

FREE

Swan Supping

Issue 138

Spring 2023



The
BIRD
in
HAND
FREEHOUSE



**The Bird in Hand,
Princes Risborough
wins our coveted Pub of
the Year Award!**

See Page 4



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FOR
REAL ALE**

Newsletter of the Aylesbury Vale & Wycombe Branch of CAMRA

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NEWS FROM THE EDITOR



Welcome to the second relaunch of *Swan Supping*!

In our last issue, which came out just before summer started we suggested that you should enjoy the Jubilee as we sent our best wishes to Her Majesty the Queen.

Unfortunately things have changed totally since the sad passing of the monarch who graciously served this country and its people for longer than most of us have been on the planet, and we now look forward to the coronation of King Charles III. Long may he reign! We can also look forward to the

extra bank holiday and to enjoy the special beers brewed especially to commemorate the event.

This issue of *Swan Supping* marks the start of what we hope will be a long and happy relationship with Neil Richards MBE and **Paper Red Media** who handle the advertising and printing of a number of **CAMRA** newsletters, including *CAMRA Angle* which is produced by the **Slough, Windsor & Maidenhead branch**.

This year commemorates the 50th anniversary of the first meeting of the **Buckinghamshire Branch of CAMRA** (Monday 3rd December 1973). We put out an appeal by email for anyone who was at the meeting and Robert Watson who was landlord of the **Rose & Crown**, Saunderton, where the early meetings were held got in touch with us as well as John Wood who joined **CAMRA** in 1973 (member 259) when there were no branches yet formed. Once a month there was an all-comers regional type meeting at the **Rose & Crown** hosted by Robert. This started at 11.00 on a Sunday morning which meant that business had to finish by noon when the pub opened to the public. Robert was always known as Kami Watson because he only served what we considered then to be strong beers (ie. **Ruddles County**). Buckinghamshire was considered too large to be a single branch, so it split up a year later and the first meeting of the **Aylesbury Vale & Wycombe Branch** took place on Sunday 15th of December 1974. It seems only fair that we celebrate both occasions, but sadly we can't do that at the **Rose & Crown** as it has met the same fate as too many of our local country

pubs.

We have sad news that John Lomax, who was a local **CAMRA** member and attended various events before moving to the **Mid Chilterns Branch**, passed away in February. No funeral was held but a wake at the **Wetherspoons Full House** in Hemel Hempstead on Friday 17th March was well attended including Elvis Evans and myself, and we heard a moving eulogy and stories of his life from his brother. Our condolences go to all his family and friends.

Sadly we also heard of the passing of Bill Tidy MBE, someone who is familiar to all **CAMRA** members for his Kegbuster cartoons which graced *What's Brewing* for forty years. Month after month, Kegbuster (pictured right) and his faithful whippet fought the good fight for cask ale against the machinations of big brewers, pin-striped executives and steely-eyed marketing men, all the time finding time for a pint or three of his beloved **Crudgington's 6X**.



Bill Tidy's cartoons included the Cloggies for Private Eye and the Fosdyke Saga for the Daily Mirror and I have the treasured memory of meeting and speaking to him at a Members Weekend when he drew a Cloggies cartoon for me in a Kegbuster collection I had bought especially for the purpose.

To finish, I hope you enjoy reading our latest effort and I also hope to see loads of our readers on our annual trip to the Black Country on Saturday 15th July (details on page 14) plus a lot of the local **CAMRA** members at the Members Weekend in Sheffield.

Once again, my thanks go to all who have contributed to the making and the delivering of this issue of *Swan Supping*. Special thanks to Colin Stanford for his cartoon and his lovely tribute to Bill Tidy - I'm sure the master himself would have loved it!

David Roe, *Swan Supping* Editor

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NATIONAL CAMRA NEWS

Alcohol tax reforms

Nik Antona, **CAMRA National Chairman**, has responded to the publication of details on reforms to the Alcohol Duty System, coming into force on 1 August 2023.

On the new draught duty rate for beer and cider:

'**CAMRA** has campaigned for many years to secure a draught duty rate, and we are pleased that this has come to fruition. We particularly welcome the confirmation that traditional gravity dispense will be captured within the new, lower, duty rate.'

'With the Chancellor extending the differential between the general and draught duty rates to 9.2% in the Budget, we look forward to campaigning to further increase that differential to the benefit of pubs, social clubs, and consumers.'

On the new Small Producer Relief Scheme: 'Small brewers and cider makers will be pleased to see the details of the scheme, so that they can start planning for the future.'

'With stubbornly high inflation and the impending cliff-edge drop-off in energy bill support, small producers need more help than ever to compete with the purchasing power and economies of

scale enjoyed by the global producers that dominate the UK beer and cider market.

'Small cider makers will also benefit from a progressive duty system for the first time ever, supporting them to grow and increase choice of artisanal ciders for consumers.'

On the announcement that decanting from draught-duty paid containers for consumption off the premises will be prohibited:

'Despite our formal representations and extensive engagement with the Treasury, a workable solution to allow pubs and social clubs to make incidental takeaway draught sales has not been found. It's good that specialist bottle shops will be able to buy casks and kegs with the general duty rate paid on them to make takeaway sales, but most publicans – who the draught duty rate is designed to benefit – won't be able to afford or accommodate extra draught containers just to make takeaway sales.'

'This, if implemented, will equate to a stealth ban on takeaway pints and is extremely disappointing for licensees and consumers, and especially designated drivers that like to take away a pint or two to enjoy responsibly at home. We will continue to campaign for a workable solution.'



BRANCH PUB OF THE YEAR

The branch is pleased to announce the results of our **Pub of the Year** competition for 2023. Winner is the **Bird in Hand** in Princes Risborough and runner-up is the **Belle Vue** in High Wycombe.

On Friday 24th March, a presentation was made to the **Bird in Hand**. Local **CAMRA** branch members joined Chairman, Mike Clarke, to present a certificate to Katie Baldock, general manager of the pub.



The **Bird in Hand** is an outstanding example of a thriving community pub and has gone from strength to strength since its acquisition by **Oak Taverns** and in the past year under Katie's management. The pub is now a regular entry in **CAMRA's** national **Good Beer Guide** with four well-kept real ales, often from local and micro-breweries. Congratulations to Katie and her team.

