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AUTUMN 2026

INSIDE

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Beer of the Year**

**Summer Festival
Reports**



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FRONT COVER: The bar at The Three Kings,
Hanley Castle, one of the Daily Telegraph's
five Regional Pubs of the Year – see page 39

Welcome to



the
tippler
AUTUMN 2026

THE MAGAZINE OF THE GLOUCESTERSHIRE
BRANCHES OF THE CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE

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CAMRA NEWS IN BRIEF

CAMRA West Central Region has announced its Regional Pubs and Clubs
of the Year for 2026, which are:

The Alma, Linton, Herefordshire – Pub of the Year

The Hoptician, Dursley, Gloucestershire – Cider Pub of the Year

Cookley Sports Club, Cookley, Worcestershire – Club of the Year

Congratulations to Goffs Brewery after being crowned International Cask Ale Champion
with **Cheltenham Gold** at the prestigious 2026 International Brewing & Cider Awards.

Congratulations also to Inferno Brewery who won a regional round of the **Champion
Beer of Britain** competition with their wheat beer **Wheat Storm**, winning against entries
from across the CAMRA West Central and West Midlands regions.



EDITORIAL . . .



Welcome to the latest edition of the Tippler magazine, that is, as usual, full of interesting features, competitions and opinions, all are welcome. I have been editing various magazines for quite some time now and the usual cry from any editor is: "Let's have some material from you!"

I am not just speaking about the CAMRA officers around the county who do sterling work sending in news and views, or the advertisers, whom we must applaud as they sustain this wonderful organ. No, I am talking about you, yes you! (sounds a bit like a Pink Floyd tune doesn't it?). Don't be scared or worried about the writing or design, we have people to help with that.

So if you have something to say, and I bet you do when you're locked into a deep conversation in the pub, then why not write it down and send it along. This is how nearly every one of our regular contributors started and look at how they have contributed to the diversity of the magazine.

So, don't be shy, send your thoughts or ideas in and we'll be in touch to see how we can progress... needless to say, I am looking forward to a veritable flood of material.

In the meantime, the cider and perry season is upon us, so get out and support all the pubs and venues who are doing a great job at keeping this county's fabulous heritage alive.

Chris Leibbrandt, Editor, (Steve Fisher's Mate)

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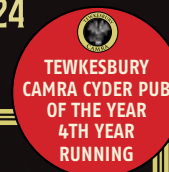
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& CYDER PUB OF THE YEAR 2023/24/25/26**



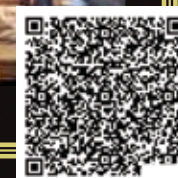
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DOG FRIENDLY

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 will be published!

Chris,

As they say in "Private Eye", can I be the 147th person to congratulate you on the bumper issue of the Summer Tippler.

I picked my copy up last Saturday, in the "Ship" Brimscombe, a lovely pint of Fresh Standard Solution. As time was of the essence there was only time for the one as the last bus from Stroud to Cirencester is 4.30pm. (Do you know how lucky you all are in Glos, Cheltenham & Chucksberry, for public transport?)

So back to the Corinium Ales Brewery in Cirencester, for a few pints of their excellent Pliny the Elder where I met up with three stalwarts of Cirencester CAMRA. After a few more Plinys the combined heads came up with Vault City Brewery, Haymarket, Edinburgh, which is one I've missed when visiting Edinburgh.

It is not far from the Ghillie Dhu and the Fox & Feather, watering holes of my late brother and now his son.

The article on the Hoptician was a coincidence as I visited Dursley two weeks ago, A pint of Uley in the Old Spot and the two halves of Brummie Stout in the Hoptician and a chat with some regulars, and then a quick trot to the bus to connect with the last bus from Stroud to Cirencester.

Rick Martin

Many thanks for the email, and many thanks for the kind words about the magazine.

Keep up the perambulations via public transport, and even better as we all get older and (perhaps) wiser, we could do worse than use our bus passes for visiting our wonderful hostelries around this fabulous county.

Cheers!

Dear Chris,

What a cracking edition the latest one is – plenty of local interest for me – now a Dursleyite, born and brought up in the Black Country near Pardoe's before living in a former tavern in Broseley.

However my thrust is as follows: well done for trying the Black Country lingo.

Your readers might enjoy this classic example:

'Them bin bay winders, bay 'em? Them bay bay winders, bin 'em?

Best wishes
John Roberts

Many thanks for the email John, and the kind words about the magazine... the contributors who do stirring work are the real stars of the show.

As regards AI, AI? I have to admit that as a geezer from darn sarf and fairly fluent in rhyming slang, my mother was a scouser, so I can usually navigate a deep Liverpudlian accent. Black County, however, is about as mysterious as a full on Geordie accent to me.

The magazine's international celebrity brummie 'The Hunter' can no doubt shed some light on your two questions, but, if pressed I'd hazard a guess that they are part of a conversation with a double glazing salesman?

Cheers!

Hello Chris,

Another excellent Tippler. Many thanks.

I liked the Hunter's column. I lived and worked in Birmingham and the Black Country in the 60s and early 70s.

I remember the phrase as 'black over Bill's mother's'. Stories aBound as to who Bill ever

was. One theory is Kaiser Bill from the first world war.

We were in Bridgnorth for the weekend and drinking Joules and Holdens, particularly their mild.

I remember drinking Midlands style mild over 50 years ago.

Keith Eyles

Many thanks for the 'to the point' email. Brevity is the soul of wit they say, so in as ironic manner as I can manage: keep sending them in!

Cheers!

Hello Chris,

Did the person who selects Magazine winners ever get back to you, as to why higher rated mags were nowhere near as good as Tippler?

Thanks,
David Midwinter

Regarding your unrelated query as to the decision making about the magazine, apparently it's because we don't do enough campaigning for CAMRA and our pub and brewery news isn't good enough for them, and, I have no doubt there are other things that don't hit the mark.

Interesting content, reader engagement, competitions, as well as articles and features, don't appear to be very important, and don't get me started on pagination, distribution and circulation!

Suffice to say, in the last complete judging we came last in the region and at the start of the latest we were disqualified by page 3. (We were told that we hadn't included the required disclaimer on page 3, but someone hadn't read it properly – it was there!). Ho hum. Cheers!

Dear Sir,

I am not a Gloucestershire citizen, but I regularly get a look at your admirable magazine. I am not a complainer normally, but It is with a great deal of regret that I write this email to you.

Standards, particularly political and social, are falling all the time and whilst we may have to 'suck it up' as our American friends overseas may say, the latest front cover of the Tippler features an incident that has to be called out.

The shambling old man with the 'loud' jacket on the right who appears to be using a council dustbin as a public convenience needs to be censured, or at least called out for such disgraceful behaviour.

Can you ensure that, in the future, your photographer takes more note of the background in their future snapping behaviour.

David Ribble
North Piddle, Worcs.

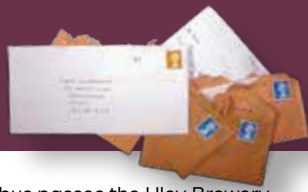
Many thanks for the email, and many thanks for pointing out this distressing image. We will try a lot harder with the front cover images as we don't want to be accused of (any more) falling standards with the magazine.

I will of course have stern words with the photographer to ensure this never happens again.

Cheers!



Letters to the Editor



Hello Chris

As a Prince Albert regular I have often pondered what Betty Boop is thinking...I always conclude it would probably be:

"I should have worn shorts."

Candy

Many thanks for the email Candy, and your caption competition entry. Thanks for be one of the brave ones to have sent something in... not many entries for this so you should be in with a good chance!

When I first encountered this young lady, my immediate thought was, Wow! That's go to be the caption competition subject, and if I were to enter the caption would be:

'Betty Boop, always known for hiding her light under a bush-el...'

I think I may have won it.

Cheers!

Dear Chris,

Picture a train journey from Gloucester to Stroud, watching the world pass by and constantly wondering "why are modern Hitachi seats so uncomfortable?"

This country produced proper seats in the 1970s and fitted them into Inter City 125s - aka Class 43" I guess that is called progress and I am digressing from the core of your excellent publication, namely beer.

Whilst this journey was a two hour afternoon slot, for people of a certain age it makes an excellent full day's entertainment. There is little doubt that I come into that category. So back to beer, there followed an excellent pint in the Ale House and a pop into Spoons.

Part two of the exciting journey was front seats, top deck on Stagecoach route 65. Heading up and over Selsey and past the gliders (plus a turbo prop executive plane) at

Nympsfeld. The bus passes the Uley Brewery entrance, too. What's not to like?

Uley Brewery was excellent - well done to our hosts Ken, Emily and Charlie.

Then a slight 'blip' to the day. The event ended at 16.00, the bus passed by at 16.15 but we managed to miss it. I blamed the beer! Ever resourceful, we resumed drinking and sought the 17.15 bus. Unfortunately we missed that one too. Google informed us the next bus was a quicker frequency but the beer was gently flowing. The upshot was we were not at the stop in time.

The moral in this story is "Uley Beer is so good, one will give up bus journeys to keep sampling it".

Our partners do not allow us out much - any ideas why that might be?

Best wishes

Stephen Hawksworth

GLOUCESTER
BREWERY

PRIZE
LETTER



Gloucester Brewery are now the sponsors of the new Tippler T-Shirt prize letter where you can win one of our coveted Tippler T- Shirts.

Send your letters, along with your T-shirt size, by either email, or by old-school post, to the Editor at: The Tippler, 23 Theocs Close, Tewkesbury GL20 5TX

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Tewkesbury CAMRA Pub of the Year 2026

THE HUNTER'S COLUMN

Our intrepid hero looks at the connection between elephants, the circus, beer, Delirium Tremens and that other well-known trumper ...



Trumpety Trump ...

'Nellie the Elephant packed her trunk and said goodbye to the circus, off she went with a trumpety Trump, Trump, Trump, Trump.' We need a Nellie now.

This is not being political – I was always told by my Uncle Jock never to bring up politics or religion in the pub – this is critical; trying to make sure that not only pubs, but the world stays open for business, in the face of the all-encompassing, orange, narcissistic Don. Nellie, wherefore art thou?

Some of you may not be familiar with the songstress Mandy Miller, who recorded the song, Nellie The Elephant, in 1956 (and still worth a spin) but may well recognise the producer of that record, a certain George Martin, no less, who later went on to have success with comedian Peter Sellers – Songs For Swinging Sellers, 1959 – not to mention that celebrated Liverpool quartet, The Beatles, in the 1960's and beyond.

Trump is definitely trumpety. Always blowing his own trumpet and insisting that everybody else blows it too. The only President of the USA who has come in and immediately made every other President look better.

The polar opposite of little Georgey Washington, who never told a lie. Jimmy Carter often gets a ribbing, probably because of his humble origins; growing up in the Great Depression on a peanut farm in Plains, Georgia without electricity or running water. Jimmy lived to be 100 years old and during his presidency, 1977 – 1981, repealed legislation which had prohibited the sale of malt, hops and yeast (we know what that makes) to individual members of the public.

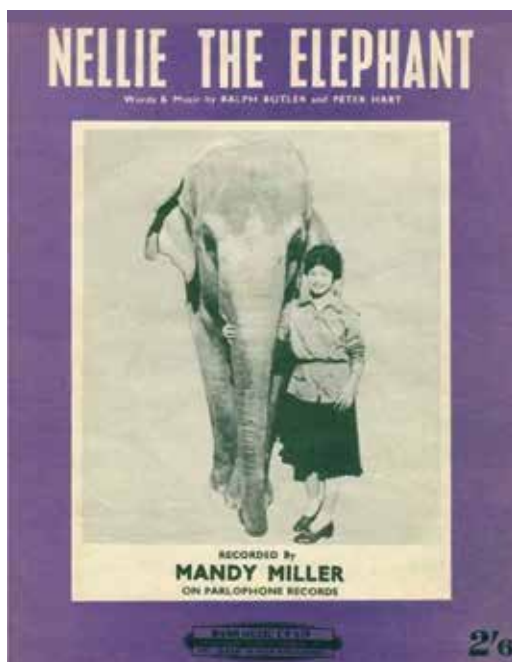
The law had been in place since the days of prohibition, 1920 – 1933, a period which managed to give a massive boost to the sale of beer and alcohol throughout America. The repealing of the legislation led to a boom in the home brewing

industry throughout the 80's and 90's, which rapidly developed into the craft brewery movement, with over 9,000 small, local breweries operating in the States today.

So, there we have it, a humble 'Peanut Vendor' kicked off the craft beer revolution.

Saint or Sinner? Your choice. His actual nickname was the 'Rock & Roll President', through his support for artists such as Bob Dylan, Willie Nelson and the Allman Brothers. I'm tending towards Saint but that's getting on to religion and Uncle Jock wouldn't have liked that.

It is four elephants that guard the tower entrance to the Carlsberg Brewery in Copenhagen.



Completed in 1901 each elephant bears a giant swastika on its side. An ancient symbol of good fortune, it came to represent something far less in the Nazi era.

Carlsberg's Elephant Beer is a 7.2% bock style lager. After drinking a trunkful, one might indeed start seeing elephants – pink elephants! In the late nineteenth century 'pink elephants' became the standard description of a drunken hallucination caused by the delirium tremens or DT's, a 'rapid onset of confusion caused by withdrawal from alcohol'. Typical symptoms include nightmares, confusion, disorientation, heavy sweating, elevated heart rate, and elevated blood pressure. Visual, auditory, and tactile hallucinations are also

common" (Wikipedia). (Blimey, a good night out in Tewkesbury? – Ed.)

