I listed. It closed in 1995. The Old Black Lion closed in 2018. The Trust have taken it upon themselves to bring this pub with no beer back to life and form a perfect partnership: "The refurbished pub will provide hospitality for visitors and volunteers at St Peter's" - see visitchurches.org.uk. After standing there for nearly 9 centuries and the pub having been closed for 5 years, St Peter deserves a drink more than most. Please



don't suggest a Brunswick Brewery Black Sabbath 6%. If he's been standing there that long in just his sandals, anything could happen.

So, let's hear it for the CCT and Slim Dusty. Slim being extremely Australian went on to have further hits with Boomerang, no less, and G'day, G'day. Presumably, being from

the Antipodes, he had a boomerang that did come back, unlike our own dear Charlie Drake. They must have sold him a dud. A boomerwrong?

The Hunter



The GBBF Experience – Tasty!

Chairing the IPA CBOB Panel at the Great British Beer Festival was a great honour.

In the normal course of events, drinking 5.5% to 7% strength IPAs, at 10 in the morning, would put you on the path to an ‘intervention’ by family and friends. But for judges at the Champion Beer of Britain (CBOB), at the Great British Beer Festival, it’s just a fact of life.

At the first round of judging, seven panels (six judges each) start work at 10 a.m. Each panel judges one style of beer; in my case IPAs. Panels consists of an experienced CAMRA judge as Chair, with a CAMRA assistant, two figures from the brewing/ licensee side, and two from politics or campaigning groups. Ensuring diversity and a spread of knowledge and experience.

The key to running a successful high-level judging panel is preparation. As Panel Chair I needed to conduct in-depth research, checking the judges backgrounds for strengths in different areas. It turned out to be quite unnerving. The panel included the Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Beer Group, the CEO of the British Institute of Innkeeping, a Brewer who was also Chair of the London Brewers Alliance, and a Danish Beer Campaigner!

Next, I needed to be able to answer any questions on the IPA style that might arise in discussion. That meant in-depth research on the history and development of IPA and making sure that the British and New World styles (and CAMRA Style Guides) were second nature to me. Incidentally, I can recommend Roger Protz’s book ‘IPA. A Legend in Our Time’, if you want to learn about the origins and development of IPAs worldwide.

Once sat down and everyone was introduced, judging could finally start. Timekeeping is important. We had nine beers to score in just ninety minutes. The two semi-final tables would be waiting for the first-round recommendations and they, in turn, had to send beers to the final table in time to make the 3pm Champion Beers announcement.

Cheltenham Tasting Panel

CAMRA’s Cheltenham Tasting Panel has had a busy spring and summer. The job of a tasting panel is to assess all the beers in its area, and to score them for Champion Beer of Britain recommendation. The panel also write tasting notes for the Good Beer Guide and for festival programme notes.

Cheltenham Tasting Panel covers 64 beers from 11 breweries across three CAMRA branches – Cheltenham, North Cotswold, and Tewkesbury.

Tasting began in earnest in late April at the Inferno Brewery’s Pop-up Bar, behind the closed White Bear in Tewkesbury. A great selection of Inferno’s finest beers was available – Prometheus, Cinder Stout, Golden Embers, Spark, and Wheat Storm were all in top form. The range of styles – pale ales, stout, IPA and an excellent wheat beer impressed us all.

June saw the panel at North Cotswold’s very popular Ale & Steam beer festival at Winchcombe. Goff’s Joust and Dark Knight, Donnington’s Cotswold Gold and Cotswold Lion were all assessed.

At the beginning of July, the panel met at Cotswold Lion’s scenic new brewery at Hartley Lane, off Leckhampton Hill. Cask and bottled versions of Best in Show, Drover’s Return, Golden Fleece, and Shepherd’s Delight were all scored.

In mid-July, the panel provided core expertise in both running and judging the ‘Gloucestershire Beer of the Year’ competition at the Cotswold Beer Festival, Postlip.

Finally, panel chair, Tony Lucas, was invited to chair the judging panel on IPAs at the Champion Beer of Britain finals, at the Great British Beer Festival.

GBBF JUDGING

All beers are tasted blind. We are only told whether each IPA is British or New World, and the ABV range.

As judges, we score with two equally important criteria in mind:

- How good an example is each IPA of its style, as defined by CAMRA’s Style Guidelines;
- How well-made and balanced is the beer and are there any faults.

Points are awarded as below with a possible maximum of 50:

APPEARANCE (0-10 points)

We consider colour, clarity, sparkle, and head and how appealing it looks in the glass. Unfined beers are more difficult, they can still be appealing even when cloudy, or unappealing if they look muddy.

AROMA (0-10 points)

We cover the glass with our hand, gently swirl, then take a big sniff. We consider hop, malt, and fruity aromas, whether they are appealing and are what we expect in this style of beer.

TASTE (0-20 points)

It’s important to sluice the beer over the entire tongue. Different parts of the tongue detect different types of flavour. We consider the balance of hop, malt and fruity flavours, sweetness, bitterness, and condition. Are the flavours appealing and correct for this style of beer?

AFTERTASTE (0-10 points)

We consider the taste, half-a-minute or so, after swallowing the beer. It will often comprise dry, bitter flavours at the back of the

tongue, and hoppy and/or fruity flavours that may also linger. Most importantly we consider the complexity and development in the aftertaste and whether it is expected in this style of beer.

Scoring is done in silence, to avoid undue influence, and then a brief discussion takes place (after each beer) on the strengths and weaknesses of each candidate IPA.

Of the nine IPAs, a surprising number were similar, New World (West Coast) style beers – piney and bitter. There were few examples of the more popular New England style and New Zealand IPA, but (sadly) only one British IPA.

IPA panel winners were:

Gold: Bragdy Twt Lol - Diablo Dragon

Silver: Loch Lomond Brewery - Bravehop

Bronze: Thornbridge Brewery - Jaipur

A nice spread of Welsh, Scottish and English breweries.

Overall Champion Beers of Britain were:

Gold: Elland Brewery - 1872 Porter

Silver: Greene King - Abbot Ale

Bronze: Salopian Brewery - Darwin’s Origin.

As for timing, the panel finished with five minutes to spare before handing our scores to the organisers.

What did the Chair experience feel like? Although I have sat on the CBOB semi-final tables in the past, I must admit that this was more daunting. The amount of research and preparation beforehand was significant.

On the day making sure the panel ran smoothly, and to time, whilst balancing some knowledgeable, but strong personalities, was not easy but very enjoyable.

Tony Lucas

Left to right: Andy Gill (CAMRA Judge), Lord Rainow (Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Beer Group), Tony Lucas (Panel Chair, and Chair of the Cheltenham Tasting Panel), Steve Alton (CEO of the British Institute of Innkeeping), Gawain Cox (Pinnora Brewing and Chair of the London Brewers Alliance), Anne-Mette Meyer Pedersen (Danish Beer Enthusiasts Campaigner).





News from NORTH COTSWOLDS



Monthly Pub Walks

Held outside the Summer festival months. We have now completed 112 walks around our pubs in the North Cotswold area.

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

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

The next walks are as follows:

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

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

Day Away

Is on Friday 29th Sep to Tewkesbury. Visit all GBG pubs in the town. See website for details.

FaceBook

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

Cycling Events

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

The Summer run is planned for the 18th August from Broadway to Evesham and return. The Autumn run is on 13th Oct from Bourton on the Water to Stow and Oddington area.

The spring event to Cirencester from Chedworth was held on 12th May and included a visit to Corinium Brewery and 5 GBG pubs. A good turnout enjoyed a great day.

Motorcycling Events

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

Started in Spring 2023. The first held in May was to the Carpenters Arms at Miserden. A run to Cassington Bike Night was on 26th June and we support Cotswold bike Night in aid of Air Ambulance held each Wednesday night at local pubs.

BEER FESTIVALS 2023

16th Moreton Beer Festival 8th - 9th September

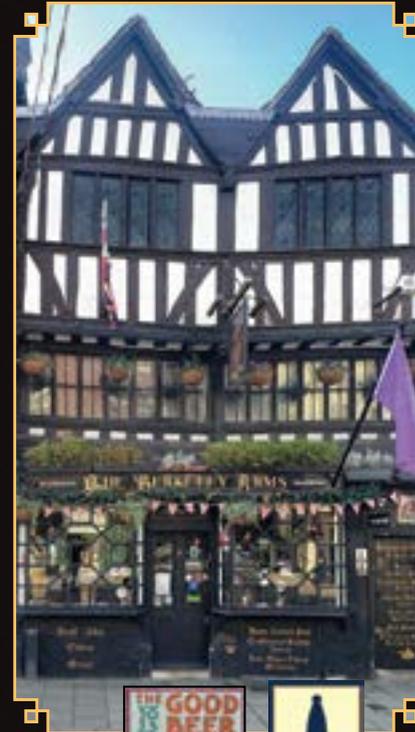
Further information on our website:
www.northcotswoldcamra.org.uk



The Berkeley Arms

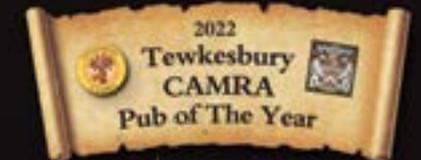
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Online: www.theberkeleyarms.pub



STROUD CAMRA CLUB OF THE YEAR



Photo: Rachel Andrews

The Chalford Sports & Social Club has scooped the title of Stroud CAMRA Club of the Year for the third year running.

Ali and Rob Brady were presented with a certificate recording their achievement at a presentation ceremony and celebration on Sunday 16 July.

“We had a good turnout of Stroud CAMRA members and the club was very busy, confirming its status as the sporting and social hub of the village,” reports Tim Mars, Stroud CAMRA Pubs Officer. “Sadly this meant we were unable to use the skittle alley, which was the high point of last year’s presentation.”

Rob Brady runs the Good Beer Company, a leading local wholesaler that exclusively distributes Stroud Brewery beers, and supplies the Ale House and Prince Albert (among many other pubs) with cask ales from a wide roster of breweries up and down the country. So a good selection of beers was a given. On tap were Brew By Numbers 21, a 4.0% pale ale, This Mess from Twisted Barrel, a unfinned vegan 4.0% hazy pale ale, Hammerton

Crunch, a 5.4% Peanut Butter Milk Stout and Hattie Brown’s Dog on the Roof (6.0%). So a wide range of tastes and strengths was catered for.

The Chalford Sports & Social Club sits right at the top of Chalford Hill with a glorious southerly aspect across its own tennis courts. The club is the sporting and social hub of the village, with around 500 members who pay £15 a year for membership. It is an astonishing resource at the heart of the community, offering a wide variety of social and sporting opportunities, from craft clubs to skittles, fitness classes to sport on TV. It is a warm and welcoming place, very family-orientated and where children are always welcome.

The club is justifiably proud of its sporting prowess. It hosts four men’s football teams, with the 1st team currently sitting pretty in the Northern Senior League. Two cricket sides play out of Chalford, with the 1st team playing in Stroud Division 2 and the 2nd team currently playing in Stroud Division 4, as well as a pub cricket team.

Above: Tony Hill (right, Chair of Stroud CAMRA) presents the certificate to Rob Brady and Ali Brady, Manager, while Stroud CAMRA members gather behind the bar to toast the award.

As if that were not enough, the club has no less than five tennis teams, with their top players battling it out against the best in the area in the premier division. The club boasts five floodlit courts, including two synthetic clay ones.