'My main goal when taking the position of manager at the Bird was to create a vibrant community pub! I want everyone to feel instantly welcome when they walk through the door,' Katie said. 'I'm pleased to say this has been achieved and we are constantly praised on the warm and inclusive atmosphere within the pub. I make a point of

personally welcoming newcomers and taking time to get to know them.'

The pub is dog friendly and Katie says she always give cuddles and treats to visiting dogs 'who often lead their owners back to their favourite pub!'

In addition to the real ale, the pub runs street food nights, pub quizzes live music nights. It also has a pleasant garden and outdoor heated area and aims to be as eco-friendly as possible.

Katie said, 'I feel as a business we are supporting the local community, the environment, and other local businesses - whilst having a lot of fun!'

The pub will now move forward to the regional **Pub of the Year** competition.

Beer scores submitted by members are an important factor in our pub of the year selection. We continue to appreciate all the beer scores that branch members submit via the **What Pub** website, reflecting their support of local pubs.

Mike Clarke

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Campaign
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THE PUBLIC HOUSES OF LOUDWATER

There seem to have been nine pubs in Loudwater (including Knaves Beech) over the years although not all existed at any one time. These are listed in a sort-of chronological order.

First we will mention the **Beech Tree** in Knaves Beech. Not much has been found out much about this, such as when it closed. It seems to have been about where the Tesco roundabout is now. There is a photograph of it from about 1920 on the *Lost Pubs Project* with what looks like White Hill in the background.

Next there is the **Crown**, on the opposite side of the A40 from Dereham's Lane. This closed as a pub in the 1930s but the building is still there and now called Crown House. It is in use as an accountant's office.

Next to close was the **Papermaker's Arms** in 1938. This was demolished and a brand-new **Papermaker's Arms** built a short distance away, also in 1938. The new building was built in the Brewers' Tudor style that was very popular at the time but is now quite rare. Ideally it should have been a listed building but it seems that it wasn't. The new pub was demolished about 2015 after being shut for a couple of years. It was a well-frequented pub and supported many of the teams that used the Kingsmead playing field. Especially it had close links with the cricket club that was based at Kingsmead.

A major event for Loudwater was the closing of the station in 1970 and the ripping up of the line between Bourne End and Wycombe making public transport rather more difficult than it had been. We all still hope that some replacement line will be built some day.

Next to go was the **White Blackbird** just about on the border between Loudwater and Knaves Beech and beside the A40. This closed in the 1990s having spent its last few years as a gay bar. It is now yet more housing.



And next we have a pub opening! This is the **Papermill** in Knaves Beech (pictured above) and it is a **Brewers' Fayre** restaurant with hotel attached. Their web-site gives no information on when the place was built and opened. I think it fits here in the sequence of events.

The **Happy Union** (pictured top right) was the next to go. It closed in 2021 and most of it is still standing although boarded up. It is expected that this will be demolished and replaced by yet more housing and with no increase in facilities to support the new residents.

Also closing in 2021 was the **Dereham's Inn** (pictured on the right) which had been the **Bricklayers' Arms**. This was always well packed out with customers and supported darts teams, crib teams, quiz nights and more. The last landlord was Graham Sturgess who died in March 2022 after a period of illness. If reopened as a pub it could be a gold-mine. However it currently looks as though this will



not happen. There is now a petition to reopen the **Dereham's**. It is hoped that the petition does affect the local council but we will have to see whether it does.



So we come to the only remaining pub in Loudwater and that is the **General Havelock** (pictured above). It is right on the border with Wycombe Marsh. Originally a pair of farmhouses with farmland around it and no other housing in the vicinity, it became a pub when housing was built around it. It regularly features in the *Good Beer Guide* so it must be alright.





LOCAL NEWS

AYLESBURY

Fullers London Pride and **Dark Star Hophead** are the beers found at the **Aristocrat** which opens at noon seven days a week. No food on Mondays but they offer a curry night on alternate Wednesdays.

The **Redcat** owned **Bell** offered **Fullers London Pride** when visited with two beers from **Vale, Lock, Stock & Barrel** and **Gravitas**, settling in the cellar.

The **Bricklayers Arms** continues to offer great beers in the form of **Fullers London Pride** and **Shepherd Neame Spitfire** plus a local guest beer.

Great support for our local breweries can be found at the **Broad Leys** as they had **Tring Side Pocket** and **Mansion Mild** on offer with **Vale Hoptimist** settling in the cellar. Both breweries feature regularly with **Chiltern** making guest appearances as Sharona, late of the **Bell**, prides herself on the quality of the ales which are reasonably priced.

The **Feathers** offers **Fullers London Pride**, **Sharp's Doom Bar** along with guest beers including **Black Sheep Respire**.

Landlord Kyle and Bar Manager Amy (also in the same job at the **Egg & Monkey**) took over at the **Harrow** seven months ago. Currently closed on Mondays and Tuesdays for repairs to be carried out they only offer one beer, **Marston's 61 Deep** was on offer when visited, but they hope to increase the choice in the summer when customers

can take advantage of their hidden courtyard garden.

As we were going to press, the **Hop Pole** was preparing for its Easter Beer Festival which was due to open at 5pm on Thursday 6th April. Over 15 beers (both cask and keg) would be available all weekend with live music on the Friday and Sunday. The new hours at the pub are: Monday closed, Tuesday to Thursday 4.30pm - 11pm, Friday & Saturday 12pm to midnight and Sunday 12pm to 11pm.

The **King's Head** remains closed on Mondays (although it will be open on Coronation Monday Bank Holiday 8th May) and Tuesdays but offers a great range of **Chiltern** beers during the rest of the week. On offer when visited were **Pale Ale, Beechwood, Coronation Ale** and **300's Old Ale** plus guest beer **Independence** from **Bristol Beer Factory**.

Larris Grant and Alex Doyle took over at the **Old Millwrights Arms** on February 10th. This **Greene King** pub offers four real ales which were **IPA, Old Speckled Hen** and **St Austell Tribute** and a guest beer, **Spring Break**. Home-made food is on offer all week (except Monday) plus a Sunday roast. A quiz and a meat raffle are held every Thursday. Opening Hours: Monday 12pm-10.30pm, 12pm to 1pm Friday and Saturday and 12pm to 11pm the rest of the week.