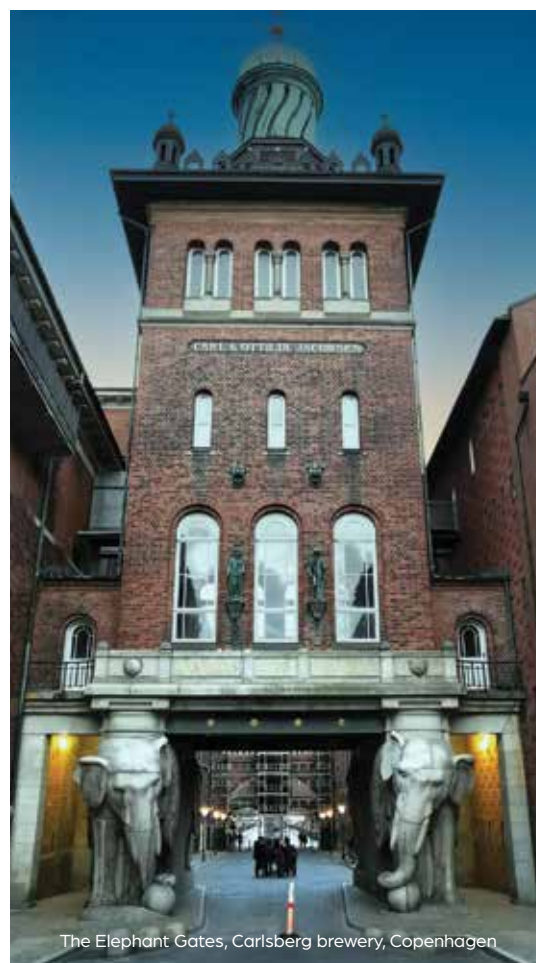
Take note and take care with that tippie. An alcoholic character in Jack London's 1913 novel 'John Barleycorn', in which he explores his own battles with alcohol, makes reference to hallucinations of "blue mice and pink elephants", whilst describing two different types of men that consume alcohol excessively. You have been warned. Both of you.

In 1988 the Delirium Brewery in Belgium started brewing Delirium Tremens, an 8.5% Belgian Pale Strong Ale, which had a pink elephant as its logo and went on to win a Gold Medal at the 1997 Chicago World Beer Championship. Delirium Black 11.5% appeared in 2019. It is matured for nine months in oak Bourbon barrels and described as deliciously delicious.

And what happened to Mandy? Did she say goodbye to the circus too? Incidentally, one of my favourite Robert Plant quotes comes from when he left Led Zeppelin, and with one glance over his shoulder cried out, 'Goodbye cruel circus, I'm off to join the world'.

Back to Mandy. She appeared in the film 'The Man In The White Suit' and also 'Adventures in the Hopfield', so her heart was in the right place.

And Nellie? Where are you now Nellie? We need you to go off with a trumpety Trump. Trump, Trump, Trump. Sorry, Uncle Jock.



The Elephant Gates, Carlsberg brewery, Copenhagen

The Hunter



Pub and Club of the Year Winners for 2026

The Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) West Central Region is delighted to announce the winners of its prestigious 2026 Pub of the Year Awards, recognising excellence in real ale, cider, hospitality and community pubs across Oxfordshire, Herefordshire, Gloucestershire and Worcestershire.

Pub of the Year 2026

The Alma

Linton, Herefordshire

Set in an acre of attractive grounds on the edge of the picturesque village of Linton, five miles from Ross-on-Wye, The Alma is a welcoming free house renowned for its excellent beer and friendly atmosphere. The pub features a cosy front bar, rear pool room and wood-panelled restaurant and function room. Freshly prepared pub classics, seasonal specials and bar snacks are served throughout the year. A popular destination for both locals and visitors, The Alma also hosts a programme of professionally organised events and festivals in its extensive grounds.

Runner-up – Pub of the Year 2026

The King and Castle

Kidderminster, Worcestershire

Located beside Kidderminster's mainline station, this unique railway-themed bar recreates the atmosphere of a Great Western Railway terminus refreshment room. It serves up to eight cask ales, a selection of traditional still ciders, basket meals, cobs and bar snacks. As the gateway to the Severn Valley Railway, it attracts both railway enthusiasts and real ale lovers alike.

Regional Director Brett Laniosh said: "These awards recognise the very best pubs and clubs in the West Central Region. They have demonstrated an outstanding commitment to quality real ale and cider while playing an important role in its local community. Congratulations to all our winners and everyone involved."

Presentation dates and times for each award will be announced shortly and published on the CAMRA West Central Region website: <https://westcentral.camra.org.uk>

Cider Pub of the Year 2026

The Hoptician

Dursley, Gloucestershire

The Hoptician is an award-winning micropub that opened in May 2024 in the former premises of a local optician – inspiring its distinctive name.

The pub serves five carefully selected cask ales alongside an excellent range of locally produced real ciders, offering a warm welcome and an outstanding drinking experience.

Club of the Year 2026

Cookley Sports Club

Cookley, Worcestershire

This popular sports and social club combines excellent real ale with first-class facilities. It features a comfortable lounge bar, snooker room and two meeting rooms, while the outdoor terrace offers spectacular views across north Worcestershire.

Regular beers from Wye Valley Brewery and Hobsons Brewery are complemented by three changing guest ales. CAMRA members are admitted on production of a valid membership card. Club members also enjoy discounted bar prices.

**GLoucestershire
CAMRA CIDER
PUB OF THE YEAR
2026**

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CENTRAL REGION
CIDER PUB OF THE
YEAR 2026**



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Tickets and Beer Sell Out at Postlip



(Photo courtesy of Ben O'Sullivan)

Over 1800 tickets sold and 112 firkins all but emptied – the Cotswold Beer Festival at Postlip continues to grow from strength to strength

The 48th Cotswold Beer Festival was another fantastic success. The quantity of real ales was increased from 105 to 112 firkins, compared with 2025, but the beer pretty much all sold out by 9pm closing time on Saturday. Just 24 pints remained when the casks were taken down. The 45 boxes of ciders and perries also pretty much sold out by close on Saturday.

Over 1,800 tickets were sold, with the 'all-weekend' ticket and the CAMRA members' ticket, allowing people to visit both days, proving to be particularly popular.

The weather was perfect with temperatures in the high 20's and no rain!

Entertainment was provided on Friday night by **Neon Rodeo**, who had the barn jumping with their blend of covers and country tracks. They would probably still be playing now, if there hadn't been the 11:15pm curfew.

The traditional Saturday lunchtime entertainment came from the **Tewkesbury Town Brass Band**, with **Ola Samba** entertaining the

crowds out in the gardens. The Saturday evening entertainment was a more laid-back affair with **Down to Georgia** playing more mellow numbers, on this year's new stage down by the pond.

Award Winners

The beer of the festival was **Deya's 'There's An App For That'**, giving DEYA a second win in three years. The first cask sold out on Friday night and then, when the second cask was opened on Saturday evening, it was all sold within 38 minutes of opening. Mills Brewery produced a special beer for the festival, their first ever cask beer, a blend of young and old spontaneously fermented pale ales. This was also a popular beer, although not everyone was taken with the sour style of beer. The festival was also proud to be the first festival to sell beers from the new Springbanks brewery in Wolverhampton, beating Wolverhampton's own festival to the beer by a week.

The award winners from the cider tent at the 2026 Cotswold Beer Festival were: First Cider to sell

out: **Priors Tipple Cider's Elderflower Infusion**. Cider of the festival by merit, based on tasting was **Chiblers Cider and Perry's Dymock Red**, **Knotted Kernal & Kingston Black Blend** and Perry of the festival was **Old Stag Cider and Perry's Dumbleton Perry**.

Token aid raised £450 each for Macmillan and South Western Air Ambulance.

Once again, we thank the hundreds of unpaid volunteers from both CAMRA and the Postlip Hall community, without whom the festival could not take place.

The festival will be back in 2027 for the 49th festival and plans are also underway to celebrate the 50th festival in 2028.

Gloucestershire Beer of the Year 2026

With 112 cask ales and 45 boxes of cider and perry available this year, the Cotswold Beer Festival continues to grow both in size and in reputation.

Following on from this was the 'Gloucestershire Beer of the Year' competition. This year, to make it manageable (due to the Champion Beer of Britain judging), the competition was reduced to one beer from each Gloucestershire brewery.

Nineteen beers were entered into competition. Beers from the bigger players like DEYA, Gloucester, and Stroud breweries, were up against smaller or garage producers like Ashton, Tewkesbury and Little Avon.

A panel of eight, consisting of trained CAMRA judges, tasting panel members, brewers, and experienced CAMRA members, was chaired by Ken Burney.

The competition followed the stringent CAMRA style guide and scoring system, as used in the national CAMRA competitions. All beers, through both rounds of judging, were tasted blind. Judges only discovered the identity of all the beers after the competition finished.

In the first-round, judges were (where possible) allocated a single specific beer style i.e., Session

Bitter, Premium Pale Ale, Stouts, etc. When all the judges scores were in, the top scoring beers from each judge went forward to the final round.

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

The People's Choice Award, which is the first beer to run out, was **DEYA 'There's an App For That', a 3.8% Session Pale Ale**.

An excellent performance by all the county's brewers, and especially DEYA for winning both award categories.

Thanks go to the 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 Richard James, for running the competition and to Dave Burney for keeping the judges properly supplied.

GLoucestershire Beer of the Year – Champion Beers

GOLD	DEYA	There's an App for That	Session Pale Ale
SILVER	Uley	Squeal of Fortune	Session Golden Ale
BRONZE	Tiley's	IPA	India Pale Ale
4th Place	Goff's	Jester Brew6 Mango IPA	Speciality Beers
5th Place	Little Avon	India Export Porter	Strong Porter
6th Place	Corinium	Bathurst Barley Beer (BBB)	Premium Golden Ale

To find out more about CAMRA's Beer Styles, then you can download, a guide from here:

<https://tinyurl.com/CAMRA-BEER-STYLES>

Champion Beer of Britain 2026

This year, in addition to the established 'Gloucestershire Beer of the Year' contest, Postlip also hosted a regional round of the 'Champion Beer of Britain' competition.

The beer style allocated was **'Speciality beers' – differently produced'**. This wide-ranging style encompasses lager, rye beer, barrel-aged, wild fermented and sour beers. The best of these were selected for judging from all 33 CAMRA Branches

of the West Central and West Midlands Regions.

The six finalists were 'blind tasted' by a panel of six judges – two senior CAMRA judges, one experienced pub manager, one brewer, a festival sponsor and the editor of SoGlos digital magazine.

The winning beer was a spicy wheat beer – 'Wheat Storm' from Inferno Brewery in Tewkesbury.

The judges described it as having 'a stunning aroma, punchy flavour, with sweet spice'.



CBOB judging panel (clockwise from front left): Alastair Kerr, Rob White (Hop Shed brewer), Andy Coston (CAMRA regional Tasting Panel coordinator), James Fyrne (SoGlos editor), Tom Traish (NFU Mutual), & Leigh Norwood (Chair). Server Steve Williams is standing at the back.

(Photo courtesy of Alastair Kerr)

'Jaipur' John Crossley RIP

I think the first time I met John was at a CAMRA social evening at the Bayshill. John quickly became a regular at these events, and his knowledge and love of cask ale and pubs was immediately apparent.

When Cheltenham broke away from Gloucestershire CAMRA, to form our own full branch, he got involved in the branch committee. John's love of pubs made him an ideal Pubs Officer. When CAMRA created the 'WhatPub' website John undertook the onerous, and time consuming, task of taking all the pub data from the old system and updating it to the new. With over 100 pubs and clubs in the Cheltenham area this was no small task, but John managed to visit all of them taking photographs for the site and updating all the details on the database. Cheltenham was one of the first branches to achieve 100% completion of pubs on the new site and this was all down to John.

During his time on the committee, he spent a couple of years as Chair of the branch before returning to the Pubs Officer role.

John's background was as a designer and skilled draughtsman, and he put these skills to great use when we decided to produce a map of Cheltenham's pubs and clubs. John designed and drew the map, combining his two loves – pubs and the bus routes of Cheltenham. The map was popular, and an updated version was produced – and is still being distributed round the town. For this second map John took on the gruelling task of obtaining sponsorship from local landlords!

One of John's CAMRA highlights came in 2014 when he managed to recruit a 'Bond Girl' into CAMRA, persuading Fiona Fullerton to sign up as a member at the Food and Drink festival. He wasn't shaken or stirred by the experience and our only disappointment was that Fiona didn't want any publicity, so we weren't able to put the photos on the website or spread the news of John's success more widely.

John and I were less successful in our recruitment efforts at University of Gloucestershire's 'Freshers' Fairs'. The students

seemed more interested in the free vouchers for shots (at Cheltenham night clubs) than in our maps of the best real ale pubs in town!

John was well known throughout the wider Gloucestershire CAMRA branches, through

his involvement in local beer festivals, particularly at North Cotswold's Moreton-in-Marsh and at the 'Ale & Steam'. John was a CAMRA trained 'bar manager', which he put to good use at our Cheltenham Real Ale Festivals at the Town Hall and Cheltenham Ladies' College.

In fact, it was on the day that he retired from his day job that he went straight from work to catch the train to Manchester to complete the CAMRA Bar Manager course. An amazing dedication to the cause. You would have thought he would want a few

days to rest and enjoy doing nothing, but no, John put CAMRA first.

His design skills also helped produce information labels for the ends of the casks at Postlip, and his great layout for the stillages saved hours in setting up the casks.

Following retirement, John had more time to keep surveying pubs and clubs, and was regularly seen in his favourite pubs, becoming good friends with the landlords and staff of many – including the St Georges Vaults, Cheltenham Motor Club, the Bank House, and the Moon Under Water – to name but a few.

He was known for his love of Thornbridge Jaipur, and when the brewer came down for a 'meet the brewer' event at the Motor Club, he presented John with his very own "Jaipur John" pump clip, something he always treasured.

John was well-known and respected throughout CAMRA in the South West, and we have received condolences from (amongst others) the South West Regional Director, Pete Bridle.

John's passion for cask ale was exclusive, and he refused to touch 'newfangled' keg beers, no matter how good the quality. His commitment to the cause will be missed by all at CAMRA. We thank John for everything he did for the campaign over the years.