The clubhouse is an unprepossessing flat-roofed, concrete-block bunker, but it proves to be an Aladdin’s cave when it comes to the range of facilities and activities within. The main hall is big enough to accommodate 150 people and is a popular choice for wedding receptions, parties, concerts and family events. It is also used for short mat bowls, with several sessions each week. There is a dartboard in the comfortably-furnished lounge.

But skittles is at the heart of the club, with several teams, regular competitive and social events throughout the winter and a weekday league in summer.

Ali Brady became manager in March 2018 and from that point on it was all change on

the beer front. In came the handpumps and on came the real ale, and overnight the club changed from serving only pressurised keg beers to an oasis of real ale. Rob is solely a volunteer at the club but takes care of beer ordering, line cleaning and also serves behind the bar.

The Chalford Sports & Social Club now goes forward to the next round—to compete with other Gloucestershire CAMRA sub-branch nominations for the title of Gloucestershire CAMRA Club of the Year.

Last year it was possible to get to and from the club by bus on a Sunday on the Stagecoach 67 service, running from Cashes Green to Bussage and calling at Merrywalks. No more. Due to savage cuts to this route, the 67 bus no longer runs on Sundays or on weekday evenings.

Tim Mars
Pubs Officer
Stroud CAMRA

Stroud CAMRA Ale Trail

Stroud CAMRA have devised some Ale Trails to encourage people to take the train or bus and visit Stroud, maybe take in the Farmers’ Market, explore some wonderful surrounding countryside and savour some real ales and excellent pub food.

To date, we have researched and written up two Ale Trails. One takes the bus to Brimscombe and then you wander back along the Cotswold Canal and the second takes you up to Minchinhampton Common and then wandering around the common, maybe talking the cows, or to the many people who enjoy the stunning views of the surrounding valleys, the ice cream parlours and some wonderful real ale pubs.

The second trail sees you visit the following pubs: **The Crown** and **The Old Lodge** in Minchinhampton, **The Black Horse** at Amberley and **The Amberley Inn, The Bear** and the **Prince Albert** at Rodborough Common.

For more details visit: <https://stroud.camra.org.uk/commons-walk/>

A Plea for Help

Is there anybody who knows enough about WordPress to help me?

I have the dubious task of trying to edit the Stroud CAMRA web site- <https://stroud.camra.org.uk/>. We can’t fathom out how to remove the user log in details just on our Home Page. We’ve looked at various YouTube videos but still can’t remove these details at the bottom of our Home Page. It does cause confusion as some people visiting our website think you need a password and log in details to access the website. If you have any other tips would be much appreciated. Email Philip Burton on secretary@stroud.camra.org.uk with any tips.

Many thanks, **Philip Burton. Tel: 01453 757196**

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O	Y	H	K	I	N	G	S	H	E	A	D	M
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- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| Beehive | Pelican |
| Bell | Plough |
| Craven Arms | Ram Inn |
| Crown | Retreat |
| Falcon | Royal |
| Fleece | Star |
| Hog | Strand |
| Kings Head | Swan |
| Lamb | Tipputs |
| Lammastide | Tivoli |
| Mousetrap | Yew Tree |
| New Inn | York |
| Ormond | |

- 1 Find the listed Gloucestershire hosteleries in the grid (open before the COVID lockdown).
- 2 They can be horizontal, vertical or diagonal, forward or back.
- 3 The unused letters spell out a well-known, BUT SLIGHTLY TWEAKED, phrase.

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

THROTTLE CLUB

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

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

This one was to be our big summer outing. The Turks head regulars decided we'd go proper posh this time. No, not Cheltenham, but proper posh. So it was decided on Cirencester.

We met in The Turks Head at 11am on the Sunday before the August bank holiday for a liver waker. As all eleven of us gathered, Christine tried her whistle out. It was an old railway one (*The ACME Thunderer - Ed.*) a customer had given her for a present, not knowing they are going for £75 on ebay.

So, after half an hour of supping our breakfasts our minibus arrived. Boy was it big for a minibus - 33 seater! The hardest drinkers amongst us brought refreshment for the long journey ahead - it could take all of 30 minutes! And off we went.

Most of us felt a little dizzy by the time we'd driven up past the now closed *Air Balloon* on Crickley Hill. Before long, our Charabanc chugged into Cirencester (all Cotswoldy stoneish with ladies with real wicker baskets). First stop *The Bear Inn*. Quite posh it is too. We felt a bit uncomfortable here because it's a foodie type place. Stone and timber and 'olde worldie' fake. Kind of neo-Georgian/Victorian meets modern day pub designer from Camden Town (No, not the brewery, the place, Londonish). But it was beer we were after and they had Butcombe Rare Breed and Original on tap - both very nice.

Next was a short trek to the *Hop Kettle*, a trendy brewery tap. Long wooden benchy things which were bolted to the floor. There was a large TV with all the beers etc., advertised on it. It was lit up like the 4th of July in Times Square. So it was five cask, eight key and two ciders and we didn't recognise a single thing. A bit like being abroad (or so we have been told).

Very cool muzak inside and the outside was inhabited by mums with dogs and children all pretending to be enjoying themselves.

Next we were off to the *The Twelve Bells*. By this time someone said we'd lost South African lan. I pointed out: "lost him, he's not exactly a bunch of keys, someone go and find him." He turned up OK, just sight seeing. So, it's very traditional with a beer garden. And very inventive, they had optics

for the spirits, they were super trendy. Strangely, the outside was very much prettier than the public bar. The ale was fine, but I lost my notes on what we had, doh! (*Was it Duff? - Ed.*)

Then last but by a long way not least. The *piece de resistance* of the day, the famous *Marlborough Arms*. Now Simon, the landlord, (below) I presume



Great selection at The Twelve Bells

speaks French as I know he goes over there to buy wine. Anyway we all piled in, and what a treat. A proper old pub, but very nice. Lots of bottles on high shelves. A wooden floor to soften one's landing. A real cast iron fireplace for the colder times - no needing this as it was a warm day. A proper old style pub brilliant for real ale drinkers - Good oh!

Ale wise, we had decided this was the place to spend the rest of the afternoon, but one problem: there were at least six real ales on apart from the other taps and the ciders, so we had to make sure we weren't greedy. But we tried anyway.

The ales on were: Arbor Pico Mountain, Wye Valley Samba, Hook Norton Brew Berry Ale and Old Hooky, Bass (oh yeah) and, last but not least, HB Oatmeal Stout. The beer garden is pretty, but being posh around here, the locals were only smoking cigarettes - how novel! But we had a good time here, the landlord is very funny, but he's got a large bottle fridge against one wall and not behind the bar. Someone told me there was posh wine and stuff in there, and it wasn't even locked!

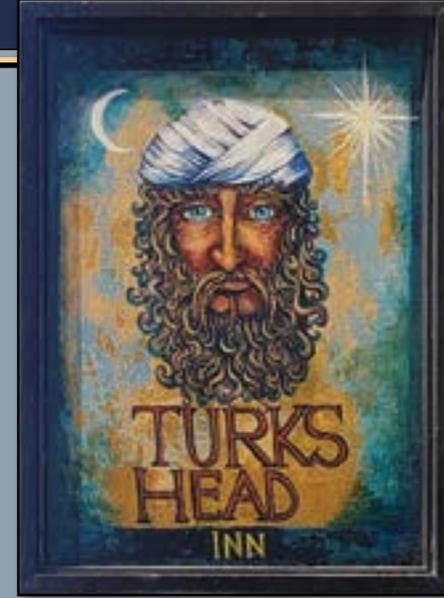
So then it was back onto the transport and see who can stay awake - its only 7.30pm.

Next time out, why not join us?

Pete Sheehy

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POSTLIP 2023

45th Cotswold Beer Festival Beats the Weather

Despite the very changeable weather, the 45th Cotswold Beer Festival proved to be a great success

Attendance figures were nearly back to 2019 levels, following COVID-enforced cancellations in 2020 and 2021 and a ticket cap in 2022.

Despite the appalling weather forecast, which instigated a weather-related cancellation of Sudeley Castle's Fantasy Forest festival, Saturday was as well attended as in pre-COVID years. The beer festival public's confidence and enthusiasm for these festivals is clearly increasing once again.

The festival also saw a return of a full entertainment line-up throughout the weekend, the re-launching of the

Thursday 'Trade Night' night, and the same night judging of the 'Gloucestershire Beer of the Year' competition.

Ticket sales were 1,865, and 70% of these were sold more than a month in advance, which gave the organisers financial security before the doors opened. Festival buses proved popular with nearly 900 return tickets sold. Bus ticket prices were kept as 2022 at £5 from Cheltenham and £2 from Winchcombe. Camping remained popular, with 120 weekend pitches sold.

On the beer front the news was very good, despite price increases caused by the energy and ingredient prices that breweries have

endured in the last year. Out of 108 firkins of beer on offer (over 7,500 pints), by the close on Sunday only a few pints remained unsold. That's a good result for the beer committee. The first beer to sell out, and therefore 'Beer of the Festival', was Uley Brewery Pale.

Cider struggled a little this year, which is thought to be a result of the weather: cider does sell much better on sunny days. Also, cider costs were up. As a result, there was a larger amount of cider left but we did manage to pass this on in Tewkesbury, so nothing was wasted.

A great deal of positive feedback

came from festival visitors. Special thanks go to the Tewkesbury Town Band, Apple Mashers, Ola Samba, Double Bass Dan, Top draw wandering magic, face-painting and Morris dancing too. Thanks also go to all the hard-working, ever-cheerful volunteers, and it wouldn't have been as magical without all the loyal fans or new festival lovers.

Due to the kindness of festival goers, £700.50 in donations, from token aid, were divided equally between Sue Ryder Leckhampton Court, and Heart Heroes.

See you in 2024! The dates for your diary are 19th to 21st July. Hopefully the weather will be better!

'By close on Sunday only a few pints remained unsold'

POSTLIP 2023

Gloucestershire Beer of the Year Competition



One of the great traditions of the Cotswold Beer Festival, at Postlip, used to be the 'Gloucestershire Beer of the Year' contest.

Held on the Trade Night it was always looked forward to by the county's brewers, as it would gift bragging rights to the winners. Over recent years the competition had faded away, but in 2023, the festival decided that a rejuvenated, professional competition, would once more take centre stage on Trade Night.

The Cotswold Beer Festival organisers invited all Gloucestershire breweries to enter two beers to the festival competition. In total 37 beers were eligible for judging.

Competition organiser, and Cheltenham Tasting Panel Chair, Tony Lucas said, "Putting together a good judging panel was not easy. My aim was to create balance between twelve

judges, chosen from: respected professionals from the county licenced trade; senior CAMRA figures from the South West; representatives from all the Gloucestershire CAMRA Branches; a backbone of experienced tasters from the Cheltenham Tasting Panel.

"Fortunately, Leigh Norwood, of Favourite Beers, agreed to Chair the judging panel. His experience as a World Beer judge was invaluable guiding the less experienced judges. The CAMRA Regional Director, Pete Bridle, together with Regional Tasting Panel co-ordinator Andy Coston, both came up from Bristol to take part in the judging.

"The competition followed the stringent CAMRA style guide and scoring system, as used in the national CAMRA final competitions."

