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Real Ale

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Autumn 2024

Inside:

A Successful Day of Ale and Steam

Cask Chronicles with Alex Jordan



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

Oktoberfest



**BEER | MUSIK | FOOD
CINEMA | DANCE**

A WEEKEND OF SCHNITZ UND GIGGLES



**SEPTEMBER 27-29
STROUD BREWERY BIERKELLER**

SEP 27 BASS UND BIER!

SEP 29 SUNDAY STYLIN' MIT WILL MENDOZA

SEP 29 PRESENTS: RUN LOLA RUN



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SCANNEN**



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For
Real Ale

the tippler

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

In this issue:

Editorial and Letters page 4

The Hunter 8

News from North Cotswolds 10

Chuffed! Steam & Ale Festival 12

Pintsy - We Want Beer! 14

News from Cheltenham 16

Postlip CBF Success 18

Footloose with the Pub Runner 22

News from Dursley 24

Prize Crossword 29

The Tegestologist 30

Throttle Club 32

Uley Brewery Wordsearch 35

Pub & Brewery News 36

Tall Tales from the Cider Shed 42

The Pub Whisperer 44

Stroud Brewery Caption Comp. 47

Deaf Boy Wanderin' John 48

Cider & Perry Man 50

Cask Chronicles 52

Stonewalling - Hadrian's Ales 54

Wetherspoon 'Name that Pub' 57

Dodgy Ticker: Lager?! 58

Meetings & Branch Contacts 64

Our Advertising Supporters 66

Got something to say?



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

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

NEW! CONTRIBUTION DEADLINES

For the next two issues, the deadlines will now be the
FIRST Friday in November 2024 and February 2025



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!



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

Speaking of competitions, we now have four regulars to choose from all with great prizes, so get the entries sent in and see if you're a lucky winner. All our regular features are here, along with some new contributors, letter writers and some that are a bit of a divergence from just beer and cider, but are still part of the fabric of this great county of ours.

Gloucestershire's pubs, clubs, breweries and charities had, despite the changeable and sometimes unseasonal weather, have a had a very successful summer with plenty of punters filling the events and sampling the wonderful beers, ales, ciders and perries from not only Gloucestershire, but also the rest of the country. If there are any autumn events around we should all do our best to get out there and support them.

Don't forget to visit your local pubs, clubs and taprooms and give the brilliant breweries and hostleries all the support we can.

Cheers!

Chris Leibbrandt

Editorial...

THE NOTTINGHAM ARMS
Ecclebury

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Good beer, good cheer & good company

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pouring today
on Facebook

Letters to the Editor...

In the 'Letters' page of the spring issue Keith Johnson asked the whereabouts of the pub that is the subject of the postcard, pictured right. The only known aspect of the inn was its name, rather unhelpfully a Red Lion Hotel. Keith wondered whether or not any of our eagle-readers would be able to pinpoint its location.

I recently got this email from Andy Barton in Dursley:

Hi Chris,

I found it, it's the old Red Lion Hotel in Church Hill, Stalbridge, Dorset, not too far from Yeovil, near the border with Somerset. I've attached a few old pictures of it.

There is some historical information about it here:

<https://www.stalbridgearchive.co.uk/phil-knott-red-lion.html>

It's no longer a pub unfortunately, but it still stands as seen in this Google Maps view:

https://www.google.co.uk/maps/@50.9616902,-2.3793958,3a,75y,79.87h,85.02t/data=!3m6!1e1!3m4!1sYW_CIWihkxSvfqyTgkE_oA!2e0!7i16384!8i8192?coh=205409&entry=ttu

At least it's remembered by the crest above the entrance to "Red Lion Court":

https://www.google.co.uk/maps/@50.961475,-2.3791175,3a,73.8y,49.6h,93.85t/data=!3m6!1e1!3m4!1sc7KVeltwCkVQSi_v8cbNIQ!2e0!7i16384!8i8192?coh=205409&entry=ttu

Letters to the Editor...

FLAONG
DOWN, YOU TIPPLER
SCOUNDRELS AND OUT
WITH THE QUILLS!



Andy Barton



THE NOTTINGHAM ARMS
Tewkesbury

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Good beer, good cheer & good company

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Letters to the Editor...

Hello Chris,

Cask Chronicles in the Summer 2024 Tippler (an excellent magazine, by the way) presented a very rosy picture of beer in Britain and while I agree that there is much to be optimistic about there are some negatives too.

Perhaps most worrying is that beer consumption in Britain has apparently fallen in recent times to its lowest level since 1950. While many small breweries have been founded we have equally seen the demise of quite a number of these, sometimes after trading for some time, along with more longstanding producers ceasing or existing in name only. Given the finite size of the beer market (be it static, growing or diminishing) I have long wondered if having so many breweries chasing a share of it is actually counter-productive to their profitability. Additionally, constant pub closures also limit potential sales and even where ales are sold they are sometimes the 'mass market' offerings rather than anything remotely local or unusual. The 'Fresh Ales' now appearing are also a threat to genuine hand pump beers and while micro pubs provide welcome additional sales outlets, by their nature their volumes are restricted.

Yes, there is much to be enjoyed and celebrated on the real ale scene but the threats to it should never be underestimated. We have been there before!

Martin Broadribb

Chris replies:

Hello Martin and thanks for the email. It's an interesting subject isn't it? It's almost counter-intuitive. I have worked in marketing both domestically and internationally and noticed an interesting phenomenon. Innovators or small producers either keep what they have small and manageable and have a good life; working in a company that is only just smaller than a cottage industry or

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

SAMMY PEPYS SAYS



they sell their 'baby' out to a big brand and start something else. Their 'baby' is then subsumed into a general melange of homogenous stuff that is in many cases indistinguishable from all the other brands in the big company's portfolio. Does the profitability angle always come first or is it about having a lifestyle, being an artisan and pleasing your customers?

For all that, 'Fresh ales' (is that fancy keg?) beer and micro-pubs along with brewery tap rooms and refurbished pubs are all adding to the intersting pub scene in the county.

I had hoped that after COVID there would be a general reset of values, we all went and clapped the small guys who do essential jobs, maybe they are important? Money talks, however, and they were quickly forgotten in favour of bankers, stock market gamblers and big money. It's a great shame as very often I ask myself, how much is enough? No investments, no savings, no inheritance, and I don't need them because I've got enough to see some bands, drink beer with mates and make enough of a living to pay bills, AND live in a great part of the country.

Great T-Shirt!

Here's a photo of our first Tee-Shirt competition winner, Dennis Corcoran, raising a glass at the Brewhouse and Kitchen, Gloucester..

Cheers Dennis!



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Tewkesbury

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Good beer, good cheer & good company

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THE HUNTER'S COLUMN



This edition our intrepid hero heads north from the Tudor town of Tewkesbury to Ludlow, another ancient town on the banks of two rivers. The account of his peregrinations is a Tale of two towns...

Tewkesbury and Ludlow are two, 'Olde English' towns that both grew up next to the confluence of rivers. Ludlow has the Corve and the Teme, whilst Tewkesbury battles with the 'Mighty Severn', the country's longest river - unless you believe, as some do, that Seven Springs is the source of the Thames and not the officially recognised Thames Head - and Shakespeare's Avon; not to mention the Swilgate. Now that I have mentioned the Swilgate, I will further mention that it is a modest and discreet river that never quite achieves the exposure that it deserves. When the question is asked, "Which is the only river to flow north in the UK?" the standard pub quiz answer is the Trent; the Swilgate doesn't get a mention. If you do get asked that question in a pub, for the sake of the poor, neglected Swilgate, leap up and down and wave your knickers (or any other negotiable garment of underwear) in the air. (*You could also do the same with the river Darent, where I come from - Ed.*) After you've been thrown out you could try explaining yourself but, please don't mention CAMRA. In your defence, you could mention St Cecelia or even Jonathan King... but maybe not Jonathan King. You could also politely point out, if anyone have stopped to listen, that the self-effacing Swilgate is, to quote an Environment Agency Fisheries Officer, no less, "... one of the most important watercourses... for the European eel population." Impress them with your knowledge, although I doubt if it will get you back into the pub. I found it a bit hard to believe too. After arriving in Tewkesbury from Cheltenham, our solitary friend merges with the Avon, near to the site of the Battle of Tewkesbury 1471, where it made a miserable contribution to the quagmire conditions that the battle was fought in - Mudgate!

The plus side is that when the world starts dealing with the forthcoming water crisis and water becomes the new oil, Tewkesbury will be the place

to be. It will become the H₂O capital of North Gloucestershire; the Saudi Arabia of the South West, but probably without going as far as publicly beheading people and stoning miscreant locals to death. Tewkesbury Borough Council, quite rightly, stopped paying for that kind of thing on the rates centuries ago, when it was decided there was more fun to be had in the flourishing ale houses and brew pubs of the quayside town. Saudi Arabia, of course, is not known for its ale houses and brew pubs, which could be half the problem.

John (later Sir John or 'Surgeon' to his medical mates and 'Sturgeon' to his fishermen friends) Betjeman wrote fondly of Ludlow. "Probably the loveliest town in England", said he, hedging his bets, just like the Heineken ads. A.E Housman, a Shropshire Lad if never there was one (he was born in Worcestershire), loved Ludlow too, and ale.

"The lads in their hundreds to Ludlow come in for the fair

The lads for the girls and the lads for the liquor are there"

These days the girls are also there for the liquor and some of the lads for the lads too, but that's another story. On a slight tangent but a similar note, the May edition of What's Brewing, the CAMRA monthly newspaper, quotes "artist and beer writer Lily Waite", who has a new initiative to raise awareness and money for an LGBTQ+ (blimey, what's the plus??) campaign called The Queer Brewing Project. Lily proclaimed as follows, "And as the old saying goes - we're here, we're queer and we drink good beer." I have nothing against anybody or good beer but 'old saying'? Well, I've never heard it before, but maybe I'm just in the wrong branch. Incidentally, the first of their beers is described as having a "fruity tartness." Each to his own, as the Saudi Arabians

never say. They are big Stones and Bob Dylan fans down in sandy Saudi apparently and their favourite Dylan number? Everybody Must Get Stoned.

On our recent branch trip to Ludlow Spring Fair, there were around 170 cask ales available in a cavernous marquee, where the Overall Champion of SIBA (Society of Independent Brewers Association – err, no possessive apostrophe) Wales & West Competition was St Anne's Brewery's Iron And Fire 7.5%.

Ludlow and Tewkesbury both share an interest in micropubs too. The first to open in Ludlow was Artisan Ales about five years ago. It is a room above an outdoor and had one cask on when I visited, Swan Gold. The landlord said that there is about one year to go on his lease and when I asked him what his future plans involved he said, "A lot of fishing." Blood Bay, which is more to do with horses than Long John Silver, is an outstanding reproduction of a Victorian brew pub, with a Georgian panelled upper floor. They pull their own Swan Walters & Son beers using "Lignum vitae beer engines from the late 1800s", if that helps. Ludlow also has The Dog Hangs Well, which is in Corve Street and easy to miss, as the frontage is that of a Georgian terraced house. I passed it several times before noticing an A4 piece of paper in the front window, just as someone was walking in with their shopping. When I asked if this was the micropub, I was pulled up straight away and told that it was not a micropub but a parlour pub - even more obscure, even more interesting, I thought. We had to return before it opened but its write up on CAMRA's whatpub.com is a fascinating read. Here is an extract; "Not immediately obvious that a pub is there, look for the No. 14 door and the subtle lamp above, if the lamp is lit then the pub is open. A small corridor leads you into the lobby area which connects the two main rooms. At the back of the building is the kitchen bar with a solid oak counter set on the remains of an old shed roof! The room is adorned with collected pub artefacts, though

the usual impression of the room one is left with is the buzz of traditional pub conversation. The front room of the house is the parlour, with decor straight out of a Conan Doyle novel." The opening hours are very restricted,



unlike The Cross House Tavern, Tewkesbury's first micro (below). Compared to others of its ilk, it is 'Open All Hours'. A bit of a jewel in the crown in the town,

it subtly manages to be the newest drinking venue, whilst giving every appearance of being the oldest. Situated right on the cross at the end of the High Street, in one of Tewkesbury's finest, 16th century, listed buildings, it is hard to believe that it was recently a mobile phone shop. Completely stripped out and tastefully renovated, including brand new Minton tiles commissioned to match existing tiles, wooden settles, barrel tables and a newly discovered Victorian oven range; a good selection of local ales, normally six, are served direct from the cask into Victorian 10 sided, glass mugs. It looks as though it has been there for ever. Sir John and the Shropshire Lads will be sorry they missed it.