The **Queens Head** only offer **Sharp's Doom Bar**, but have a loyal following of regular drinkers.

Bath Gem and **Old Mill Jester** were found at the **Rockwood** when visited

along with a draught **Rosie Pig** cider.

Wadworth 6X and **Shepherd Neame Spitfire** (guest beers vary) were spotted in **Weavers** on two handpumps now placed prominently front and centre of the bar instead of being down the side.

Occasional work is carried out at the **White Swan** which raises faint hopes that one day it will reopen!

BLEDLOW

The five handpumps are fully manned at the **Lions of Bledlow**, reducing to three during the week. **Wadworth 6X** remains as the session ale, joined by predominantly **locAles** from **Loddon, Loose Cannon, Rebellion, Tring** and **Vale**. The **Lions** will appear in Masters of the Air – an upcoming American war drama mini-series based on the actions of the Eighth Air Force of the United States Army Air Forces during World War II, as it was used as a filming location two years ago.

BRILL

Brill Beer Festival takes place during the weekend of August bank holiday 25th - 27th August and is part of the wider Brill festival which is in its 19th year. They aim to have 40+ real ales and ciders from small independent breweries and cider makers. Additional attractions include: 'street food' from artisan cooks and chefs available all weekend, a comedy night on the Friday night, a family fun day on Saturday and a classic car show on Sunday. Further information on their website www.brillfestival.com.

CHINNOR

The three ale line-up at the **Crown** is predominantly national-based, with **Sharp's Doom Bar, Greene King IPA, Fuller's London Pride** and **Shepherd Neame Spitfire** all appearing of late, although **locAle Rebellion IPA** has made a recent appearance. Chinnor's largest pub is a five-minute walk from the Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway and is also the closest pub in the village to the Icknield Way.

Rebellion ales are available at **Chinnor Community Pavilion** via keg dispense.

Landlady Nicki celebrates three years in situ at **Oak Taverns' Red Lion** having moved in just before the Covid-19 lockdown. The best ale range in the village with four handpumps, **XT 3** is the session ale, augmented by three rotating guest ales – mostly **locAles**, but sometimes from further afield. They have also showcased beers from **Oak Tavern's Dead Brewers Society**, plus have four boxed ciders. They have a

popular Quiz Night on Wednesdays (8pm start), and there is a 'street food' van in the car park from Wednesday to Saturday (differing cuisines).

Greene King IPA has been the only ale on the three handpumps at the **Wheatsheaf** for some time, although **Timothy Taylor Landlord** has been added to the second pull recently. The kitchen has now been taken over by Top Mandarin Chef, who operate a successful Chinese takeaway in-house.

EMMINGTON

The **Inn at Emmington** has continued to offer three **locAles** from its three handpumps – **Rebellion IPA** remains as the guest ale and it is usually joined by two from **Chiltern, Loddon Brewery, Loose Cannon, Vale, Tring, Windsor & Eton** and **XT**, as well as three real ciders. Happy Hour is available Monday to Friday (pints £3.75). The **Inn** opens from 3pm Monday to Friday and from 12pm at weekends (food available from 5.30pm Monday to Friday, and from 12pm at weekends). Innfest – their annual beer and music festival – returns for a second year on 2nd September.

HADDENHAM



Haddenham Summerfest, reputedly the UK's largest one day Beer Festival is back. On the 1st July, this friendly village festival features over 100 different cask real ales.

Served direct from the barrels the beer ranges from Low Strength refreshing pales to Dark High Strength ales best tasted in half pints. The full scope of UK cask beers will be available, Highly Hopped Pale Ales, Mild, Best Bitters, IPA's with hops from UK, and the New World, rich and Bitter Porters or heavy dark malty Stouts and Old Ales. They even featured a White Stout and a Black IPA last year. The beers are sourced both direct from the many local brewers within a 30 mile radius of Haddenham but also many from across the UK bought in specially. There will be rare casks for the Ticker to try. A limited number of super early bird £12.50 tickets are available, then remaining advance tickets are £16 and £20 on the day, subject to availability. <https://www.haddenham-beer-festival.co.uk>.

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HENTON

Just **Sharp's Doom Bar** available from one of the three handpulls on a recent visit to the **Peacock** – a popular hotel and restaurant at the foot of the Chilterns. They serve home-cooked food seven days a week with 24 bedrooms and self-catering apartments available.

HIGH WYCOMBE

Congratulations to Pav at the **Belle Vue** as she was presented with the Runner-Up certificate in the **Aylesbury Vale & Wycombe Pub of the Year** competition.

Another planning application has gone in to convert the **White Horse** to flats.

MAIDENHEAD



The **10th Maidenhead Beer and Cider Festival** will be held on Friday 7th (12pm - 11pm) and Saturday 8th (11am - 11pm) of July at the NMCC Sports Bar at Summerleaze Park, off Summerleaze Road, Maidenhead SL6 8SP.

Over sixty beers and twenty-five ciders will be available as well as food and live music. The entry price will be £5 (**CAMRA** members £3) and tickets can be bought in advance.

MARLOW

Marlow Football Club are holding their popular annual beer festival on Friday 2nd and Saturday 3rd of June. Over thirty beers and ciders, a gin bar,

live music and food will be available. Entry £6 including souvenir glass (£4 for MFC or **CAMRA** members).

Pub in the Park takes place in Higginson Park 18th to 21st May.

The **Royal British Legion** won the **Aylesbury Vale & Wycombe Club of the Year** award which was presented to them by Branch Chairman, Mike Clarke, in the company of various other branch members (pictured above).

The **RBL** will be having a mini-beer festival on Armed Forces Day, Saturday 24th June. No more than twelve beers with at least six from certain Derbyshire favourites!

The **Three Horseshoes** on Burroughs Grove Hill reopened in December under new ownership and we welcome manager Angelica to Marlow. Delights on the handpumps are **Harvey's Sussex Best Bitter** (4% ABV), **Rebellion IPA** (3.7%) and **Timothy Taylor Landlord** (4.3%).

POSTCOMBE

Loose Cannon Gunner's Gold remains as the sole real ale at **England's Rose**, although a variety of real ales in bottles are available to purchase. The popular Sunday Carvery continues from 12-3 every week (£16.95) with three meats and all the trimmings. The two-acre garden is available for private hire and



you are allowed to provide your own food and drink as part of the deal, which is ideal as longer evenings and better weather approach us. As well as offering breakfasts, they have a daily 'special' for just £5.95.