In the first-round judges were allocated a specific beer style i.e., Session Bitter, Premium Pale Ale, Stouts, etc. When all the judges scores were in, the six top scoring beers from the beer style judges went forward to the final round:

GLoucestershire Beer of the Year - Beer Style Winners

BEER STYLE	BREWERY	BREW
Session Bitters	Gloucester	Cascade
Premium Bitters	Cotswold Lion	Drover's Return
IPA, Strong Brown, Strong Mild	Battledown	Belgian Dubbel
Session Pale Ale	Tiley's	Citra
Premium Pale Ale	Tewkesbury	Tewkesbury Gold
Golden Ales	Goff's	Cheltenham Gold
Session Stouts	Bespoke	Money for Old Rope
Strong Stouts + Strong Porters	Inferno	Vulcan
Speciality Beers	Corinium	Pliny the Elderflower

All the judges then tasted the top six beers and, after tallying, the results were as follows:

GLoucestershire Beer of the Year - Champion Beer

GOLD	Gloucester	Cascade
SILVER	Battledown	Belgian Dubbel
BRONZE	Cotswold Lion	Drover's Return
4 th Place	Goff's	Cheltenham Gold
5 th Place	Tiley's	Citra
6 th Place	Corinium	Pliny the Elderflower

If you would like to find out more about CAMRA's Beer Styles, then you can view and download a guide from here - <https://tinyurl.com/CAMRA-BEER-STYLE>

Tony Lucas

Tewkesbury Comes Alive

The weather was all over the place, like it has been all summer, but it didn't deter Tewkesbury locals and visitors turning out in numbers for the second Tewkesbury Live weekend.

A total of 18 venues, including 12 of the town's pubs, hosted just short of 120 different gigs kicking off at 4:00pm on Friday and running for three days through to Sunday night at 8:30.

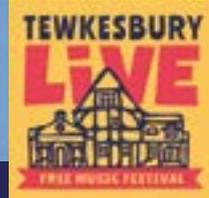
A tremendous logistical puzzle that was brilliantly solved by the Town Council organisers who did a great job in bringing the whole event to fruition.

The weather was playful to say the least, but the rain didn't dampen the obvious enthusiasm for the event that must surely become an annual celebration of live music and the great pubs that are such an integral part of the old town.

There was music to suit just about all tastes except perhaps industrial grunge, thrash metal or full on orchestral classical.

Funded this year by local sponsorship, including The Nottingham Arms, The Cross House Tavern and the Tippler magazine amongst others, we hear that next year's event is already in the planning. Bring it on (bang the gong?)!

PROUD TO SPONSOR



28-30th JULY



Note: The Tippler is actively interested in sponsorship opportunities in events across the County which promote pubs, real ale & cider. We're not just focussed on Tewkesbury! If you've got an event next year that you think ticks our boxes, please get in touch at chris@thetippler.co.uk

Cider & Cheese – What a Festival!

Despite a few raindrops trying to dampen our spirits, the 21st to 23rd of July marked the grandest Cheese and Cider Festival ever at Sandford Park Alehouse. Our resilient community proved that a little weather couldn't keep them away from celebrating the best of local brews and flavours.

With 23 ciders and 20 delectable cheeses, we tantalised taste buds and took our guests on a delightful journey of exploration. The cheese boards flew out of the kitchen faster than a lightning strike, and by Sunday, we found ourselves joyously SOLD OUT!



A first for us and a testament to the unwavering support of our incredible patrons.

Our brand-new 'bark-uterie' board (for our 4 legged friends) was a huge hit, devoured with absolute delight and proving that good taste knows no bounds, not even species!

Thank you, our dear ale house community, for embracing the spirit of togetherness and supporting your local alehouse. We're already dreaming big for next year. Preparing an even grander celebration! We'll take cider & cheese pairings to a new level.

Lottie Raymond

A Royal Connection

Several months ago, in the wake of King Charles III's Coronation, we wrote to pubs across Gloucestershire with a reference to royalty in their name to ask about their backstory - why the royal reference? Only one replied, The Royal Hop Pole in Tewkesbury, and this is their tale of brushing shoulders with the monarchy.

'Our Royal connection goes back to 1891 and the visit of Princess Mary of Teck, later Queen Mary, royal consort to King George V,' wrote Linda Coxshall from the Royal Hop Pole. 'The hotel was given permission to display the royal coat of arms after that visit, since when it has been known as the Royal Hop Pole Hotel. The royal coat of arms can still be seen above the portico at the front entrance to the hotel.'

So now we all know. Thanks Linda.



Queen Mary, royal consort to King George V

wetherspoon

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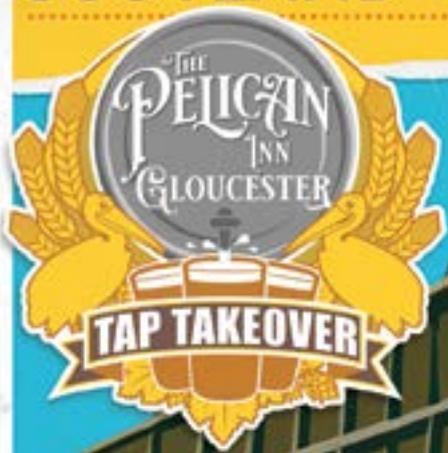
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It's a Festival at The Pelican

The Pelican Inn, Gloucester is known for its beer festivals.

Since 2013 it has held a summer and winter festival every year (with the exception of a year or so of Covid intervention). Somehow, each one grows bigger and bolder than the last. Everything at the Pelican begins with beer and cask is still king in their little corner of Gloucester, by the cathedral. Dozens of cask beers from all over the country were available over the weekend as well as 10 craft kegs from USA, Norway, Belgium, Spain and from across the UK. Volunteers were drafted in to man the three bars and food was provided by Meltons SmokeShack. Smash burgers, pork rolls, jerk chicken and loaded dogs added the perfect accompaniment to a bellyful of real ale. Bluegrass, Cajun, rock and blues echoed off the city walls as bands lined up to play outside the garden gates. The Churchdown Male Voice Choir and Friends Ukenited brought a real buzz and a ton of colour as they opened proceedings on Friday 9th.



This June was The Pelican's most popular festival to date, with all 49 of its beers gone by close of play Sunday along with 20+ traditional ciders and an unfathomable selection of craft cans and bottled beers. Fine weather smiled down on Mike Hall and his team for their eleventh anniversary as they push the boundaries of what is plausible in

a small wet-led pub. Last year, CAMRA bestowed The Pelican with South West Pub of the Year and this year they have already been crowned Gloucester City and Gloucestershire CAMRA pub of the year for the ninth and third times respectively. None of that seems relevant however, as the sheer choice and quality of beer on show suggests this isn't a pub chasing accolades, but one chasing immortality. On a normal day, The Pelican has 10 cask beers available and 6 craft keg. Its 12+ ciders all come from small, local suppliers and as you glance across the bar there isn't a mainstream product in sight. No lager, no national brands, no gimmicks. A throwback pub with a modern twist that not only clings onto the traditional values of the past, but also pushes the boundaries of what is possible in a world now bursting with beer choice. The next festival at The Pelican is their annual regional Tap-takeover in October featuring 100 beers (cask, keg, cans and bottles) all from Scotland and the North East. There's no doubt Mike and the team would love to see you there, cheers!

Mike Hall

www.gloucestershire.camra.org.uk

LINTON FESTIVAL

30TH JUNE - 2ND JULY 23



What a great festival weekend of music and beer that was!

I've always kicked myself that I have missed so many of these great festivals, more or less on the border of the county and Herefordshire this is an exceptional local event, that I am determined not to miss in the future. One way to start the process was to get along and indulge, and I did just that.

The festival takes place in a field at the back of the local pub, The Alma, and is not lacking in its musical technology, producing an excellent sound from its fully kitted out stage. The stage area is not like some, six feet above the audience, it is far more listener friendly than that, and you really feel part of the whole experience when you can look the musicians in the eye.

The organisation is a lesson in community spirit and how to get the best out of a rural village. The residents come together to put on a brilliantly organised event. The cake stall, run by the local WI, is a godsend with tea and coffee at a super reasonable £1 per mug, whilst the incredible cakes that they're so famous for, do not disappoint. Along with the Thai food, burgers and pizzas, you're spoilt for choice. The toilet facilities are also of a very high order and for those gentlemen who like a view of the countryside, the outdoor urinals are quite Gallic and entertained a new local

band *Al Fresco* and the *Willy Wavers* for all three days.

There were a total of 14 acts that covered the two full days and the Friday evening. The music on offer leans towards the blues, which is good for me as I was brought up on the R&B (proper R&B) of the 60s. Don't be fooled into thinking it's all delta and Chicago blues as there are bands that cover folk rock, Americana, swamp blues, three piece power trios and a couple of excellent tribute bands too. Amongst the testosterone fuelled line up there are some noteworthy exceptions that featured tremendous women who really brought extra colour to the vocal department.

The three headline acts were just that, for those of us of a certain age *Think Floyd* on the Friday brought us a tremendous set of the band's that has always defied categorisation,



it was a balanced set of old and new, finishing with the quite magnificent *Comfortably Numb*.

Saturday was topped off by *King King*, who I am ashamed to say were new to me. What a discovery! Excellent vocals and guitar by the multi-talented frontman, Alan Nimmo, were a real treat, and even better a distinct likeness to Free and Bad Company, not a bad recommendation as Paul Rodgers never sang a bad note in his life.

Sunday's headlining band *Quo Connection* was a trip down memory lane for my wife and I who both remember getting in to see the local band, Status Quo, for 50pence a night, even better for us, they played a few of the

really early ones to keep us old 'uns happy.

Finally the beer, with 20 beers on offer from local breweries within a 50 mile radius there was nearly something for everyone, although to my mind, way too much over-hoppy IPA, 'golden' and 'amber' ales. There was one porter, one milk stout and one proper bitter, the Bristol Beer Factory malty *Independence* that tickled my tastebuds the most.

All in all, a brilliant use of a weekend in a bucolic English village. I'm going again!

Chris Leibbrandt

WHY NOT
ENTER A COMPETITION

WE'VE GOT LOADS TO WIN!

BREWERY TOURS TO GLOUCESTER BREWERY - SEE PAGE 21!

BREWERY TOURS TO STROUD BREWERY - SEE PAGE 39!

MEALS FOR TWO AT A QUALITY INN - SEE PAGE 55!

SEND YOUR ENTRIES TO



chris@thetippler.co.uk



The Tegestologist

Welcome to a series all about Tegestology, the little known term for the collection of beer mats. Our man has a lot, over 40,000 to choose from, so we reckon he knows what he's talking about . . .

For this next selection of current local brewers and their beer mats, we head East to Bourton on the Water and a brewery now called Hawkstone.

Formerly Cotswold Brewing Co. who have been primarily producing a range of bottled and keg speciality lagers for local pubs - a welcome font amongst the raft of mass-produced euro-lagers. They now make the Hawkstone range in alliance with Clarkson's Farm, which I'm sure you've heard lots about. Shown below is their current mat, which is available at the on-site taproom.

Now I think the last of my Gloucestershire breweries (to have issued a mat) is certainly the oldest still trading and is the most picturesque brewery too. I'm talking about Donnington of course, who commenced brewing in 1865, and issued their first, rather plain mat, in 1961. All those that followed were similar scenes of the brewhouse, lake and swans, but taken from different viewpoints - well if you've got it, flaunt it! Here is their beer mat from 1967, though why they didn't produce a mat for their 100th anniversary in between is a puzzle to me.

That's pretty much covered all the live Gloucestershire breweries, other than the small number of new ones in the area, whom to my knowledge, have not produced mats e.g. Elemental, Tewkesbury and Werkstatt, and I will publicise them here when they do.

Therefore, to avoid leaving a blank page, I have examples here from some brewers from neighbouring counties and whose beers are regularly seen in Gloucestershire, starting with North Cotswold Brewery.