The Hunter





News from NORTH COTSWOLDS



Monthly Pub Walks

Held outside the Summer festival months. We have now completed 113 walks around our pubs in the North Cotswold area.

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

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

Dogs welcome on leads. Non CAMRA members welcome. Walks are subject to weather and walker numbers.

Dates and locations will be published and circulated after the summer.

Day Away

In planning stage. A Saturday by public transport. Visiting GBG Pubs in a local town or City: Planned for Sat 12th October to Oxford. See website for more information.

FaceBook

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

Cycling Events

The programme includes 3 events in 2024. Spring Summer and Autumn. Dates to be announced. 20 mile events around GBG Pubs in N Cots area. Usually visit 5 pubs on route at a steady pace.

The Summer run was held on the 18th August from Broadway to Evesham and return.

The Autumn run will be in October from Bourton on the Water to Stow and Oddington area. See the website for details.

BEER FESTIVALS 2024

**17th Moreton C.C. Beer Festival
13th - 14th September**

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

17th BEER & CIDER FESTIVAL

**at Moreton in Marsh
Cricket Club**

Fri 13th & Sat 14th SEPTEMBER

11:00 to 11:00 - Friday & Saturday

50 Beers, 20 Ciders and Perries
Hot & Cold Food with Soft Drinks
Live Music

CAMPING& PARKING

See website for details

Friday 11:00 to 11:00 - Entry £3

Saturday 11:00 to 11:00 - Entry £3

CAMRA members receive a beer token allowance



CHUFFED!



22nd Annual Ale & Steam Festival

Blessed with mostly fine weather the increasingly popular Ale and Steam Weekend held this year on 14th to 16th June, was a great success.

The festival is held in collaboration with the Gloucestershire & Warwickshire Steam Railway and is held at Winchcombe and Toddington stations, with heritage steam and diesel trains transporting festival goers between the two stations.

The Toddington bar had additional beer from last year with 20 beers and three reserves plus five ciders. Winchcombe Station had two additional making 28 beers plus three reserves and seven ciders. The beer theme was Derbyshire and South Yorkshire breweries along with a selection of local ales. Most of the beer, including three of the six reserves, and all of the ciders sold out. The bars at both stations were very busy on Saturday afternoon. The first beer to run out, so our festival winner, was at Winchcombe at 2.20pm. That was *Brother Rabbit* a 4% golden ale from Thornbridge at Bakewell. The first to go at Toddington at 3pm was *Nutty Ambassador* a lovely 6% milk stout from Little Critters in Sheffield. Cider of the

Festival was Priors Tipple *Elderflower Infusion* a 6.5% medium sweet cider from Stanway. The runner up was *Reborn* a 5% medium cider from Cider by Barnes from Gloucestershire.

By Sunday morning, several beers and some cider remained for customers at both stations; fortunately, it was a much quieter day so there was sufficient to keep the customers happy until the last train at 5pm. Most people retained their festival glasses sponsored by *The Bell* at Moreton and *The Mousetrap Inn* at Bourton on the Water. Many thanks to them and *The Crown and Trumpet* at Broadway who sponsored the grey staff polo shirts and token cards.

Special thanks must go to Alan Stenton for his help with getting the business plan together, Roger Merrett for his help with the stunning brewery and beer selections and to cider coordinator, James Fry, for his selection of 'quality' local ciders. Martyn Jackson, for compiling the festival beer and cider lists, Chris Knight for printing the cask labels and assistance with the floor protection at Winchcombe, Roger Price for setting up the cooling fans and Dick and Dawn Harrison for the token and glass sales and dealing with the finance. At Toddington, the

team of Rob James as bar manager and Peter Rowe for the token and glass sales and signage and, of course, our army of volunteer helpers without whom the event could not take place. Thanks, must also go to Rob Brady and The Good Beer Co., who provided the national range of beer plus the racking and Mudway workmen for providing the marquees, tables and chairs. These companies support all our festivals which is very much appreciated.

The railway were delighted, even chuffed with the extra rail travellers and reported heavy train travel over the weekend. Over 1,000 people attended the festival, a new record exceeding our budgeted 900. More good news as our

membership secretary, Garry Hayward, recruited two new members for CAMRA. Most of all, many thanks to our customers who turned up to drink us dry, I do hope we will all be able to return next year for the 23rd Ale and Steam Festival, provisionally the same weekend in June 2025. Put the date on next year's planner, in the diary and in the phone.

We all look forward to seeing you at our other Festival, the 17th Moreton Festival on 13th and 14th September 2024 at the Cricket Club.

Cheers!

Alan McLellan
Ale and Steam Festival Director



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The ART of Beer

Beer. According to Homer Simpson, the cause of and solution to all of life's problems. Which got me thinking about a world **WITHOUT beer.**

We had a partial glimpse of it a few years ago during Lockdown when for months on end pub life disappeared and we generally had to be content with the bottled stuff.

Breweries and pubs were serving takeaways but the social bit was obviously missing. Beer without a chat and a laugh? You wouldn't have fish without chips would you? OK, maybe you would. Once.

So no beer, no social life? Dodgy territory, that, and thankfully I don't yet know the answer. Moving on....

We want beer!

At least alcohol has never been banned in England, as happened during Prohibition in America in the 1920/30s. Unsurprisingly it was

called The Great Depression. Jobs and money were scarce and morale low, but amazingly there was one thing that drove people out onto the streets of New York City – a lack of beer.

On May 14, 1932, the City Mayor led a march which became known as the 'We Want Beer!' parade through the streets of New York.

Apparently over 100,000 people turned out, including a certain Congressman by the name of Emanuel Celler, who said that you'd be able to pick him out in the crowd by the two signs he'd be holding: '*Never Say Dry*' and '*Open the Spigots and Drown the Bigots*'. Clearly keen on a drop or two, he made it to 92, so it didn't seem to do him any harm.

The marketeers went into overdrive to get the message across, with posters, banners and





pin badges to advertise the cause. Those were the days, Facebook? X? Back then social media meant reading the papers together.

Dry in the desert

A little more recently, at the World Cup in Qatar last year to be precise, you may remember that beer was in short supply - banned at games and only available at eye watering prices in fan zones after the games. Not surprisingly, the Columbians chant of 'We Want Beer' during their opening game against Qatar went viral. (Keen on their stimulants, that lot.) No beer? That's just not cricket.

An odd fact

Did you know that beer was banned in Iceland (no, not the supermarket) between 1915 and 1989? You could buy wine and spirits, but no chance of a beer. Apparently a political move - Iceland was trying to become independent of Denmark and beer drinking was seen as a very Danish habit. Independence was achieved in 1944 but they still had to wait another 45 years to see the beer light, specifically on March 1st 1989 - now known as B-Day.

According to The Reykjavik Grapevine, 'This was the day Icelanders took the step to try to become civilized.' Now they celebrate being civilized every year on their B-Day.

And finally..

My latest work, 'Beer is proof God loves us', is now appearing on a wall somewhere in GL20. (With apologies to Benjamin Franklin, Michaelangelo and Banksy (who's he?) but not necessarily in that order).

Pinty





Campaign
for
Real Ale

NEWS FROM CHELTENHAM



Ian Scott (1965 – 2024) RIP

It is with great sadness that we must report the passing of former Cheltenham Branch committee member, Ian Scott.

Prior to falling ill last year Ian was an active member of the Cheltenham branch committee, and the sub-branch committee before that. He held many roles over the years including secretary and newsletter editor. He was also involved in the organisation of both the recent Cotswold Beer Festivals and the Cheltenham Real Ale Festivals.

Originating from Plymouth he was a huge Plymouth Argyle fan and a keen competitive sailor, frequently competing in yacht races.

The funeral service took place at Cheltenham Crematorium Oak Chapel and was followed by a wake at the Sandford Park Alehouse.

Ian will be missed by all in Cheltenham CAMRA, and in all the CAMRA branches where Ian was regularly seen as a festival volunteer. Ian's sense of humour and

cheerfulness, particularly during long and tiring beer festival shifts, gave everyone a lift.

We send our condolences to his family. Rest in Peace Ian.



Photograph by kind permission of Gilbert Turner

WE NEED YOUR HELP



chris@thetippler.co.uk

WE NEED NEWS!

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

Similarly, breweries are coming and going, starting up, being bought out, merging with others, and we want to know all about them. It only takes a few lines to the editor and he'll do the rest!



Cheltenham Motor Club is South West 'Club of the Year'

Once again, the Cheltenham Motor Club has been awarded Regional Club of the Year for the South West. This extends a run of many years for the three-time CAMRA National Club of the Year.

"This is great news for Cheltenham," said Branch Chair, Rob Coldwell. "To some people this may seem like 'Groundhog Day', an automatic repeat win for the club. But we shouldn't forget that to win the Regional Award (repeatedly) takes hard work. It means delivering a consistent high-quality beer range, and friendly service, against the best clubs in the South West.


"Naturally, this follows on from winning the Branch Award, and that is not a given. We keep a close eye on the many clubs within Cheltenham Branch, checking beer quality and the wider club environment.

"Club Steward, Neil Way and his team,

ensure that the club showcases the best examples of real ale, modern craft keg, cider, perry and continental beers. The Motor Club continues to be a destination venue for beer lovers visiting Cheltenham."

Presentation of the Regional Award will take place in September, on a date to be announced. All CAMRA members are welcome to attend the presentation and celebration.

The Club will now progress to the National Finals. Congratulations from everyone at Cheltenham CAMRA on continuing to win against stiff competition.



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

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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Open 7 nights a week, all day Saturday, new members welcome.

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Changes Help Boost the 46th Cotswold Beer Festival



The 46th Cotswold Beer Festival proved to be a great success, despite some rain on the Saturday. Attendance figures were up (with nearly 2,000 tickets sold) with Friday and Saturday virtually sold out.

The festival saw a full entertainment line-up throughout the weekend, starting with the Thursday 'Trade Night' that also included judging of the 'Gloucestershire Beer of the Year' competition.

On the sales front the news was very good. During the weekend 21 ciders and perries, and 113 firkins of beer (about 7,900 pints) were on offer. By the close on Sunday, over 95% had been sold. The first beer to sell out, and therefore the 'People's Beer of the Festival', was DEYA's 'It's Another App' (a 3.9% vegan Session Pale Ale). It sold out by 19:30 - just an hour and a half after the Friday session of the festival opened!

Outdoor space was increased this year, and the location of the food trucks helped to spread out the visitors. Special thanks to the vendors Sibling Distillery for their excellent Gin

and Prosecco, Cotswold Pizza Co., Simpsons Fish & Chips, and The Dogs for their smash burgers and hot dogs. Everyone was catered for with gluten free, vegan and vegetarian options available.

Entertainment was provided throughout the weekend, both in the barn and around the Postlip site. 'The Everglow' rocked the barn on Friday night, and the ever popular Tewkesbury Town Band, and Double Bass Dan kept the barn lively on Saturday. Around the festival site entertainment was provided by high-energy Rio-inspired drumming 'Ola Samba', and, for traditionalists, the Tattered Court Morris Dancers. Family fun was provided by Daryl Carrington's magic and clown act, plus face painters and wandering entertainers.