Ale and Steam Beer Festival 2026

12th – 14th June



Well Chuffed!

Once again, the weather gods smiled on us and we were blessed with fine weather on all three days ensuring the festival was another cracking success with virtually all the beers and ciders selling out at both stations.

Winchcombe served up 28 beers and 10 ciders and Toddington boasted 20 beers and 6 ciders with one reserve cask tapped at each. The Railway reported great numbers on the trains.

In addition to our selection of local brews there were beers from London and the Home Counties, which all went down very well. The first beer to run out at 1.15pm on Saturday, was **Here Comes The Sun, a 3.8%ABV pale ale from Brentwood Brewing**, therefore our Festival Winner. This was very closely followed by **Green Man IPA at 4.0%ABV and from North Cotswold Brewery**, the local ales winner. The Festival Cider Winner was **Priors Tipple Elderflower Infusion a 6.7% medium sweet cider**.

Both Friday and Saturday were busy with approximately 1,000 people attending over the three days, the vast majority arriving and departing on the GWR steam and diesel trains. A lot of the beers and ciders had sold by close of play on Saturday, but we had a reasonable selection remaining at both stations for our Sunday tipplers who were met by a troupe of Morris Dancers. The bars closed at 3.30pm on Sunday with very little wastage, a pretty much perfect result.

Thanks must go to our wonderful army of volunteers, without whom the event could not happen and special thanks to Alan Stenton for his assistance in getting the business plan together. Also, Roger Merrett for his knowledgeable input into the selection of the beer list and cider co-ordinator James Fry. Thanks go Rob James for looking after the Toddington Bar, Martyn Jackson for compiling the beer and cider lists, Chris Knight for the labels and Jenny for wearing the H&S hat so keeping



CAMRA insurers happy. All helpers were sporting our new Festival Shirts sponsored by Pearson Cider.

I must also mention The Good Beer Company (Rob, Ali and Sam Brady) for collecting the London ales, as well as supplying and erecting the racking; Mudway Marquees and of course GWR for their



help and support. Everything considered the festival was another huge team effort.

If you missed this one, look out for the next North Cotswolds Beer and Cider Festival, at Moreton in March Cricket Club, always an autumn favourite!

Alan Mclellan, Festival Director

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PUB OF THE YEAR 2024

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Roll up, Roll up! The Circus and Real Ale is Coming to Town!

Giffords Circus returned for its summer season, with some added attractions. The much loved restaurant tent was joined by the 'Woolpack on Wheels', its own in-house pub, selling real ale from a hand pull cask beer engine. Top class food and drinks, with top class entertainment, strong local and traditional themes, and a captivating mobile venue; not much left to wish for.

This year's show was called 'Waterfield', chosen by Red and Cecil, children of Giffords Circus founders Nell & Amp; Toti Gifford, 'Waterfield' is inspired by the English countryside and the creatures that inhabit it. The show was set within parkland at Blenheim Palace, the epitome of a bucolic English landscape.

During the half time break, Giffords entertained the audience with its showman's pub experience, offering carefully sourced drinks including its own house beer, a cask ale brewed by **Cotswold Lion Brewery**, served correctly (never in doubt - Ed.), from a beer engine. Crisp and refreshing, a modern twist on a pale ale, inspired by the vibrant flavours of local hops, it has carved out a popular spot for itself as an iconic local flavour.



In keeping with the Cotswold theme, the in-house pub is named after the Woolpack, at Slad, Stroud, owned by Toti Gifford's friend Dan Chadwick, which serves 'Woolpack Ale', also brewed by the Cotswold Lion Brewery, a small farm-based brewery nearby at Hartley Farm, Cheltenham.

In keeping with the values of the circus, the brewery uses home-grown barley, solar power, and well-water drawn from the aquifer which surfaces at Seven Springs, the source of the river Thames. Its hops are sourced from the local Three Counties growing region.

The relationship between the three entities very much mirrors the local rural community, and its strong interconnection of business success through unity.

Like its namesake, the Woolpack on Wheels serves quality real ale, in excellent form, but can take the beer on tour with the circus. Every performance carries with it a slice of Cotswold hospitality, taking the essence of the Cotswolds to a wider audience through entertainment, great food, and excellent beer, all in one mobile venue.

Don Burgess

North Cotswold CAMRA & Moreton CC

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at Moreton in Marsh Cricket Club
11th & 12th September 2026

45 Beers 20 Ciders & Perries

Food & Soft Drinks, Live Bands

Fri - Freefall

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As I sit writing these few words in the sweltering heat of August, it seems rather strange to think that thoughts are already turning towards our December Social (I dare not say the word!) and initial meetings are beginning to take place about next years Tewkesbury Winter Ales Festival.

It's amazing how quickly the seasons go. Updates on both events to follow in due course.

Summer BBQ

Early August saw us gather for our tremendous Summer BBQ at the Lower Lode Inn. We were blessed with superb weather, a beautiful setting beside the river and, as always, plenty of good company.

The event was well attended and the staff at The Lowe Lode looked after us extremely well. Of course, no CAMRA gathering would be complete without some good beer and plenty was available to keep everyone refreshed throughout the afternoon with a choice of Sarah Hughes "Dark Ruby", Clavell and Hind "Blunderbuss", North Cotswold "Hung Drawn and Portered" & "Shagweaver".

A special mention must go to SARA, who kindly provided the ferry shuttle service, helping members get across the river and making the whole event that little bit more memorable. Our thanks also go to members who generously made donations to SARA.

Branch meetings

Our next Branch Meeting takes place on the 3rd of September at the Royal Hop Pole (Wetherspoons) and will include our Annual General Meeting, so we hope for a good turnout. (This will have happened by the time you're reading this) The subsequent Branch meeting will be on the 5th of November, and details will be circulated once arrangements have been finalised.

The Good Beer Guide

There is always a certain excitement at this time of year as we approach the announcement of the local entries in the new Good Beer Guide. Choosing which pubs make the cut is never easy. There are some excellent pubs across our Branch area and choosing which ones have a place in the Guide is a difficult task. Whatever the final selection, it is encouraging to see the continued strength and variety of good pubs and good beer available.

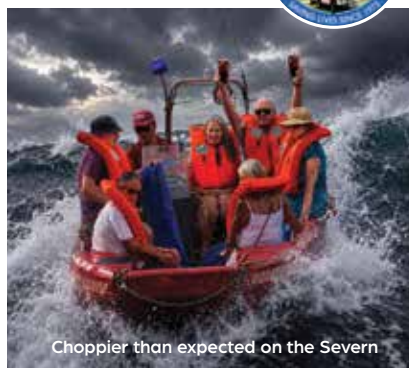
And so, while we may be starting to turn our thoughts to the Autumn and Winter social calendar let's make the most of the remaining summer, enjoy the sunshine, support our local pubs and, of course, enjoy a few well-kept pints along the way.

Cheers

John Roberts
Chair – Tewkesbury CAMRA



Summer BBQ, Lower Lode Inn



Chopper than expected on the Severn

Image by courtesy of AI maestra Kate Smith

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The Carpenters Arms at Westrip: Stroud CAMRA Cider Pub of the Year

The Carpenters Arms at Westrip is deservedly Stroud CAMRA Cider Pub of the Year for the fourth year running. We duly presented Sammy McKie, owner and licensee, with a framed certificate commemorating the pub's triumph on a slightly overcast, but warm Saturday afternoon at the beginning of May. The pub was lively with families and children following the Randwick Wap.

This fourth consecutive win from Stroud, added to a clutch of awards that culminated last year in being judged one of the best four cider pubs in the whole of the UK.

I only ever seem to get the Carpenters once a year for a presentation—it's a long bus ride from Merrywalks and the gruelling final ascent from the bus stop to the pub would have tested George Mallory and Sherpa Tensing. So, on the rare occasions I am at the pub, I am reminded why I should make the effort more often. The Carpenters is a whitewashed stone-built pub right at the north-western edge of the Cashes Green conurbation, close to the Cotswold Way. Located on a steep hillside with spectacular and panoramic views across the valley, from the Stroud cemetery chapels stage left to the tower and saddleback roof of All Saint's Selsley at stage right.

Real ciders on offer included Orchard Revival, Days Cottage, Dunkerton's and Snailsbank. On the beer front, Stroud **Tom Long** (3.8%), was joined by Hop Union **Bonville Pale** (4.0%), and **Cheltenham Gold** (4.5%), an American hopped golden ale, brewed with a blend of the seven 'C' hops, including Cascade, Citra and Chinook, to give a light and citrusy hop burst. This is a well balanced range, though it would have been even better if a brown bitter or a dark beer had been substituted for one of the pale/blond/gold beers. But perhaps it wouldn't sell. Even Nigel at the Ale House struggles to sell a single dark beer or any brown bitters.

There was a Thai food pop-up in the garden and live music. The band kicked off with



a not wholly convincing rendition of Won't Get Fooled Again at 5.50pm.

Sammy bought the pub in 2019 and has proved a hands-on, energetic and enterprising publican. There's always something going on at the 'Carps', whether it's live music, a quiz, a raffle, Singo Bingo, Let's Paint, breakfast at the weekend, steak nights, premiership rugby on the widescreen TV, carols at Christmas, and even an annual dog show (this year at 2pm on Saturday 22 August).

This is quite a turnaround for the pub, which was once closed and risked being lost to a residential conversion after being declared unviable by so-called 'industry specialists'. It was advertised for sale as an 'ideal lifestyle purchase [that] would also appeal to purchasers looking to open on restricted hours and benefit from three-bedroom private accommodation in a desirable residential area'. Neon Homes bought the pub and built two houses on part of the car park. It was eventually advertised as for sale freehold at £300,000 or to let on a free-of-tie lease.

Previously the pub was owned by Punch Taverns with landlord Steve Poulter as their tenant for many years. It was subject to an unsuccessful application by Pubmaster (now part of Punch) for planning permission for conversion to residential in 1997. This was refused by Stroud District Council.

Pubmaster went to appeal, the appeal was rejected and the pub was saved from closure.

According to locals, Punch sold the pub to landlord Steve Poulter and almost immediately he sold it to Neon Homes and became their tenant. Neon Homes received planning permission to build two houses on part of the car park.

Perhaps also because of Pubmaster's experience, Neon Homes then commissioned Plainview Planning to prepare a Future Options document that stated baldly that 'changes in drinking habits and its peripheral location present a day-to-day challenge to the ability of the pub to stay up and running. A viability report undertaken by industry specialists concludes that the pub is not viable.'

Plainview Planning fail to mention that despite the pub's 'peripheral location' it is at the edge of a densely built up urban area (Cashes Green) with hundreds of people within walking distance, has stunning views from the garden and happens to be on the Cotswold Way. Surely these are material considerations and trump any 'viability report' undertaken by self-styled 'industry specialists' hired to conclude that 'the pub is not viable'? As is the



Presentation Night at The Carps

fact that neighbourhoods with pubs are seen as desirable and that is reflected in higher house prices.

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

That's surely worth raising a glass (of cider or beer) to!

Tim Mars, Stroud CAMRA

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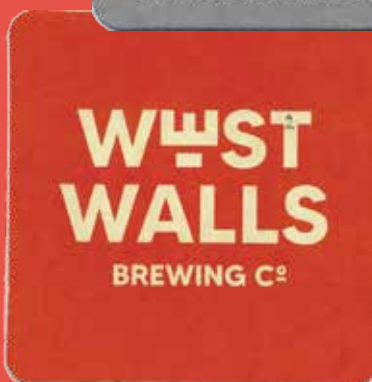


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The Tegestologist

Welcome to a series all about Tegestology, the little known term for the collection of beer mats. This issue we're looking at holiday memories...



Welcome back everyone! I say that because I'm sure most of you have been away on holiday somewhere exotic, although with the fantastic summer we have had, one didn't need to go very far for the sunshine this year. We have been to Ireland in the camper van!

Yes I know, normally a wet place to go, but this year, though cooler than most of England it was very pleasant, warmish and just right for climbing mountains, walking in the woods, and sitting in the occasional pub garden.

This edition I'll be featuring a few of the mats I picked up during the stay near Belfast, and the few days in the Lake District and Galloway en-route to the Ferry at Cairnryan.

That is the shortest route across to Northern Ireland which is handy for the dog, and also if you're not keen on sailing, though the sea was like a millpond once again.

We spent a few days with the Durrants in North Yorkshire first of all, to Climb Penygent (8) and Ingleborough (7), then moved on to Keswick to tackle Great Gable. This is the 4th Highest* in England at 899 mtrs, and is one of the peaks to tick off my bucket list. Any railway fans out there may be familiar with the class 44 locomotives which were named after the 10 highest peaks in England and Wales, so I'm only left with: 1. Scafell Pike; 5. Cross Fell and 10. Tryfan for the full set.

Anyway, we managed the climb on a very pleasant day, except it clouded over on the top, so we missed the view. The route we chose down was well dodgy too, with a lot of scree, so tough on the feet/paws. Of course, the mist had cleared by the time we reached Keswick, but waiting there you will find a couple of nice little brewery tap rooms, for Crooked River and Keswick Fox Tap. Here are their two latest mats.

Our friends returned to Gloucester, whilst we stayed overnight in Carlisle, having a couple of very nice beers in the West Walls brewery tap, here is their cat 2 as evidence. Next morning it was off to Scotland with a brief pause at Castle Douglas. I was lucky to find a beer shop there which had a mat from a brewery new to me. It's nice to find a new one - thanks Wigtown. A couple of bottles and mats to go with them saw us right for the crossing.

*British Rail may have used a little poetic licence with the choice of names, so don't write if you know higher ones which were excluded.

Now if you've never been to Ireland, it's a great place to visit, but don't expect to find pubs as we know 'em. Indeed, cask beer is a real rarity, which is true of everywhere in the world, but finding independent pubs is very difficult too. OK, so I didn't go just to find Timmy Taylors on the bar (though you will in the Crown in Belfast, a real treat it is too) but unless you only drink Guinness or Heineken then be prepared.