They are based near Stretton, well and truly 'in the sticks' at the end of a long farm track just off the Fosse Way (not unlike Hawkstone in fact). This mat was their 11th issue, one of a series featuring the classic green man design. They also brew Shakespeare brand beers on site, which is lovely in bottle, and I think I sampled some draught at the Cotswold beer festival this July. There are four mats from that department too.

Staying in the Cotswolds, is the eponymous Hook Norton brewery, which must give Donnington a run for its money in the beauty stakes. I grew up on Hooky in the days when only two brews were readily available, unless

you count 'mother-in-law', 50/50 of Old Hooky and Bitter. Hooky had a slow start producing mats, but they are now up to 85, plus a few pub festival mats not credited directly to Hooky. I have them all except the first one, which is similar to the one pictured here, but without the yellow colouring.

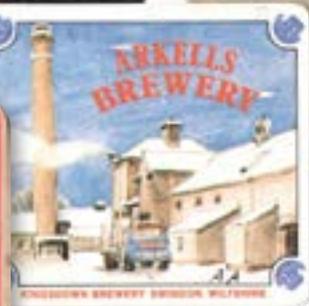
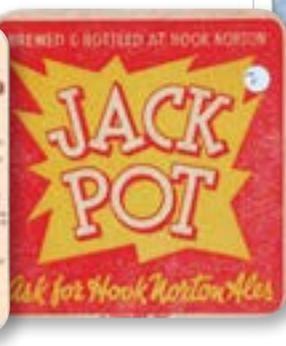
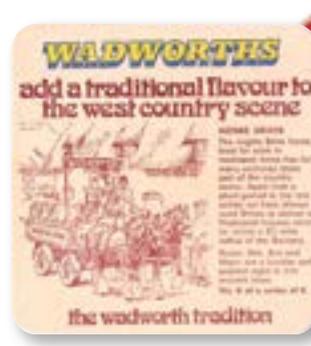
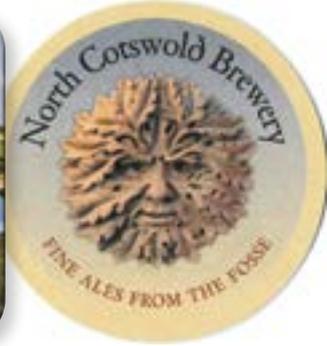
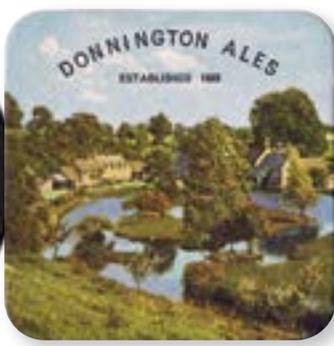
My local was the wonderful Kings Head in Bledington, and in those days when cask ale was scarce, we were lucky as they also stocked Wadworth 6X. Drinkers never swapped though. One was either a 6X or Hooky man. How things have changed, as now one can drink a different beer every time. Wadworth's comes from Devizes in Wiltshire, but now have several tied houses around the county. This mat is cat.20 from a set of six which was re-issued in different colours from 1979-1985. On the reverse I've written in ink the donor pub, the Lamb Inn, Andover. I would usually use pencil, and add the date, but probably decided it would never be a rare mat, and helps me remember the occasion of visiting an old school friend who was stationed there at the time. Horse drawn brewery drays are still a nostalgic feature at both Wadworth and Hook Norton and can be seen if you visit for brewery tours or occasionally at country fairs. If you like such things, support them by drinking their beers.

Here are three more mats from Wiltshire brewers. Vibish - you may not have heard of - have been registered in Cirencester for five years, but brew at their new taproom in Swindon. Here is their one and only mat from 2023 which I found in the Tuppenny Inn. It's funny how some mats give tons of information, yet others like this, you wouldn't know it was a brewery from first encounter.

Next is a beer mat from Hop Kettle brewery, and a little bit older from 2015. Now brewing in Old Town, just along from Tuppenny, they originated at the Red Lion in Cricklade, where some beers (may) still be produced, even though it is now tied to St Austell. Hop Kettle also have a brewery tap in Cirencester, but no brewery there. All very complicated!

The 3rd mat below is from Arkell's Kingsdown Brewery in Swindon. Following the 'Beer Orders legislation' in 1989, Arkell's had also acquired more pubs in Cheltenham and Gloucester. This 1987 mat shows the brewery in winter. The design was an original painting by Anne Arkell the late mother of current chairman, James. It was such a successful theme that around 10 of Anne's paintings were used on mats throughout the 1980's and 90's. Perhaps her family will revisit this tradition for their 180th anniversary this year.

Thanks for reading about some of my beer mat collection and the local breweries associated with them during 2023. Next time I'll cover a few of my mats from Obsolete Gloucestershire breweries. So till then, happy collecting!!



Russell Murfitt

DEAF BOY WANDERIN' JOHN



Sitting in the pub one day, the question 'Exactly where is the source of the Thames?' came up. 'Know that, been there!', said our Resident Rambler, and that was that - we sent him off to do it again and report back. This is what happened...

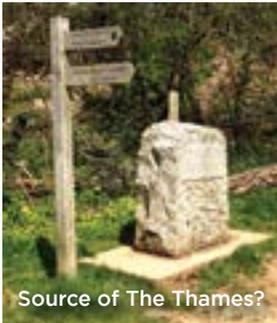
Within this 7 mile Cotswold walk, there is a wonderfully surprising cornucopia of historical transport links and heritage sites. A veritable 'anoraks paradise' you might say.

Starting at the Tavern Inn in Kemble, the walk immediately enters the down platform of Kemble Railway Station. Walk over the footbridge onto the London-bound platform, and give yourself time to look around at this Grade 2 listed station, an absolute gem of railway architecture.

Exiting the station, the walk continues past the car park and down a slope giving access to fields adjacent to the infant River Thames.

The first road bridge across the Thames comes into view, so follow the river bank up to the first man-made structure spanning the river. A few yards upstream is a little tree-surrounded area that hides the only realistic spring on the walk. This is Lyd Well and is the current official source of the River Thames (that is, unless there is a long dry summer, as in 2022 when the river disappeared, only to re-emerge five miles downstream near Lechlade).

The route continues upwards and crosses the old Roman road, the "Fosse Way", Crossing another field, you eventually arrive at an alternative 'official' source of the Thames, where a large stone marks the spot. Unfortunately, every time I have visited this spot there has been no sign of a spring or even the tiniest drop of water. However, there is a finger signpost that indicates how many miles it is to walk to the Thames Barrier. Make of that what you will.



Source of The Thames?

The route rises away from the river to meet the Thames-Severn Canal, originally completed in 1789 to boost trade between Bristol, the Midlands and London, before leading uphill towards the village of Coates, which offers delightful views over prime Cotswold hills and valleys.

Walking down the road into Coates, turn right at the crossroads and go past the Village Hall. The path wanders across sheep and horse-laden fields to the very flat and convenient boundary wall of St Matthews Church, an ideal place for a coffee break surrounded by a beautiful bucolic landscape.

Whilst there, look at the corners of the tower and be amazed at the display of crocketed pinnacles - small decorative mini-towers covered in spikes (may be handy in your local pub quiz).

Moving on, the path leads down a lush valley and crosses the main Gloucester to Swindon railway line.

You will now approach the saddest part of the whole walk, the magnificent, but temporarily closed, Tunnel Inn, depending on your definition of temporary, as I have known it to be in this Marie Celeste state for at least the last two years. The first inn built in the 1780s was for the navies digging the two-mile long Sapperton Tunnel. When the tunnel was fully operational, it was a base for the 'leggers' who literally lay flat on their backs and walked the barges through the tunnel. I have done a small bit of legging and it is very physical and thirsty work, which is why each end of the tunnel has an adjacent pub.

Leaving the Tunnel Inn, the walk leads down into a huge man-made canal cutting. One can only stand and stare at this awesome feat of engineering carried out with navies, picks and shovels. Once on the tow path, turn and face the magnificently restored Coates Portal.

The route follows the towpath and passes Coates Roundhouse lengthman's cottage, unique to this canal. This building has an inverted roof, lead-lined and designed to catch rainwater which was piped to an underground storage tank. Who said engineers in the 1790s weren't at the forefront of technology? Now unfortunately it is derelict and isolated.



'The bar is a ferroequinologist's delight...!'

A little further on, walk under Coates Skew Bridge, so called because this railway bridge is skewed at an angle over the canal. Walking under it, the unusual diagonal angle of the bridge plays tricks with your eyes.

The canter along the towpath ends when the first canal bridge hoves into sight again. From there, retrace your steps via the river and the station, back to the Tavern Inn, an Arkells pub with a full range of real ales and ciders, a warm welcome and good food. The bar here is a ferroequinologist's (train-spotter to you and me) delight as you can down your pint of Arkells Wiltshire Gold or similar, whilst seeing trains arriving and departing at the station, without having to leave your seat.

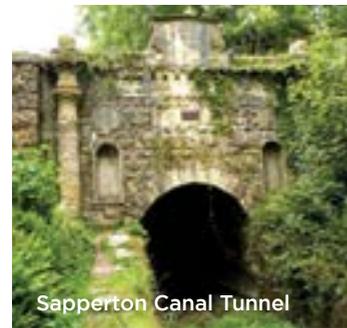
A very fitting conclusion to a fascinating walk.



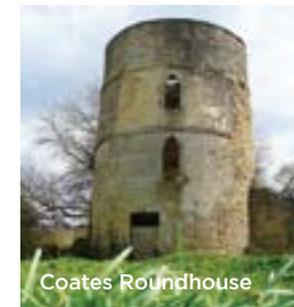
Kemble Station



The Tavern Inn



Sapperton Canal Tunnel



Coates Roundhouse



THE RETURN OF THE BLACK BEAR



MAY THE FORCE BE WITH YOU LUKE

"I know this sounds a bit of a cliché, but it's really important to me that pub goes out there know this: I want our pub to be at the heart of the community," said Luke Haynes, the owner and mastermind behind the resurrection of the Black Bear in Tewkesbury.

This ancient landmark at the top (or is it the bottom?) of Tewkesbury High Street is widely considered to be Gloucestershire's oldest pub, its history dating back to 1308.

"Social cohesion is being eroded all the time and high streets around the country are being transformed, and not for the better, as more and more people buy things using their phones, the days of a 'retail experience' look like they're numbered.

Small independent shops and pubs are what give high streets character and I want to make sure that the Black Bear is one of those places. Places where people can go and interact and engage with each other, and in our case with a range of beers, ciders and perries. We want to ensure that the British pub institution continues as it is central to the community of the town."

Luke has been on a journey (as they would say in Strictly) of some six years ensuring that the 'Bear' has been given every opportunity to re-open with the original features intact, but enhanced with modern atrium interior that blends seamlessly with its garden overlooking the river Avon. The garden often hosts live music and popular various pop-up

food outlets featuring delicious Thai food, pizzas, burgers and the like. These increase the variety and choice on offer with their own kitchens serving from noon until 9:00pm every day.

"From 2017 through to 2020 we worked with the council, historians, architects and conservation officer to ensure that all of the original features were preserved. The building work to begin with was focussed on uncovering those original features and the discoveries on the way have been one of the most fascinating aspects of the refurbishment," said Luke. Luke has many that are yet to be displayed, but one that is a smoking pipe from the early 1600s, found embedded in a wall. More will be on show as they are mounted and



Uncovered: Steps to the Abbey and a pipe found buried in the wall



displayed. Another discovery was the staircase that can be seen in the bar, which is covered by a glass plate and is thought to be part of the network of tunnels beneath the town that linked the pub to the Abbey.