SOULBURY

The **Boot** has a Real Ale Club offer which runs on Mondays and Tuesdays with 40p off a pint of any of their ales.

This **Punch Taverns** pub currently offers the following: **Timothy Taylor Landlord**, **Sharp's Atlantic Pale Ale** plus a third beer. They also have live music events on a fortnightly basis.

SYDENHAM

Rebellion IPA and **Timothy Taylor Landlord** were available during a recent weeknight visit to the **Crown**. The third handpull is usually occupied by a guest ale at the weekend. Sunday lunch is extremely popular at this bucolic venue, with a current three-week booking time! Aunt Sally also resumes from May.

TOWERSEY

A warm **Swan Supping** welcome to David and Helen who took over at the **Three Horseshoes** at the end of last year. Noted as a good food venue, they have taken on this mantle with aplomb and booking is essential; especially for their Sunday roasts. They initially began with just **Sharp's Doom Bar** on one of the two handpulls, but this has been joined by guest ales of late including **Black Sheep Bitter** and **Purity Longhorn**. They have resurrected a Quiz night, the last-Thursdays-of-the-month Open Mic Night has been continued and their 14th century barn is available

for hire. The **Three Horseshoes** is just 200 yards from the Phoenix Trail and is popular with cyclists and walkers. They are closed on Mondays.

WEEDON

Andrew Hemsley (pictured above), the licensee at the **Five Elms**, appears to be running a thriving pub serving excellent **Otter Bitter** (3.6 ABV) plus one other, seldom above 4.0, in addition to a wide range of food.

WINSLOW

The Lions Club of Winslow ran their **Winslow Beer Festival 2020**, just three years later than planned, on Friday 24th and Saturday 25th of March.

Due to the refurbishment of the local Public Hall, the venue was changed to the **Bell Hotel** (pictured below).

Twenty-four different real ales were on offer alongside four ciders and, a new feature this year, a 'Gin, Wine and Prosecco Bar'.

Our photographer, Mick Browne, also gave an 'in depth' review: 'A fiver to get in, four quid a pint, no music - perfect!' Nuff said!

WOOBURN COMMON

Another new brewery has appeared on the scene as the **Feisty Beer Co.** started trading in October 2022. Run by owner Judson Williams and head brewer, Ross Hawkes, their first outing was a keg beer named **39% Viking** at the **KEG** bar in Bourne End in October, followed by a cask beer (**Cricket Ale**) at **Marlow RBL** in December (although that was a one-off as their output will be keg and cans for the foreseeable future).





The Regency city of Bath boasts many spectacular and historic sights, from the Pump Rooms and Roman Baths to its Royal Crescent. We started our visit a mile to the west of the city centre, a walk that took us past various tattoo parlours and arterial road takeaways. Being stranded among the light industrial units and demolished gas works hasn't stopped the **Royal Oak** becoming the local **CAMRA** branch pub of the year.

A rugged stone building, the pub sits incongruously in an unlovely spot right by a busy junction on the A36 Lower Bristol Road. But its main attractions lie inside, largely in the form of **Ralph's Ruin** microbrewery. We visited shortly after the pub opened at midday on a Saturday and were the day's first customers. The live music equipment in the larger of the two rooms gave the impression that the **Royal Oak** was more of a night-time place at heart.



The bar featured an impressive row of handpumps, including my first beer, *Outline* by **Kettlesmith Brewery**. After investigating the room on the other side of the bar, Jon and myself were given a viewing of the microbrewery, which is situated in the pub's former kitchen. Three **Ralph's Ruin** beers were available: *Ivory Tower*, *Sirius* and *Dark Side of the Ralph* (Ralph is the pub's dog). I

sampled an invigorating pint of the first.

We then headed over the River Avon and followed the Upper Bristol Road into the more leafy outskirts of the city centre. We passed a number of tempting pubs not on our itinerary and the Royal Victoria Park, which was full of people exercising in the winter sunshine (didn't they realise the pubs were already open?).



The **Hop Pole** occupies part of an imposing stone building sandwiched between the main road and the river. Inside, there's a couple of panelled rooms with polished wooden floors, adjoining a modern and airy bar area with high stools and table. Andy joined Jon and myself to sample the **Hop Pole's** range of **Bath Brewery** ales. I refreshed myself after the walk with one of my old favourites, their amber ale, *Gem*, and sampled the more difficult to find pale ale, *Prophecy*.



As well as its magnificent architecture, Bath is also a city of hills. It was a steepish slog up Marlborough Hill, with an impressive view of the Royal Crescent to the right, to reach our next stop, the **Marlborough Tavern**. This was less a tavern than an upmarket gastropub which proved to be packed with well-heeled diners enjoying lunch. Tables were scarce but the beer was good and I enjoyed a pint of *Butcombe Original*.

Our route kept to the hill above the city centre and, after a walk through the smart back streets, we arrived at the back door of the **Star Inn**. Entering by the rear, via a narrow passageway and staircase, added to the



sense of awe when we first viewed the pub's stunningly well-preserved interior. It looks as if it has barely changed since the four wood-panelled rooms were fitted out in 1928, apart from a few politically-incorrect sporting mementoes from more recent decades, such as a photo of a (male) naked cricket team who were barely covering their collective modesty.



The pub is both Grade II listed and on **CAMRA's National Inventory of Historic Interiors**. There's a larger lounge bar near the main entrance with a fireplace and mirrors. Three separate smaller rooms adjoin the bar. All are furnished with benches around the walls, small round tables and polished wooden stools. All the pub's walls are



THE BATH

almost entirely covered with old pictures, photographs and mementoes. It was quiet during our visit, so we were able to fully explore this wonderfully atmospheric place as well as enjoy the beer, which lived up to its surroundings.



The **Star Inn** serves beer from local brewer, *Abbey Ales*, as well as being a rare outlet nowadays for *Draught Bass*. I sampled *Dark Star's Hophead* and *Inverlmond Brewery's Bard*. Neither were local (risking smacked wrists from *CAMRA*) but both were excellent.



