

**FREE**

# Swan Supping



Issue 111

Dec 2015/Jan 2016

24 Beers plus Ciders and Perry!



Florence

**BEER OF THE  
FESTIVAL  
2015**



cover your selections for the beer of the festival.  
have separate sections for the different types of  
Details of the winners will

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over £6,000  
for Florence  
Nightingale  
Hospice Charity!  
See Page 8.**



**CAMPAIGN  
FOR  
REAL ALE**

**Newsletter of the Aylesbury Vale & Wycombe Branch of CAMRA**

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## NEWS FROM THE EDITOR



It's strange how a moment's aberration can cause so much grief. As a lot of people noticed (and told me endlessly) our last issue was dated Nov/Dec 2015, when, of course, it was the Oct/Nov 2015 issue (so all of you who thought you had missed an issue, well, you haven't!).

A load of people checked the cover before we went to press and all commented on the photograph of the mural outside the **Old Crown**, Wooburn Green, pictured there (which I should have attributed to **Simon Isted**) but no one pointed out the error of the date. As Sherlock Holmes said, we 'looked,

but we did not observe'. You can't proofread stuff you have written yourself as your mind assumes you were correct in the first place, and our main proofreader was away enjoying beer in Holland (I'm tempted to bar him from taking holidays during the preparation time for *Swan Supping*, either that, or chaining him to a computer), so I can only apologise for the mistake. Finally on this subject, if I can get away with quoting Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, I can quote another of my heroes - 'D'oh!'

Onwards and hopefully upwards!

In October we held our 22nd *Vale of Aylesbury Beer Festival* to raise money for the *Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity*. This was a great success as we raised over £6,000. A report can be found on page 8.

It seems to be the time of year for giving out awards! We held our inaugural *Winter Pub of the Year* competition recently which was won by the **Lions of Bledlow**. Further details on page 13.

Congratulations also go to the **Oak** in Aston Clinton which won the Aylesbury Vale Village Pub Competition 2015/16. The photograph shows the presentation which was held at the Unicorn in Cublington. In the

photo from left to right are Tim Cooper from **Dayla**, Patrick Hayward from the **Oak**, AVDC Chairman Clr Jenny Bloom and AVDC Clr Angela Macpherson.



The **Oak** was runner-up for the Best Family Pub which was won by the **Old Fisherman**, Shabbington.

Best Community Pub winner was the **Pilgrim**,

North Marston and in the Best Food Pub category the runner-up was the **Pheasant** in Brill and the winner was the **Pointer** also in Brill. Both of the Brill pubs were joint runners-up for the overall award.

The four pubs that have qualified for the final round of the *National Pub of the Year* are (West Pennines) **Drovers Rest**: Monkhill, Carlisle, CA5 6DB (Yorkshire) **Kelham Island Tavern**: 62 Russell Street, Sheffield, S3 8RW (Kent) **Yard of Ale**: 61 Church Street, St Peter's, Broadstairs, CT10 2TU (South West) **Sandford Park Ale House**: 20 High Street, Cheltenham, GL50 1DZ. The winner will feature in a future issue.

Just enough space to thank all those involved in the production of *Swan Supping*. Special thanks to David Parkinson for providing the picture for our cover and to Colin Stanford for his cartoon, beautifully rendered in colour. Thanks also to all our writers, pub checkers, photographers and those who trail round the pubs and breweries delivering the magazine after it has been printed by Pelican.

A merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all our readers!

*David Roe, Swan Supping Editor.*

## FROM THE CHAIRMAN

### *How do pubs get into the Good Beer Guide?*

In early September the 2016 edition of the *Good Beer Guide (GBG)* was published with great anticipation from members. It is always exciting to see what pubs have been included in guide, particularly when you find new entries that you had never heard of or visited before.

Some of you may be wondering how pubs get into the *GBG*. First of all, I would dispel the myth that pubs pay for entry as they do in the unrelated Good Pub Guide or Good Food Guide. Pubs are purely put forward by their local *CAMRA* branch on the basis that they are the pubs that serve the best quality real ale in their branch area. So how does the branch choose their best pubs? *Aylesbury Vale & Wycombe CAMRA*, along with over 85% of branches nationally, follow *CAMRA* national policy of using members' beer scores as the predominant way of deciding branch entries into the *GBG*. We introduced this approach in time for the 2014 edition and it has radically streamlined the very difficult process of entry selection and devolved decision making power from a small branch committee to branch members in general, increasing democracy within the branch. Previously, the committee and a few active members met to debate what our best pubs are. Of course, this meant that certain pubs which had not been visited by this small group were therefore precluded from the guide, whereas others were visited infrequently leading to potential arguments over consistency of quality. As with other members, we could only confess to visiting a very small number of pubs frequently enough to judge their consistency. By using beer scores, a much larger number of members are incorporated into the selection process and as each beer bought in the pub can be scored, we are able to get a clear picture of consistency across the previous year. Beer scores are also used by the branch to shortlist candidates for our *Branch Pub of the Year*.