"Uncovering the original timber frame was a delicate job and during the process they found that death watch beetle had taken its toll. A team of Bristol based boat builders was brought in, craftsmen who had the transferrable skills to ensure that working with ancient woods like oak and elm was not only sympathetic, but would also last for another few hundred years." He continued: "One thing we tried to do and made it an

integral part of the re-build was to re-use and re-purpose as much of the original parts of the building as we could, and I think we have achieved just that.

"I'm really proud of the work and results, but these, like any business are still ongoing.

We have a new cellar and have invested in fifteen hand pumps for real ale for the pub goes to enjoy, and we are always looking for new beers to try alongside more regularly seen favourites.

We also have 24 taps for lagers, keg beers, ciders and perries, so there is something for every beer drinker to enjoy. We honestly can't wait for you to join us."



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CAPTION COMPETITION

Sharpen your pencil, as well as your wits, and come up with a suitable caption for this rather unusual pub's window display.



This chap, a silent pub resident for many a year, must have been witness to plenty of monkey business in his time.

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

Thanks go to Ron and the staff at the Berkeley Arms the use of image of this fine primate.



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The ART of Beer

After his controversial article last quarter (talking tinned beer in a real ale magazine?) we caught up with Pinty again and asked him to restore the balance with something about real ale and art. 'I know just the thing,' he said, tendering his empty flagon of ale for a refill...

Beer Street, London. Ever heard of it? Like Hooky Street, Peckham, it may be a fictional concoction but both offer lasting hope for a happier future. One day Rodney, we'll all be millionaires...

When in 1751 William Hogarth produced 'Beer Street' and its accompanying comment on the evils of gin, 'Gin Lane', he could have been saying exactly that: "Drink beer my friends and one day you'll be millionaires. Just see what happens to the gin junkies and their children - death, pestilence, deformed offspring, a life of crime and treachery.

"Beer, on the other hand is a benign draught with restorative properties which leads to a life of prosperity and happiness".

Well 272 years on, not everybody would necessarily agree with that, but back in 1751 perceptions were different.

Beer Street was effectively an 18th century advertising campaign designed to counter the damage widely considered to be caused by the demon gin (aka 'Mother's Ruin', 'Madam Geneva', 'Ladies Delight', 'Cuckold's Comfort', 'Strip-me-Naked', or in London slang, the wonderful 'King Theodore of Corsica').



ON BEER:

Beer, happy produce of our Isle, Can sinewy Strength impart, And wearied with fatigue and Toil, Can cheer each manly Heart

Labour and Art upheld by Thee, Successfully advance, We quaff Thy balmy Juice with Glee, And Water leave to France.

Genius of Health, thy grateful Taste, Rivals the Cup of Jove, And warms each English generous Breast, With Liberty and Love



ON GIN:

Gin cursed Fiend with Fury fraught, Makes human Race a Prey It enters by a deadly Draught, And steals our life away.

Virtue and Truth, driven to Despair, It's Rage compells to fly, But cherishes with hellish Care, Theft, Murder, Perjury.

Damn'd Cup! that on the Vitals preys, That liquid Fire contains, Which Madness to the Hear conveys, And rolls it through the Veins.

'...men were encouraged to drink beer.'

Introduced into England by soldiers returning from the Low Countries in the 18th Century and totally untaxed, by 1730 cheap gin had become the favourite drink amongst working class and poorer members of society. Historically known as the 'Gin Craze', consumption in London at that time has been estimated at the equivalent of two pints per week per Londoner.

But Big Brother was watching and decided that gin was the undoing of society, noting that in relation to the working classes it contributed

to the 'Destruction of their Healths, rendering them unfit for useful Labour and Business, Debauching their Morals, and inciting them to perpetrate all manner of Vices.'

So naturally enough, the cry went up: 'Tax them Mr Mainwaring, tax them', and they did.

The Gin Act of 1736 imposed a license fee for gin retailers and a tax on gin itself. Compounded by yet further restrictions and licences in the 1750 Sale of Spirits Act, gin drinkers were left feeling the pinch. To offer an alternative to gin, not only was the import of tea encouraged (strange but true), but men were encouraged to drink beer.

Perhaps this was not so irresponsible. Back then, beer was far weaker than today's offerings - drinkers typically quaffed what was known as 'Table Beer' or 'Small Beer', generally thought to be of an ABV between 0.5% and 2.8%, so beer was seen as the 'sober' alternative to gin.

The stage was therefore perfectly set for William Hogarth (he of 'The Rakes's Progress'), an A-List artist already well known for his moralising views on society.

'Beer Street' and 'Gin Lane' sold for just one shilling each, which was cheap enough to be bought and widely displayed in taverns and coffee houses around London. Hogarth's work was credited as a contribution to the success of the Gin Act - gin production fell from 32,000 litres to just over 19,000 litres within a year, which was the lowest level in twenty years.

What we have here is a great example of art in action, with politics and beer at centre stage. What price CAMRA secretly dates from about 1750, I wonder idly?

Take note Rishi, gin drinking is on the rise again...

Poems by the Reverend James Townley, friend of William Hogarth

Tall Tales from the Cider Shed...

In another new series we finally persuaded Gloucestershire cider maker Derek Hartland to recall a few of the more noteworthy moments from his illustrious past.

Many years ago when I was younger there was a sporting superstar who lived in the next village to us. He was the golden boy of National Hunt racing and his name was Terry Biddlecombe.

In his time, Terry was a three time champion jump jockey, and later in life he and his wife Henrietta Knight trained racehorses including the legendary Best Mate who went on to win three Cheltenham Gold Cups.

At the time of this story, Terry was working for the ATV station as a racing correspondent, and on Friday evenings, he would give out racing tips for the next day's racing. In fairness to Terry, he was a better jockey than he was a tipster. As father told him many times: "You couldn't tip a wheelbarrow, let alone a winner." For all that, they were friends and were known to drink a lemonade or two together.

One day in a local watering hole, Terry came up with the idea of filming a cider run, where people would go around in horse and traps and stop at four different venues for a drink of cider in each one. They would start at Terry's home village, Corse Lawn, in the Plough then go onto the Corse Lawn House, followed by the Greyhound in Eldersfield before finishing off at Flat Farm where we used to live. "It would be good for business," Terry said. So, bearing this in mind, we set about cleaning up the farm yard and also the old farm cottage where we would serve the cider, I thought that we made a pretty good job of tidying it all up.

By the time the horse and traps got back to the farm there was only Terry and his reporter, along with an affable chap called

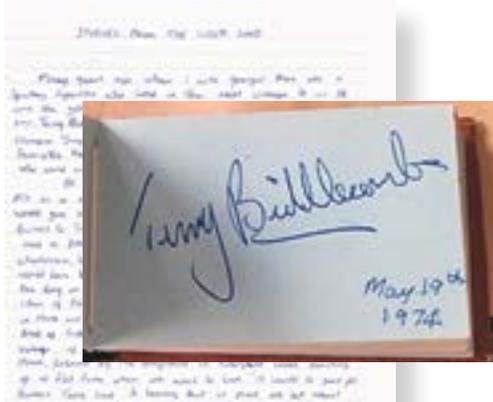
John Swallow and the camera crew left. We never did find out what happened to the others. What was the first thing John said when he came through the gate? "Mind the mud Terry." Wow! That's a good start isn't it? I thought. As we went into the old farm cottage where we pour out the cider, we're all just about to take a drink when Mr Swallow cries out: "There's a fly in my cider," to which father with his impeccable comic timing said:

"I thought swallows liked flies," proving father could make a joke out of anything.

As we watched the highlights on TV later that evening, we reflected that perhaps it hadn't been quite so good for business as Terry had suggested. For all that, it had been an interesting day having the television cameras on the farm and the day will live in my memory bank forever.



Dereck Hartland



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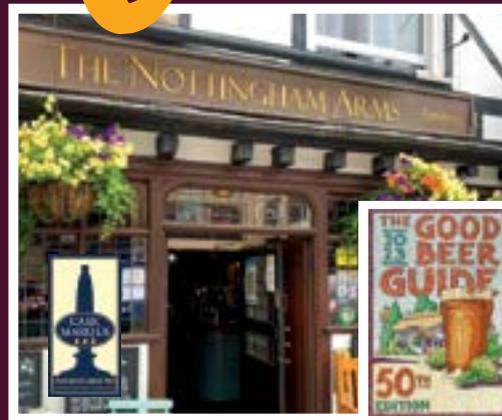
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When beer ticking was a challenge



An archetypal middle-aged, bearded, generously proportioned CAMRA member recalls the days when seeking boring brown bitters was rewarding and fun.

I'm always fascinated to read the 'Dodgy Ticker' tales of Pete Searle - the continuing tales of a beer collector.

His devotion to sample, record, and document as many beers as possible is very commendable. He has 'collected' over 11,000 different beers of all types, including a 10 per cent 'Red Jammie Peanut Butter Marshmallow Honeycomb', a 10% beer from Vault City Brew.

It seems a world away from my pub crawls of the mid to late 1970's when you had to travel the country to sample 'rare' and strictly

regionally based beers such as Darley's from Thorne in Yorkshire or Yates & Jacksons from Lancaster. Now only cherished drinking memories from nearly fifty years ago those beers may well have been uninspiring beers with little character, but the point was you had to make a considerable effort to visit the brewery's limited trading areas.

Sometimes, rather like one of those Venn diagrams, the trading areas of these family and regional breweries overlapped, creating a 'real ale haven'. Such a place was Kinver in South Staffordshire, adjoining the West

Midlands, where there were Banks's, Batham's, Davenport's, Hanson's M&B, and Simpkins tied houses. Way further up'north by the M6 in Lancashire was a place called Garstang that had Boddingtons, Matthew Brown, Mitchells, Robinsons and Yates & Jacksons pubs.

Back in the mid 1970's it was possible to go into most pubs in the country and simply ask for a pint of Bitter, Best Bitter... and, if

you were in the right place, Mild. Taking into consideration that the price of beer back then was about 25 pence a pint, it's very easy to

look back on those days with affection.

Then, as now, the CAMRA Good Beer Guide was an invaluable source of information to plan pub and brewery visits. Preceding the GBG as the beer drinkers' 'bible' was a book published in 1973 by Frank Baillie called 'The Beer Drinker's Companion'. The book listed 88 regional independent breweries that were still active at that time, of which only about a dozen survive today.

Applying the Venn diagram model to Gloucestershire back in the mid 1970's was less impressive, with only Moreton-in-the-Marsh

worthy of note with Donnington's at the Black Bear and Hook Norton Ales at the Wellington. A pie chart of the pubs in Gloucestershire owned by breweries would have shown a large slice of the cake being Whitbread pubs, with smaller segments of Courage, Ind Coope, Bass, Arkells, Donnington and Wadworth pubs... and not much else.

The first edition of 'Real Ale in Gloucestershire' in January 1976, compiled by the CAMRA Gloucestershire Branch, listed only 21 beers on offer in the whole county from 11 breweries. Hardly inspiring. In fact, the Good Beer Guide stated that "Gloucestershire is a poor county for real ale."

A few like-minded beer entrepreneurs began to introduce rarer beers to free houses in the county and kick started the real ale revival. Chas Wright and Ric Sainty deserve special mention for bringing Theakstons Best Bitter and Greene King Abbot Ale into Gloucestershire. Beers from Robinsons, Samuel Smiths and South Wales Clubs began to appear in selected pubs.

Imagine the delight when Gloucestershire CAMRA set up the first Cotswold Beer Festival in 1976 with a selection of rare beers, punters happily 'ticking off' the likes of Theakson's Old Peculier, Marston's Owd Roger and Robinson's

Old Tom. Those were the days when serving a third of a pint wasn't even thought of - most drinkers happily swilling pints, often with unforeseen consequences.