Our route had circled the city centre so far and it was time to head into town. The glitter ball hanging from the ceiling, the sound mixer attached to the wall and the countless flyers pasted around the bars were clues that the next pub, the **Bell Inn**, features lots of live music. It's such an institution on the Bath music scene that it was saved from closure, being bought by a large consortium of locals. These included, it is rumoured, an internationally known local rock and world-music musician



who presumably was horrified at the prospect of sledgehammers being taken to the venue.

It also had a fire to warm us up mid-afternoon, plus an extensive selection of nine real ales. I had halves of *Box Steam's Golden Bolt* and a perennial favourite, *Hop Back's Summer Lightning*.



The **Old Green Tree**, located among Bath's upmarket shops and boutiques, boasts another listed interior. It was created by the same architects as the **Star Inn** and is marginally older, so features the same predominance of cosy, wood panelling. Being a Saturday and located near the tourist hot spots, we found the pub packed out with customers filling-up on the pub grub.

The pub is long and narrow with rooms at the front and back separated by a central bar area with only bar stools for seating. We found the only available table in the back room. While it was a little too busy to fully appreciate the *National Inventory* interior, we struck up a few convivial conversations with fellow drinkers as I savoured my pint of *Butcombe Original*.

The **Raven** is a street-corner, unpretentious pub aimed at a young and ale-drinking clientele (if the two aren't mutually exclusive). On our visit, it featured an unusual selection of ales from West Country microbreweries such as *Kettlesmith* and *Glastonbury* (I had the latter's *Hedge Monkey*). On our visit, it also offered its own *Raven* and *Raven Gold* ales, brewed by local brewery, *Blindman's*. The **Raven** gained notoriety in April 2021 when Labour leader, Sir Kier Starmer, was angrily thrown out of the pub by its landlord.

Starmer had tried to use the closed pub for a campaigning meeting in the regional mayoral elections.

Adjoining Bath's Theatre Royal, the **Garrick's Head** has been a theatre pub for over two hundred years. We must have missed the pre-theatre crowd as its single, large, elegant, high-ceilinged room was fairly empty. There's a good selection of real ales to imbibe as a warm-up for any thespianism. I had the house *Garrick* ale, brewed by *Stonehenge*.



Heading back towards the station, the **Bath Brew House** was our last pub. As the name suggests, it's home to an onsite microbrewery called the *James Street Brewery*, after the pub's address. Its beers are given names with Roman associations in homage to the famous baths. I sampled a pleasant *Sol Invictus*.

It's a large and lively pub, situated in a student area of the city. In addition to the microbrewery, there are plenty of other attractions, including televised football (Man Utd 0 Wolves 0) and Six Nations rugby, Harry Potter quizzes and a 'Ten Pounds to Spin It' wheel of fortune. Given the young clientele in the pub, opinion would probably be divided on which of the wheel's resting positions offered the top prize. Would it be, among others, two pints of real ale, four bottles of *Sol* or four shots of *Jager*? My vote would be to play safe and stick with the ale.

Mike Clarke



CHILTERN BREWERY



In April 2022, we pressed the button to go ahead with what is perhaps the most significant change to the brewery since the pioneering days of September 1980, when my parents, Mr & Mrs Richard Jenkinson set up the brewery in Terrick.

The brewery is in old farm buildings that date from the early 70s and which have capped our ability to expand and keep up with demand for our beers for a couple of years, or more. Replacing them wasn't a simple matter though, because we are in both the Green Belt and the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

We worked closely with our local planners to come up with a design that would give us the room we need to enable us to meet demand and at the same time, satisfy the planning rules.

In late 2019, we had everything in place, from final plans and permissions to contractors and crucially, a start date set for early 2020, so we had Christmas under the belt.

A couple of years down the road and the plan, to be implemented in phases, is underway to replace all of the brewery buildings which have been unchanged for half a century.

However, we need to be able to brew throughout, so the redevelopment will take place in phases.

Starting at the back of our site, our first phase is the replacing of around 30 feet of the old barns, with a purpose-built barn designed specifically for brewing.

This barn alone will enable us to increase our brewing capacity in the region of two to three times. When we undertake the next phase, we will use this barn to keep brewing in, while the next set of barns are taken down and replaced.



Once all stages are complete, we will have a suitable showcase for the home of brewing in the Chilterns.

However, to begin, we needed to take the first step!

The 10th May is a day I shall remember for a long time. It is the day when all that we had been planning for nearly a decade, was translated from the architect's plans into something we could see, hear, smell and touch.

It is the day when the first of the heavy machinery rolled up the yard, dwarfing the brewery buildings and bringing with it the reality of what we were undertaking! We were ever so excited to see the changes it would bring.



In fairly short order, the old barns housing the fermenting rooms had gone. We weren't very sentimental about their disappearance, but we were surprised by how quickly we got used to the newer view of the Monument on Coombe Hill!

Foundations were dug, concrete poured and the steel portal frame was up in a matter of weeks.

As many who know us may be aware, we are very proud to support British farmers having always brewed with malt and hops grown in Britain.

It is a principle that we have held since our very first brew in 1980, and naturally, one we want to keep to. We put our money where our mouth is, and have continued to support British manufacturing.

The steel for the frame is made by British Steel and the frame was fabricated in Herefordshire and the highly insulated roof and wall cladding is also British made as are the bespoke LED lights being made for us in the England. All put up by our contractor, a local firm in Bucks.

At first, the scale of the new brewery building caught us by surprise, but it sits very well within the brewery site and our countryside.

Specialist doors have been installed and next on the schedule are the brewery-



specific floor tiles, which should be laid before you read this. This will be followed by internal decorating and the last fix for the electricians.

But we have to have something to put in the wonderful new barn, something to lift the lid on our growth!



Many who have been on a brewery tour may remember our round, open-topped fermenters? Originally from **Bass Brewery** - and in our very early days an impromptu swimming pool for my brother and I if we could fill one with water before Dad found out! - will enjoy retirement as they shall be replaced by several new vessels, being fabricated as this is typed, just a few hours up the road.

At this point, the finish line for Phase 1 really is in sight and with these new vessels set to arrive in time for the winter brewing schedule, we will raise a glass!

Thank you for your support and custom.

Cheers!!

George Jenkinson, Chiltern Brewery

< Our thanks go to George for permission to use this article which was originally scheduled for a planned edition of **Swan Supping** last year - Ed. >

Tuesday, 28th February marked a milestone in **Chiltern Brewery** history, when they filled one of their brand-new vessels for the very first time.