Some pubs obviously receive a lot more scores than others, which is understandable as *CAMRA* members tend to go to the pubs with the best reputations for real ale. Many pubs have in excess of 100 beer scores (some

having up to 500), whereas a few only have a handful. The number of members scoring pubs has dramatically increased year on year since we adopted this policy, however, we are desperate for more people to beer score so that the process is made more democratic and so that the results become more significant. If your favourite pub is not in the guide, and you haven't beer scored, then you could be partly to blame for its absence.

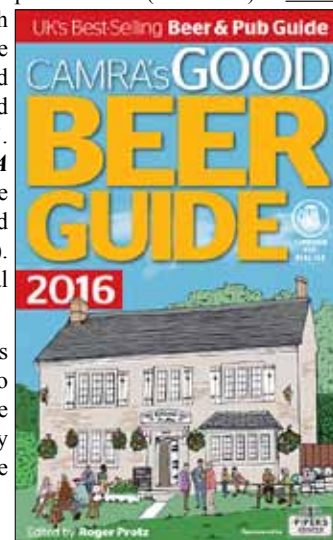
### *How do you add beer scores?*

Beer scores can be added by any *CAMRA* member whether or not the pub is in their home branch area. A large number of our branch's beer scores are entered by members of other branches and we regularly receive scores from members who live as far away as Glasgow, Belfast and Manchester.

To enter scores visit *CAMRA's* national pub database (*WhatPub*) at [www.whatpub.com](http://www.whatpub.com). You need to search for the pub by entering the pub name followed by the town. To the right-hand side of the pub description there should be a box entitled 'Submit beer scores'. You can login here using your *CAMRA* membership number as your username and your postcode as your password (unless you have previously changed it). Scores can be entered using a 0 (no real ale) to 5 (perfect) scale.

We strongly recommend that publicans ask their local *CAMRA* members to score their ales so that they can be sure that scores are submitted so that they can be considered for entry into the *GBG*.

*Carl Griffin*



## THE BALD BUZZARD ALE HOUSE

The reputation of Leighton Buzzard as a destination for ale drinkers has taken another step forward with the arrival of its first micropub. The **Bald Buzzard Ale House** opened on July 4th in Hockliffe Street in the town centre. A warm welcome from ‘buzzard’ Phil Thompson and his wife Alison awaits customers who enjoy well-kept ales or cider and the art of conversation in a relaxed atmosphere without the intrusion of electronic games, music or TV.

Emphasis for the beers is on local ales especially *Leighton Buzzard Brewing Company (LBBC)* and *Hornes*, from nearby Bow Brickhill. Others have included *Tring*, *Red Squirrel*, *Dark Star*, *Burning Sky*, *Aylesbury Brewhouse*, *Vale* and *XT*. Occasionally guests come from further afield such as the current *Thornbridge Kipling 6.2%*, a golden IPA, from Bakewell, Derbyshire. At least four ales are normally available together with a similar number of ciders such as *Tutts Clump* from Bradfield, W Berkshire and *Orchard Pig* from Glastonbury, Somerset. All beers and ciders are dispensed manually straight from the barrels situated in a chill room immediately behind the bar, accessed by sliding glass doors. Clearly visible are up to twelve barrels on a stillage with room either side for polypins and the like.

Bottled beers from the likes of *Brewdog* and *Sierra Nevada* are on the menu as are wines like Pinot, Merlot and Chardonnay, also Italian Prosecco. Traditional cloudy lemonade and ginger ale plus Alison’s Mochtails – alcohol-free cocktails - are also on offer. Food consists of bar snacks like ploughman’s, homemade scotch eggs (eggs from *Hornes Brewery*), local pork and game pies and toasted sandwiches.



Phil first worked in a pub at the age of 15, part time. The pub was the **Golden Ball** in Pinkneys Green, Maidenhead, (still there) at the time a *Wethereds* tenancy pub run by a landlord who preferred whisky, rather a lot of whisky. One day the area manager arrived to investigate the source of the many complaints of dire beer quality at the pub. The landlord had already commenced his daily spirit intake and it was obvious he didn’t have the motivation to improve the situation. The area manager then asked Phil if he would like to take a cellarman’s course at the brewery in Marlow. Phil accepted and as a result ran the cellar at the pub for about five years. After that Phil was successful in the motor trade for some thirty years but continued living in the South Bucks area. He was a regular visitor to the **Royal Standard** in Woburn Common and it was this pub and the way it was run that has influenced this new venture. Having decided on a career

change he wanted to run a pub, but not with the constraints of a pub company. The current trend to micropubs decided him and the search for suitable premises started about a year ago.