Lots of pubs don't allow dogs either so when you find one that does, AND they have decent beers, then happy days! One such place is the Beer Hut in Kilkeel. A tap room once again and only open at weekends but a worthy stopover when walking the Mourne mountains. Here is a reminder with their Cat.2 from last year.

Another, and without doubt the best beer I tasted on the Island was in a bar called Mo Chara (pron. Cara) in Dundalk. Locally brewed beers, not overly carbonated and actually tasted of malt and hops. Plus, they had a new mat, which will probably become their Cat. 2 too. I say probably, because we are not 100% sure of who makes it, and as they may contract their recipes out to other breweries it's likely to be catalogued under the brand.

Our final day was spent in Belfast with my son and his wife for the Fleadh (pron. Flah) which is a national, week-long music and culture festival being held in the North for the first time. It was a great success from what we saw of it, with thousands of people milling around the closed roads in the city centre. Surprisingly I found only one mat mentioning the Fleadh (see pic) nothing from the aforementioned big breweries, which was a disappointment, and I did pop into a lot of pubs to check!

However, I did find a few mats for sale in the flea market (pron. flee) and I couldn't not show a Guinness mat so here are a couple of their less common ones from the market.

Thanks for reading my travelog. Next one will be my swansong.

Russell Murfitt





In a new series, Geoff Sandles becomes PubSignman, giving us a fascinating glimpse into the world of Pub signs

'Pardon me, boy, is that the Chattanooga Choo Choo,' or is it an artist's depiction of a Royal Scot 7P Class 4-6-0 locomotive in London Midland and Scottish crimson lake livery, pulling a passenger train on the Gloucester-to-Bristol main line at Charfield?

The locomotive looks unusual, with American-style features such as a cowcatcher, a large central headlight, and a big bell mounted on the buffer beam—hardly the typical steam engine that once thundered past the Railway Tavern. Although the main line has since been reduced to a single-track branch line, the train shown on the pub sign does have some historical credibility. It is the locomotive Royal Scot (or 46100 in British Railways days), the most famous and doyen of the 'Royal Scot' class, a celebrity locomotive that visited Chicago in 1933 when it was adorned with cow catchers and central light and given a presentation bell to mark the occasion (it was actually No 6152 The Kings Dragoon's Guardsman in disguise but that's another story).

The Railway Tavern at Charfield had a previous Whitbread pub sign depicting more humble motive power, notably a tank engine, but what loco class is it? The number 1832 doesn't correspond to what appears to be a 4-4-0 tank engine of unknown design. In the LMS numbering system with a prefix of 4, 41832 is a Johnson Midland designed 1F 0-6-0 tank engine but bears no resemblance to the locomotive on the pub sign.

The LMS is well represented on pub signs in Gloucestershire, a legacy of the Midland Railway penetrating south to Bristol through traditional Great Western Railway territory with branch lines off the main line to serve the Nailsworth and Dursley lines. Of note is the Railway Inn at Cam which has boasted several excellent pub signs over the years. The present sign depicts a Stephenson Locomotive Society (S.L.S) tour of the branch line in 1956 to celebrate its centenary hauled by a 'Jinty' 4F 0-6-0 tank engine. The Dursley branch line, known for its 'Dursley Donkey' local passenger train, closed for passengers just six years later.

The Midland Hotel (now the Steam and Whistle), opposite Cheltenham Spa Station, used to have an excellent pub sign depicting a 'Jubilee' class 4-6-0 7P locomotive which, together with 'Black Five's', were the mainstay of steam locomotives allocated to the Birmingham to Bristol Midland line back in the 1950's and early 1960's.

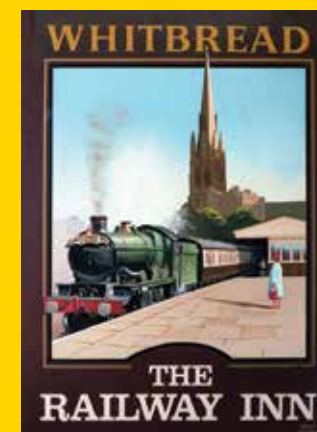
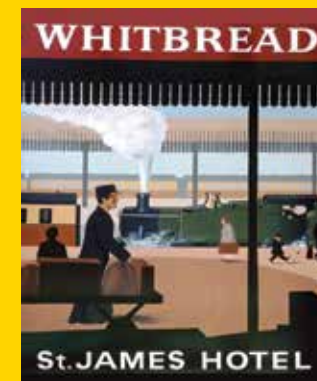
In 1985 there were mixed feelings as the 150th anniversary of the Great Western Railway was soured with the news that BR(W) were closing Swindon Locomotive Works. However, many will remember the celebrations and the running of steam trains on the Gloucester to Swindon line, locos that included 'King' Class 4-6-0 No. 6000 King George V. and 'Castle' Class No. 7029 'Clun Castle'. Whitbread Flowers used

the occasion to rename two of their pubs – The Plough Hotel in Alfred Street, Gloucester, became the Great Western and the Victoria Hotel in Brimscombe, a stone's throw from the Golden Valley line, became the aptly named King and Castle. It was pointed out by knowledgeable rail historians that the 'King' class locomotives, with a double red restriction, were banned from traversing the Golden Valley in steam days because of the severe gradient and sweeping curves up towards Sapperton tunnel. The King and Castle pub has since closed and is now an Indian restaurant.

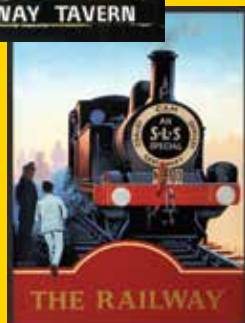
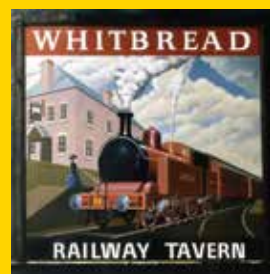
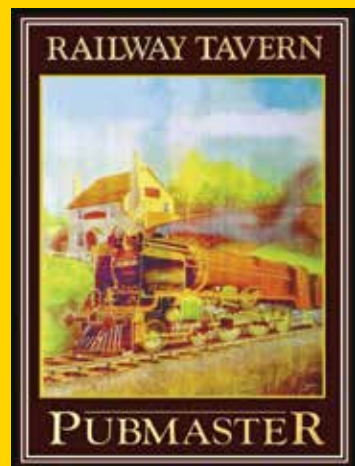
Until closure in 1966, St. James Station in Cheltenham served as the terminus of the Great Western Railway route from Paddington and was famous for the departure point of the London bound Cheltenham Spa Express, or 'Cheltenham Flyer'. Usually hauled from Gloucester Central by a 'Castle' the first part of the journey was hardly flying with the stock attached to a large GWR designed 2-6-2 tank engine, often No 4141. At Gloucester the train reversed for its onward journey. St James Hotel in nearby Ambrose Street (now the Bottle of Sauce) had a great pub sign of the 'Large Prairie' tank locomotive about to leave, bunker first, to Gloucester.

Nearby in New Street, the Railway Inn now has a reputation of being one of the best real ale pubs in Cheltenham. Over the years it has had some interesting pubs signs, spanning from its Whitbread days to the brief period when it was owned by Banks's of Wolverhampton. The Castle Class loco is about to depart from platform 4 (possibly 7023 Penrice Castle), presumably after turning round on the Malvern Road turntable. A wonderful image of bygone Cheltenham. Contrast that with the 1991 Banks's sign by A.J. Goody. With due respect to the artist the locomotive proportions are certainly not representative of Class 8F 2-8-0 Stanier heavy goods engine that has the number 8233 and is preserved on the Severn Valley Railway. The exaggerated cylinder blocks on the side would almost certainly foul a platform and the wheel configuration is dubious to say the least. The tender has been severely squashed between the engine and the first coach and the 'Black Eight' loco, as they were nicknamed, has a distinctive shade of blue rather than black.

Many thanks to Inn Sign Society archivist, Matthew Sproston, for giving me permission to use the pub signs. On my Gloucestershire Pubs website you can use the search engine to discover more pubs that have a railway theme, for example the Station Hotel, Junction Inn and some with evocative names such as the Silent Whistle.



Top : St James Hotel, Cheltenham
Middle and bottom: The Railway Inn, Cheltenham



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MARCH 30TH

A remake from 2025, but this year we will use Charles Faram's experimental hop CF277 for a beer with hints of orange, spice and floral overtones.



MAY 4TH

GB meets the USA! We will blend the spicy English hop Olicana, with an American classic hop.



JUNE 15TH

We promise you a deliciously summery straw colour beer, but the rest is a surprise for now...



SEPTEMBER 11TH

You talked, we listened and this favourite from 2025 is making a very cheeky return.



OCTOBER (MID)

Ken has his heart set on a hop called Mystic for this year's green hopped beer. Fingers crossed.



23RD NOVEMBER

It's big, it's beautiful and it's back for the festivities.

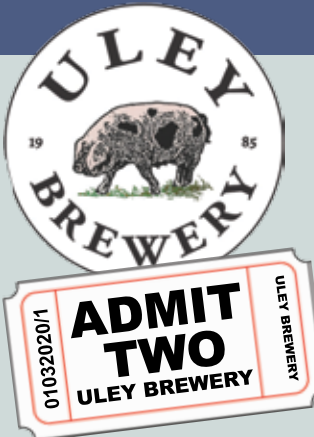


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| Fleece | Ship Inn |
| Fountain | Strand |
| Fox Inn | Swan |
| Hog | Tippits |
| Lamb | Tivoli |
| Mount | Vine Tree |
| New Inn | Yew Tree |
| Ormond | York |

- 1 Find the listed regional breweries in the grid (these were all open before the COVID lockdown).
- 2 They can be horizontal, vertical or diagonal, forward or back.
- 3 The unused letters spell out an Austrian brewery where you can go to truly immerse yourself in your favourite tippie.

Send your entry to chris@thetippler.co.uk



It's All Over Now

What a great 25 years of music and beer that was!

So that's that then. After 25 years of fabulous music and beer, it's all over. The year 2026 will be remembered for the last Linton Festival as well as the end of Keir Starmer as PM.

The festival has taken place in a field at the back of Linton's local pub, The Alma, not lacking its musical technology, producing an excellent sound. The stage area is different, not six feet above the audience, it's more audience friendly so you really feel part of the experience and look the musicians in the eye.

Social cohesion, something that is being rapidly eroded in rural communities, is an essential part of the organisation, getting the best out of a rural village with outstanding community spirit. After 25 years it is a slick operation. The residents of the village came together and put on a brilliantly organised event. It's not just the music and beer of course, other highlights include the cake stall, run by the local WI, with tea and coffee at a super reasonable price too. Along with the Thai food, burgers and pizzas, you're spoilt for choice.

The 'portaloo' style toilet facilities are also of a very high order and for those gentlemen who like a view of the countryside, the outdoor urinals are quite Gallic – an acquaintance of mine, Dick Everard, guitar player for the band **Al Fresco and the Willy Wavers** was particularly impressed.

The beer, with 20 beers on offer from local breweries within a 50 mile radius, offered something

for nearly everyone, although in my view, way too much over-hopped IPA, 'golden' and 'amber' ales. There was one porter, one milk stout and a couple of proper bitters, the Three Tuns Best was the brew that tickled my tastebuds the most.

A total of 14 acts covered the two full days and the Friday evening. The music on offer suits me as it leans towards the blues, as I was brought up on the R&B (proper R&B) of the 60s, which suits me just fine. Don't be fooled into thinking it's all Delta and Chicago blues as there were bands that cover folk rock, Americana, swamp blues, three piece power trios and a couple of excellent tribute bands too.

The three headline acts were just that, for those of us of a certain age. Think Floyd on the Friday brought us a tremendous set of the band that has always defied categorisation, a balance of old and new, finishing with the quite magnificent Comfortably Numb.

Saturday was topped off by King King, a simply superb Scottish band with excellent vocals and guitar by the multi-talented frontman, Alan Nimmo. This band is a real treat and I was heartened to learn they will be touring later this year, so I am already investigating the nearest venue. They not only create a real Caledonian feel to the driving riffs and licks, but also a distinct likeness to Free and Bad Company.

Sunday's headlining act was the multi-award winning cast from the West End show 'Motown'.



Anyone of a certain age and fans of the Detroit sound were handed a glitzy treat to finish the Sunday night' entertainment...and unfortunately the Linton Festival era.

All in all, a brilliant use of a really hot weather weekend in a magnificent bucolic English village. I'd

love to be able to say I'm going again. Sadly this really was the final curtain. But what a legacy the event has left, with over £150,000 raised for local and national charities.

Chris Leibbrandt

wetherspoon THE ROYAL HOP POLE HOTEL CHURCH ST, TEWKESBURY



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Autumn at the Prince Albert

We love Autumn here at the Prince Albert, and this year with it being our 30th anniversary of running this rather wonderful pub at the top of the very steep Rodborough Hill – it's hopefully going to be our best yet.

Summer was crazy, we don't normally have a really busy one as folk tend to think we are more of an inside hostelry. But the pergolas that had been erected in our garden last year provided a much needed amount of shade. Also, as we are quite high up there on the hill there's been a nice breeze on most except the hottest days. We are also lucky to solar panels on top harvesting those rays.

But as we move on to the season of mist of mellow fruitfulness, browner beers, darker nights and cozy pub fires, we also bring in a huge programme of events to take us through the next few months. If you want to see the whole list then do head to our website, and you can subscribe to our mailing list to make sure you never miss out:

www.theprincealbertstroud.co.uk.



Highlights are the authentic 1950s-style bluegrass band The Truffle Valley Boys – their raw authenticity will ensure there's a bit of whooping and dancing that night. We have jazz from Eyebrow, the trumpet and drums duo of Pete Wiggins and Pete Judge joined by poet Jon Hamp. Another Poet in the diary is Luke Wright with his heart wrenching new show about finding his birth mother.