What better way to christen it, than with a brew of **Chiltern Pale Ale**, their oldest beer? And who better to cast his eye over the fermentation and the new vessel, than their founder, Mr. Richard Jenkinson, above?

Mr. Jenkinson established the brewery in 1980. **Chiltern Ale** was the first beer he brewed, and today, they are still brewing it to his recipe despite the name change with

CHILTERN (Continued)



the addition of the word *Pale* to distinguish it from the other beers in the range that has built up over the last forty years.

The new vessel is one of four that are now in pride of place (pictured left with their Head Brewer, Dave) in their new brew barn. This first phase of their growth and development is, perhaps, their most significant since the brewery


was established in 1980.


Chiltern Pale Ale, believed to be the oldest, continuously brewed beer in the Chilterns and Buckinghamshire, is classically understated. It is a wonderful evocation of an English light ale - a light gold, low strength, quaffable beer brewed with malt grown on the Waddesdon Estate farms and quintessential, English-grown hops.

Why not try it at the **Kings Head**, Aylesbury, along with others in their range including the new *Coronation Ale*!







THE
CHILTERN
BREWERY





Coronation Ale - a golden, hoppy beer available as a quaffable IPA in draught and as a limited edition, bottle conditioned, strong IPA.

Online and in our brewery shop, Terrick.

Monday to Saturday 10am to 5pm
www.chilternbrewery.co.uk





Marlow Beerfest 2023

Friday, 2nd June, 4pm to 10pm

Saturday, 3rd June, midday to 10pm

Over 30 Beers & Ciders

Gin Bar, Live Music & Hot Food

beer@marlowbeerfest.co.uk

www.marlowbeerfest.co.uk

Entry £6 including souvenir glass

£4 for concessions and MFC or CAMRA members

at Marlow Football Club

Oak Tree Road, Marlow, Bucks, SL7 3ED



LOCAL BREWERY NEWS

Oak Taverns

Oak Taverns pubs have had a successful few months particularly with winning awards, and are very proud to have won **CAMRA Pub of the Year (POTY)** for the **Bird in Hand**, Princes Risborough (see page 4).

Outside our region the **George** in Sutton Courtenay won the **South Oxfordshire CAMRA POTY** and the **Cross Keys** Wallingford won the **Cider POTY**. **Oak Taverns** are very proud of what they are doing, and it seems the **CAMRA** membership are too.

They have also a very successful inaugural **Dead Brewers** program this quarter with three beers brewed for the first time, in some cases for over 100 years. **8d Ale** from **Wallingford Brewery**, **Best Bitter** from **Hunt and Edmund** and **AK Pale Ale** from **Halls of Oxford**.

The next three which will be available in turn over the next three months or so will be, **Blatch's Pale Ale** from **Theale** Berkshire, **XL Ale** from **Field & Son Shillingford Brewery** and **India Pale Ale** from **Halls Oxford**. They are looking forward to continuing this program by bringing some of our regions forgotten brewery's beers back to the bar. Their contact at the **Dead Brewers** said that compared to the rest of the country there are very few closed breweries in our region as they are still going. It goes to show even the previous generations in the **Swan Supping** area had good taste and enjoyed the odd pint of cask beer!

Rebellion Brewery

Thirty years ago, **Rebellion** brewed their first beer in Marlow. Since then they have grown and developed into a popular, busy brewery and are thrilled to be celebrating their 30th anniversary.

Their monthly range this year is a nod to the past 30 years. Voted for by customers who selected their favourite beers from the last 30 years with the most popular beers making it into the range including old classics such as **Mutiny**, **Blonde** and **Red**. On offer in the next few months:

April: **Gold** (4.4%) A rich golden ale with an intensely hoppy aroma.

May: **30** (4.2%) Hoppy, yet perfectly balanced, **30** is light copper in colour with clean malt profile and just a hint of caramel sweetness.

June: **Zebedee** (4.7%) A straw coloured, pale ale with a clean, fresh and uncomplicated taste.

July: **Blonde** (4.3%) A light golden summer beer, with a citrusy hop character.



Other celebrations of the big three zero will be announced later in the year, so look out for those.

In other news, the **Tap Yard**, their brewery bar, is growing into a very popular social spot, attracting crowds of visitors to the brewery to enjoy a fresh beer or something else from the full bar menu. The bar serves their full range of draught and keg beers, all poured as fresh as possible from within 100 meters of the brewhouse. Alongside the core range and monthly specials, the **Tap Yard** is the only place you can order their draught nitro stout, wit bier or their ever changing small batch development brews (the DB range).

The development brews are produced on **Rebellion's** 1000L small batch brew kit and allow them to produce a wide range of beer styles that sit outside of their typical styles. In early April they're releasing their 14th development brew, a sparkling ale. Previous DB styles have included a New England IPA, a German Kölsch and a Belgian Gristette.



Street food on Saturdays has also become a big success at the **Tap Yard**, as a food truck serves up delicious food from 12-8pm every Saturday. The style of food changes from week to week with burgers, pizza, Greek, Indian and fish and chips all on the line-up.

Monthly Tuesday social nights are also back but you do now have to book on the website (www.rebellionbeer.co.uk). All their beers are on offer alongside the full bar at the **Tap Yard** plus lots of food options. Currently the 1st Tuesday of the month is a public and members night with the 2nd Tuesday a member only event. Public night details: 7-9.30pm 1st Tuesday of each month. Booking essential - £20 entry includes five pints and your glass. £10 entry includes two pints and your glass.

Tring Brewery



Tring Brewery have raised over ten thousand pounds for local charity Rennie Grove Hospice Care which provides hospice-at-home services and support to people in Bucks and Herts with life-limiting illness.

Twelve monthly specials were brewed in 2022, part of their campaign to raise funds and awareness over the year which included collections from members nights at the brewery and a charity beer festival. A raffle offering prizes generously donated by the brewery and local businesses raised nearly two thousand pounds.

The photo shows Richard Shardlow (director at **Tring Brewery**) and Jared Ward (communications and marketing) as they were joined at the brewery shop by Chris Langford (Rennie Grove Ambassador) and Louise Hewitt (Senior Community Fundraiser at Rennie Grove), where a cheque for £10,200.41 was presented to the charity on February 24th.