After drawing a blank in the Milton Keynes area the site in Leighton Buzzard was decided upon. Until recently it was a small old-style sweetshop with shelves adorned with large old jars and a set of scales complete with brass weights. Phil and Alison took over on June 1st and spent a month to complete the conversion to micropub. Phil stressed that the most important factors in setting up the venture were finding the right premises with the right landlord, the latter in his case being ‘pub friendly’ and most helpful in the setting up. Most of the work was cosmetic apart from the addition of the chill room. The floorboards are of reclaimed timber and really look the part. There is a small patio area with seating for drinking in suitable climate conditions and new toilet facilities.

Micropubs are opening up all over the country at an accelerating rate. The first was the **Butchers Arms** in Herne, Kent which was opened by Martyn Hillier in 2005. There are now over 130, most of which opened over the last two years. According to the website of the *Micropub Association* (set up by Martyn) seven more have opened since Phil opened the **Bald Buzzard** in July. A micropub is defined as a small free house which listens to its customers, mainly serves cask ales, promotes conversation, shuns all forms of electronic entertainment and dabbles in traditional bar snacks.

For the future Phil listens to his customers’ preferences. Already there are occasional brewery visits and day trips (recently to Berkhamsted, next will be Henlow). Cheese-tasting nights with local brewers are on the cards and he is also looking at the possibility of a small snug in the cellar.

The pub opens Tuesday - Thursday from noon to 9pm and Friday and Saturday from noon to 10pm. Well-behaved dogs are welcome. For more information phone Phil or Ali on 07581 146491, or visit the website: [www.baldbuzzard.co.uk](http://www.baldbuzzard.co.uk) For the Micropub Association visit their website on: [www.micropubassociation.co.uk](http://www.micropubassociation.co.uk).

*Mick White*



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## THE PHILOSOPHER'S ARMS

One of the enduring pleasures of the great British pub is being unexpectedly drawn into a philosophical debate.

There's something uniquely relaxing about sipping on a pint or two and, in response to a news story or friend's anecdote, letting the conversation flow. Soon you're chewing the fat way into the evening with your drinking companions, discussing the great moral questions of our time. You can profoundly disagree, heatedly argue but still all buy each other a round when the glasses run dry.



In its programme, *The Philosopher's Arms*, BBC Radio Four has recognised the pub as being the prime venue for such sociable debate. This show brings together some of the most eminent philosophical thinkers in the country with a live audience in a real pub. What could be more natural?

The programme is about to broadcast its fifth series and I went along to a recording of the first show in the **George IV**, a large **Fuller's** house on Chiswick High Road in London.

Being a show that's broadcast on national radio, the debate was a little more formally organised than a microphone merely being plonked on a pub table. With over a hundred or so people in the audience it would have needed to have been a pretty big table.

Nevertheless, the pub atmosphere was authentically recreated – everyone was encouraged to bring in a drink and contributions to the debate were signalled by tapping a pen on a glass rather than hands being raised in the air. I had a very pleasant *Big Chief IPA* from the **Redemption Brewery** – an enlightened choice of guest beer by **Fuller's**, especially as their Chiswick Brewery was only the throw of a philosopher away.

The presenter, Matthew Sweet, was joined on stage by a serious philosophical heavyweight – Professor Jeff McMahan of Corpus Christi College, Oxford and currently White's Professor of Moral Philosophy at Oxford (try saying that after several pints) – a position that dates back to 1621.

The discussion was inspired by a theory developed by one of Professor McMahan's mentors, Derek Parfit, a philosopher who spends so much time thinking that he can't bear to waste his time on activities like eating. For years, to save time, he ate the same breakfast of 'sausages, green peppers, yogurt, and a banana, all in one bowl' (according to *The New Yorker*).

The show began by discussing a fictional dilemma based on Parfit's theory of multiple identities. Even though you're probably reading this in a pub, it might take rather too many pints to explain this in detail here.

Suffice it to say that it's a highbrow theory that addresses very practical, and emotive, questions, such as how do you choose to go through with a pregnancy if you discover the child is likely to have a disability, and how can you decide to what extent a life is worth living. All are questions that require more than a few good pints of real ale to resolve.

As with a typical pub discussion down your local, the conversation took a surprising turn when some unexpected contributions came from other drinkers. On a couple of occasions guests were revealed who'd been 'planted' in the audience.