Looking back to those days of flared trousers, cheese-cloth shirts, men with long hair and such delights as Watneys Red Barrel, Youngers Tartan and Whitbread Tankard perhaps it is easy to dismiss the era as being a bit rubbish. The beer selection wasn't great, and some real ales were described as 'bland and unspectacular' - not much demand for ice cream porters, imperial pudding stouts or unfiltered lambic sours in those days! On a personal note, I can look back with some affection and remember when I had a full head of hair, was lighter in weight and was devoid of a beer belly.

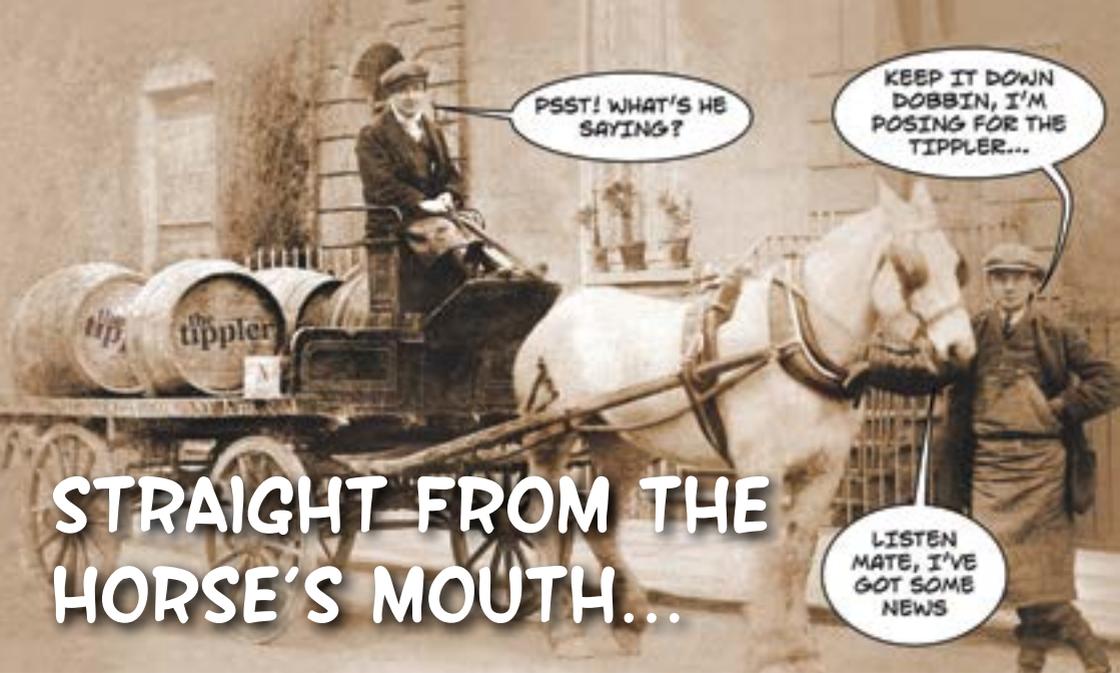
But was it worth it getting on my trusty push-bike and heading out towards the Malvern Hills to seek out beers from Marston's and Banks's? Three 'ticks' with a lot of effort - Banks's Mild and Bitter and Marston's Pedigree.

I wonder if the 'Dodgy Ticker' has "copped" those ales! I know I have.

Geoff Sandles

...the price of beer back then was about 25 pence a pint...





STRAIGHT FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH...

BREWERY NEWS



The Fresh Standard Brew Co.,

established November 2020, saw local investment in January of this year, not only increasing their premises by another unit, but also installing a new five barrel kit. Upping its production capacity by 400%! They have also been able to take the plunge and hire a brewing apprentice, Chris Moorhouse.

The small brewery owned by husband and wife team, Richard and Charlotte Taylor, is based in Woodchester, Stroud and has seen steady growth since it started during Covid. Initially cuckoo brewing out of Artisan Ales up at Aston Down, they moved into their own premises in February 2022.

The tap room is open on a Friday and Saturday, 2-9pm, with its variety of food pop-ups, has proved so successful last year they kept running out of beer. This led to enthusiastic regulars wanting to help out and invest.

Charlotte says: "What we didn't expect when we opened the bar was the reaction from our locals. We feel part of a lovely and welcoming community and really appreciate that they consider us as part of that."

Richard says: "We are so pleased with the new brewhouse, it's a beautiful British built plant that we have been able to adapt specifically to our needs.

"We are thrilled that Chris has now joined us and look forward to channelling his enthusiasm for beer into creating a talented new brewer for the team."

They have 6 core beers;

- Solution 4.8% Common Pale Ale, cask
- Horse Brass 4% Standard Biter, cask
- Red Mild 6%, cask
- Soft 5.2% Juicy Pale Ale, keg
- Bryter 3% Table Beer, keg
- Pothering 6.2% West Coast IPA, cask and keg.

Their main brewing philosophy is simple, low intervention, vegan friendly beer using only four ingredients: water, barley, hops and yeast. They aim to create distinct beers, inspired by the Stroud valleys and the places we drink them. For a whole lot more information, visit: www.thefreshstandard.co.uk



Stroud Brewery will be offering a 'Brewer's Social Table' on the first Friday of every month, 5 - 6pm, beginning 1st September. Come along to the brewery's taproom and talk everything beer and brewing with brewer,

STRAIGHT FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH...

Manuel Vrizzi or another of our expert brewing team. Talk techniques, latest trends, the vagaries of taste and any burning question that's been rattling around in the back of your mind. It's free for anyone to join in - the table's booked, the beer's on tap so what more enticement is needed?!

STROUD BREWERY WINS 10 AWARDS IN 6 WEEKS

Stroud Brewery is celebrating winning ten awards during the past six weeks at local, county and regional levels, with the potential for national awards. These have covered all aspects of the brewery: its beer, its taproom and the business as a whole, and now it's a finalist in a national award for its



environmental and ethical work.

"When I set up the brewery in 2006, I wanted to make great beer which brought people together to talk, laugh and learn, and to be at the heart of my local community," said Greg Pilley, founder and MD of Stroud Brewery.

"My background as an ecologist working in wildlife conservation and in local food production meant that using organic ingredients and thinking about the impact the business had on the environment became part of the business model early on. When I started the brewery 17 years ago, this approach was virtually unheard of in the industry."

For Greg and the brewery's team, these awards are a heartening recognition that taste

and quality aren't compromised by using organic ingredients and making its operations more environmentally friendly. The brewery is now urging all breweries to embrace sustainability and produce drinks that can both give customers a great product and help to regenerate the planet.

THE LIST OF AWARDS IS AS FOLLOWS:

- The Stroud News & Journal, voted it as the 'Business of the Year' in the inaugural Community Heroes Awards.
- SoGlos honoured the brewery with the titles of 'Gloucestershire's Lifestyle Business of the Year' and 'Pub/Bar of the Year'.
- SIBA (Society of Independent Breweries) Wales & West annual beer competition awarded:
 - SIBA Gold - Budding,
 - SIBA Gold - Hop Drop,
 - SIBA Gold - Easy Peasy
 - SIBA Gold - Light Organic Lager
 - Light Organic Lager also claimed the SIBA Wales and West overall winner's title in the category for Bottles & Cans Session Lager up to 4.4% ABV. Light Organic Lager goes through to the National Finals at the BeerX Festival in Liverpool early next year.
- Taste of the West's beer category awarded:
 - Gold - Big Cat Organic Stout
 - Silver - Budding Organic Pale Ale
 - Silver - Easy Peasy Organic Session Ale.
- The Brewery is in the finals of the Sustainable Pub of the Year category of the Great British Pub Awards The winners are announced in September.

For more visit: www.stroudbrewery.co.uk



Battledown Brewery has sadly announced that it has ceased brewing, as owner Roland Elliott-Berry has decided to retire. The brewery, at Coxhorne Farm on the London Road, is now for sale. This does not affect the Sibling gin distillery, set up by Roland's four children, who share the brewery site and will continue to operate normally.

STRAIGHT FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH...

(Battledown Brewery closes cont'd)

Brewing in Cheltenham since 2005, Battledown produces a range of ales, lager, and craft beers. Originally brewing in cramped premises in Keynsham Street the brewery moved to its Coxhorne Farm site in Charlton Kings. A new owner will inherit a new brew plant, installed in 2020 and supplied with spring water from the Cotswold hills located behind the brewery. Hopefully, new owners will be found, and will be able to build on all the great work Roland has done over the years at Battledown. Cheltenham CAMRA would like to wish Roland a long and well-deserved retirement.

PUB NEWS

The unique **Red Lion at Ampney St Peter** (below) reopened in May 2023 after a number of years of closure and is now serving Thursday, Friday and Saturday 5.30pm to 10.30pm. They currently serve one cask ale which at the time of writing is North Cotswold Brewery Shagweaver. The Red Lion is a CAMRA National Inventory for historic interiors listed pub and is one of a few 'parlour' pubs remaining in the UK. A parlour pub being named due to it having no bar counter, with drinks being served from

behind a Settle in one of the two small rooms. The current owners have done a fabulous job of retaining the original character and it is well worth a visit if you have not experienced an evening in a Parlour Pub, on entering the serving room you will almost certainly be drawn into friendly conversation with the Landlady or one of the Locals as it is impossible not to be...

Possibly topical, **The Odessa** in Tewkesbury has re-opened on a more regular basis, after its new signage was unveiled earlier in the year. Afternoons and evenings from Thursday through to Sundays.

The Willow, the new Fullers pub at Bourton on the Water, opened in April 2023.

The Mill at Withington has reopened in August with a new Manager.

Jolly Brewmaster Cider Festival will take place on 8th & 9th September. In addition to great ciders there will be a BBQ, live music, and a pig roast.

The Sudeley Arms has reopened. Current it only serves one real ale, Doom Bar.

The Bank House is no longer for sale and will remain a Wetherspoons pub.

Montpellier Wine Bar is now expected to re-open during Cheltenham & Gloucester Beer Week, mid-September.

The Merryfellow, Charlton Kings, has reopened as a pub/restaurant after redecoration, and a big revamp. England Rugby International Phil Vickery has transferred the No. 3 restaurant from its Royal Crescent premises to the Merryfellow. Real ale is on offer. The opening featured Oakham Citra, Timothy Taylor's Landlord and (we understand) a DEYA cask beer.



The Cheltenham Motor Club, three-time CAMRA National Club of the Year (in 2013, 2017 and 2020), is once again the South West Club of the Year, extending a run of many years.

The Club will now progress to the National Finals. Congratulations from everyone at Cheltenham CAMRA on continuing to win against stiff competition. The presentation was at the CMC on 24th August.



Rob Coldwell (right of both pics) presents (above) the Club of the Year certificate to the Cheltenham Motor Club and (below) Pub of the Year to the Sandford Park Alehouse.



The Sandford Park Alehouse has been named as the Cheltenham CAMRA Pub of the Year, a well deserved winner of a pub that works hard to ensure its local community (and dogs) have a welcoming venue to sample real ales and much more besides. Recent festivals have included their summer beers and hey have recently he, with regular 'festival' events throughout the year.

CHELTEMPHAM MOTOR CLUB
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Winning numerous CAMRA awards in recent years, we have been in the Good Beer Guide since 2005. Our "Wheel Ale" beer festival is held in September.

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The High Constable in the docks is doing a fine job feeding the seagulls. One minute you are enjoying fish and chips while watching the boats go by - then whoosh, fish gone, seagull happy. Beware!