THE CASKITEERS - PART TWELVE

On a cold April lunchtime session, Harry reeled with horror as he opened the email from MaxProfit Energy. 'Jeepers! This is a jolly large number although I'm not so au fait with ones that have commas in.'

Jacob wandered over to Harry's MacBook at the recycled school desk in the taproom. 'Fifty-thousand guineas a month for our bijou little brewery. That's going to make a rather nasty dent in the allowance from my pater. And because we haven't opened our bills for months, they want payment pronto.'

'Maybe vaporising and recondensing the *Triple Dropped Biscuit IPA* was rather energy intensive – and the neon lights we used to advertise our *Kumquat Sour* from space were a little over the top?' Harry suggested.

'Or the cost of yer electric heaters running all night so Sophie from Chipping Norton doesn't get goosepimples in her five-hundred pound 'peasant style' cotton dress in the middle of January?' Ruthie the brewer chipped in from the mash tun.

They stroked their bushy beards and stared forlornly through their fashionably outdated horn-rimmed spectacle frames at the mostly empty taproom.

As the possession of quiet voices, suitable for subduing bad news, was not Jacob's nor Harry's forte it wasn't difficult for her to overhear the conversation.

In fact, Jacob and Harry's Shackney craft beer brewery tap, **Eaten Trifles**, had been pioneering the interactive approach to micro brewing by putting seating for customers all around the brewery's equipment, such as a ring of stools around the mash tun. If customers were occasionally burnt by splashing boiling water then that was all part of the jolly experience: those blisters and weals were a lot more authentic than fridge magnets, Jacob liked to say. However, the customers' authentic experience of filling and labelling their own cans of *Samphire and Poached Quail's Egg IPA* hadn't been the hit Jacob had been expecting.

A sudden whoosh of wind swept around the post-industrial building, with the retro electric filament light bulbs swinging like dervishes from the ceiling.

'Oh cripes,' Harry said. 'That's all we need.'

'Ah, I see from whereby the longer ambulant arm of my seventeenth century timepiece is pointing that I may expect a visit from my beloved partner of the, ahem, opposite and therefore contradictory gender?'

'That's what I meant! You didn't warn me that Tizz was paying us a visit!' Harry exclaimed. 'I need my tin helmet.'

'But, my dear chap, Tizz does have a first in Pretentiousness, Pontification and Eccentricity (PPE) from Bullingdon College at Oxo University and, thereby, *ego, urbo, urbo, rin-tin-din facto sum*, she may have the ideal solution for our embarrassing predicament of the less-than-optimal cashflow sort.'

Tizz Flush stormed through the front door of **Eaten Trifles**, accompanied by her faithful assistant Nads. Jacob occasionally mentioned Tizz as his 'soulmate' but Harry wondered if that was because she booted him around so often with her forthright opinions and unwavering plans. She was short and stern and reserved any smiling for when she looked into the mirror. She surveyed the near-empty bar imperiously.

'Bring me a *Jerusalem Artichoke and Bone Marrow Gueuze* immediately, Jakes dear,' she commanded. 'Make it on the house, of course. And incidentally, where are all your customers?'

'Jakes,' Harry said quietly to his friend. 'We're not exactly solvent enough to give Tizz our premium twenty-five pounds-for-a-third beer for free.'

'Nonsense, dear chap,' Jacob said, bowing before Tizz. 'She's an

economics genius and will tell us exactly what we need to help us out of our little short-term difficulty.'

Tizz looked at the prices on the cinema-style lightbox beer menu over the bar and spat with contempt. 'No wonder your business is on the rocks. You two are part of the anti-cheap beer establishment. Your prices are a RIP-OFF! What you need is GROWTH!' she thundered.

'But even a chap who's no good at sums like me can see that our suppliers of the finest Hebridean malts and hops from remote Tasmania have been raising their prices like bill-io,' Harry protested. 'We need to put up our prices too, don't we? I think. Have I got that right, Jakes?'

Jacob stroked his bearded chin and twisted his hipster ear piercing. 'No, Harry. Your problem is that you're part of the establishment, the old orthodoxy, unlike Tizz and myself. Is that not correct my darling?'

'Indeed, it is. You need to put your prices down – encourage growth rather than being such a gloomster.'

'But **Sunnyforks** down the road charges a tenth of our prices. You're not suggesting we compete with them?'

By this time Jacob was already clambering on the bar, rearranging the prices of the beers on the overhead display, removing a digit from the prices of each.

Carpet Cleaner Porter – 8.5% -- reduced from £9.90 a pint to 99p.

Roman Ammonium IPA – 13% – slashed from £15.99 a half to £1.59.

Artichoke and Fig Platinum Ale 20.5% – massacred from £25 a third to £2.

'There can be no turning back now,' Tizz declared, downing a free print, a small price to pay for such revolutionary insight.

Soon word got around that **Eaten Trifles** was selling stupendously strong craft beers at such knockdown prices. Patrons flocked from **Stuff Yer Stinky Cheese**, the local branch of **Sunnyforks**. A queue snaked around Shackney High Street, in part exacerbated by the hold-ups in service when local **CAMRA** members quibbled about receiving a further discount at the bar when brandishing their membership cards.

The knock-down cheap craft ales had the desired effect of filling **Eaten Trifles**, albeit with comatose ex-**Sunnyforks** customers. The hipster regulars had to hold their noses and clamber over the prone

bodies only to find that demand had outstripped supply and only *Blandweiser* remained for sale.

'Tizz is such a genius,' Jacob cooed to Harry, looking at all the empty casks and tanks.

'But we've taken even less money than when we were virtually empty,' Harry said, looking at the till.

'Mere details, non-believer,' Jacob declared. 'In the long-term growth is all that matters.'

At that moment, a grey-looking man in a suit strode through the door, accompanied by members of the Metropolitan Police.

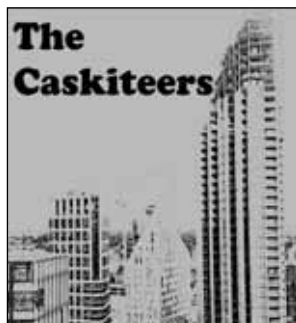
'I'm Inspector Orthodox of the Inland Revenue. You owe us thousands in beer duty and failed to appear at our court hearing this morning.'