These included Tom Shakespeare, a distant relative of the bard, who has built a successful career as an academic bio-ethicist (another one not to try saying after a few pints) despite having the genetic condition achondroplasia,

more commonly known as dwarfism.

Tom therefore experiences on a practical, day-to-day, personal basis the issues that were discussed in dispassionate, intellectual terms by the Oxford moral philosopher. These two perspectives clashed to the extent that a robust debate ensued between the two academics. This continued with the various other guests, including a woman who could potentially pass on a debilitating genetic condition to any children she had and she had to make a crucial decision in conjunction with genetic

screening specialists from Guy's Hospital.

The recording lasted well over an hour and roved over a wide range of connected philosophical points, including a surprising link with global warming, which would probably take the rest of *Swan Supping* to fully explain.

I look forward to hearing how Radio Four will condense the discussion into a mere thirty minutes. The programme is due to be broadcast around Christmas so check the *Radio Times*, get yourself a good pint to hand and enter the *Philosopher's Arms* for the best-qualified pub debate you'll ever hear.

Mike Clarke



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## LOCAL NEWS

### ASHENDON

The **Hundred of Ashendon** has *Vale's The Hundred IPA* supported by an *XT* offering or the ever popular *Tring Sidepocket for a Toad*.

### AYLESBURY

The **Aristocrat** will hold a Quiz on Thursday 17th of December at 8pm to raise money for the St. Mary's Church Hospice to provide Xmas dinners for those unable to provide for themselves. Ales on offer are *Fullers London Pride*, *Oliver's Island* (now permanent) and another (*Red Fox* when visited).

The **Hop Pole** is extending its bar and replacing the kitchen following the departure of Hayley and Lyndsey. Full details next issue.

Charles Stow and Chris Murch have taken over the tenancy at the **Old Millwrights Arms**. They intend to run it as a community pub offering bar snacks, platters and Sunday lunch. Beers on offer when visited were from *Haresfoot*, *Paradigm* and *Greene King*. See next issue for further details.

### BOURNE END

Amanda Baker of the **Jolly Cricketers**, Seer Green, will be taking charge of the **Garibaldi** in December.

### BRILL

*Chiltern Beechwood* has become the **Pheasant's** best seller recently supported by regulars such as *Vale Brill Gold* and *Skinnners A Very Pleasant Pheasant*.

At the **Pointer**, *XT Pointer* at 3.8% and *Vale VPA* are always available with *Rebellion Roasted Nuts* or *Chiltern Double 50* recently as guest ales.

### CADSDEN

The **Plough** can justifiably lay claim to the title of most famous pub in the world at the time of writing after David Cameron famously invited Chinese President Xi for a pint while he stayed over at Chequers in October. The Chinese leader had apparently been immensely looking forward to sampling two of Britain's great traditions: fish and chips and a drink in a pub, although it's not that often the natives combine the two. President Xi's fish and chips in a wire basket has now gone on the menu permanently in the **Plough** after coach parties of Chinese visitors have arrived at the pub to sample this rather non-traditional method of serving the national speciality. Importantly for **CAMRA**, the visit has led to real ale becoming a much sought after drink in China, with demand for *Greene King IPA* after the Chinese leader drank a pint in the pub. See the picture (from David Cameron's official twitter account) below.

### GREAT HAMPDEN

Louise at the **Hampden Arms** has the following beers currently on pumps - *IPA* from *Rebellion*, *Beechwood* from the *Chiltern Brewery* and *Amber* from the *Otter Brewery* in Devon. She also added: 'Before I finish I would like to thank all our loyal friends and customers who support this village pub - without you there would be no pub - so a huge heartfelt thank you to you all. Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a peaceful new year. With love Louise, Constantine, Evie, Emily and Timber our new pub dog.'

### GREAT KIMBLE

Over the Christmas season, the **Swan**



will be holding its usual community events. On 17th December there will be carol singing outside the pub on the village green and on Christmas Eve there will be a carol singing session in the bar (last year this was suitably led by the local vicar). Boxing Day is always a popular fixture with a visit from the local hunt's beagles and the Owlswick Morris perform a mummers' play. Fortunately both events are kept separate.

### HADDENHAM

The **Green Dragon** no longer has a **Twist** - it's firmly shut again whilst *Enterprise* seek another tenant - all we want is a decent pub.

The ten-day refurbishment at the **Rising Sun** is going to be at least three weeks with reopening now planned for early December. Compost Corner has mostly decamped to the **Kings Head** in the meantime. The carpet is up for grabs if anyone needs one.

### KIMBLE

The **Kasturi** (formerly the **Crown**) has a planning application to demolish the building and replace it with a terrace of three houses.