Festival buses from Cheltenham to the festival, and ample camping on site, helped

ease congestion. Thanks 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, from donated token aid, £1,200 was raised for two charities, LINC Cheltenham and the Gloucestershire Society.

A great video of the festival can be viewed at:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JJ9pVQWQQ-U>

The dates for your diary, for the 47th Cotswold Beer Festival, are:
Friday 18th to Sunday 20th July 2025.

Gloucestershire Beer of the Year 2024

The 'Gloucestershire Beer of the Year' contest was successful relaunched at last year's Cotswold Beer Festival Trade Night. This year 30 beers, from 15 of the county's finest brewers, were entered into competition. For the winners it would be a great opportunity to hold bragging rights for the rest of the year.

A panel of 10, consisting of trained CAMRA judges, tasting panel members and respected professionals from the county's beer trade, was chaired by Leigh Norwood. of Favourite Beers.

It is crucial that the brewers have confidence in the results. Therefore, the competition followed the stringent CAMRA style guide and scoring system, as used in the national CAMRA final competitions. All beers, through both rounds of judging, were tasted blind. Judges only discovered the identity of the beers after the competition finished.

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 top scoring beers from the beer style judges went forward to the final round:

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

GLoucestershire Beer of the Year - Champion Beers

GOLD	DEYA	It's Another App	3.9% Session Pale Ale
SILVER	Inferno	Prometheus	5.8% British IPA
BRONZE	Clavell & Hind	Blunderbuss	4.2% Session Golden Ale

The Gold Award will be presented to DEYA in October. The Silver Award will be presented to Clavell & Hind, at their Taproom, on August 24th at 1pm. The Bronze Award will be presented to Inferno at their popup Bar, Tewkesbury, on September 28th at 1pm.

Thanks go to the 10 judges for their due diligence, and the difficult task of picking winning beers from a very fine selection of Gloucestershire's best. Thanks also to Steve Williams, for running the competition.

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-STYLES>



Tewkesbury Town Band hits 50 years old – and plans to celebrate with beer

Tewkesbury Town Band are celebrating their 50th Anniversary in October this year and have approached local brewers The Tewkesbury Brewing Company to brew a special beer to mark the occasion.

Daryll Tanner, owner of Tewkesbury Brewing, said: 'We're delighted to help celebrate the Town Band's birthday with a Golden Ale brewed to a new recipe specifically for the event. Plans are well advanced, with a Brew Day set for 10th September followed by a Release Date of 10th October. We should have up to sixteen firkins available which will be on sale at pubs around the town.'

Well known for their involvement in the Tewkesbury Winter Ales Festival ('The Dambusters' is always a highlight) we're looking forward to celebrating a town institution with a pint of their own ale. Sounds like this will be one symphony which will be finished pretty quickly...



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Better late than never

At the Tewkesbury Winter Ales Festival 2020, the awards for both Best Cider (Dabinett) and Best Perry (Blakeney Red) went to James McCrindle of McCrindles Cider, then known as the Craft Cider Company.

But before we were able to get him his certificates, Covid and Lockdown arrived and then somehow those certificates got lost in the system.

However, they did magically resurface and we are therefore pleased to announce that on Friday 12th July 2024 (some four years later!) James at long last received his well deserved certificates - presented to him at Jolter Press in the Forest of Dean by Martin Raven, Tewkesbury CAMRA's Cider Rep. You might say he was somewhat pleased!

Well done James . . . and thanks for your patience.



James McCrindle (left) and Martin Raven (right)



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Footloose with the

PUB RUNNER

The Fountain Five Mile, Parkend. (8km)

In a new occasional series, 'Pub Runner', Mike Hall, Landlord of The Pelican in Gloucester takes on some of the hills and dales of the magnificent local countryside...

The Fountain Five, an off-road five mile smorgasbord of fire-tracks, stream crossings, mudslides, clay sprints and sharp climbs. It was incredible!

Some 71 mad men and women met at The Fountain Inn at Parkend near Lydney, taking the trail up, up and out into the forest via the idyllic railway station bridge and off into the wilderness to the start. It had rained the day before so the ground was quite lively and spuggy (a new word to me - Ed.) and treacherous in places. The pre-race briefing was long but engaging, everyone was alert to the dangers

these woods possessed, but it helped that it was laid out to us in a charismatic way with a warm Scottish accent. My own fear of dogs made the whole CaniCross (cross country running with a dog) element concerning. They assured us that we would catch some of the six-leggers on the way, but I was sceptical considering their 15 minute head start. The announcement that five families of wild boar had been sighted during set up made me appreciate the presence of dogs, hopefully

scattering any warhogs and enhance my own chances of survival.

I'd hitched a lift with Terry, my barber, this time and I spent so long chatting to him on the line that the start actually caught me by surprise. I realised I was a bit too far back, so

I charged down the first slope like a man who had no idea what was to come. The front of the race was steady, they knew that this was a test of endurance and too much pace at the start was going to find you out later. We quickly left the width of the fire track and turned onto the single track trail run up through the trees and roots. This was exhilarating, skipping over the

forest debris and chasing down the back of the heads ahead. It soon thinned out and the real protagonists showed their form. Guys from Forest of Dean AC, Western Tempo and Tewkesbury were notable talents, this wasn't their first rodeo, so trying to keep up with them was over-ambitious. Monmouth were also well represented as well as plenty of runners who were unattached to particular clubs.

The rolling countryside was heavy going and the downhills were scarcely long enough



to recover from all the steep but short inclines. We dropped back down onto the fire track and travelled our way to the next section. The lead group are pulling well away from me now, but I'm grappling with some well paced men in front and behind. The latter takes me on the climbs, but I catch him on the downhill and we fight for most of the race. Ahead, he looks strong, so keeping with him is enough incentive for me and we plough through the mud in combined isolation. Here we meet the Oakenhill, which I'd seen on the map to be the main climb. It wasn't as fragmented as most of the climbing so far, so it was a good chance to grind up and maybe this was the last major effort of the day (or perhaps not). I pushed on well from here, but it became very wet with clay-like soil and picking a good line through the dryer bits was essential. Surprisingly it was the downhills in the mud that really made this race tricky, you were flying with no means to slow down so trusting your feet was important. One canicross runner had fallen here and was calling for help, the runner in front informed the nearest marshal; she quickly received help and luckily, she was fine and would finish shortly after us. By now, the fatigue was overwhelming, more rise and falls and then one final incline at the end which was really short, but still murderous. My form went completely and I leaned into the line, my body broken. Thankfully there were plenty of similarly exhausted bodies at the finish, but we all clapped and cheered the bravery of all

who followed, knowing we'd all been through something tough and we'd come out tougher for it. Finally, we could head down to the pub for our free pint. Yippee!

I've always had a huge passion for pubs and good ale, so I was delighted to find that The Fountain Inn, Parkend was delightful. The beer offering was Bespoke or Wye Valley so Terry and I had one of each then sought out the on-site burger van for sustenance. The beer was in perfect condition and the pub was welcoming and immaculate. Spirits were high among everyone and it's was lovely to put some faces to the heads I'd been chasing. I grabbed a second HPA and the prize giving began. Terry was the fastest Septuagenarian which was usual for him, but it meant free biscuits for me so it was win/win. Some confusion over who won the canicross, several runners went the wrong way so nobody felt they'd crossed the line first, plenty of human chivalry, the canines keeping their opinions largely to themselves. Monmouth took the team prize and Western Tempo won the race overall. Everyone else was happy regardless. We'd achieved something magnificent in the magical Forest of Dean! Chapeau to all who entered. Onto the next!

This race was organized by the Forest of Dean Athletics Club (fodac.org.uk).

Mike Hall
Landlord, The Pelican, Gloucester





Campaign
for
Real Ale

News from DURSLEY



It is with great sadness that I must report the passing of a stalwart CAMRA member in our sub branch, David (Dave) Hedges.



Dave Hedges

I first met Dave in 1995 when I first moved to Wotton-under-Edge and my local hostelry was the Falcon Hotel.

I was sitting in the pub talking to Martin, the Landlord at the time, bemoaning that there seemed to be no other CAMRA members in the town, when the very large beard in the corner put me right by saying that there were at least two of us, him being the other. It was an interesting introduction that led to a friendship that endured until his untimely death in June.

Together we travelled around pubs with other members doing surveys for the Pub of the Year contests, and with Dave doing the driving we were all concerned because a little matter of driving a car never interfered with his drinking!

Dave was responsible for creating and maintaining our sub-branch website, and he created an online 'green card' system for us when Tewkesbury went independent and we lost Mike Bristowe's services collating green cards for the Gloucestershire branch. We still use the system today as it gives any of our members the chance to input to the surveys, and hence to the GBG entries and possibly to the POTY selection.

As well as enjoying his beer, Dave also enjoyed local cider, and was particularly attracted to Wilkins Cider, whose local agent happened to live just down the road from Dave. A good cooperative arrangement as Wilkins cider started to appear in a number of our local pubs, much to the delight of real cider drinkers.

As well as maintaining our website, he took over responsibility for the Gloucestershire CAMRA website a couple of years ago, and he redesigned the site to match the more modern look of CAMRA.

He also collaborated with Geoff Sandles on the Gloucestershire Pubs and Breweries website, a real labour of love from both of them, and a magnificent resource for anyone researching the county's brewing and pub history.

Additionally, he has worked on the websites of a number of our local pubs, as well as doing private work for other organisations

We shall miss Dave greatly. He wasn't just another member, he was a good friend to all of us, and he never had a bad word for anyone. Rest in Peace old friend, you will be greatly missed.

Peter Corfield
Chair, Dursley CAMRA sub-branch

Mark Steeds, Landlord of the Beaufort Arms, Hawkesbury Upton adds:

'Dave was a regular at the Beaufort for over 50 years, way back in Fred and Vera's time he used to rock up in his state-of-the-art white Maestro van emblazoned with 'Hedges Electrical', when we came to run the pub 30 years ago, he immediately joined in with the pub's philosophy of being a good community pub.

His great passion was beards, boozers and beer, and not necessarily in that order. A genial fellow, he was always ready for a laugh, and great company in a lounge or public bar, skittle alley or smoke room.

Personable, he had a way of engaging with people that was uniquely his own. He wasn't afraid of computers and mastered them so well that he set-up a string of websites for all comers, from Gloucestershire CAMRA to pubs like the Beaufort Arms.

Dave also had a compassionate side and would help anyone he could, if he possibly could. He was a doyen of the Beaufort's Long John Silver Trust and local educational needs charity Props, helping to raise many thousands of pounds with his various schemes and hard labour. He wouldn't take any money when webmaster of our Trust website, and would spend many hours maintaining the site and keeping it tip top.

Local history, family history, he helped so many people with these topics it's untrue.

Mr Hedges, matey, you'll be so missed... anyone for an eyepatch?"



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PUB OF THE YEAR
2024**

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An eye for a chance

The Hoptician - Gloucestershire's newest micro-pub



Kevin and Kirsty began their unusual journey to Dursley in 2022. At the time, they were based in Kent's capital city, Canterbury, Kevin plying his trade as a wall and floor tiler and Kirsty a hairdresser.

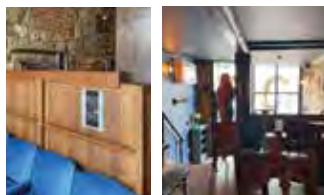
By sheer chance, they spotted a property for sale in an auction catalogue. They'd never heard of Dursley and had no idea where it was, but in a moment of madness decided to take a look.

They set a target price in the auction and, amazingly, they won. Kevin had wanted to open a Micro pub for some time and this was the perfect place for his dreams to come to fruition. There was a lot of work to be done and many hoops to jump through for permissions and licenses but they've done it.