'Oh, is that what the brown envelope was for?' Harry asked.

'If you don't pay immediately, you'll be arrested by my colleague, Inspector Coalition.'

Harry heard the sound of Jacob slamming the back door on the way out as he surveyed with despair the few coins that were left in the till.

Charlie Mackle



Branch Diary

Everybody welcome to all socials and meetings!

April

Wednesday 12th BRANCH MEETING

7.00pm, Rising Sun, Haddenham

Friday 21st - Sunday 23rd MEMBERS WEEKEND

The Octagon Centre, Clarkson Street, Sheffield S10 2TQ

May

Saturday 6th CORONATION DAY SOCIAL

5.00pm Kings Head, Aylesbury

Saturday 20th AYLESBURY GYRATORY MEANDER

1.00pm Aristocrat, Bricklayers Arms, Old Millwrights, then Broad Leys.

Wednesday 26th WENDOVER SOCIAL

Start 6.30pm King and Queen

June

Saturday 3rd WALKING SOCIAL

12 noon Le De Spencer, Downley, 1.30pm Wheel, Naphill, 3pm Golden Cross, Saunderton.

Saturday 24th BEER FESTIVAL SOCIAL

12 noon Royal British Legion, Marlow

July

Saturday 1st BEER FESTIVAL SOCIAL

12 noon, Haddenham Summer Beer Festival

Saturday 8th BEER FESTIVAL SOCIAL

12 noon Maidenhead Beer & Cider Festival, NMCC Sports Bar at Summerleaze Park, off Summerleaze Road, Maidenhead SL6 8SP.

Saturday 15th BLACK COUNTRY COACH TRIP

Details are given on the right.

Further details can be found on
www.avw.camra.org.uk and facebook
CATCH UP DURING BRANCH SOCIALS
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BLACK COUNTRY COACH TRIP

Saturday 15th July 2023

Bookings are being taken for our 31st trip and the cost is likely to be about £38 per person. Members and non-members are all welcome to join us on the best day of the year.

The coach will pick up in Aylesbury at 9.40am and then at the following: Princes Risborough (9.55am), High Wycombe (10.10am) and Stokenchurch (10.20am). Please note that the timings after Aylesbury are approximate and depend on traffic and other pick-ups on route can be catered for.

This year we plan to stop somewhere new on the way to the Black Country, but don't worry, we will visit lots of old favourites, such as the **Bull & Bladder** (pictured) and the **Beacon Hotel**, plus we may plan another new brewery visit!

After a full day's enjoyment, we will drop off in reverse order, with the bus due to arrive back in Aylesbury before midnight!

Contact the editor (details below) to book your place!

Space is limited, so make sure you don't miss out!



DON'T MISS OUT!

Keep up with the latest local pub news, be given beer festival information plus the latest social details, please join our e-mailing list by going to:-

www.avw.camra.org.uk

Swan Supping

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Copy deadline for next issue (due out early July) is 30th June 2023.

Subscriptions :- *Swan Supping* is distributed to over 250 pubs and many other locations in our area but if you would prefer to receive your copy by post we can mail it to you immediately it is published. All you have to do is send £2.00 for each edition you wish to receive to the Editor at the address above (please make all cheques payable to *Aylesbury Vale and Wycombe Branch*) and leave the rest to us! This applies to single copies to UK addresses only. We can mail overseas, but the price will vary depending on the country to which it is to be delivered. Remember that all issues of *Swan Supping* can be downloaded from our website (avw.camra.org.uk).

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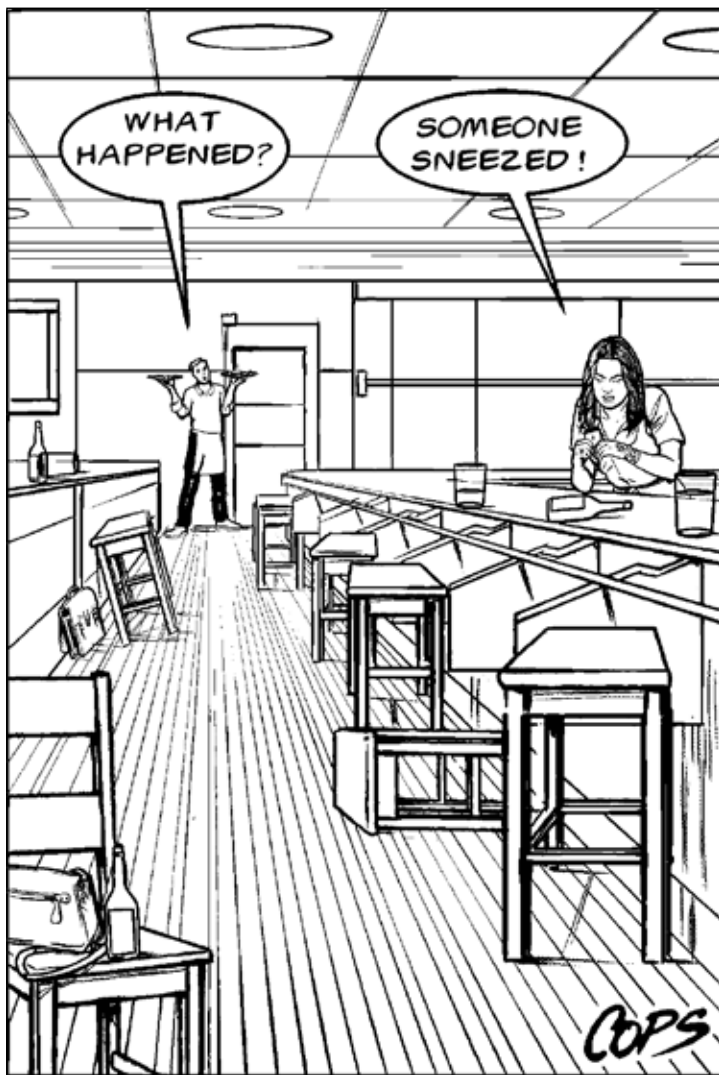
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THE SUN, WHEATLEY
THE GREYHOUND, WHITCHURCH ON THAMES
THE CROSS KEYS, WALLINGFORD
THE ANGEL, BICESTER
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THE SWAN, FARINGDON

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