### MARLOW

The **Botanist** is a restaurant with cocktails and craft beers and has branches in Leeds, Manchester and Newcastle among other locations. Their latest premises is at 48 West Street in Marlow and opened on 26th November with draught beers from *Rebellion* and *Cloudwater Brewery* of Manchester.

**Marlow Football Club** will host their inaugural beer festival on Friday 3rd and Saturday 4th June 2016 so write that in your diaries now before you forget.

**Marlow Royal British Legion** host their Winterfest beer festival extravaganza from Thursday 17th to Sunday 20th December.

The **Three Horseshoes** on Burroughs Grove Hill is currently 'Closed until further notice' according to the sign on the front door. Landlord Nigel's last day trading here was 19th October and we are most saddened by his departure. We will bring you more news when we receive any as to the future of this once very popular pub.

### MILTON COMMON

At the **Three Pigeons**, knowledgeable bar manager Daniel sticks almost exclusively with breweries that are within a 20-mile radius with one or two exceptions such as *Gun Dog Ales* from Northampton, serving pretty much their full range over time. He serves two ales and a cider on hand pump. Lots of *XT*, *ABC*, *Rebellion*, *Shotover*, *Chiltern* etc. The real cider is from *Chalgrove, Hitchcox Dry*.

### OAKLEY

At the **Chandos Arms**, *Sharp's Doom Bar* and *Green King IPA* are this pub's stalwarts with *Sharp's Atlantic Pale Ale* on next.

### OVING

The **Black Boy** will open every Monday from noon to 11pm commencing on Monday 28th December. See page 9.

### PRINCE RISBOROUGH

On a recent social at the **Bird in Hand**, the local branch presented licensees Keith and Hannah Lewis-Hamilton with a *LocAle* certificate (see picture above) to mark their impressive commitment to local breweries with three handpumps dedicated to local ales of the pub's six. The **George and Dragon** has a board outside advertising for new tenants.

### QUANTON

The **George and Dragon** will have mulled wine and various festive ales available throughout December.



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Recently enjoyed amongst the five ales that are always on offer were *ABC GMT*, *Chiltern Double 50* and *Malt Harvest*. The Christmas menu commences on Tuesday 1st December, please pre-book for parties of six or more. An OAP Christmas lunch will be on the 15th with two courses and tea or coffee at £10. A darts knockout competition will be held on Saturday 9th December at 8.30.

## STEWKLEY

The *Swan* currently has both *Timothy Taylor Golden Best* and *Landlord* alongside the regular *Courage Best*. Up next will be *Wells Bombardier* and *York Guzzler*.

## TETSWORTH

All ales at the *Old Red Lion* are £3.45 whatever the strength. There's always at least one *Locale* on such as *XT 4*, *Loose Cannon*, *Abingdon Bridge* or *Chiltern's Chiltern Ale*. Currently for the next four weeks *Greene King London Glory* is sold with a free raffle ticket with a draw each Thursday. The lucky winner wins eight pints of the ale.

## TIDDINGTON

*Sharp's Doom Bar* is a permanent fixture for passing trade at the *Fox & Goat* not brave enough to test local brews. Recently, as a change for a trial period, the *XT 4* has been replaced by *Rebellion IPA* which has proved at least equally popular. Others in the pipeline are *XT 25*, *XT 13 Pacific Red Ale* and *Rebellion's* lovely *Roasted Nuts*.

## THAME

Congratulations to Goldie and all the staff at the *James Figg* for their inclusion in the *2016 Good Beer Guide*. It has been a goal of Goldie's to get in

the guide and he's chuffed to bits as it is the public who nominate the pub throughout the year. *Mad Goose Purity* is one of the regular beers and on the last visit, it didn't disappoint! Other beers are *Doom Bar*, *Vale Best* and one other guest beer.

In November the *Cross Keys* held a beer festival, but when is it not a beer festival with eight beers on. During the day, Trudi, Pete and Jodie were kept very busy and most of the 20 beers on the list made an appearance at some time. *Hoppiness* – the brewery beer – proved very popular, due no doubt to its rarity value and *Mr Splodge* also made an appearance. Peter has also received his *Cask Marque*, despite his insistence that they require the beer to be served too cold!

## WHITCHURCH

Guesting at the *White Swan* is *Butcombe Chinook IPA* next to *Fullers Discovery* and *London Pride*. Seasonal events kick off on Tuesday 8th December with *Whitchurch Morris* and a Christmas Carol Singalong. On the following Tuesday 15th is a festive music quiz and on the 22nd a Wildest Sweater Competition and Chinese Auction. (Bring a wrapped present under £10 – can be funny, useful, interesting or rude). There is a Christmas quiz on the 29th and on New Year's Eve a Black Tie Masquerade (optional dress) with party till late. All events start at 8pm.