Their vision was to create somewhere they'd like to go, with a good beer selection and live music.

The local community have been absolutely amazing and so supportive, Dursley being a wonderful place to live with a thriving community spirit that has made them so welcome.




Pop in, and see it's worth more than a quick glance!



NEW

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FIND US ON





NEW FOR 2024

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

Send your entries to

chris@thetippler.co.uk

We're working on a new series of Tippler 'merch' and also a website that will ensure you can become the owner of one of these super smart tee shirts.

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What you can win

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

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

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

Rearrange the yellow squares to find a brewery.

ACROSS

1. This beer sounds ideal for Siya Kolisi (4)
3. Famous eco activist is a bit wet (6)
8. Change of heart makes it home (5)
9. There's nothing in the pie, the cards foretold it (5)
10. Retail to be destroyed (10)
12. A drug dealer has cannabis with male film star Grant (10)
16. Chinese leg of the race to the top (5)
17. Band is welcome in the desert (5)
18. Red German joins X and is bad (6)
19. Very small part of a tomato (4)

DOWN

1. Welsh town in sombre conference (6)
2. Girl only heard at Christmas (5)
4. Adam's ale with fruit (10)
5. Broken timer is worthy (5)
6. Beast starts yodelling energetically to intimidate (4)
7. Walter wallops worktop in Kent town (10)
11. Mineral agent back in the sticky stuff (6)
13. Mix a pint of pigment (5)
14. Upturned seats become useful (5)
15. Ornamental tree in palace roof (4)

Send your entries, along with your Tee-shirt size,
by either email, or by old-school post, to the Editor at:

The Editor, The Tippler, 23 Theocs Close, Tewkesbury. GL20 5TX

Send your entries to

chris@thetippler.co.uk





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 . . .

Quirky Mats for Tippler Autumn 2024

Welcome to my notes on beer mats in this autumn edition. I hinted at showing some quirky mats last time, but hadn't decided what those would be till now. So here is a mixture of unusual shapes and risqué subject mats that I've picked up over the years.

The vast majority of mats are a standard 95mm circular or 95mm width square. However, some newer printers use a different cutting template and so the same design can also be found on 107mm diameter or 90mm width, making it difficult to remember whether one has the mat already. A 5mm change of mat size would justify it being catalogued separately, as would a 3mm difference in the print size. I've not resorted to taking a ruler

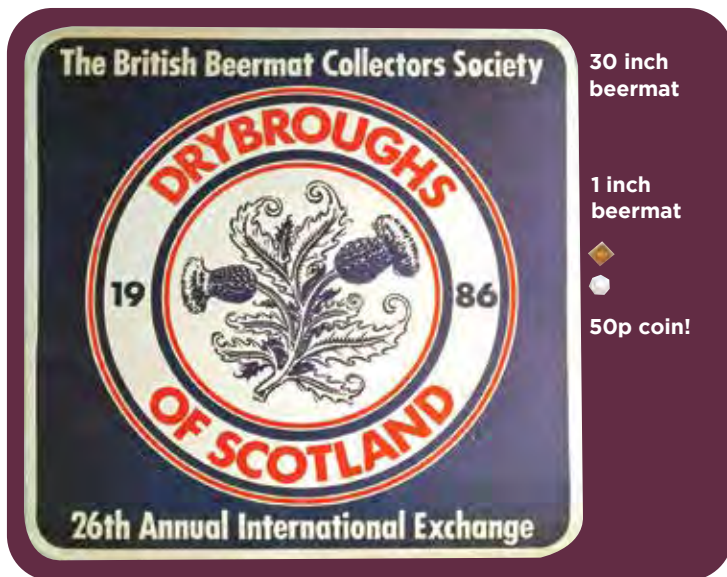
with me to pubs, so always best to pick a mat up just in case.

Then there are giant mats which were designed to fit inside drinks trays, or on the bar to accompany the cloth beer towels. You can still find these, but most pubs now use the rubber / flock bar runners or those awful plastic drip trays. The giant mats are normally about 230mm dia. and are a bit of a nightmare to store, but my first photo is of the largest and smallest mats issued in the UK. I hope the picture does the size difference justice, as both are somewhat impractical, produced just for entry to the book of Guinness World Records. The mats are 30 inches and 1 inch square respectively. There are plenty of other shapes of course. Indeed, unlimited shapes are possible if the brewery was prepared to

fund the tooling charge.

This is no problem if the shape is to be re-used e.g. when its their logo design, such as this mat from Belhaven, or the Burton Ale 'teddy bear' mats from the last Tippler. But some shapes come from small breweries with short print runs, and even contain a sticker, like this from Soho Brewing Co in London. Sadly, no longer in existence - perhaps they spent too much on mats?

Here's another from Flowers which formed several coloured sets of 6 back in the 1960's.



30 inch
beer mat

1 inch
beer mat

50p coin!



They must have printed millions of these as they still turn up.

This Timothy Taylor shaped mat is one of a series, which I spoke of last time. It is for members of their Champion Club, i.e. pubs selling a good pint of Landlord bitter, represented here by the Beehive in Cheltenham. What started as a bit of fun to collect has now become a real challenge with currently over 400, and a few more are added to the series every month.

You can also find jigsaw sets with anything from 4 to 12 interlocking pieces, and both Grolsch and Randalls of Jersey issued a set of 4 or 5 hanging monkey mats like the kids' toy that existed some time ago. Coca-Cola seen here, and several others, made game mats to hang from one's nose. These were all the rage in the noughties. The problem with unusual shapes is that their points or thin extremities are easily damaged, and even simple triangular mats quickly become dog-eared in storage. There's no hope for this Potbelly mat, as its already pig-eared!

Speaking of naughties, does anyone remember Shag, Dutch lager? No, I thought not, but maybe this mat will jog your memory. There are 23 others in the set plus 4 rectangular ones, some of which I still need. I'll finish this time [or my writing career] with this Whitcop mat. Quirky or perhaps naughty, so please don't invert it if easily offended. My mother found this one for me whilst touring Switzerland, so it cant be that bad!

Russell Murfitt



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!

We decided, as it was summer and all, to do a pub crawl all the way to Gloucester Docks. So many new pubs and restaurants open there, we thought: why not!? Live life in the fast lane...

The Docks keeps expanding, there are four more bars in there than there were only three months or so ago.

Anyway, the first one has been there for a while, the **Portivo Lounge**. It looks lovely from outside. Got comfy inside, with musak and seating - but NO REAL ALES! Oh no, one shouts...despite this we decided to be nice and stay for a drink, but we weren't too happy.

Still, all was not lost, only 20ft away is **The High Constable** which is a Wetherspoons house. Consequently lots of seating, beers and food. The six of us decided to lubricate the throats. So it was Abbot Ale £2.99, and Doom Bar £2.71. Exciting, though some slurpers say Doom Bar tastes different to how it used to taste. Not sure myself because I was in the Abbott - delicious!

After drinkies there we passed my boat in the inner basin and headed for **The Hop Kettle**. Very friendly staff and interesting homemade ales. We shared Little Nipple at £4.90 and Flying Solo at £4.80. Not bad prices for the posh end of town pubs.

Then it was off to one of the oldest pubs in the Docks - **Doctor Foster's** which has reopened after being closed for months.

It's looking good. They have spent an awful lot of dosh on the place. Now its looking great.

I had Butty Bach at £4.40 (impressive) then Gloucester Gold at the same price, good choice. Their only shortfall in the sunshine is they are waiting for permission to put lots of tables outside overlooking the water as it used to be. It'll be wonderful for summer or autumn days.

After that it was either swim across the main dock basin, or walk around. We walked. We arrived at a large Victoria Warehouse named **Warehouse 4**. It was mucho trendy inside with very high ceilings and cool trendy

paintings: generally very nice. The outside seating is lovely (see below).

Between 5 - 7pm £4.00 a pint for all their own brews, this is a lovely idea as outside these hours we're looking at Dockside Porter £5.80 (ouch!) and Session IPA £5.80.!

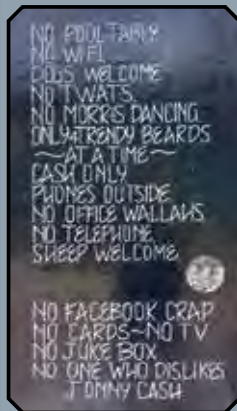
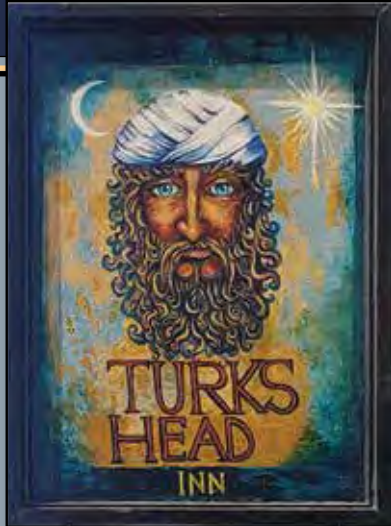
We then decided to decided to head for the bus/rail/taxi/pavement to make it home. For a last beer or so while awaiting transport I reopened **The Turks Head Inn** where everyone appreciated the fact it was £2.99 a pint of ale. But, there you go.

So, this summer has been wonderful Gloucester is interesting because of the huge developments in the Docks, the new University and the rebuilt Kings Square. Some people think we are in a different City. Weird or what?

Lastly when the Uni opens next year the closest pub to it will be The Turks Head which will be the tallest pub in the City, three floors high. Wow! Not to worry, seems like good leg exercise for customers...



*Pete Sheehy
Landlord, the Turks Head*



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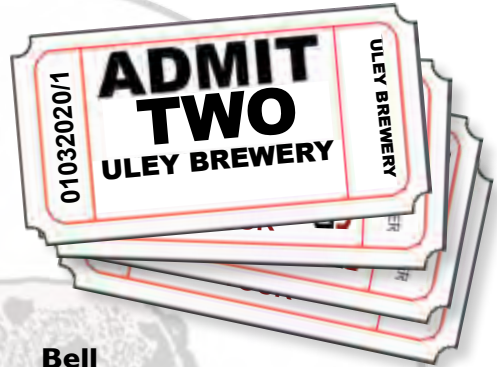
PRIZE WORD SEARCH



Uley Brewery are proud to be the brand new sponsor of the incredibly popular Tippler word search.

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

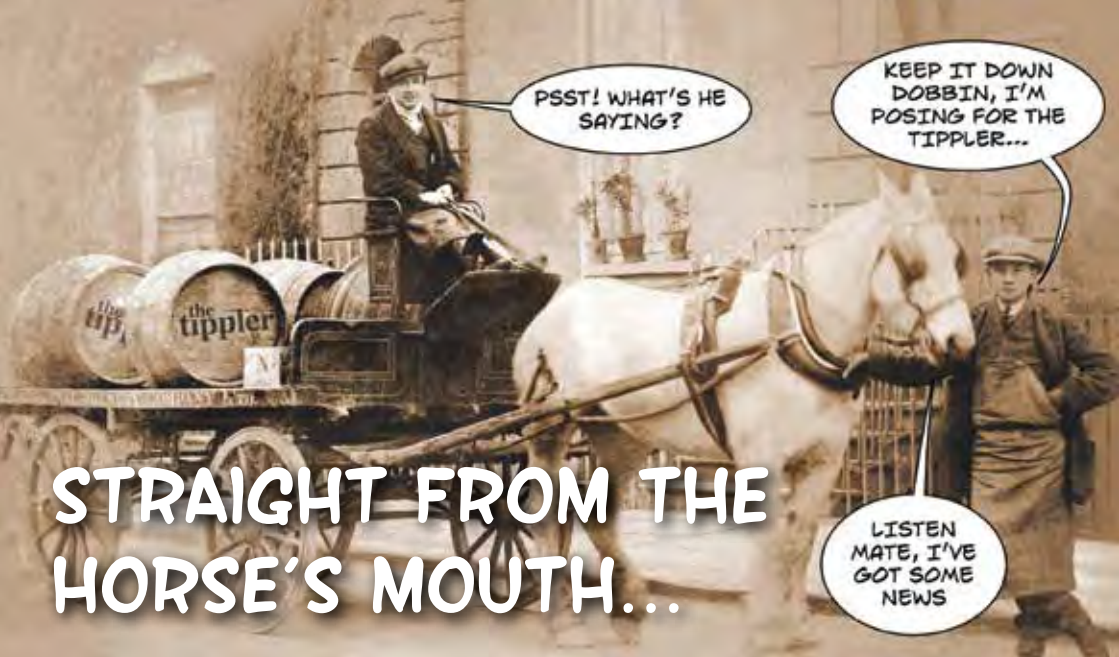
There's a lot more than you think going on at this truly fascinating traditional brewery.



- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| Bell | Ormond |
| Black Horse | Pelican |
| Crown | Plough |
| Falcon | Prince Albert |
| Fleece | Queen Matilda |
| Fox Inn | Ram Inn |
| Hog | Royal |
| Lamb | Star |
| Mount | Strand |
| New Inn | Swan |
| Noel Arms | Tivoli |
| Norwood | Tudor House |
| Old Spot | York |

- 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 every country needs, and the surname of the rock musician whose opinion this is.

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



STRAIGHT FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH...

PUB & BREWERY NEWS...IN BRIEF

PUB NEWS...

The Restoration, Cheltenham, is currently open

1pm to 11pm. The landlord hopes to start opening earlier once a new chef has been recruited.

The Midland Hotel, opposite Cheltenham Railway Station, has reopened as the **Steam and Whistle**. This is the first pub owned by the Marvellous Pub Co. The pub specialises in pizza, which is available from Wednesday to Sunday. Keg beers are available from Camden, Brixton, and Tiny Rebel breweries. The pub does not serve real ale, although DEYA 'live beers' are available in cans.

The Kings Arms, Gloucester Road, Cheltenham is currently closed and seeking new tenants.

The **Merryfellow**, in Charlton Kings, is currently closed and looking for new tenants. The Hatton Group, who own and have successfully redeveloped the **Montpellier Wine Bar** and the **Beehive** in Montpellier, were in negotiation with Stonegate.

The Miller, Bath Road, has reopened following refurbishment.

The Kings Arms, Gloucester Road, has reopened with new tenants.

Harry Cook closed for refurbishment and will reopen in August.

Whitbread closed the **Crosshands Beefeater**. Paul Ainsworth has raised closure with Cheltenham planning as Whitbread have not applied for change of use.

Cheltenham's **Tivoli** pub has been taken over by Tom Noest and Peter Creed; it is their fifth pub. Their ethos is to bring a country feel to a town pub. Local beers are promised, including DEYA.

The Hoptician a new micro pub in the centre of Dursley has, at last, opened for business and is proving to be very popular, considering the competition from both The Old Spot and The New Inn, both within walking distance. There are normally six or seven cask ales available, mostly sourced locally, with another 6 keg beers, together with a very large choice of ciders and the occasional perry.

The Black Horse in North Nibley is now fully operational with a new management after a number of short-term managers. As well

as serving well-kept ales and lagers, it also serves Indian cuisine, both for eating in or for takeaway.

We await to hear about the future of The **Boar's Head** in Berkeley. It is understood that the owner still wants to sell the pub, but recent applications to build a number of houses on the site have been turned down by the council.

The Swamp is opening in the old DEYA Brewery. It is to be run by 'Four Cats' (a bottle shop and small bar near the Tavern and Bayshill pubs). In addition to DEYA beers it will serve cocktails, natural wines and food. The Swamp will open in August.

CLUB NEWS...

Cheltenham Motor Club is once again the 'Southwest Club of the year'. The presentation will take place in late September.

A 'meet the brewer' event was held in June. Belgian brewer 'De Halve Maan' shared a selection of their famous beers with an enthusiastic and knowledgeable group of club members.

Following this the annual Motor Club 'Wheel Ale Festival' drew big crowds and was, once again, a big success.

BREWERY NEWS...

Clavell & Hind

The new kitchen has opened at Clavell & Hind brewery.

Cotswold Lion Brewery, after being 'mothballed' due to the retirement of owner Andy Forbes, has now recommenced brewing on April 15th. Now under new ownership, Andy is offering consultancy to new owners and the familiar Cotswold Lion beer range will continue to be produced.

Lucifer Brewery has two additions to the range of beers recently, firstly Curtain Up, a 4.5% ABV Rye Porter and Dog Days, a 4.0% ABV Summer Ale. Both were well received, but sadly, you'll have to wait until next Summer for Dog Days!

Mills Brewing have produced *Glass*. A series of beers characterised by a delicate

mineral flavour, fresh kettle-hop aroma and the addition of sea salt in the blending tank. This is the fourth iteration.

In July 2022, Mills produced an extra pale wort using Czech pils, chit malt, and flaked maize. This combination gave wild yeasts the ingredients to make a delicately flavoured, yet relatively full-bodied beer. Fresh East Kent Goldings hops are added throughout the boil to build sweet and floral aromatics. Bittering acids in the hops add a little bite to keep the finish of the beer fresh. They also restrict the amount of acidity produced by the wild lactic acid bacteria during fermentation.

Stroud Brewery is celebrating all round and it's all down to two things: its 18th birthday, and another SIBA champion award. Plus the return of an old favourite. The brewing gurus have created a special edition of their signature beer to mark the milestone of reaching an age when the brewery is old enough to drink! '*Birthday Budding*' will be launched at the celebratory festival weekend, 7th - 9th June. Following its Gold Award, '*Big Cat*' was declared Overall Champion for Keg Stout & Porters in SIBA's South Wales & West Regional Independent Beer Awards 2024. We were also thrilled to receive silver awards for '*Budding*' (Cask Pale Ales 4.4 to 5.5%), '*Tom Long*' (Bottle & Can British Ales up to 6.4%), '*Stinger*' (Bottle & Can Speciality & Flavoured Beer) and '*Hop Drop*' (Keg Pale Ale 4.5% - 5.5% & Bottle & Can Pale Ale 4.5% - 5.5%) plus a bronze for '*Easy Peasy*' (Keg Non-Alcoholic & Low ABV). Such success bodes well for the quality of the latest new brew - '*Low Chance*', a 0.5 ABV pale ale which is now being tested with customers in the taproom. And the return of Aledeflower shows summer must have arrived - the addition of elderflowers creates a light, refreshing summer beer.

Uley Brewery's Hussar will no longer be brewed, in its place there will be a new beer, based on the same recipe but with the addition of Brambling Cross hops, will be brewed called Uley Gold.

Brewery tours are held on the first and third Thursday of the month between 6-8pm. The Forge (the brewery tap room) is open on Friday nights between 3-8pm.

CHEERS TO CHANGE!



Cheers to Change: the simple sip that supports farmers, publicans and a greener future

Everyone loves a 'one size fits all' option: that straight-forward way to achieve something that makes us feel good. What if you were told as a beer drinker that there's one easy way to support farmers, the environment, publicans and customers all at the same time? And just by raising a glass?

Believe it or not, this can be done by drinking organic beer. As Stroud Brewery's contribution to Organic September (the UK's annual celebration of all things produced without artificial chemicals), it's teamed up with the Soil Association and national pub chain, Nicholson's, to throw the spotlight onto the special qualities of organic beer. The brewery is producing a special 4.2% pale ale called Gaia which will be available in all of Nicholson's 81 pubs. It's the first time the company has offered an organic beer nationally.

With beer's ingredients of malt, hops, yeast and water, downing a pint (or half) seems a natural way to support a healthy environment and the farmers who maintain our countryside. Whilst public campaigns have focused on encouraging consumers to consider where their food comes from, drink has been generally ignored. In reality, non-organic barley can have a negative impact on the environment similar to any field or arable crop grown conventionally.

Organic standards are the rules which govern how a product is grown, farmed or made and apply not just to farming but anything claiming to be organic, such as clothes or cosmetics. Organic products must be made and processed without the use of artificial chemicals or inputs (including preservatives, colours or flavours) at every stage. The organic certification is underpinned by legal regulations so guaranteeing a minimum standard that consumers can trust.

The absence of artificially-made herbicides or pesticides in farming means these don't build up as residues in the soil, or leach into the groundwater or our rivers – the latter two providing a goodly proportion of society's drinking water needs, and including for brewing beer.

The manufacture of artificial fertilisers, used in

conventional farming, needs large amounts of energy which has a large carbon dioxide footprint. These fertilisers also don't contain the trace elements and nutrients needed to make healthy, well-rounded soil. Organically grown crops, by comparison, are fertilised naturally and grown in fields with other plants that naturally add nitrogen and regenerate the soil. Not only is this better for the environment and soil, it means organic food contains more nutrients and is better for human health.

Other beneficiaries of organic farming are wildlife – and publicans! Research has found that there's up to 30% more insects, plants and birds

living on an organic farm compared to a conventional one. And a healthy complex of wildlife not only helps our farmers – think of all those pollinators (and bees aren't the only ones) – it spills

out to repopulate the wider area including our towns and cities. How much does it brighten our day and replenish the soul to hear birdsong around us and have butterflies decorating our day-to-day world?

In what way do publicans benefit? Consumer demand for greener choices is rapidly increasing as people choose more responsibly produced options. Research by company CGA by NIQ revealed that sustainability credentials influence the venue choice of 44% of customers visiting pubs, bars and restaurants. Including an organic beer on the bar can attract more customers, especially younger people – a bonus for hospitality in these economically tough times.

Here's our challenge: during September, try an organic beer (any organic one) and see what you think. We believe the richness of organic soil leads to beer with a more complex and satisfying flavour.

If you're a publican, get in touch with the brewery closest to you which offers an organic beer and order a cask. It's that simple. And then register your pub on the Organic September map:

<https://www.soilassociation.org/certification/marketing-organic/organic-september/organic-tap-takeover>

'Here's our challenge: during September, try an organic beer (any organic one) and see what you think. We believe the richness of organic soil leads to beer with a more complex and satisfying flavour.'

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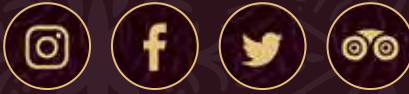
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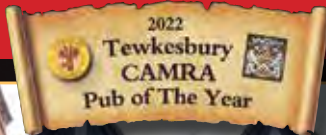




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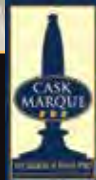
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Tall Tales from the Cider Shed...

In which an article in The Guardian leads to an award ceremony in London

'Perry brewers struggle to preserve way of life', was the headline from a story that The Guardian wrote about us way back in December 1988.

However this, as all you knowledgeable Tippler readers will know, is a mistake, because you ferment perry and cider and brew beer. But we all make mistakes don't we? I've certainly made my fair share of mistakes.

One I remember from about the same era was when a reporter asked me to name some of the pears that we used to make our perry. With great confidence I said 'We only use the best pears in our perry - pears such as 'Moorcrofts' and 'Malvern Hills', which just happen to be two names for the same pear!

However, both that story in The Guardian and a funnier story in The Western Daily Press suddenly sprung us into the limelight, culminating in us winning our first CAMRA Perry Award the following year, which was obviously good news.

Now it was great to win, but the only trouble was we had to get the award from a place in London that we'd never heard of, and in darkest November.

So the first decision we had to make was how to get to London. It would take too long to go by tractor and trailer, so we decided to go by train. Neither father nor myself had a lot of experience of the railways, although the previous year I had been to Wembley stadium to see my football team, Wolverhampton Wanderers beat Burnley 2-0 in the Sherpa Van Cup final (those were the days my friends!)