Across the docks to **Gloucester Brewery's** Warehouse #4. The innovative self-service system is still in need of some development so currently, it's back to "a pint of that one please".

The Common Room on St Aldate Street has bit the dust sadly. Open roughly a year to the day.

The **Turks Head** will shortly be doing those wonderful handmade pizzas as they used to in the previous Turks. But only Fridays and Saturdays.

The Imperial, purveyors of Bass Ale. Strange opening times. Closed on Mondays but sometimes at random times as well.

The **North End Vaults**. After a long list of short term landlords they have changed from a Craft Union back to a traditional tenancy.

Angies down Bull lane has been renamed **The Drunken Duck**.

The Tall Ship in Southgate St. is looking a little wobbly. Let's hope it survives.

STRAIGHT FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH...

The Royal Oak, Wotton under Edge is once again open for business, with the apparent aim of being a music pub. On a recent visit the heavy metal was being played at a volume which guaranteed that the visit was a short one, despite the quality of the beer being good.

The New Inn at Waterley Bottoms remains closed, but opens occasionally in a "pop up" capacity.

The Old Fox at Coaley has suffered from a fire in part of the building. We understand that it wasn't bad enough for the pub to be closed and although it affected food service for a while, by the time this is published in the Tippler, all should be back to normal.

The New Inn at Woodmancote should be reopened after a long period of closure when building works went badly wrong, mainly due to bad weather.

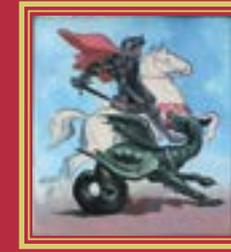
A new micro pub is planned to open in Dursley in the former premises of Norville Opticians, to be called **The Hoptician** (well, what else would you expect!) It is hoped that it will open early next year after major works have been completed.

The Lucifer Brewhouse has been very busy during the beer festival season. The tap takeover at **The Falcon Steakhouse** went really well with two of their four beers (Dog Days Summer Ale and GL12) selling out on the first night and the other two (Ol' Falcon Ale and Trickster Black IPA) not far behind!

Trickster and Starlight made an appearance at Postlip and again they got some great feedback.

They are also supporting the Cam Beer Festival and several other local events and are busy preparing for Ocktoberfest at **The Star Inn** in late September where they will be supplying a cask Lager. It's called 'KLB' - Kölsch-style Lager Beer - it's a stretch to make the name fit! (The local school is Katherine, Lady Berkeley School, founded in 1384, and thus abbreviated to KLB)

Uley Brewery brewery tours that are held on the first and third Thursday of the month at £20.00/head between 6-8pm have proved to be a great success, also the following Friday night sessions in **The Forge** (the brewery tap room) between 3-8pm have been well attended.



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CIDER & PERRY MAN



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

POSTLIP 2023 – not just a beer festival, there was a load of cider and perry too!

I had previously only been to a few beer festivals, in very much a social mode, so that volunteering to help at Postlip was entirely new to me.

I was soon on the festival bus, with my free ticket, for the Friday night session. My helpers tee shirt fitted just fine, and I was quickly shown the ropes by my co-helper in our little 'cage' for the medium and sweet ciders and perries, about a dozen in total. Like going to the races, we were soon off to a quick start. A few 'cognoscenti' knew what they wanted, but quite a few wanted explanations or a recommendation, and maybe a little taster too. It turned out that some of the ciders, were rather sweeter than medium, so we had to explain that. I was then able to move customers along to the next 'cage' if they wanted more of a medium or dry. I had tasted a couple of those myself, and liked the Core Cider (6%) from Craft Cider in the Forest of Dean.

I don't normally like loud bands, but so great was the atmosphere that you couldn't help getting swept up with it and the audience were soon dancing in the aisles. A later complication arose when customers coming back for a repeat, couldn't remember what they had had before, and so another recommendation was called for, and maybe another little taster. The first box to sell out was a cider from Thistly Cross in Scotland which had been matured in whisky casks. This at nearly 7% alc was one of the more

expensive, but the whisky factor seemed to outrun the extra coupon requirement. Our second box to finish was the well named Hazy Dazy cider from Hunts Cider in Devon. This was more easy drinking at 4.5%. It was a frenetic three hours for me, and approaching my eighth decade, I was fair 'cream crackered'! Over all, my partner and I, must have served well over a hundred pints.

The more I drink 'proper' cider, the more I feel that the still version served from BiB (Bag in Box) is the best format. However, I visited the excellent Old Bell pub in Uley the other day, after reading a recommendation by Deaf Boy Wandering John, in a past issue of Tippler, and enquired from the landlady, who is a great cider fan, as to why she didn't offer any ciders from a box. She said that she likes the focal point of the clips on the hand pumps, for her forthcoming real ale and music festival in early September, she will have quite a few BiB cider available.

I did also get to visit another great little rural pub, The Carpenters Arms at Westrip, which has not only just won the Stroud Cider Pub of the Year, but also The Gloucestershire title. They had available nearly as many ciders as Postlip, but nearly all fairly local, as opposed to country wide. It was lunchtime, and I was driving, so I just tasted two ciders. The pub was in danger of closing up until a few years ago, but they now have very strong local support.

Guy Vowles

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NAME THAT PUB COMPETITION



It's a big 'Hello' from this multi-award winning pub in a porcine sounding village in the south of the county. Previous winner of the National Pub of the Year this is a community pub that spends time ensuring that local ingredients are used in its very own food, cider and beer.

Cheers!

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REJOICE - Craft Works!

THE EVOLUTION OF CHARITY BEER FESTIVALS



In March 2006, the Friends of Cheltenham Samaritans had a problem. Since 2003 their main fundraising had been a dragon boat racing event on Pittville Lake. This event was cancelled and they needed a replacement annual fundraiser.

In the end, they decided to try their hand at running a beer festival.

That first Cheltenham Beer Festival was held on Saturday 9th September, 2006 at the Old Patesians club in Leckhampton. The festival was just the fourth annual festival in Gloucestershire, being preceded by the Cotswold Beer Festival at Postlip, the August bank holiday festival at Frocester, and the Tewkesbury Winter Ales festival.

Tickets were just £5 including your first pint, selected from 26 local real ales and a couple of ciders - all available for just £2 a pint. Music was laid on in the clubhouse and a pig roast was provided to soak up the beer. About 250 people attended that first festival on a warm sunny day, and thanks to many free or heavily discounted beers from local breweries over £4K was raised for charity.

Over the next eight years the number of beers increased, peaking at 52 in 2010 and the cider offering continued to grow to become a major part of the festival. Ticket numbers grew peaking in 2011 when we had over 900 people attend over the day and we raised over £12K. In the early years, tickets would often sell out within a few weeks, but as the years went on it became far harder to sell tickets in advance.

There were two reasons. Firstly, by 2014 you could pretty much attend at least one beer festival a week in Gloucestershire from March through to October. The second reason was the cultural change brought about by social media and smart phone ownership. People who had previously planned events well in advance, now often decided what to do at short notice, often based on that week's weather forecasts.

To offer a point of difference to other beer festivals, in 2015 and 2016 the festival featured a 10-tap craft keg bar, featuring some of the very best of the UK's growing craft beer breweries, including Cheltenham's outstanding DEYA brewery. This experiment was so successful that in 2017 the festival went full on craft, featuring 37 keg beers (many in CAMRA approved KeyKegs) and just four cask beers.



At the same time, they moved to having food trucks instead of running their own BBQ.

The move was successful in generating interest amongst a new, generally younger, group of beer drinkers. The weather, however, was still the one thing that could not be controlled with potential profits at the mercy of the British summer.

After Covid, the 15th and final iteration of the summer festival was held on Saturday 11th June 2022. The weather was great, it was a sell-out, and it raised over £9K. Despite this, the committee still decided it would be their final summer beer festival. Having raised an amazing £122K from fifteen festivals. Not an easy decision, but their experience in St Philips and St James church made it easy.

The church had undergone an 18-month renovation, had rebadged their new bookable space as 'Pip & Jims'. After discussions with Pip & Jims, the Friends committee (who had recently built their own flat-pack, ten-tap keg dispense system), ran a Winter Craft Beer festival at the venue over two days in February 2022. Each session featured 10 different keg beers, a few ciders and food served from the internal kitchen.

The event was a revelation, because of the incredible surroundings and the quality of the beers. The festival was easy to set up and dismantle following the last session. There were no additional expenses for marquees, toilet trucks or chilled trailers. That first festival a raised over £9K, for a fraction of the work and worry.

In November 2022 an impressive array of foreign beers were on show at Cheltenham's first ever International Craft beer festival. A second winter craft beer festival was held in February this year. The Friends committee aim to replace their brilliant summer festivals, with two festivals at Pip & Jims every year. The next festival is being held to mark this year's 60th anniversary of Cheltenham Samaritans on Friday 20th and Saturday 21st October 2023. Tickets are available on Eventbrite - search for Friends of Cheltenham Samaritans. Why not come along to church and enjoy some incredible craft beers in this amazing venue?

Leigh Norwood

Chairman

Friends of Cheltenham Samaritans

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SCRAPING THE BARREL

with Ernest and Verity Dregg

Seven years ago, Ernest and Verity Dregg, retired snipers and fleet street hacks swapped their life as anti-woke, unreconstructed bigots and gossip columnists opened their dream pub. We find them hard at it on Sunday 27th August...

Seven million dollars in just a few days, Trump is a genius, not to mention a narcissistic parasitic psychopath, but what a guy! We should all be proud. Tee shirts of himself being arrested, he must be the perfect candidate for the American people to elect as the leader of the free world, I can't wait!" Exclaimed Ernest, "Think about it, we can have proper anarchy and make even more money from the hapless poor people in the country. We could be even more badly behaved than members of the Government, it's brilliant!"



"Listen, I've got a new idea, it's a cracker," said Ernest. Verity groaned, not another one, the brewery is working a treat, so what now? It was true: the two best sellers, Victory Tarten and Victory ZT continued to gain momentum, there were plenty of barrels leaving the brewery. The best bit was the transport, straight from the back gates, onto the quay and into the canal barges. Then delivery to the waterside pubs The Drowning Man, The

Nelson and The Trafalgar three pubs doing a great trade. The brewery was a great idea that Ernest had, even if they did have to kick out the asylum seekers from the sheds and outhouses that had now transformed into the brewery, and even better it was making a packet.

"I was thinking about barges, I'm going to get hold of some and park them at the bottom of the garden in the canal, right? No need for anything fancy, same as the one the Government have got down on the south coast. All we've got to do is put asylum seekers on them."

"Yes dear, then what?" Asked Verity, who was still sweeping out the empty cans, bottles and bits of clothing from underneath the pool table, perplexed about the owners of what is,

after all pretty essential if you don't want to get arrested.

"Well," said Ernest, "it takes the authorities forever to work out whether they should be here, so all the time we can sell the spaces to them, we're on an absolute gravy train, what could possibly go wrong?"

"Hold on a minute," warned Verity. I thought that special barge was full of those French chappies, the Foreign Legionnaires, they got in first and ruined all the plans, just like they always do. Isn't it

that joker Beau Jest and all his mates who took over the thing? A new posting after all that roaming around the desert. Aren't the French chaps supposed to be stopping the boats over there? I thought that's what we're paying them all the money for. It looks like they're having a good joke at our expense, no wonder they wanted Brexit!"

"Anyway," she continued, "I thought you and a few of your mates from the golf club were gambling on the mortgage rates going up so we could buy up peoples' houses as they default on their mortgages. Then we can rent them back to the council at twice what they're worth. It's a much better plan and it keeps the working people where they should be, unemployed and penniless. Am I wrong, but didn't the bank rate go up again last week, just like you wanted?"