## WORMINGHALL

At the *Clifden Arms Sharp's Doom Bar* and *Fuller's London Pride* are permanent, plus a guest such as *XT 4*, as it was recently, or *XT 8* or a *Ringwood* offering such as *Boondoggle* or *49er*.



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01494 535317 [www.ledesencersarms.co.uk](http://www.ledesencersarms.co.uk)  
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## FESTIVAL SUCCESS



At 6.00pm on Friday, 23rd of October, the stage for the Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity 22nd Aylesbury Beer Festival at Bucks CC Sports & Social Club was set, as MP David Lidington and Deputy Mayor of Aylesbury, Barbara Russel (pictured above), officially opened the festival by pulling the first pints. After the opening, the current chairman of local **CAMRA**, Carl Griffin, and the two previous chairmen, myself and Alexander Wright, now on **CAMRA's** National Executive, took the opportunity to chat with our local MP about many subjects, mainly beer and pub related (see the photograph bottom right).

Supported by the Aylesbury Vale & Wycombe branch of **CAMRA** as well as Charity volunteers, festival-goers were treated to 24 ales, plus cider and perry over the two-day festival from many local breweries as well as those from further afield.

Entertainment over the two days included a spot of Morris dancing on Saturday afternoon courtesy of the Towersey Morris Men and live music in the evening from festival favourite Dragon Drop.

The festival was busy both on the Friday night and all day Saturday and by the end of the festival approximately 90% of all the beer, cider and perry had been consumed. This meant that the total raised from the festival was over £6,000, which was an improvement on last year, whilst leaving enough beer for the volunteers to enjoy at home as they had been too busy during the day.



The **Beer of the Festival**, voted for by the drinkers, was a delicious coffee and vanilla porter from **Colchester Brewery** called **Brazilian**.

Words: **David Roe**

Photos: **David Parkinson** (who also did the cover photograph) and **Mike Clarke**.



# MARLOW

## ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

2015 **CAMRA** Aylesbury Vale & Wycombe Club of the Year  
2015 **CAMRA** REGIONAL Central Southern Club of the Year



# WINTERFEST BEER FESTIVAL

*Circa 16 Christmas, Seasonal & Rare Brews*

Opening Times

Thursday 17th December (19.00 – 23.00) / Friday 18th December (11.00 – 23.00)

Saturday 19th December (11.00 - 00.00) / Sunday 20th December (11.00 -20.00)

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## CHANGE AT THE BLACK BOY

The lease at the **Black Boy** in Oving changed hands at the end of August and the new hosts are Paul and Sarah Mitchell, known already by many as they also run the **Eight Bells** in Long Crendon.

The **Black Boy's** recent history has been somewhat unsettled and needs some consistency to rebuild the popular following and reputation it used to enjoy. Paul and Sarah are well aware of this and are determined to build the business by re-establishing the pub as a destination for local drinkers whilst not forgetting the potential of passing trade drawn by the spectacular views of the Aylesbury Vale and old world charm of the building itself, dating from c.1524. Their experience gained over the last two years in a similar village environment at the **Eight Bells** is being fully utilised at the **Black Boy** where applicable.

Already the new liberal opening hours and a warm welcome at all times are achieving an atmosphere that is more customer friendly. The pub is now open all day Tuesday to Saturday (noon – 11pm) and noon – 6pm Sunday. Redecoration is under way starting with the restaurant area. The menu is comprehensive without being 'over the top' either in style or price.



Daily specials are always an option as are children's portions. There is a bar menu in addition to the main with favourites like ploughman's and 'The Boys Baps' with various fillings like sausages or fish fingers with salad and other options for those who just want a bite.

The pub is privately owned and free-of-tie so Paul can develop the choice of ale as he likes, and by customer response. Local brewers dominate at present with up to three on sale at a time. There will be a general rotation of guest ales with some from further afield. When visited there was *Malt Anniversary*, *Tring Side*

*Pocket* and *XT 3* all on handpump and in fine condition.

The pub will start opening every Monday starting on the bank holiday of 28th December. For more details on future events, bookings for Christmas meals and other enquiries telephone 01296 641258 or visit: [www.theblackboyoving.co.uk](http://www.theblackboyoving.co.uk).

*Mick White*

*Photo: Bill Piers* (featuring from left to right: Paul Mitchell, Landlord; John Grant, Sous Chef; Chris Kirby, Head Chef).

# TRING



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**TRING**  
BREWERY Co.