So at least I knew where Paddington was. But where was Mornington Crescent, the place in London that we'd never heard of? Would we be going around London for hours looking for the Victoria pub? Well as luck would have it, the pub was right next to the Mornington Crescent tube station, so all our worries were over.

The award presentation took place in the function room of the Victoria, where we were greeted by many of our old cider friends. There was David Kitton, writer of the first and probably the best Good Cider Guide, cider wholesaler Jon Hallam, his friend Mick Lewis and a Scouser called Rob to name but a few. If truth be known, we were actually JOINT winners of the 1989 CAMRA Perry Award,



The article that started it all off - a bit creased now!

along with Lyne Down Perry of Much Marcle, who consisted of Lyn Ballard, a gentleman who wore a cravat and Jean Nowell, who we didn't have a lot to do with at that stage.

Later on in life though, I would get to know Jean quite well, as she was one of the organisers of the Big Apple Cider and Perry Trails at Putley and not only was she a lovely lady, she was always very complementary about our perry and ciders, which meant a lot to me as she was one of the best perry-makers of her generation.

The winner of that year's Cider Award went to Wilkins Cider of Mudgley Somerset. I had heard a lot of good things about Roger Wilkins over the years and let me tell you they were all true, you couldn't have wished to meet a friendlier man, and we hit it off straight away. The afternoon went by in a haze with numerous glasses of cider and

perry. All I can remember is eating a lot of chicken legs. . . I don't know why because I don't even like chicken legs! Somehow we made it back to Gloucester station having enjoyed an eventful day.



Now 35 years later, perry and cider are still going. Yes there have been plenty of changes, especially in ciderland, which now has white cider, flavoured ciders and ciders made from all around the world. But most counties in our great country still have cider makers, with a lot of youngsters carrying on the tradition, which is very encouraging.

I wonder what the next 35 years have in store for cider and perry? I don't think for a moment I will be around to answer that question. But if miraculously

I am still going by then, I think I will be well and truly pickled!

Dereck Hartland



Dereck & Ray Hartland (2nd & 4th from left)



Sunday 29th May 1988. Wolves beat Burnley at Wembley and I was there!

The Pub Whisperer

In a 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. Here, we drop in on various pubs as the journey continues...

After the Party

Christmas and New Year is over. We are entering a dark time. At 7:30 one evening, there are seven customers and two staff. The staff have to put on the juke box and the level of sound is pleasant; the selections are from 30 years ago. It's blissful if you like your local to be a quiet place where one can talk at a normal quiet volume and discuss serious issues such as the quality of the ale. This pub, like all of them in Cheltenham, has been packed in the run up to Christmas and company parties make as much noise as they can as loud reunions with friends add to the party atmosphere. It was manic for a month, but now it's over, it's the total opposite. Cheltenham festivals maintain a momentum of activity, but there is a quiet period between Christmas and the horse racing festival and, strangely, in mid-summer after the jazz, music and cricket until the literature festival and the opening of the race season. It's a varied and enjoyable life here in Cheltenham.

New Quiz night

It's 7:00pm Sunday night in this sports bar boozier that has no food menu. Seven Groups gather at the bar and on tables with three-five

in each group. The quizmaster announces, in her loudest voice, that the microphone has gone missing. She distributes the first questionnaire - some anagrams of holiday places. Peace, for once, descends on this pub as the music is turned off and each group talk quietly so as not to give away their deliberations to others. The quizmaster uses her loud teacher voice to urge contestants to persevere as the answers are not easy. A few jokes develop about some young men's

answers to these anagrams. They move onto the next round which is general questions. No phones allowed. Her question resonates

through the pub. "In which town was Boris Johnson born?" "Who is he?" shouts someone. Next, in which city is the CC building. (Oxford). "The Chinese are known for four famous inventions and one of them is something I use in my job everyday," and a few lewd suggestions are made. More questions follow: "How many blank tiles are there in scrabble?" She moves on rapidly. People talk quietly in their groups, and she exhorts them to put down an obvious answer. You need to have read Defoe's Lilliput book to answer one question. The questions are all totally

'...a few lewd suggestions are made. More questions follow: "How many blank tiles are there in scrabble?"'



unconnected. The staff who do not take part, try to answer the questions, but like others, look perplexed to the question "What colour is the toilet paper in France." She wanders round the pub repeating questions for those who have no answers. End of first two rounds. Round three starts - sport. First: "A city in which a famous boxing match took place in 1990." She offers a clue, "It begins with a T." "Who got sent off in a 2017 rugby final, no sorry semi-final?" Nobody can answer most of these questions, but it has quietened the pub and suspended the loud music. Then there are obvious questions: "Which is the tallest jump in the Grand national?" All is quiet. "Which football club did Ian Botham play for?" All sports questions are from the distant past, a question about Brian Clough. It is clearly not targeted at the people that use this pub. Next section - History. The results could be interesting, what proportion of questions did each team get right? Not many, I guess. Nobody got any of the anagrams. Will there be another? I doubt it.

An intimate Tuesday in November

It is unusually busy, but comfortable. The normal drinkers are in the main bar and each of the window seats has a group of dedicated drinkers. The music is limited (thank goodness) and the back bar is three quarters full with: a middle aged group in one corner including one woman; two guys sitting in different areas consumed by their phones and two elderly couples occupying two more spaces. A group of lesbians occupy another corner with new friends joining them from time to time and they greet one another warmly as well as showing warmth to those who appear to be their intimate partners. One couple welcomes another and at least three of them take cigarette breaks outside. They drink pints of lager and drink the occasional shot. Another single drinker with his dog arrives to be welcomed into this warm atmosphere on an unusually lively Tuesday night after the party atmosphere of a racing weekend. This really is an example of a friendly, inclusive boozer.

Bob Jeffrey

wetherspoon

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K.O

TYPE: Kölsch | ABV: 4.7 | COLOUR: golden

FLAVOUR: Soft, Round, Delicate



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CAPTION COMPETITION

Sharpen your pencil, as well as your wits, and come up with a suitable caption for this interesting photo.



We thought that we'd sort you out with a dead cert from days gone by.

So what do you think our racehorse owner and jockey have got to say about the going?

Thanks go to the staff at the The Black Bear Tewkesbury for the use of image of this painting.



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DEAF BOY WANDERIN' JOHN

Against all our advice, this issue our intrepid wanderer stands atop Coopers Hill, home to the world famous Cheese Rolling event every Spring Bank Holiday

Do you crave adventure? Are you a daredevil risk taker? Then this walk is for you! This is the Cheese-Rollers Challenge Walk. Are you up for it? Are you well-insured?

This short undulating walk is about 3.5 to 4 miles long, but don't let the brevity of it fool you into thinking that it is just a 'Sunday afternoon stroll in the park'.



The description 'undulating' generates various grumpy replies from once innocent walkers, who now know through bitter experience that undulating is a technical term for lots of ups and downs.

Starting from the enchanting community-run Black

Horse Inn in the delightful Cotswold village of Cranham, the walk dives down the valley, back into the village and onto the aptly named Sanatorium Road. Presumably the name refers to some retreat/prison/asylum for retired,

injured or obsessive cheese-rollers that was set up after the initial races.

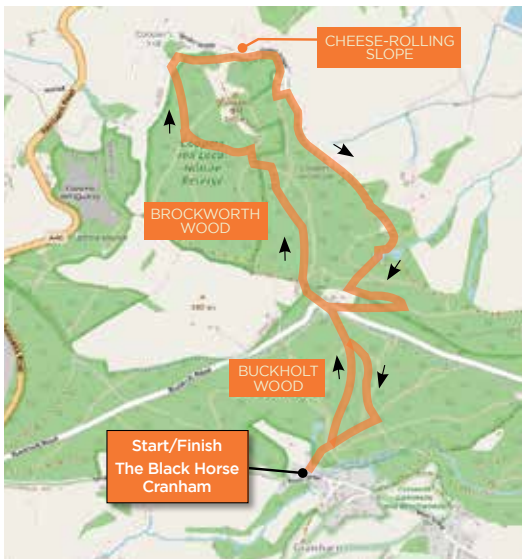
The road gives access to the cool, calming atmosphere of Buckholt Wood, part of a nationally important area of beechwoods, eventually leading to the Cotswold Way, a national footpath and therefore easier to follow. The footpath snakes upwards towards Brockworth Wood through natural wooden columns of beech trees. The ever-steepening undulations of the Cotswold Way are evidence that the famous, or perhaps infamous, cheese-rolling site is at hand.

Cooper's Hill is in fact an area of Special Scientific Interest containing a nearby Iron Age settlement and not just a site of Ridiculous Human Interest. Maybe it was one of the Ancient Britons who first thought it would be a good idea to chase a runaway cheese down a very steep incline.

Before you entertain such suicidal thoughts, however, go and stand on the very edge of the famous slope. The view of nearby Gloucester and the surrounding country will take your breath away. Look carefully down at your feet, you are standing on what is a cliff edge of grass, ridges and pot-holes and



The Cheese-Rolling slope: With an average gradient of over 45 degrees and a concave profile, the slope itself is so steep it's difficult to see from the top



then wonder at the sanity of what exactly draws people to throw themselves down the hill to risk life and limb for a cheese purchased much more easily from a local supermarket.

But every year on the Spring Bank Holiday, the hill is packed with on-lookers, would-be cheese-rollers and thankfully the first-aid volunteers and 'catchers' from the local rugby club. Hospitals in Cheltenham and Gloucester are put on stand-by and the fun (?) begins.

From the top of the slope, a 3 to 4kgm container of Double Gloucester Cheese is sent rolling down the 180m long hill. A one second start is allowed before the hordes begin chasing it, in a (usually) vain attempt to catch it.

In 2013, for Health and Safety reasons, a foam cheese was substituted, but luckily insanity and tradition prevailed and a real cheese has been used from then on. The event is believed to be at least 600 years old.

Two reasons for its existence have been promulgated: first, that it maintains grazing rights to the local commons around Cooper's Hill and, secondly, that it is linked to a fertility rite ensuring a good harvest. (Surely breaking a limb or two isn't going to help with the harvest or improve your ability to perform any kind of fertility rite at all?)

If you don't want to go the whole hog, how about a DIY version on a small beginner's undulation about 100m back from the real slope. A group I led there recently got a flavour of

the event by using a couple of Dairy Lea Cheese containers and chasing after them. The nimble-footed amongst you should be able to catch the cheese without the painful consequences associated with the real thing.

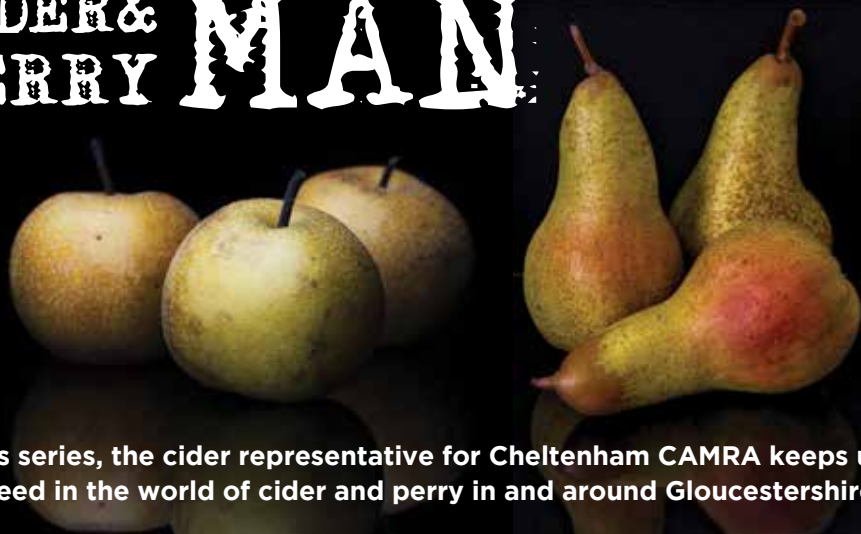
Having recovered from the excitement of an event which must surely feature in a future Olympics, calm down, turn your back on the BIG slope and head around the hill itself by following the Cotswold Way again. Passing a steep slope by the Tile Well, cross the Buckholt Road and re-enter the peaceful sanity of Buckholt Wood once again.