We do like to vary our offer, but it's always really good. As is the beer. We were rather delighted to be included in the Telegraph's top 500 Best Pubs again this year. Other pubs around Stroud included are all Regional CAMRA award winners – the Carpenters in Westrip, (well done Sammy), and also The Old Spot, Dursley and The Salutation in Ham. So we are aiming to lift that Stroud CAMRA POTY Award again for 2027. Come and have a pint and see what you think. But we warned – it's a very steep hill!

Lotte and Miles Lyster Connolly

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**Rearrange the yellow squares
 to find a brewery**

ACROSS

1. Opening touch describes how beer is as you sip (9)
6. Wine is part Ribena and part orange juice (5)
7. Flyer ends each group (5)
9. I'm drained, but it's finally assembled (4)
10. Brainy rearrangement is in two parts (6)
12. Endless idea is also nearly finished, however (6)
14. Wives and fiancés start a network (4)
17. Bird starts nibbling headdress (5)
18. Algie is flexible and nimble (5)
19. Proverb about vehicle tyres has edge (9)

DOWN

2. Circular area provides radiation shield (5)
3. Rip up exchange rate (4)
4. Brilliant boy makes textile (6)
5. Old boyfriend returns craft for a bonus (5)
6. Like a machine, it starts running off both of the
 integrated circuits (7)
8. Dried grass filament is erratic (7)
11. In bug and ant infested country! (6)
13. One hole followed by another is like an egg (5)
15. Glaze ends rejoicing (5)
16. Stuck and flying at the same time? (4)



Send your entry to
chris@thetippler.co.uk



Brewing Apprenticeships

There's hope
for us yet!

Brewing is one of the world's oldest crafts, combining centuries of tradition with modern science and innovation. As the industry continues to evolve, brewing apprenticeships have become increasingly important in developing the next generation of skilled brewers. They provide aspiring professionals with the practical experience, technical knowledge, and confidence needed to succeed in a highly competitive and rewarding industry.

Unlike classroom-based learning alone, apprenticeships immerse individuals in the day-to-day operations of a working brewery. Apprentices gain hands-on experience in every stage of the brewing process, from raw material selection and recipe formulation to mashing, fermentation, conditioning, packaging, and quality control. They also develop an understanding of health and safety, hygiene standards, equipment maintenance, and production planning, all of which are essential for producing consistent, high-quality beer.

As a graduate of a brewing apprenticeship myself, of the most notable strengths is the opportunity to learn directly from experienced brewers. Knowledge that has been built over years of practical experience can be passed on through mentorship, allowing apprentices to understand not only the technical aspects of brewing but also the problem-solving skills required when things do not go according to plan. This transfer of knowledge helps preserve traditional brewing techniques while encouraging innovation and continuous improvement.

For employers, apprenticeships are a valuable investment. They help breweries develop skilled employees who understand the company's processes, culture, and values from the outset. This often leads to improved staff retention, greater loyalty, and a workforce capable of adapting to changing consumer trends and technological advances. As the brewing industry faces challenges such as sustainability, energy efficiency, and evolving customer preferences, having well-trained brewers is more important than ever.

Brewing apprenticeships also create opportunities for people from diverse backgrounds to enter the industry. They provide an accessible route into brewing without requiring extensive prior experience, making the profession more inclusive and helping to address skills shortages across the sector. By earning while they learn, apprentices can build rewarding careers without the financial burden often associated with full-time education.

Ultimately, brewing apprenticeships benefit both individuals and the wider industry. They nurture talent, safeguard traditional skills, and equip future brewers with the expertise needed to embrace new technologies and brewing methods. As breweries continue to innovate while respecting the heritage of their craft, apprenticeships will remain a vital pathway for ensuring the industry thrives for generations to come, producing skilled professionals who are passionate about creating exceptional beer.

Alex Jordan, Head Brewer, Goffs Brewery



The Pub that Time Forgot Finishes top 5 Nationally

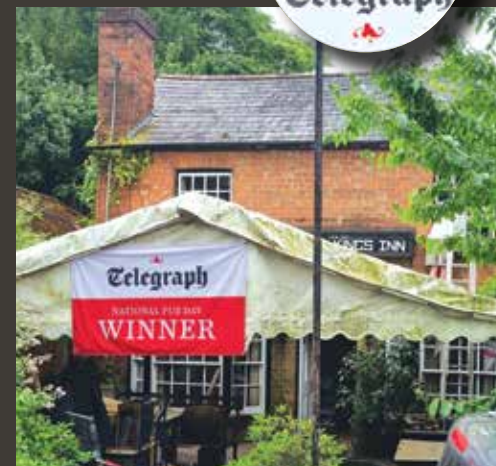
It's a rare thing indeed for me to say anything good about the Daily Telegraph. That said, to add to their positives (the crossword, Matt cartoons and cricket coverage), they are working for all of us in highlighting great British pubs and need to be saluted for that.

To quote from their letter to **The Three Kings in Hanley Castle**:

'Congratulations on being featured in the Telegraph's guide to the Best Pubs in the UK 20206. Chosen by a panel of experts, our guide celebrates the very best pubs in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, with a focus on venues that serve up history, character, good beer and a warm welcome.

Each of the 650 establishments in our guide has been tried and tested. If you haven't already taken a look, the full guide, including the listing for your pub, can be found at telegraph.co.uk/bestpubs. You'll see that you're in excellent company.'

I make no apology for lauding the first of the pubs we are featuring, as it is not in our county. It must be said, however, that this institution is an honorary Gloucestrian, being only a few miles over the border in Worcestershire. It does sit within our self-imposed Tippler buffer zone and we are proud



to be associated with this unique venue. Many of us will of course be familiar with **The Three Kings**, but for those who have never been: why not? It is fair to say that this village hub is a wonderful community asset and, in more colloquial terms, a pub that time forgot.

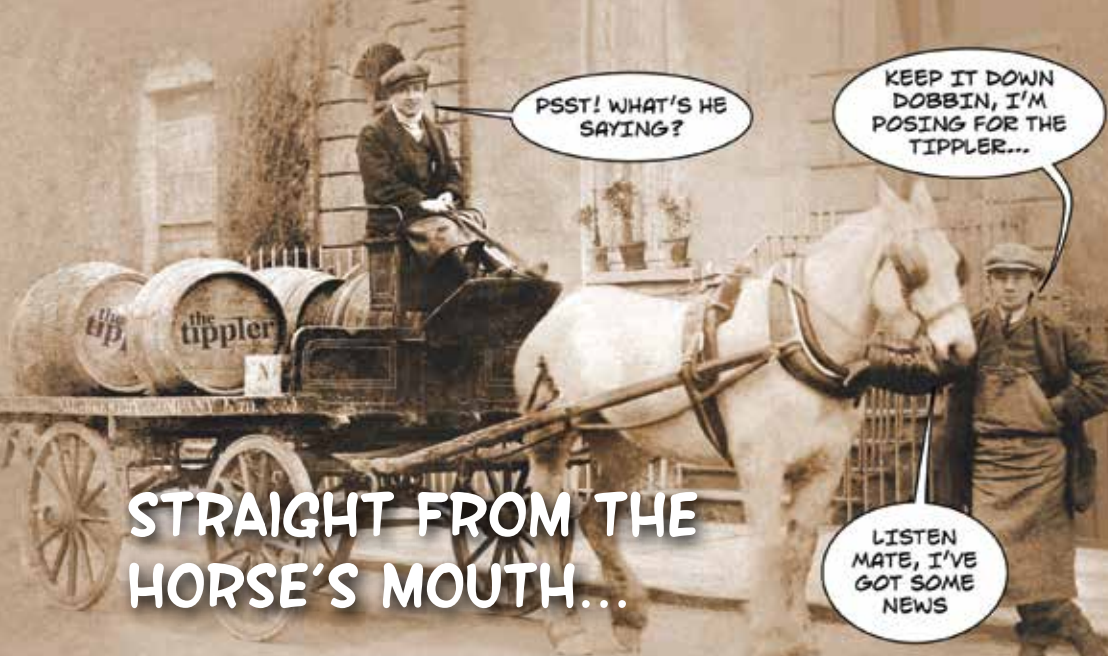
In fact, this pub is so special it is a winner of a regional award, **one of only five in the whole country**. So well done Sue on this fantastic achievement, we are all delighted for you!

Actually in the county is a pub that has been listed in the top 250 and this is the splendid Donnington's pub in the Market Square in Stow on the Wold, **The Queen's Head Inn**. A delicious two roomed Cotswold stone delight with a great offering of Donnington's Ales.

Two Stroud pubs also feature in the top 500 category, **The Prince Albert** on Rodborough Hill and **The Carpenters Arms**, both of these pubs being no strangers to awards and well deserved they are too.

Chris Leibbrandt





STRAIGHT FROM THE
HORSE'S MOUTH...

Pub & Brewery News

BREWERY NEWS

Clavel & Hind's Head Brewer, Alex Jordan, has left to become the head brewer at Goff's, in Winchcombe. In return a member of Goff's brewery team will take over at Clavel & Hind.

Goffs Brewery is celebrating a landmark achievement at the Brewing Oscars, after being crowned **International Cask Ale Champion** at the prestigious 2026 International Brewing & Cider Awards.

The awards ceremony took place on 20th May at the historic Guildhall in London, where Marcus and Alison Goff proudly received both a Gold Medal and the coveted Championship Trophy for their renowned **Cheltenham Gold** 4.5% cask ale.

Judging for the competition took place earlier this year and attracted entries from across the globe including Japan, Canada, the USA, Mexico, Spain, Sweden and Germany. Organised by the international trade association, the Brewing, Food & Beverage Industry Suppliers Association (BFBI), the competition is widely regarded as one

of the brewing industry's highest honours — often described as 'the Oscars of brewing'. Judges are flown in from around the world and are all beer professionals.

Cheltenham Gold secured the Gold Medal in the International Cask Ale Competition – Class 3 for Cask Ales 4.4%–4.8% ABV, marking the second consecutive victory for the beer in this category. As the competition is held every two years, the accolade means Cheltenham Gold will hold the title for an impressive four-year period.

The celebrations did not stop there. During the awards ceremony, Cheltenham Gold was also announced as the **Overall International Champion Cask Ale across all competition classes** sponsored by The Morning Advertiser: a moment that left the Goffs Brewery team absolutely amazed.

Founded in 1994 by Marcus and Alison Goff at the age of just 26, the brewery has earned numerous awards over the years, but the couple say this international recognition stands above them all.

The Goffs said:

"Winning this competition truly is the icing on the cake for us. To be recognised on an international stage against such fierce competition is absolutely incredible.

"We are immensely proud of our entire team at the brewery whose hard work and dedication made this possible. Special thanks must go to Libby Elsworth, who joined us to receive the award – we couldn't have done this without her.

"There were certainly tears shed and huge cheers echoing around the Guildhall when the winner was announced!"

First brewed in 2017, Cheltenham Gold was named both for its rich colour and as a tribute to the famous Gold Cup horse race held annually at Cheltenham Racecourse.

Situated on the scenic Cotswold Way, Goffs Brewery has built a reputation for producing award-winning beer using high-quality ingredients and a passion for brewing excellence. Cheltenham Gold and the other beers from the brewery can be found in pubs, bars & restaurants across the county and beyond and also available directly from the brewery website.

The Lydbrook Brewery, aka The Forge Hammer, has introduced a new brew going by the name of Black Bridge Stout and it is very black. Also on offer is Lydbrook Valley Viaduct IPA and beers from Goffs.

Mills Brewing has just opened their taproom in Thrupp, Stroud. In their courtyard pub benches fill the lovely suntrap, with additional seating inside the brewery and barrel store. They are serving their wild fermented beers on tap and in bottle, a Pilsner from Mills' sister brand (**Theremin**), top tier cider and perry by Tom Oliver, in-house made kombucha, single variety apple juice and natural wines. There is a "season yourself" crisps offering, with eight flavours to choose from.

Mills is owned and run by husband and wife, Genevieve and Jonny Mills, who will be serving the drinks. "We live in Stroud and are so happy to have been able to move our brewery here a year ago and finally open the doors to people properly!" Taproom opening hours are 12–7pm on both Friday and Saturday. You'll find the brewery at: Unit 4, Griffin Mill, Thrupp, Stroud, GL5 2AZ.



Goffs Brewery team celebrating a landmark achievement at the Brewing Oscars: Overall International Champion Cask Ale across all competition classes

Stroud Brewery was delighted with the results of the SIBA Midlands & West regional heat: its beers received two Overall Champion titles and nine further awards. This brings the total number of awards won this year to 20. The Overall Champions were OPA (Organic Pale Ale) and Easy Peasy, its 2.6% ABV pale ale, and both go forward to the SIBA national finals next March.

This year, Organic September is being celebrated with a new collaboration beer and a special partnership. Tap Social, an Oxfordshire

social enterprise, trains and employs people in prison and prison leavers in work skills using brewing, baking and hospitality – with remarkable results: 89% of its employees are still in work a year after release, and none have re-offended. Compare the latter to the national rate of 59%.

Tap Social's beers already scoop awards, but it lacked an organic brew – so they turned to fellow sustainability champions Stroud Brewery to fix that. Enter Against the Grain: a 4.2% hazy, unfiltered pale

CIDER & PERRY MAKERS' NEWS

Hayles Fruit Farm is putting on a fun packed family day at the farm this October. The team on the farm have been very busy over the last year growing all their own pumpkins, so they'll be ready for you to pick straight from the PYO pumpkin patch. Enjoy delicious food from their cafe and a variety of food vendors. To top it off they'll have loaded hot chocolates and marshmallows to toast around the fire pit. They're dog friendly too, so even your four-legged friends can enjoy the fun. There is something for everyone this Halloween at Hayles. Keep an eye on their socials for updates over the next few months @haylesfruitfarm'

Martin Pagett, Dursley's long-established cider maker got the top cider award at the Bath and West Show with his Kingston Black.