ISLE OF WIGHT CLASSIC BUSES, BEER AND



Having heard from a pal, Mike Hill, that the first IoW buses and beer weekend last year was most enjoyable, Bruce Seymour and I decided to attend the festival with him this year. The whole weekend was superbly organised by the *IoW branch* of CAMRA and the IoW Bus Museum in Ryde – and it really was a feat of organisation.

Over the weekend about forty-eight different classic single and double-decker buses, built between 1939 and 1997, provided a free, hourly service on eight routes serving some fifty participating pubs. Another dozen buses were on static display. Other nearby pubs also had the benefit of busloads of happy drinkers turning up on their doorsteps at regular intervals. The participating pubs, however, all had special offers available to those with programmes such as ‘50p off your first pint’ or ‘20% off food’ or ‘£3.00 a pint’ etc. It appears that the normal price of a pint of beer on the island in most pubs is well over £3.50 no doubt reflecting the additional cost involved in transport.

The journey from Aylesbury to the IoW was straightforward and worked faultlessly. We had opted to stay at **King Harry’s Bar**, a **GBG** pub in Shanklin. We bought off-peak, senior, open returns from Aylesbury to Waterloo and from Waterloo to Shanklin (saving over a fiver by splitting the tickets in



this way). The all-in cost, including the Wight Link Ferry from Portsmouth Harbour to Ryde Pier Head, was £68.40 each. On arrival at Portsmouth we stepped straight off the train and onto the ferry which soon departed for the 22-minute crossing. The overall journey time from Aylesbury to Ryde took just over four hours. At the pier head we took the local train (formed of two 1938-vintage, ex-London Underground coaches) for the 24-minute trip to Shanklin. The varnished window frames and deeply upholstered seats (and it has to be said the genteel, albeit bumpy, ride) prepared us for the gentler pace of life on the island which at times had a somewhat 1950s feel about it.

A comprehensive and attractively presented website was set up for the event from which one could readily obtain details of the bus routes, the buses themselves, walks from IoW Ramblers, participating pubs, the beers and ciders available and accommodation. Details for pre-ordering a programme,



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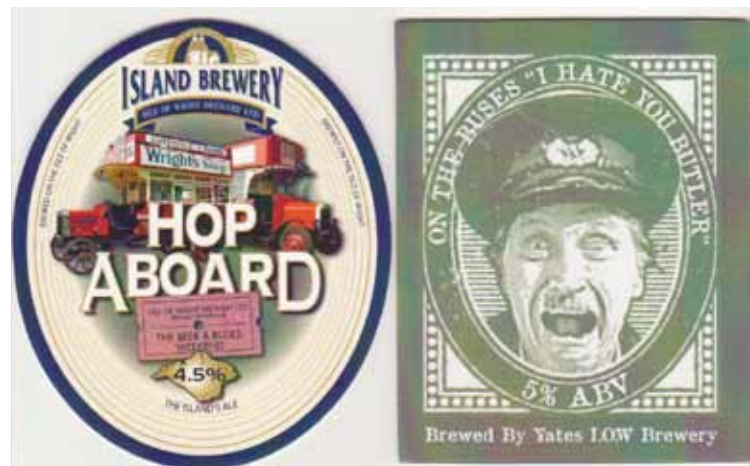
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## ISLAND WALKS WEEKEND 17-18 OCTOBER 2015

price £6.00, were given for those wishing to plan ahead in detail. A printed vehicle supplement also gave a more detailed timetable showing particulars of the buses plying the routes.

The website seems most usefully to have been updated straightaway after the weekend to indicate which beers and ciders were actually available at each of the participating pubs over the weekend – some 170 different ones in all. Beers from the three breweries on the island were of course found in many pubs: (i) **Goddards Ale of Wight**, *Scrumdiggy*, *Wight Squirrel*, *Fuggle-Dee Dum*, and *Lost Track*; (ii) **Island Nipper**, *Wight Gold*, *Yachtsmans Ale*, *Wight Knight*, *Vectis Venom*, *Earls RDA* and *Hop Aboard* (brewed especially for the festival); (iii) **Yates On the buses** (also brewed especially for the festival), *Golden Bitter*, *Pale Ale*, and *Dark Side of the Wight*. Amongst the mainland brewed beers the only brewery represented from our neck of the woods was **Tring** with *Side Pocket for a Toad*, *Squadron Scramble*, *Moongazing* and *Kotuku* but there were plenty of other well-known, as well as not often found, beers available also.