"Well, there is that plan, maybe that would be a better one, it's a lot easier and all we have to do is wait for the bankers to deliver the

SCRAPING THE BARREL

goods to us, and they're doing that all right!" Exclaimed Ernest, who was busy reading the paper, taking what he called a natural break.

Verity carried on collecting the detritus from the snug bar, still pleased with her handiwork. Verity had always thought that owning a pub would be a bit of a cushy number, but she was realising that there was a lot of work to make it look easy, there was definitely a lot of cleaning up after special events, she was a bit worried about next week's party for the local constabulary, who liked nothing more than a decent lock-in with the local criminal fraternity. The sign-up had been terrific, nearly causing traffic chaos in the street when they heard about it. First come, first served always ensured you got plenty of people attending.



"Hold on a minute," he called out, "an even better idea, I'm going to become an MP, I'll be good at that! It says here that Nadine Dorries last spoke in the House of Commons sometime in June last year, that's around 400 days and she gets over £86 grand for that. Even better, she promised to resign 'with immediate effect' eleven weeks ago, so managed a few more quid before she left. Mind you, reading this resignation letter, it would have taken eleven weeks to write it, it's enormous!"

"Even better, MPs have voted that after the next election, if they leave they're awarded double the current severance pay. So I reckon I could make a packet and only work for a few months...result!"

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The Pub Whisperer

In a new occasional series about local pub life, entitled 'The Pub Whisperer', we're looking for readers to make regular contributions even if they're new to writing. Bob Jeffrey, pub enthusiast, historian and social commentator, begins the idea with some of his tales.

Domination Bubbles

Pubs, like trains, are now places where small or large groups appropriate a space and 'own' it for the time they are there. It becomes their 'bubble' where everything outside it is another world, estranged from them and they have no consciousness of any other group or individual in the pub.

They talk intimately with loud voices just as they do on a train into their phones. The public space is one that they have commandeered and taken full control over it. They appear unaware of other individuals or groups. They are totally oblivious to other bubbles or the general social space. They laugh loudly and draw the rest of us into their worlds, whether we want to join it or not.

We learn about their obsessions, their fears, their family traumas, their travels, "I have been to Pisa, Florence, Rome" but not Lucca or Padova." They describe in detail their work issues and their conflicts; laugh loudly all the time and assume they are in their living rooms having a party. As they tell their tales they reproduce events, e.g.: shouting "Shelby, Shelby, Shelby" letting us have the full force of the call.

Two members from the same family give us all the stories of incidents between family members. They want to have a laugh and enjoy it at full volume and laugh enthusiastically at their own 'amusing'

comments and usually ignore the staff clearing their table. Some groups may well sit there without a drink for a while, continuing their bubble exchanges. Has the pub always been a place where everyone does whatever pleases them or in the past did the 'gumnor' or 'missus' intervene and tell groups that they were being inconsiderate to those in the rest of the pub?

St George's Vaults - Jan 27 2023

It's the Friday evening prior to one day's racing in the run up to the Cheltenham Festival and the pub is more crowded than we have seen it on our regular visits. We selected the pub because it was quiet, but with a juke box that was played according to the enthusiasm of the pubs' punters; however, the music is all 'easy listening'. The ales are the same three all

'A quirky back street boozier with character and uniqueness where the 'gumnor' wears a waistcoat and tie every day.'

week, A wonderful well-kept *Proper Job* worth a top mark, its sister *Tribute* and an ale from our distant past, *Old Speckled Hen*.

It's crowded because the Irish are back in town and the regulars welcome them with open arms. The pub was pleasantly bullish and busy with, mainly, older men's voices and there was the lilt of Irish laughter. Three young

staff pile in behind the bar especially recruited for the weekend.

It's an L shaped bar with racing memorabilia plastered all over the walls and a model of Elvis adorns the fireplace opposite the bar. There are: sketches of horses; photos of jockeys; photos of regulars; ironic notices saying, 'soft drinks sold here' and 'serious' ones saying, 'that no bad language will be tolerated here'. There are old cartoons from of the 30's of women wearing little and men in various attire and with 'double entendre' interchanges between them. There's a comment under a picture of the Beatles saying, 'I banned them from here', Royal photographs, gold cups and trophy shields are everywhere. It's warm and welcoming.

A quirky back street boozier with character and uniqueness where the 'gumnor' wears a waistcoat and tie every day. The chatter is friendly and although the odd piece of vernacular is heard emphasising a point of view or embellishing a joke but unheard by the 'deaf' publican it is a thoroughly pleasant place to take a pint.

Bob Jeffrey



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DODGY TICKER?

THE CONTINUING TALES OF A BEER COLLECTOR

Our tick box hero gets nostalgic over the 30th anniversary of his box ticking exploits, enough to make an accountant smile!

It's a 30 year anniversary this year! I started writing down the beers I drink while on a half-term holiday in Devon thirty years ago. The first entry in the first beer book is dated 24th October 1993 (I drank *Ushers Best*), so this Autumn sees the 30th birthday of the beer list.

Here's how it all started...

It's a long time ago, so I can't quite remember the exact reason why I started, but I've continued to this day and have now amassed a 'collection' of over 11,000 draught beers from over 2,000 different breweries. "Well done you!" may be your response, or possibly, "So what?" or maybe even, "What a waste of time!" I certainly don't consider it a waste of time. I have thoroughly enjoyed recording my beer drinking over all those years and intend to do so for many more to come. (*That's good to hear!* - Ed.)

My intention in writing these articles is to share with Tippler readers the thoughts of someone who has a slightly 'different' approach to beer drinking, so that those of us who are a little more obsessive about beer are perhaps understood a bit better – and not just dismissed as 'mad tickers'. I am here as a champion for collectors everywhere, but don't generally try to convert others to my way of doing things: I write beers down, most people don't and that's just fine.



However, on the 30th anniversary of the start of my beer list, I thought I would try and explain just what it is that makes me carry on collecting and recording. So, here are the top ten reasons why I think it's good to record what you drink.

Challenge: Being a beer collector is like playing a game and just like any decent game, it presents me with a challenge. The challenge is a simple one: how do I add to the collection? It provides a real focus of interest for my beer drinking and dominates my decisions about where and what to drink. I regularly choose pubs based on their ability to provide new brews, carefully research places to drink when visiting new locations and actively search out festivals, which will extend the collection.

Knowledge: I love talking about beer and the collection provides a ready-made source of information about beers and breweries, which I can access easily wherever and whenever I want, just so long as I have internet access. Moreover, just putting the data into my spreadsheet and frequently interrogating it, means I have a much higher chance of remembering the details it contains. I guess there are plenty of drinkers who are perfectly happy to talk about beer with little knowledge, especially after a couple of pints, but I prefer beer of course – I am a WWT member and have a spreadsheet to keep track

to have at least some relevant knowledge at my fingertips.

Numbers: I have always been interested in numbers and lists and the beer collection satisfies a part of my mind which craves order and organisation. It's not just apparent with



of the bird species I spot on visits to Slimbridge and also have a collection of Scrabble scores going back a great many years! If, like me, you keep lists and records of obscure things, then maybe beer collecting is for you.

Memory: As I get older I find it increasingly hard to remember the beers I have drunk. That may not seem all that important, but I like to know if a beer is new to me or not and when or where I might have tasted it before. I also frequently get people asking me things like, 'Pete, have you tried North Pier's Dreamcatcher before?' The only way to answer a question like that at my age is to do a quick search of the spreadsheet.

Variety: The phrase 'variety is the spice of life' comes to mind here. I would be bored rigid if I drank the same beer day in day out, no matter how good that beer was. I need variety and the collection forces me to be adventurous, to always try the untried, take a chance with the unknown. It sometimes ends in failure, of course – a beer that sadly disappoints – but I'm more than happy to take that risk. It has also meant that my palate has gradually changed through tasting so many different beers, so that I am perfectly happy

DODGY TICKER?

THE CONTINUING TALES OF A BEER COLLECTOR

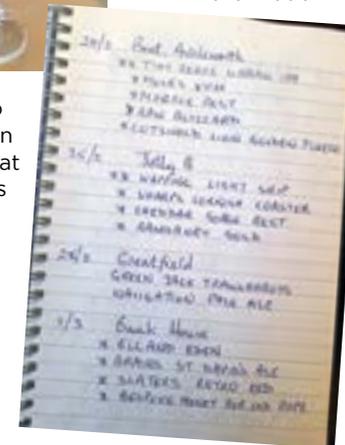
to drink pretty much whatever the brewers' latest creations might be.

Focus: Are you someone who dithers over which beer to drink? Not me! The collection gives a clear focus to any beer drinking decision. I only need a quick glance across the handpumps or a flick through the festival beer list and my priorities are always clear: new breweries first, then new beers from familiar breweries.

Ease: When I started writing down beers, the only choice I had was to use good old-fashioned pen and paper. That might still be your method of choice, but in the modern high-tech world, where

just about everyone has a powerful mini-computer in their pocket, it has never been easier to record your beer drinking. You may choose a ready-made app such as *Untappd*, a home-made spreadsheet like mine, a database or just an electronic notebook, but it just takes seconds for your new beer to be etched into your collection forever.

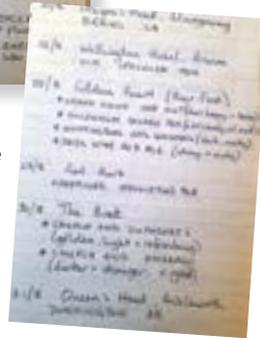
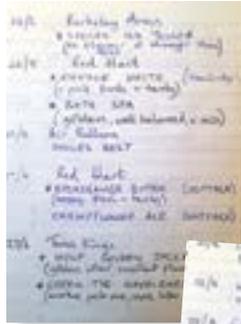
Reward: We all like the feeling that comes from achieving some goal or other. When I was young, I liked getting certificates to show these achievements – I've still got my BAGA 4 certificate in a drawer somewhere for managing the most basic of gymnastic moves when I was at Primary School in Southampton. Nowadays, I don't need certificates, it's reward enough to know that another milestone has been achieved. It may be the overall beer or brewery total reaching a new landmark or another brewery getting to 50 or 100 beers tasted or simply at last managing to find a beer from that newly opened brewery. Without keeping a list, I would never know when these achievements have been reached.



Limitless: Your collection will never come to an end! There will always be new breweries starting up, new beers brewed by your favourite breweries and even completely new beer styles appearing, so you can be happy that beer collecting will stay with you for just as long as you want.

Fun: I wouldn't collect beers if it didn't provide me with great enjoyment. It is truly exciting when I walk into a pub and find a pump-clip from an unknown brewery staring at me from the bar. Finding two or three such pump-clips on a visit to an unfamiliar area is the ultimate in beer collecting satisfaction!

The images that accompany this article show pages from my beer books. You will see that the style of my recording has changed over the years. Originally, I also kept a record of



PODGY TICKER?

THE CONTINUING TALES OF A BEER COLLECTOR

the drink chosen by my wife on our pub visits and made brief tasting notes for all new beers. It gradually evolved over the years and became more streamlined. These days I rarely ever record any tasting notes or scores for beers and I use a one and two star system for new brews and new breweries.

I hope that has given you at least a glimpse into the world of beer collecting. It doesn't have to take over your life and I certainly don't take it very seriously, but it provides me with all of the above and more, so if you have been inspired to give it a go, all you have to do is to start recording in whatever way takes your fancy. Good collecting!

Pete Searle



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



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