Martin's ciders often feature in the line-up at Dursley's, Hoptician, the micro-pub making it to the regional rounds of Cider Pub of the Year.

Martin, a postman, is a true local, having lived all his life within a stone's throw of The Old Spot Inn, where, like the Hoptician his ciders are sometimes available. Martin talked to the Tippler about his cider making:

"I've been making cider since helping my dad in my childhood. I planted my own orchard in 2016. Along the slade, which now produces enough fruit to sustain my small scale hobby. My garage has been overtaken with my equipment comprising of stainless tanks of various sizes.

"I use a spiedle scratter to pulp the apples and a hydropress to squeeze the juice out, all very different from the first basket press and hand operated scratter I started with.

"Last year at the Bath and West show I won a gold medal for a single variety **Bulmers Norman**



Martin Pagett with his awards

apple. This year I also won a gold medal, plus Best in Class for another single variety, **Kingston Black**, beating Martin Thatcher of Thatchers Cider to the top slot.

"This year's harvest will not be so good as the drought is causing the trees to shed their crop early as they can't sustain them. Hopefully I'll make a drop or two."

Here's Martin with the trophy that is called the 'Arthur Davis Cup' awarded to the best in class for the single variety class.

The Alkington Cider in Damery Lane near the M5's Michaelwood Services hosted the South Cerney Stragglers at a charity gathering. Food and drink was free, with a donations bucket which raised over £1000 for their chosen local charity, The Keepers Community Hub in Wotton-under-Edge.

They intend to sell their cider cheaper to local non-profit events with the dual aim of helping the community and rescuing apples from local orchards.

They open at the moment only on Friday afternoon into early evening, and can be followed on their Facebook page.

PUBS & CLUBS NEWS

Bank House, Cheltenham, Wetherspoon's pub manager, Jack,, has left to run his own pub in Ross-on-Wye. Alex is the new manager.

Kemble Brewery Inn, Fairview Street, Cheltenham has had its beer garden revamped, including new furniture.

Planet Caravan, Bath Street, Cheltenham, the micropub is now open from Wednesday to Sunday.

Siren Brewery, Brewery Quarter, Cheltenham, are opening their first pub outside Berkshire, in the former home of BrewDog in the Brewery Quarter. Opening dates are not yet known, but fans of Siren's distinctive keg and cask beers are in for a treat.

The Berkeley Arms at Purton, on the Severn Shore is a newly reopened venture pulling in the crowds. Derelict since 2021, it has been extensively refurbished, the scenic grounds extended, and food and two real ales served every day from Wednesday to Sunday. Those who remember the historic interior may be disappointed, but the renaissance is an achievement to be celebrated.

The Firehouse on St. James Square, Cheltenham, which was closed for a couple of years, re-opened as the: **Mad Dog Brewery Company** – great range of real ales and ciders etc.

The Fleece Community pub at Hillesley took on a new tenant in August. It means the return, after a stint at nearby Leighterton's Royal Oak, of a landlord who learnt his trade at the pub under the much-missed Rod Undy. A sausage and cider festival was due to be held in August.

The Globe Inn, Berry Hill in the Forest went for auction and has been sold to a local resident, tenants to stay,

The Hearts of Oak, Drybrook, has new owners. The tenants tried to bid for the pub at the auction but were out bid. They are still running the pub as successfully as before but await to see what happens next. Although it now has new owners, the tenants are set to stay.

The Hoptician, Dursley, is due to receive its Region Cider Pub of the year award on October 24th, but the licencees had a summer of celebration, first during Dursley Festival in July when "Sideboard" played and free samples of two ciders, one from Martin Pagett of Dursley and one from Kevin's



PUBS & CLUBS NEWS (Cont'd)

friend in Kent, were distributed to the gathered crowd who cheered when The Tippler was passed around with its featured article on the micro-pub. Then more music, cider and good cheer occurred when licencees Kevin and Kirsty were married later in July.

The Lamb Inn, Mitcheldean has reopened with new tenants,

The Miners Arms, Whitecroft up for sale as a going concern,

The Old Spot, Dursley, will also have a big day on October 24th when West Central Region members

meet there at noon for a dual celebration of these two fine Dursley GBG pubs.

The Red Hart, Blaisdon, owners celebrated 20 years at the pub on the 4th July.

The Tavern on Royal Well Place, Cheltenham has now reopened again (presumably under new management).

The White Horse, Soudley has been sold, now with new tenants.

The Woodman Inn, Parkend has reopened. new tenants on five year lease

Pubs offering CAMRA discounts

A number of pubs and businesses are offering discounts to CAMRA members, a scheme backed by CAMRA National with promotional posters available to landlords.

The ones we know of are listed below – just wave your CAMRA card and you'll be entitled to the discount. If you know of any more, please get in touch and we'll add them to the list.

Establishment	Where	Offer	
THE BELL HOTEL	TEWKESBURY	10% OFF REAL ALES	
THE BERKELEY ARMS	TEWKESBURY	10% OFF REAL ALES	
BREWHOUSE AND KITCHEN	CHELTENHAM	10% OFF REAL ALES	
BREWHOUSE AND KITCHEN	GLOUCESTER	10% OFF REAL ALES	
BUTFORD ORGANICS CIDER & PERRIES	BODENHAM HEREFORD	10% OFF WEEKEND SHOP PURCHASES (MIN £20 SPEND)	
CHALFORD SPORTS & SOCIAL CLUB	CHALFORD STROUD	50P OFF REAL ALES	
CHURCHDOWN CLUB	CHURCHDOWN	10% OFF REAL ALES	NEW
THE BRITANNIA	TEWKESBURY	10% OFF REAL ALES	NEW
THE CANTERBURY	TEWKESBURY	10% OFF REAL ALES	
THE HOPTICIAN	DURSLEY	20P OFF REAL ALES	
THE NEW PLOUGH	TEWKESBURY	10% OFF ALES MON/TUES/WED	NEW
THE NOTTINGHAM ARMS	TEWKESBURY	50P OFF REAL ALES, MON & TUES	
THE OLD SPOT	DURSLEY	20P OFF REAL ALES	
THE PRINCE ALBERT	STROUD	20P OFF REAL ALES	



HOT OFF THE PRESS

Tim Haigh-Gannon talks about the new Alkington Cidery

Gloucestershire has a proud cider-making history, but many of the old cider houses that once stood beside farms and orchards have disappeared. In the Vale, almost every farm would once have had a place where apples were milled, pressed and fermented, with cider forming an important part of rural life. Today, traditional orchards have declined dramatically and many of those cider houses have been lost. That made us ask a simple question: what if we built a new cider house using the methods, materials and ideas of the past?

That question led to the creation of **The Cider House, Alkington Cidery**, in the parish of Alkington near Berkeley, Gloucestershire. Built over the last year using reclaimed materials, it is believed to be the first traditional-style cider house to be constructed in the county for around a century, and one of only a handful of licensed cider houses in the UK. The building was designed as a genuine working cider house, inspired by those that once stood across Gloucestershire, rather than as simply a visitor attraction.

I am a retired joiner, and together with my friend Steve Bindon, we have been making cider for many years. Three years ago we moved towards minimal-intervention cider making, using local apples from traditional orchards and allowing spontaneous fermentation to do the work. Much of our cider is made from donated fruit, gathered from old orchards around the Berkeley Vale where many heritage varieties still survive.

The response from local people has been remarkable. There seems to be no shortage of orchard owners willing to share apples from trees that might otherwise go unused. In return, we help maintain orchards, share our knowledge, offer free cider, and, most importantly, help preserve old local varieties. Some of these apples come from rare Gloucestershire cultivars that are now scarcely found outside a handful of orchards.

Inside the cider house, visitors can see restored historic equipment, including a late nineteenth-century Workman & Sons scratter and other traditional machinery. Apples are milled, pressed and fermented in much the same way as they would have been over a hundred years ago. We believe that great cider begins with great fruit, and that means cider apples from traditional orchards, fermented slowly and naturally.

The building itself reflects this philosophy. Constructed using reclaimed bricks, timber and Welsh slates, it was designed to look as though it could have stood in the Vale during the 1880s. It is modest in scale, producing less than 7,000 litres a year, but that allows



us to focus on quality, authenticity and local character rather than volume.

The Cider House has already become a meeting place for local groups, CAMRA members and visitors interested in traditional cider making. Later this year we will be hosting heritage pressing days, charity events and guided tours, sharing Gloucestershire's rich cider heritage with anyone who wants to learn more. Members of Cirencester CAMRA first visited while the building was still under construction and returned recently for a charity event. Their encouragement, along with that of so many others who value real cider and its traditions, has been greatly appreciated.

In 2026 we obtained a premises licence, allowing us to open regularly to the public and sell cider both for drinking on site and to take away – Fridays have become our regular opening day.

We hope **The Cider House** can play a small part in keeping that tradition alive. If it encourages people to value old orchards, discover real cider, or simply sit down with a glass and talk about apples, then it will have achieved exactly what it was built for.

We are open every Friday from 3.00 pm to 8.00 pm, with additional events and heritage pressing days during the apple season.

You can follow our journey on Facebook by searching for Alkington Cidery.



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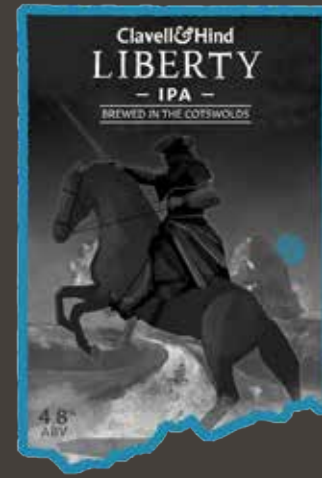
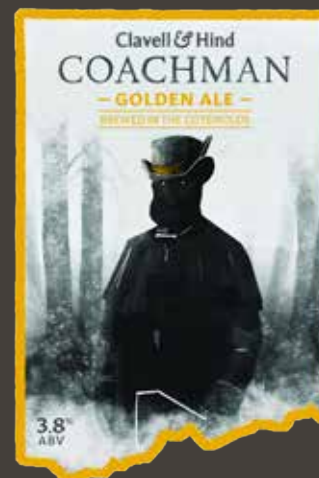
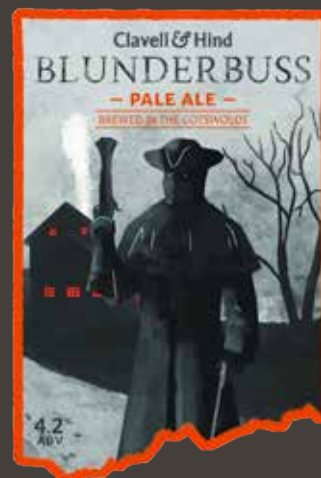
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Ploughing a New Furrow

A new direction for The New Plough in Tewkesbury

Tom Gibson, new landlord at the New Plough in Tewkesbury, has always loved a challenge in the pub trade. Moving from Drybrook in the Forest where he ran the Hearts of Oak for the last five years to Tewkesbury town centre is certainly that.

The New Plough, it is fair to say, has had a bit of a checkered recent past, with several iterations of the pub leaving it with a bit of a confused personality. Creating a new personality for the establishment will be at the top of the 'to do' list for Tom. The pub does, however, have plenty going for it, as well as the obvious enthusiasm that Tom brings to the party.

"I like a challenge," Tom told me, "and I always try and aim high, I can see a great future for the pub, and I am working hard to establish a new 'face' for the pub in the town centre."

Tom knows exactly what is needed to make a community pub work, **The Hearts of Oak** won the Forest of Dean Pub of the Year award in 2024, and established a regular place in the Good Beer Guide for three years running.

Tom is no newcomer to the pub scene, in fact he wasn't far off being born into it. At two years old his family moved into a pub in Derbyshire and he's been in and around pubs and the pub trade ever since. The local recent history means that, along with the Hearts of Oak, Tom has also worked at the Mill Inn in Withington.

I asked Tom what he had planned for the pub, how is he going (in marketing speak) to differentiate his product, make the New Plough stand out from the crowd, it'll be a tough act in Tewkesbury, but he is confident he can pull it off.

"First of all, and most importantly for CAMRA members, we are free of tie, so a traditional freehouse, giving us a real choice in the ales we can sell. This does mean that we will have three real ales and two ciders on all the time. It also means that we can showcase beers from all over, although I intend

to feature smaller, independent breweries up to a 50 mile radius from town. Along with these regular offerings, we can also arrange our own beer and cider festivals, something that will also become a regular feature.

"In terms of the pub itself, it has enormous potential, particularly the excellent upstairs function room, 'The Library', which we will be using very soon. Our regular Blues Nights, on the first Saturday of every month, start on September 5th. This will be hosted by a regular band with guest performances...and even better for our customers, it's free entry. (I like the sound of this! - Ed.)

"We are also looking at a complete internal and external (we have a beer garden too) refurbishment. Change of decor, colours and the like, are all planned which may, of course, also mean some change to the internal layout, but that will be a bit organic, we won't know until we start.

With my marketing head on I asked about the advertising and promotion of the pub. Did Tom have anything up his sleeve?

"With an eye on the marketing of the pub, we are introducing a 50 pence discount for CAMRA members from Monday to Wednesday and also an 'Ale Passport', a loyalty card that means that with every eight pints, you'll get a free one.

"Finally, we are realistic about the pub and it's near future, we are not looking at outright competition, it's far more a case of looking to become and integral part of the Tewkesbury town centre pub community, with our own distinct personality, and I am really looking forward to welcoming new regulars to the pub, so all I can say is: come in and give us a try."

I am confident that there will be plenty of locals who will be doing just that.