The remainder of the walk is downhill except for the last steep climb to the Black Horse Inn. The pub is a lovely place to have a well earned pint and the meals are generous and beautifully presented with a range of good local real ales on tap.

Of course, if you prefer a ploughman's lunch with your drink don't forget to ask for Double Gloucester Cheese!

Deaf Boy

CIDER & PERRY MAN



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

CIDER without ROSIE

Just occasionally(!) my social life has to encompass 'Er Indoors' so when, on a Sunday morning, I suggested visiting a garden near Stroud, she was all for it.

The key to this small hillside garden just outside Slad is the name - Little Orchard. The owner Rod Clifford has lived most of his life in the area but more importantly he has been involved with one of the largest independent cider makers in the UK - Aston Manor, who are based up on the south side of Birmingham. As a hobby, he has set up his own little cidery at the back of his garden and calls it Slad Valley Cider. I got the impression that he wasn't wanting to expand this into a larger commercial venture and that the produce was mainly for family and friends. He had certainly spent a lot of time and effort transforming his garden into a beautiful oasis, and if a bit of revenue from cider sales helps, so much the better.

We couldn't visit Slad without going to the Woolpack, much beloved by Laurie Lee. In his time, it would have probably then have been a Whitbread pub and any food offered would have been minimal. I do hate the expression 'gastropub', and you don't expect to find one in the Stroud valleys, but here, the independent owner has appointed an upmarket chef, and on this Sunday lunchtime,

there were rather more people eating than enjoying a casual drink. I had a nice bowl of mussels, but had to pay extra for the bread to mop up the sauce. A good bonus was the cider on draught or should I say from Bag in Box (BiB), which came from Severn Cider down on the edge of The Forest of Dean. Most of Severn cider is available in bottle and is carbonated, but this was proper still cider. There was also a perry on tap from the same source which is always welcome.

In my last article, I mentioned my travels up and around The Vale of Evesham. This is unsurprisingly quite agricultural in places, and no more so than in the five Lench villages, where there is no pub at all. However, in Rous Lench there is the long established Lenches Cider Company. Many years ago, the owner John Whitfield, was a habituee of his nearest pub The Wheelbarrow Castle, and enjoyed proper cider from a cask on the bar, until one day it was substituted for the much blander Bulmers. John reckoned he could make much better cider himself and so 35 years later, he is still doing so. He very much likes using individual apple varieties and his supply of apples is close to hand, including from a local orchard. I was joined on my visit by walking friend Roy, and we had a really thorough tasting, of which we voted his aptly named Allotment, which is a blend of different varieties, to be our favourite. John does supply

a few local pubs but otherwise one can purchase direct- www.lenchescider.co.uk

Unfortunately I had to miss out on the beer festival at Postlip, due to unexpected house guests. However, I gather that it was a great success and not many of the 20 or so ciders and perries lasted through the weekend. Amongst them, was a new 'kid on the block' namely Cider by Banes. This small cidery is less than two years old and the owner, Arthur Banes, lives in Cheltenham but the cider is made near Bredon. I shall be meeting up with Arthur shortly, since we have agreed to meet on August 15th at The Jolly Brewmaster where we shall once again be presenting Danielle, the licensee, with The Cheltenham CAMRA Cider Pub of the year award. Who knows, maybe Arthur will pick up an order for a 20 litre BiB whilst we are there?

Guy Vowles



WHY NOT ENTER A COMPETITION

WE'VE GOT LOADS TO WIN!

NEW! TIPPLER TEE-SHIRT IN PRIZE CROSSWORD - SEE PAGE 25!

BREWERY TOURS TO ULEY BREWERY - SEE PAGE 33!

BREWERY TOURS TO STROUD BREWERY - SEE PAGE 47!

TWO NIGHT STAY FOR TWO AT THE FOLEY ARMS HOTEL - SEE PAGE 59!

SEND YOUR ENTRIES TO



chris@thetippler.co.uk

CASK CHRONICLES

With Alex Jordan

Brewing Trends: Exploring the Flavour Profiles of British 'Traditional' Ales

Have you ever found yourself looking at the taps of a bar and wondering “What on earth are these flavours?” Or “I don’t know what I want to quench my thirst right now.”

Sometimes, you might find yourself giving into ‘beer pressure’ and going for the safe bet of what you’ve always gone for. Well, hopefully my depiction of a select few traditional British cask ale styles will whittle it down for you and make the decision that bit easier, or maybe help guide you in choosing a new brew!

British ales have long been celebrated for their depth of flavour, balance, and tradition. Among the vast array of British beer styles, the Pale Ales, Golden Ales, Best Bitters, and IPAs stand out for their unique and captivating flavour profiles. Let’s dig into what makes each of these ales distinct, exploring the subtle nuances that set them apart.

British Pale Ale: The Foundation of Modern Beer

British Pale Ale is the precursor to many of today’s popular beer styles, including the IPA. Known for its balanced profile, this ale is characterised by a strong malt backbone that is typically highlighted by biscuit, caramel, and toffee flavours. Traditional English hops like Fuggles and East Kent Goldings add a delicate bitterness that complements the malt without overpowering it. The hop notes are often earthy, floral, and slightly spicy, creating a well-rounded and satisfying drink. While we’re on the topic of pale ales, did you see that my pale ale was awarded 3rd place in the Gloucestershire Beer of the Year competition by CAMRA? You’ll have to come and taste it at the Clavell & Hind taproom!

Flavour Profile:

Malt: Biscuit, soft, toffee

Hops: Earthy, floral, citrus

Mouthfeel: Medium body, smooth finish

Pale ales are often slightly sweeter and less hop-forward than their American counterparts, making them a great choice for those who appreciate a harmonious balance between malt and hops.

Golden Ale: Light and Refreshing

Golden Ales emerged as a response to the rising popularity of lagers, offering a lighter and more refreshing option among British ales. This style is known for its bright, golden hue, and clean, crisp flavour. The malt profile is typically lighter than that of a pale ale, often showcasing soft notes of honey, bread, or light biscuit. Hops in a golden ale are usually more pronounced than in a best bitter, providing a floral, citrusy, or even slightly fruity character that complements the light malt base.

Flavour Profile:

Malt: Honey, bready, biscuit

Hops: Floral, citrusy, fruity

Mouthfeel: Light body, crisp and refreshing

Golden ales are ideal for warmer weather, offering a thirst-quenching experience that’s flavourful yet easy-drinking.

Best Bitter: The Quintessential British Pub Ale

Best Bitters are a staple in British pubs, embodying the essence of what many consider to be the classic English ale. This style strikes a delicate balance between malt sweetness and hop bitterness. The

malt character is often richer than that of a standard Bitter, with flavours of caramel, toffee, and toasted bread. The hops, usually traditional English varieties, bring an earthy, herbal bitterness that enhances the malt without overshadowing it.

Flavour Profile:

Malt: Caramel, toffee, toasted bread

Hops: Earthy, herbal, slightly floral

Mouthfeel: Medium body, smooth and slightly dry finish



Best bitters are sessionable yet flavourful, making them perfect for enjoying in the cooler, upcoming autumnal months.

British IPA: The Original Hopy Ale

The British IPA is the style that sparked a global love affair with hop-forward beers. Unlike the aggressively bitter and aromatic American IPAs, British IPAs are more balanced, with a prominent malt presence that provides a counterpoint to the hops. The malt flavours in a British IPA can include biscuit, caramel, and even slight toffee; much like pale ales, while the hops, usually of the earthy and herbal English variety, offer a bitterness that is pronounced but not overwhelming. Citrus and spice notes are common, but they

are generally more subdued than in the more contemporary American IPAs.

Flavour Profile:

Malt: Biscuit, caramel, toffee

Hops: Earthy, herbal, subtle citrus, and spice

Mouthfeel: Medium to full body, balanced bitterness

British IPAs are a celebration of balance, with no single element dominating the palate, making them a more approachable option for those new hoppy beers.

Conclusion

The flavour profiles of British Pale Ales, Golden Ales, Best Bitters, and IPAs each offer a unique experience that highlights the diversity and tradition of British brewing. From the balanced malt and hop interplay in a Pale Ale to the light and refreshing character of a

Golden Ale, the nuanced bitterness of a Best Bitter, and the historic hop-forward nature of a British IPA, these ales showcase the best of what British beer has to offer.

Whether you're enjoying a pint at a local pub or exploring British ales from afar, these styles provide a rich tapestry of flavours that can satisfy a wide range of palates. So, the next time you're reaching for a beer, consider one of these traditional British ales and savour the history, craftsmanship, and flavour that comes with each sip.

Cheers to great beers!



Stonewalling...Hadrian's Ales

Stephen Funnel has, in the past, been a regular contributor and is making a welcome return to the pages of the Tippler. It would appear that his silence was a serious case of 'stonewalling'..

Longtime readers of The Tippler may recall the articles I wrote in the 20teens about my long distance walks in the UK – in each of the home countries: England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, in that order, the last in 2018 – and the beers, preferably local, which I found to enjoy along the way.

Setting aside thoughts of a foray into Europe, such as the Camino or the trans-Crete, as the inevitable aging process takes its toll, I considered that one other trail remained outstanding, given my classical education: the Hadrian's Wall Path (HWP, or 'the Path'). I originally booked to do this in 2020: thereafter the pandemic, and some personal health issues unrelated to COVID, meant that it was put off more than once until finally, last October, I was good to go, probably to the relief of the company through which I had arranged ten nights of accommodation and my baggage transfers by Hadrian's Haul!

I chose the less popular westbound crossing from Newcastle to Bowness on Solway, partly because I had walked the Coast to Coast eastbound, and also because the first day out of Bowness would be the longest in distance, and I needed a less challenging start to see how my walking legs would fare. As before, I was looking for good local ales from the northern counties through which I would pass, or even some from just across the border.

Well, Tynemouth is a delightful seaside town in which to stay before the off, with a number of places to eat and drink, even if some were closed on a Tuesday. Mine host at the excellent No. 61 B&B gave me a quick rundown of the nearby pubs, and I started in The Turk's Head, aka The Stuffed Dog – an interesting story – a Greene King hostelry also offering one or two local brews. It seemed a good omen that one of those on tap that evening was Hadrian Border's 'Grainger Ale'. However, I chose to eat in The Cumberland Arms, whose menu I'd already checked, and scampi and chips was washed down with a red ale, the name of which now escapes me.

The first day's walking took me from Wallsend, a short metro ride from Tynemouth, through the centre of Newcastle along the Tyne, to an overnight stay at a micro-brewery! I was booked into Keelman's Lodge, attached to the Big Lamp Brewery



established in 1982, and the oldest such in the North East, so no need to go out looking for beer. My pre-dinner drink was their bitter, followed by the 'Prince Bishop Ale', which I drank again the following week, and (spoiler alert) was just about my favourite ale of the walk.

On day two, onward and upward, to the first sight of the wall itself at Heddon on the Wall. This was the only time I had to put on my waterproof overtrousers, and only for a short while. It was also the first day of only two when I found a convenient pub, The Robin Hood Inn, for a beer on the Path: not a half, but 2/3 of a pint of house ale, and ditto of Hexham's 'Shire' bitter. Perhaps that's why I struggled a little to find my way off the course of HWP into Corbridge, where I was due to spend two nights, with a taxi to bring me back from Chesters Roman Fort after day three and take me out again to start day four, to reach my halfway point.

'The first evening I chose Twice Brewed's 'Sycamore Gap', named after the tragically vandalised landmark.'