Chris Leibbrandt



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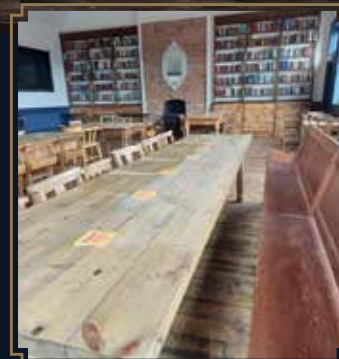
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Tall Tales from the Cider Shed...

Back in May, a gathering in the Forest of Dean brought an unlikely posse of cider and perry makers together – and our man was there...

Kevin Minchew is without doubt one of the most influential cider and perry makers of his generation. So it came as no surprise to see that an evening with Kevin at Jolter Press was a complete sell out. People came from near and far to see a master craftsman talking about his lifetime in cider making.

Another cider icon, Tom Oliver, joined Kevin that evening and started by asking him where he made his first cider. It was back in 1984 at that well known cider pub, the Plough at Elmley Castle, where they made him his first barrel, and as time went by his production levels started to increase by quite a lot.

Kevin's love of the countryside was evident as he talked about pear trees, tapping his new cider when he heard the cuckoo, and his interest in John Speed's map of Worcestershire from 1610. He went

on to remind us about the cider alphabet: 'A is for apples, B is for barrel, C is for cider and D is for drinking!'

He was also once asked if he would like to become a Liberal Democrat MP, something which he wisely turned down. As the evening went on, the stories became more interesting, like the day he thought he had found the long-lost, late Treacle Pear at Longdon. He even got pear experts Ray Williams and Charles Martell to look at the tree, and they all came to the same conclusion that it was indeed the late Treacle Pear. The story got even bigger and ended up on the BBC's Rick Stein TV programme. Unfortunately though, it turned out that it wasn't the late Treacle Pear after all, as the stem on the pear was too long.

Another story was the day the King met him.

It was following the summer floods of 2007 that the then Prince of Wales came to Tewkesbury. Having heard that the Prince was coming to the appropriately named Perry Hill, Kevin decided to take a bottle of his perry to present to him. Just as he was about to give his bottle to the Prince, the now King said, 'Mr Minchew the cider maker, isn't it?' which left Kevin absolutely speechless for once in his life.

Kevin's cider and perries were always legendary at the Tewkesbury Medieval Festival, with a lot of people not realizing how strong it was. And with the hot July sun shining down, quite a lot of people would get worse for wear. One particular gentleman took a liking to Kevin's perry, and kept coming back for more. Kevin kept telling him that he had drunk too much. So when the gentleman finally got the message, he went to get on his bike and started to pedal away. Unfortunately, his cycle cape got stuck in the derailleur gears, and he ended up going over the front of his bike, with his glasses falling off into the mud. After about three attempts to ride his bike away he gave up. There

is a video of this somewhere, but I will spare the gentleman's blushes by not saying what it's called.

The evening for Kevin was for charity, and after a raffle and an auction of one of his Last Hurrah Perry bottles, a grand total of over £250 was raised for the local Forest Pulse charity. Proprietor Pat should get a lot of credit for organizing the event. There was plenty of cider and perry to drink and some good quality bread, cheese and pork pies to eat.

As for Jolter Press, this really is the place to be if you like your cider and perry. There are plenty of draught ciders and perries on the bar

and I have never seen so many different bottles of cider and perry – I even noticed a few bottles of Babycham, which is even before my time!

So if you are ever in the Mitcheldean area, why not call in at Jolter Press. Pat will make you feel very welcome and if the enjoyable evening that we had there in early May is anything to go by, you'll certainly have a good night out.

Dereck Hartland

The great and the good at Jolter Press – (l to r) Left: Geoff Newman, Rob Castle, Phill Palmer; Adam Taylor, Back: (standing) Pat Lock, Stewart Minchew, Ian Learmouth, Tim Haigh-Gannon, James McCrindle; Back: (seated) Kevin Minchew, Tom Oliver, Jon Thomas; Right: Rich Davies, Matt Smith, Dereck Hartland



Photograph courtesy Tim Haigh-Gannon

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DEAF BOY WANDERIN' JOHN



After his peregrinations in the Antipodes, Deaf Boy Wanderin' John is firmly back home, with a delightful walk on the edge of the Cotswolds, near Gloucester.

I'm afraid there is no start from a local hostelry on this walk, as the walk commences at the parking area outside of St Mary's Church in Great Witcombe. Be sure to take notice of the sign lurking on the edge of the graveyard telling motorists to park at a jaunty angle.

The walk skirts the edge of the nearby Witcombe Reservoir, where keen eyes could spot all manner of waterfowl. I saw a pair of grebes on my walk, plus the usual mallards and other ducks that live on water, that is of course if there is any water left in the reservoir after this year's heat waves.

There followed a gradual rise towards the green, tree-lined canopy of Cooper's Hill Wood, over lush grassy fields (or they could be white and bone dry – see water in reservoir comment), which allows the walker to see ever wider vistas towards Gloucester and beyond.

The steadily sloping fields take you past the remains of Witcombe Roman Villa. What did the Romans ever do for us? Well, they didn't allow this historic site to be fenced off, meaning that nobody

can see the stunning mosaics in the villa now. This historic site looks sad and uncared for, surely English Heritage can do better than this?

Leaving the lonely villa behind, the path enters the shady, cooling woods above Witcombe. Here the Cotswold Way cuts through the wood like a walker's M5: very easy to follow. The lesser-known Gustav Holst Path comes into view, and you can well imagine the great composer humming highlights from the Planets Suite on his way through the wood. The woods are stunning and full of birdsong, most of which, I am afraid I cannot identify.

What else did the Romans leave behind besides mosaics, central heating, villas and swimming baths, sorry, plunge pools? The answer is... snails. Whilst walking in the wood, I came to a full stop when I came across a snail on the path. Far too large for our native species, it had to be the Escargot type. (As a point of interest, and another link between Gloucestershire and Kent, hops and cider being the others, they are the only counties in the UK with, now, indigenous populations of these



tasty beasts. – Ed.)

Rather than eat it with some fried onions, I stood and watched it slowly leave the path and disappear into the undergrowth. You have been warned, so watch where you are putting your feet on this walk.

The route now led downwards, off the Cotswold Way through fields of knee-high grass, but with amazing views of the city of Gloucester. Clearly recognisable were the lovely Gloucester cathedral

tower and the not so lovely Gloucester Hospital's tower block and chimney.

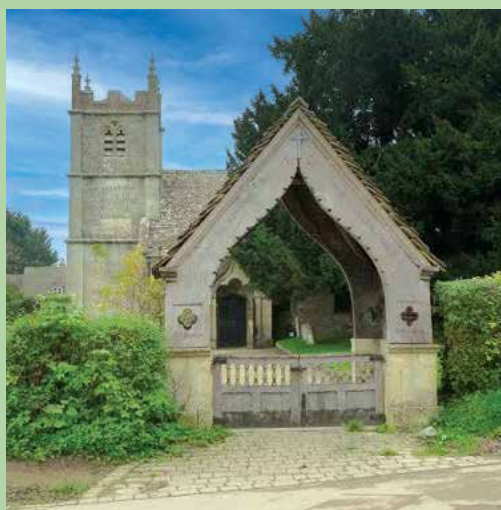
Take time to stand still once in a while as you descend into that hopefully lush and rich green valley, the very essence of Gloucestershire, and be thankful that Gloucester is not plagued by massively tall high-rise buildings.

Further on the descent you will enter the grounds of Witcombe Park. No Capability Brown landscape here, just valuable farmland, hence having to negotiate a passageway through a herd of curious cows. If you are in a group, this is the time to close ranks like those brave Roman legionaries and march steadfastly forward before running and leaping over the gate to safety. The walk returns to the church car park. A wonderful, fairly short walk in glorious Gloucestershire countryside.

I found that although there were no hostelries in the immediate locality, it was worth driving (not walking) up the back lane to The Royal George in Birdlip, which not only serves a range of beers but also provides very good meals.

The views from the restaurant over the whole of the valley towards Gloucester are as fine as any of those encountered on the walk, but are no excuse for just going straight to the pub and doing your walk with your eyes.

Deaf Boy



St Mary's, Great Witcombe



Remains of the Roman Villa (Library Picture)



The Royal George, Birdlip

The Pub Whisperer

In this series about local pub life we drop in on various pubs around the county as the journey continues...

Collective separation at a family pub table, thanks to the mobile phone

Three men and two women sit down with a drink at about 9.00 on a Saturday night. The two women chat about an issue and the four men peruse their phones in silence.

After a few minutes two men put down their phones and one of them engages with the women's conversation. One of the guys just sits and listens and the other stays on his phone. The young lad watches the footy on the TV. The women keep talking and telling stories. The guy with the phone continues to scroll and the older guy listens and contributes briefly occasionally. The young lad goes back to his phone and the women continue to recount the past family drama. The young lad does make an amusing contribution, but then goes back to the footy and then his phone. This group know each other very well and are relaxed. Not much changes over their time here. Today their local is a comfy place for a modern family outing, but conversation is often more limited than in the past. 'No phones at the table springs to mind' as a template for going to the pub.

A Sue Ryder charity weekend

It's Sunday late afternoon. The pub has been supporting a local Sue Ryder Hospice for two days with musical events, raffles, bands and events to raise money for the hospice.

The back courtyard is crowded with most people on benches; a BBQ is at one end under cover and a 'cover' band play countyfied pop music, partly under another cover. The singers play two banjos and a guitar supports them as does another with, some percussion and a missing drummer. They are very welcome as a soft approach, suitable for a Sunday afternoon.

It starts to rain heavily and in the middle of the song the lead singer says: "We might be electrified soon." Someone covers the speakers with plastic bags and someone says: "It's more like halloween." A regular rushes forward with an umbrella to cover the electrical equipment rather than the lead singer. The show must go on. They carry on relentlessly and the rain stops and the sun comes out and there is a cheer. The punters' umbrellas are taken down, all except the one over the electrical equipment. Their next song starts with some whistling and it's repeated half way through. Very musical.

All the staff and organisers wear Sue Ryder shirts and posters and banners decorate the pub.

Gradually the plastic bags are removed as is the protective umbrella and the singers become more enthusiastic with their banjos and percussion. The drummer has yet to arrive, but the three women and one hidden guitarist don't appear to miss him. 'The mighty jungle where the lion sleeps tonight' is well suited to the banjos and their sonorous voices. The pub had three bands on Saturday and two today.

Approximately £16k has been raised. This is the fourth large charity organised by one of the regulars; the first in 2019 and after Covid 2022, 2023 and now 2004.

The band leader says: "We are going to do a couple more, have a break and then assess the weather outlook as it looks 'rubbish.'" It's already ruined the Cheltenham Cricket Festival with cold winds and will do so this week with much rain to come. However, this is The Beehive, Cheltenham Pub of the Year 2024, and they are living up to their award by serving a wide range of ales and supporting local charities even during a wet July. The organisers arrange to move the band inside as the heavens are about to open. A worthy POTY.

Ladies in caps

A Saturday evening in September during a Gloucester rugby match the pub is invaded by four women dressed up in short skirts and shorts wearing golf visors and one carrying a plastic phallus. They appear to have lost someone they are searching for. It is probably a hen evening run round Cheltenham. Suddenly a few more appear, and they gather at the bar holding tick sheets and

order drinks. There are only two staff on, but they smile and welcome them. Four more head off on their hunt for the bride to be, and the rest stay for a shot, then move on, keen to win whatever prize is being offered. Another four arrive grab a shot and move on fast, all dressed similarly, with golf visors and they tick their cards as they go.

New men are pub regulars

A trio of guys and one woman are standing in a corner with stools and a barrel tabletop. They are joined by a friend and a tiny baby in a pram, the friend is welcomed, in his shorts, by everyone with a hug and all of them go to the pram and welcome the baby. More follow and more hugs are experienced, and more fingers are poked into the baby's space. S/he starts wailing and the male parent picks him/her up and he/she is seen to be no more than a few weeks old. The guys go back to their conversations that get

louder and the baby is gently rocked in its father's arms. Bottles of liquid can be seen peeking out from the top of the pram.

Another guy takes over cuddling the infant as they share him/her around which means each gives up drinking for a while. After a few minutes the baby is handed back to father who is then deprived of his ale in order to keep the baby safe. The only woman in the group eventually caresses the baby's cheeks and kisses the father on the cheek and she leaves with her partner. Another man takes his turn at rocking the baby. New men are everywhere, and they introduce their offspring to the pub culture at the earliest opportunity.





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CIDER & PERRY MAN



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

Tastings in rural Somerset

Readers may well remember my article last year when I managed to join in on a minibus tour of Herefordshire, organized by 'The Ciderologist,' Gabe Cook, after the annual CraftCon Cider and Perry Conference. Well, time flies, and this year's event was held in Taunton, so once again, it was all aboard for another interesting trip.

Taunton is just outside the low lying and wet inland area, known as The Somerset Levels, with all three Cideries abutting that area, which is thankfully on the higher ground, where apple trees can flourish. Our first stop was at **The Bere Cider Company** which is just outside the village of Aller.

I had visited it, some five years before and remembered sitting on a hay bale and having a casual tasting with some locals. The owner also has a separate main business, but the cider making has now reached a stage where he was hopeful that his son might take it into a full time operation. They now have a small shop and a café and we enjoyed a tutored tasting which included his popular **Gold Rush Draught** and a number of individual varietals including the rather rare **Morgan Sweet**, which is a dual purpose apple and is one of the earliest picking varieties.

We then moved on to **Harry's Cider Company**, at Long Sutton, which is rather better known. They have also expanded, and now have a very smart purpose built café and taproom. I have always enjoyed their well known brand called **Scrummage**, which is available in bag in box and is quite widely distributed to local pubs. We also tasted a number of single variety ciders and they provided us with a very good ploughmans lunch as we relaxed outside in the sun with our ciders.

Our last port of call was fittingly the most unusual, since whilst **Burrow Hill Cider** obviously makes some cider and a little perry, it provides the basis for their unique distillation of **Somerset Cider Brandy**, which is otherwise known in France as **Calvados**.