That aside, The Angel in Corbridge proved a delightful place to stay: comfortable accommodation; bright, helpful staff; good food; and an excellent bar with four cask ales on tap. What's not to like? The first evening I chose Twice Brewed's 'Sycamore Gap', named after the tragically vandalised landmark, the sawn-off trunk of the tree that I subsequently saw from a distance, the beer by the way was pale and soft with a dryish mouthfeel; and the second pint was Consett Ale Works' 'Red Dust', a ruby ale, soft, off-dry and very quaffable. I had 'Sycamore Gap' again the second night, followed by Anarchy's 'Blonde Star'.

My halfway destination was the hamlet of Once Brewed (yes, really), but I was not staying at the Twice Brewed pub/brewery; rather at Vallum Lodge B&B, a brief walk down the (military) road. Here I had to choose a bottle-conditioned beer - Hexham's 'Wall Walker' - for dinner with the other guests, a most enjoyable gathering

presided over by our hostess Samantha, who confided that my name had been in and out of her bookings diary

more often than she could remember. I was staying two nights over the weekend, both to take a break, but more importantly, to visit the site and museum at Vindolanda: well worth a detour and much of a day. I dined at the pub on the second evening, a 'Sunday lunch' with a pint of their 'Steel Rigg' porter.

Thereafter, I would be at four different B&Bs, although for the first two I had to be taken by my host's car to a nearby pub, The Milecastle Inn, for dinner as neither village still had one open. Another couple, walking eastward, joined me on the Monday, and I introduced them to the Big Lamp beers, 'Prince Bishop' and 'Sunny Daze'. I was by myself the next night at The Howard Arms, although I talked to an Australian lady, Sheryl, who was also walking west, while I consumed fish and chips with a half of the pub's house signature ale, a pint of Thwaites 'Amber' and a half of their IPA. My relationship with Thwaites beers

goes back a long way, to my 20s, when I had a Lancashire girlfriend from Blackburn!

Thence into Carlisle, a city I rather liked, not least for its river and open spaces as well as its history. My landlady pointed out a pub close by, but I first tried the local 'Spoons', only to be put off by the difficulty of even getting a drink at the bar during their autumnal beer festival. The other pub was another Greene King, The Beehive, where I could order Kirkby Lonsdale 'Tiffin Gold' and Bowness Bay 'Swan Black' with my meal, the curiously named but tasty Pulled Mushroom Chili...

After several days of gloomy, if not often wet, weather, which did not make for the best photographs, my last day dawned beautifully sunny as I set out on the long, but flat route to Bowness, hoping to avoid any risk of the tide flooding the road/Path. I stopped at The Greyhound Inn at Burgh by Sands for a cup of coffee - I can manage days

without a drink, but a day without coffee at some stage is a rare event. I had decided not to carry a flask of coffee on this trip.

Outside the pub, there was a small covered seating area beside the sports ground. Then, given the time, I ordered a beer to accompany my packed lunch. Plastic pint of Hawkshead 'ITI' in hand, I relaxed with my sandwiches and prepared for the last few miles. Which were not too grueling, as it turned out, on a still fine afternoon.

On arrival in Bowness I had the choice of a pub or restaurant - Sheryl spoke well of the latter when we took the bus into Carlisle the next morning - but I ended as I had started, with scampi and chips, washed down by Hesketh Newmarket 'Skiddaw' and Carlisle 'Oatmeal Stout'. So finding a local beer (or two) a day proved not to be a problem on this particular walk, and I discovered some gems along the Path. For the visuals I commend Robson Green's walk if you can access the programs: they certainly boosted my determination to follow suit. Happy Trails!

'My halfway destination was the hamlet of Once Brewed (yes, really), but I was not staying at the Twice Brewed pub/brewery...'



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DODGY TICKER?

THE CONTINUING TALES OF A BEER COLLECTOR

Our tick box hero needed a break from real ale: and decided it was 'Eurofizz' time, looking for lagers, I guess somebody's got to...

On the face of it, an article about lager in a CAMRA magazine seems rather strange, but like it or not, lager accounts for approximately 70% of the beer consumed in the UK (2023 data).

You may never touch the stuff, but I would hope that as a beer enthusiast (you picked the Tippler up, so I'm assuming you have some interest in beer!), you will welcome some knowledge about a beer style that is popular with so many people.

So, that is what I hope to achieve with this article – to provide answers to some of the questions you may have contemplated about lager: what exactly is it? Are there different types? How is it different to ale? Why do so many people drink it? Can it ever be okay to choose?

That's quite a lot to achieve in just a few pages, so I'll start with some startling data. The world loves beer – no, hang on, that should be – the world loves lager.

In 2021, around 186 billion litres of beer was consumed globally. Chinese drinkers

accounted for the greatest amount (20% of the total) – not surprising given their rather large population – but, no doubt, virtually all lager. The UK came in at seventh in the world rankings, consuming 4.6 million litres, which is 2.5% of the world total. Remember that lager accounts for most of that UK consumption and you start to realise how tiny the real ale market is on the world stage. I don't mean to suggest that real ale is unimportant – far from it – but the stark facts cannot be denied: the power and money lies in the hands of

huge global lager producers! Indeed, a 2017 survey of the leading beer brands showed that the top 50 brands accounted for 48% of world beer consumption. Top of that list was a Chinese brand called Snow, that I have never even heard of – ten billion litres were consumed, more than double the amount of Budweiser, which was in second place.

With those sorts of figures in mind, perhaps what we should be thinking is: why on earth does the world drink copious amounts of a beer style that most CAMRA members avoid, shun or even campaign against?

Perhaps we should take a step back and investigate what lager actually is and how it's different to ale. Lager is, of course, beer – it's made using the same basic ingredients: water, yeast, malted grain and hops. There are various lager styles, just as there are different ale styles. The word 'lager' is a German word which means 'to store'. If a lager is brewed properly it should be conditioned for several weeks at a low temperature and the caves and cold cellars of the Czech Republic and

'The word 'lager' is a German word which means 'to store'.'

Germany proved the ideal places for this. Of course, most large-scale producers these days shortcut this process to, at most, a couple of days. The storing, or lagering, helps flavour to develop, so by deciding not to lager, many of the biggest selling brands available today are given little or no chance for this flavour to come through.

Another major difference between lager and ale is the yeast used. Lagers are fermented with a yeast called *Saccharomyces pastorianus*, which works more slowly and



at lower temperatures than ale yeast. The biochemistry of fermentation with a lager yeast is very different and generally results in fewer flavour compounds. Lager yeast will fall to the bottom of the fermenting vessel and tend to eat more of the fermentable sugars, leaving a thinner, crisper body and taste.

In short, lager is distinguished from ale in its use of a different yeast and a long, cold maturation period. The vast majority of lagers are then put into kegs, kept pressurized using a gas line and served cold. There is no reason why a lager cannot be cask conditioned, but this seldom happens, making cask lagers rarely seen. One that is fairly regularly available is Schiehallion from Harviestoun Brewery in Scotland. This is brewed with Challenger, Hallertau Hersbrücker, Celeia and Bobek hops and is described by the brewer as crisp and refreshing, grapefruity and fresh. The hops used in Schiehallion may be less familiar to you than many of the well-known US or NZ hops used in modern ales and craft beers. Most of the hops traditionally used for lagers originate from central Europe and include a group known as the 'noble' hops: Tettnang, Hallertau, Spalt and Saaz. They are known for their delicate earthy and floral flavours with some mild spiciness. The origin of the term 'noble' as used here is uncertain, but it should not be implied that they are better quality in any way; in fact it is most likely that the term was coined as some sort of marketing device. The last cask lager I tried was at a beer festival at the Pelican Inn, Gloucester, in the spring – Tempest Brewing's Modern Helles. This was crisp and bready with some subtle fruit flavours and aromas from the use

of Mandarin Bavaria hops. Interestingly, a regular lager drinker would probably not be impressed by a cask version, since he/she has been conditioned (brain-washed might be a step too far!) to expect a high level of carbonation and a very low temperature serve.

You may be under the impression that all lagers are pale, but just as ale comes in many forms, so does lager. The lager that most of the world drinks in such volume is a rather poor quality (in my opinion) imitation of a pale style which originated in Plze in the Czech Republic – Pilsen in German. Commonly referred to as Pilsner these days, these brews all too often have little or no link to the town that gave the style its name. The first Pilsner was brewed in Plze in 1842 by Urquell, is still widely available today and is considered by many to be the finest example of this lager style there is. In Germany, pale lagers are more generally given the name Helles. A Helles is usually more golden in colour and more malt-forward in flavour. Before the success of Pilsner, German and Austrian brewers had perfected lagers that were deeper in colour and maltier, though still crisp and refreshing. Styles such as Märzen, Bock and Vienna Lager are examples of these. You may even come across a Doppelbock, which is generally sweeter and stronger (7-10%). Then there are the dark lagers made with the addition of dark, roasted malts. These drinks still retain the crisp fresh uncomplicated taste of all lagers, but have the added complexity of some chocolate, coffee or dark fruit flavours. Munich Dunkel, Schwarzbier and Baltic Porter are examples of these. Then there is the specialist dark lager style known as Rauchbier or smoked beer. Rauchbiers are traditionally made using malt that has been roasted over fires made from beechwood logs. Bamberg in Germany is still home to some traditional open-fire maltsters and is the place to go for Rauchbier, the most well-known of which is produced by Schlenkerla. I must admit to a disliking of smoked beers, but many people love the almost-burnt-bacon-like smoky taste.

I have taken you on a quick whistle-stop tour of the world of lager and thrown quite

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a few facts and figures in your direction. You have probably concluded by now that lagers are generally less complex in flavour and aroma than ales. Given the choice between a quality lager and a quality ale on the bar in front of me, I would always choose the ale, even if it was a cask lager, since my palate would be disappointed by the almost one-dimensional flavour profile of the lager compared to the rich flavour tapestry that the ale is likely to present to my taste buds. However, as a collector I cannot, and do not, ignore lagers and will happily try a new one when given the chance. Of course, our choices are always going to be affected by context. Would I enthusiastically sup a cold bottle of lager on a sunny day with a barbecue? Yes indeed!

I started this article with some statistics to demonstrate just how much lager is consumed by the world's beer drinkers. There are some very good quality tasty lagers out there, but sadly most of what is drunk around the world is produced by massive global businesses that care little for tradition or quality and will cut corners at every turn to make as much money as possible. This means that most of the world's lager is a poor-quality drink, certainly no match for any well-crafted real ale brewed on a small scale with quality ingredients by a passionate and knowledgeable team of brewers or brewsters. Wouldn't it be amazing if we could turn the world's beer drinkers towards the quality products that we can enjoy in our pubs and bars? But that is not going to happen anytime soon. The one

question I haven't yet managed to answer is the biggest of the lot: why does the world drink so much lager? There are many different answers to this question. Firstly, much of the world only has access to this type of beer. Then there is the power of the huge international brands with their multi-million-dollar marketing budgets – people will buy what is put in front of them and what they see advertised on their screens. It must also be taken into consideration that much of the world is obsessed with beer being really cold – about 5°C – and lager suits a cold dispense. Then there is the taste argument. Lager is often rather bland and therefore not a challenging drink. Many youngsters will start by choosing lager as their first beer for this reason – and many never move away from it.

So, in conclusion, lager's domination of the beer world, having started almost 200 years ago, is not about to end anytime soon. We should count ourselves very fortunate to live in a place where beers with so much more character and taste (that's my opinion, and probably yours too!) are common-place. We have a long tradition of real ale brewing and the emergence of CAMRA in the 1970s to thank for that. Don't be afraid to try a lager that you see on the bar – especially a cask version – but do a bit of research first and maybe only choose those that have a good reputation. Unless, of course, you need a quick cool down in the heat of a Summer barbie!

Cheers

Pete Searle





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