We were shown around the very old farm buildings by the daughter of the owner until we eventually arrived at a new warehouse, almost completely full of oak barrels with the aging 10/20/30 year liquor resting and awaiting eventual bottling. This was actually a bonded warehouse, with no doubt very strong security, since I reckoned there was over five hundred barrels with total mega value.

I have always found French Calvados to be rather too fierce for my palate, but still enjoyed sampling their own production which seemed to have more fruit evident. My own favourite is their **Pomona**, which is effectively fortified cider, coming out at about 20% alc content. This makes a rather nice dessert drink that goes well with strawberries. Ironically, Pomona is also available locally in the smart deli shop at **Dunkerton's**, along with several others of The Burrow Hill range.

All in all a great day out, and the even better news is that next year's conference is to be held in Cheltenham so it will be very interesting to see where Gabe will be visiting.

The Bristol Cider Club

Still just in Somerset, I have been on two tasting trips with **The Bristol Cider Club**. They often use a rather individual pub in the Bedminster area and my first event was a tasting event put on by **Sobremesa**, a small cidery and brewery based (at the time) just outside Hay on Wye, whom I had heard about some time ago. Their cider production is quite individual and based on different blends, bottled and fermenting in 75cl size, at accompanying wine prices. This is a growing trend amongst the smaller artisan producers who are more concerned with individuality rather than quantity. The Spanish owner also provided his own bakery nibbles to go with the drinks.

They have since moved to near Abergavenny where I expect they will soon to be found exhibiting in the large and famous indoor food market.

Wild West Cider

My second trip with the cider club was a visit to an interesting set up near Failand to the south west of the city. This is called **Wild West Cider** and was originally established up some five years ago as a vineyard within a restored farm complex. They always had thoughts of establishing cider production, since a lot of the machinery can be used for both fruits. They only have about two hectares (five acres) under vine but before they started planting apple trees they were unexpectedly offered the fruit from a nearby large orchard, and couldn't turn it down and got straight into production. With their own orchards now well into fruit, their cider production is way ahead of the wine.

Once again, like Sobremesa, their bottled production is based on individual apple varieties in 75cl size, but in a slightly unusual twist they also offer two easy drinking blends in cans with eye catching artwork.

Our visit was by appointment and a picnic lunch was provided, as we sat outside alongside a pool, and enjoyed the tasting.

We returned to Bristol by local bus, which conveniently took us back close to the waterside area where we called in to **The Orchard Inn** which is one of Bristol's main cider outlets.

It was in a rather rundown, ex-commercial area, but the range of ciders available certainly didn't disappoint, and it has more variety than almost anywhere up here, but then Bristol is the self-claimed City of Cider!

Guy Vowles



Left: The Bere Cider Company; Middle: Harry's Cider Company; Right: The bonded warehouse at Burrow Mill Cider

POPCY TICKER?

THE CONTINUING TALES OF A BEER COLLECTOR

In this edition, our collector has to research some fascinating nomenclature...is it pale and interesting, or is it IPA in all of its new guises? Or, is it all in a name?

I was recently asked, "What's the difference between a pale ale and an IPA?" Hmm ... I wonder how you would fare trying to answer that. An IPA is a pale ale, but how would you explain what makes some pale ales IPA and some just plain old pale ale?

And what about a black IPA – that's not even pale! I thought I could probably talk about the long sea crossing that an original IPA had to endure, but how would that help shed light on an answer to the question? As I am someone who likes to talk about beer, but doesn't like getting things wrong, I thought I'd better do a bit of proper research and find out a bit more about the world of the IPA, especially since it is now one of the most popular styles on offer.

Let's start with the History lesson. As the British Empire expanded in the 1700s, there was an increasing need for the British presence around the World to be supplied with beer. In many places, beer could be brewed locally, sometimes using local ingredients, at other times using hops and malt exported from home. However, shipping ready-made beer across the ocean quickly became big business and made some brewers very successful,

for example Hodgson's of Bow and Burton on Trent's Allsopp's. Barrels of beer proved useful ballast for ships heading out to East Asia with largely empty holds. The East India Company was responsible for much of this trade. To start with, most of the beer sent out was porter, but Hodgson's soon started shipping a strong pale ale, that by the early 1800s had become known as East India Pale Ale. This was so popular that Allsopp's started sending out a similar brew and by the late 1800s, the style was commonly called India Pale Ale. It was fairly common practice at the time for

strong pale ales, sometimes called October Ale, to be matured in cask for months, even up to a couple of years, and the four to five-month sea journey seemed perfectly suited to this task. Successful ageing generally requires a high hop and alcohol content to avoid the development of 'off' flavours through contamination. The beer would be shipped as bright as possible, in other words with next to no yeast still present, since the aim was not for further fermentation to take place on board ship, but for a rapid maturation to occur as the beer was tossed around and the temperature changed during the voyage.

So, what would a pint of IPA taste like to a thirsty Brit stationed thousands of miles from home in the 1800s?



So, what would a pint of IPA taste like to a thirsty Brit stationed thousands of miles from home in the 1800s? Probably, not much like any IPA you might order at a bar near you any time soon! It would have been far less aromatic, more bitter, probably stronger (although there are still plenty of high ABV IPAs around) and almost certainly with a distinctive earthy funk developed over the long ageing at sea. The brewers would have used traditional English hops, high in bitterness, but low in the floral, fruity flavours we are used to today. The high alcohol content helped prevent spoilage on the sea crossing. The months of ageing would allow for the development of extra flavours similar to the funkiness you get with modern beers that have Brettanomyces yeast strains added. In short, a nineteenth century IPA would have had much of the complexity you might expect from a fine wine matured in a cellar for several years.

IPA became a popular style at home as well as abroad and as time wore on, brewers for the home market reduced the ABV, often as a way of reducing the duty that had to be paid on it. This meant that by the early 1900s, much of the IPA drunk in Britain would have been session strength. Then came the dramatic decline in all ale with mass-market lagers becoming dominant and IPA was almost lost, like much of the traditional beer that had been drunk in Britain for centuries.

It was the growth of craft beer in the US in the late 20th century that revived the name IPA, but as with many things American, this new iteration of the style was bold and brash, a very different creature to that shipped from Britain two hundred years earlier. US hops are often very different in nature to their British counterparts and the IPAs that started to appear in America in the 1980s were massively hopped and full of fruity and floral flavours with little or no malt in the flavour profile. They have become hugely popular and now we

have a whole range of styles within the IPA style: English IPA, Session IPA, West Coast IPA, New England IPA, Double and Triple IPA, Milkshake IPA, DDH (Double Dry Hopped) IPA, Fruited IPA, Black IPA, New Zealand IPA or Belgian IPA, to name but 12! If you get confused by these, I will try to give a brief description of each:

English – with a more subtle hop character and less citrus from the use of English flavouring hops;

Session – generally with a lower ABV, 3 to 4% is typical;

West Coast – clear and crisp with a strong, bitter hop profile featuring pine and citrus;

New England – unfiltered and therefore hazy, with juicy, tropical hop flavours and slightly less bitterness;

Double and Triple – stronger, bolder versions, packing higher alcohol, more malt and intense hop flavours;

Milkshake – the use of lactose produces a sweet, smooth, creamy beer with less bitterness;

DDH – adding extra hops later in the brewing process produces more intense hop characteristics;

Fruited – the addition of pureed fruit gives additional fruity flavours and aromas;

Black IPA – not a pale ale at all, so this really deserves a different name, the use of darker malts combines roasty notes with the classic citrus and pine hop flavours;

New Zealand – NZ hops are used to impart intense tropical flavours, such as pineapple, passion fruit or white grape, with less bitterness;

Belgian – Belgian yeast strains bring spicy and fruity notes to the forefront, while still showcasing the hop flavours.

DODGY TICKER?

The IPAs of today mostly bear little resemblance to the beers that were regularly shipped across oceans to British workers across the Empire, despite sharing the same name. But, having explored the story of this iconic style, are we any closer to answering the initial query – “What’s the difference between a pale ale and an IPA?” I would like to think that, having read this article, you would feel more confident giving a reasonable answer to this question now. I would characterise an IPA by its assertive hop bitterness and pronounced hop flavours, often featuring citrus, pine or tropical fruits, with most, if not all, of the malty notes subdued – call it a hop bomb, if you like! A non-IPA pale ale would have a more moderate hop presence and more noticeable malt, giving it what many would describe as a more balanced flavour profile.

There are so many IPAs out there that recommending good ones is not an easy task. Most beer drinkers will have tasted Thornbridge’s Jaipur, still a decent example of the classic IPA, but maybe not as full of hop character as it once was. I am a

fan of Salopian’s Kashmir and the collaboration beer that Thornbridge and Salopian created a few years ago called Kashpur was a wonderful combination of these two classics. I would add Buxton’s Axe Edge, Oakham’s Green Devil, Ilkley’s Lotus IPA and Magic Rock’s Cannonball to a list of favourites. The last on that list was complemented by two stronger versions – Human Cannonball and Un-human Cannonball, which blew me away when I first tasted them many years ago. Sadly, the Magic Rock brewery in Huddersfield is now closed, and although the brand name has been purchased by Keystone, I somehow doubt whether the true ‘magic’ of these wonderful beers will ever be captured again. At the 2025 Great British Beer Festival last August, CAMRA judged Elusive’s Oregon Trail to be the best cask IPA. I haven’t yet collected Oregon Trail, but will certainly keep my eyes peeled for it locally – and if anyone asks me about IPAs from now on, I’ll have plenty to talk about!

Pete Searle

COMPETITION WINNERS

From our Summer Issue 2026:

Brewhouse & Kitchen (Gloucester) Prize Crossword:

The featured brewery is ‘Vault City Brewery’ and the 3 winners are **Clive Whealdon, Julia Stevens and Kevin Wilson**

Uley Brewery Prize Wordsearch:

The answer was ‘Beer is not a breakfast drink it can be enjoyed at any time’ and the four winners are **Steve Fletcher, Bev Price, Geoff Mills and Julia Richardson**

Stroud Brewery Caption Competition:

The two winners are **Jane Smith** with ‘Nothing pairs with a freezing draught like no trousers’, and **Candice Snelling** with ‘I should have worn shorts!’

Wetherspoons Name That Pub Competition:

The featured pub is **The Nottingham Arms** in Tewkesbury and the winner is **Tim Bonsor**.

Tippler Tee-Shirt Prize Letter Competition:

The winner is **David Ribble**.

Yes, people really do win our competitions!
Send your entries for this issue to chris@thetippler.co.uk

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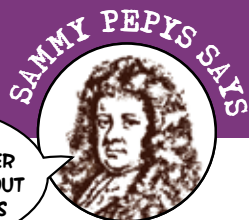


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Call: Rob Coldwell 07752 740488 For more details see website www.cheltenham.camra.org.uk

North Cotswold Branch

Email: chairncb@northcotswoldcamra.org.uk

For more details see website www.northcotswoldcamra.org.uk or the Facebook page: [pagehttps://www.facebook.com/North-Cotswolds-CAMRA-the-Campaign-for-Real-Ale-in-the-North-Cotswolds-1022351584505679/?fref=nf1](https://www.facebook.com/North-Cotswolds-CAMRA-the-Campaign-for-Real-Ale-in-the-North-Cotswolds-1022351584505679/?fref=nf1)

Call: Martin Jones on 07879 015881.

Mid-Gloucestershire Branch

Website: <https://www.midgloucestershire.camra.org.uk>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/456426941062201>

Email: chair@midgloucestershire.camra.org.uk – Peter Bennetts

Email: branchcontact@midgloucestershire.camra.org.uk – Chris Hall

Branch Meetings first Tuesday of alternate months 7.30pm at the Pelican, Gloucester. Email: chair@

Cirencester Area Email: cirencester@midgloucestershire.camra.org.uk

Meetings on second Tuesday of the month at 8.00 pm.

Area Coordinator: Patrick Mills on 07977 263368

Dursley Area Email: dursley@midgloucestershire.camra.org.uk

Meetings on the second Tuesday of every other month at 8.00 pm.

Area Coordinator: Dave Ashbee

Forest of Dean Area Email: forestofdean@midgloucestershire.camra.org.uk

Area Coordinator: Chris Laming

Gloucester Area Email: gloucester@midgloucestershire.camra.org.uk

Meetings on second Wednesday of the month at 8.00 pm.

Area Coordinator: Vacant – (Please get in touch if you would be interested in this role)

Stroud Area Email: stroud@midgloucestershire.camra.org.uk

Meetings on second Wednesday of the month at 7.30 pm at the Ale House, Stroud.

Contact Area Coordinator: Tony Hill

Tewkesbury Branch Email: chair@tewkesbury.camra.org.uk

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

Contact Ian at secretary@tewkesbury.camra.org.uk or visit the website www.tewkesbury.camra.org.uk

CAMRA Branch Contacts



MID-GLOUCESTERSHIRE CAMRA Branch

www.gloucestershire.camra.org.uk

Chair: Peter Bennetts
chair@midgloucestershire.camra.org.uk

Branch Contact:
Chris Hall
branchcontact@midgloucestershire.camra.org.uk



TEWKESBURY CAMRA Branch

www.tewkesbury.camra.org.uk

Chair and Branch Contact:
John Roberts
chair@tewkesbury.camra.org.uk

Secretary: Ian Mence
secretary@tewkesbury.camra.org.uk



CHEL TENHAM CAMRA Branch

www.cheltenham.camra.org.uk

Chair: Rob Coldwell 07752 740488
chair@cheltenham.camra.org.uk

Branch Contact:
Rob Coldwell 07752 740488
chair@cheltenham.camra.org.uk



NORTH COTSWOLD CAMRA Branch

www.northcotswoldcamra.org.uk

Chair: Martin Jones
07879 015881

chairncb@northcotswoldcamra.org.uk
Secretary and Branch Contact:
Chris Knight (Mickleton) 07890 666707
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