In chatting to bar staff in some of the pubs it was clear that all of them had done very well over the weekend; some mentioned that they had got through nine or ten firkins by Sunday lunchtime. All the pubs I visited were busy but coped well with the hourly influx of eager drinkers as the buses arrived nearby. It should be mentioned also that the island benefits from an excellent scheduled bus service. For example Southern Vectis route 3 runs between Newport and Ryde Monday-Saturday from 05.30 to 02.45 the next morning, and on Sunday the last bus to depart is at 23.35.

Bruce and I made our first classic bus ride, in a 1961 Bristol SC4LK/ECW B35F (for the initiated), from Ryde bus museum to Newport Quay which got off to a classic start when the driver turned to the full busload of passengers and asked 'Does anyone know the route?' We all laughed at the apparent joke but he persisted 'No I'm serious'. I later heard that the driver had come over from the mainland and had not had time to be briefed properly on the route. Luckily a local went up to the front to direct the driver and with some crashing of gears and labouring up hills we arrived safely.

Mike took a 1974 Bristol RESL6L/ECW B44F travelling on the short spur beyond Yarbridge to Culver Down (see route map above), from where he took the photograph above of the empty bus (I wonder where the passengers were all resting...) with cow(e)s in the background.

Amongst the great pubs (many in the **GBG**) the three of us, either together or separately, had time to visit over the weekend were: the **Bargeman's Rest**, **Prince of Wales** and **Newport Ale House** at Newport – the latter is said to be the smallest pub on the island, yet they found room for a musician to be squeezed into a corner who unaware at first of the buses and beer weekend had thought the crowds packing in had come especially to hear him play – and well they might have done as he was very good; **Anchor Inn** and **Cowes Ale House** at Cowes; **Sun Inn** at Hulverstone; **Wheatsheaf** and **Bugle Coaching Inn** (where we were also entertained by its saucy notices dotted around the bar) at Yarmouth; **Culver Haven Inn** at Culver Down; **Castle Inn** at Sandown where they had



a beer festival; **Volunteer Inn** at Ventnor; **King Harry's Bar**, **Chine Inn** and **Steamer Inn** at Shanklin.

Inevitably some of the complex arrangements did not go to plan. I understand many more people attended the festival than in the previous year. The organisers had geared up for this but were caught out here and there with bus breakdowns and occasional capacity problems. Judging from feedback received by **IoW CAMRA**, however, no one seemed to mind going back to the pub to wait for the next bus! The great thing was that local **CAMRA** and Bus Museum marshals apparently in radio contact with a control point were in attendance at all the major hubs and destinations so that they were quick to call up reserve buses and control the crowds safely. These friendly volunteers were also keen to receive feedback (a card was provided for this purpose) in their genuine desire to make next year's event even better. It was fitting that their magnificent efforts were rewarded by good weather and a great turnout over the weekend.

Photo credits with thanks:

Event programme covers – courtesy **IoW CAMRA**

King Harry's – **Bruce Seymour**

Pump-clips – **Noj Williamson** (it turned out later that unbeknown to us ..that Noj had been to the festival at the weekend – and thanks to **John Killick** of **IoW CAMRA** Noj was caught on camera boarding a relief bus for Yarmouth).

1974 Bristol RESL6L at Culver Down – Mike Hill

**Giles du Boulay**





BRANCH NEWS



*Aylesbury Vale & Wycombe CAMRA shortlisted for Community Group of the Year Award*

On the 10th November 2015, *Aylesbury Vale and Wycombe CAMRA* were invited to attend Wycombe District Council's Community Champions Awards ceremony. The branch had been shortlisted for the Community Group of the Year Award after a nomination applauding their hard work in getting over 130 of their branch pubs listed as *Assets of Community Value (ACV)*, effectively giving the local community a say in the future of their social hubs. We accepted our invitation with Simon Isted and myself volunteering to attend the ceremony.

Though the branch did not go on to win the Community Group of the Year award, the award going to a talking newspaper for the blind, we took the opportunity to set up a stall in the town hall and discuss pub preservation and other *CAMRA* campaigns with attendees at the ceremony. It gave us a rare opportunity to become visible to those who can have such an impact of the success or failure of pubs within our branch area.

Productive discussions were held with district, county and parish councillors, council policy makers and council officers during the event and broad support with our aims was declared.

We discussed issues ranging from what councils can do to help make running a successful pub easier as well as how councils can support community groups who wish to take over the running of their community assets.

Particular focus was put on the ills of permitted development under planning legislation which makes it essential that ACVs are placed on pubs in order to allow communities to have a say in the future of their pubs.

The event turned into a good evening out for Simon and myself, however we were a little disappointed that the bar only offered *Carling*. Of course we abstained and waited for our opportunity to celebrate with a couple of pints in the *Belle Vue* afterwards.

This nomination very much encourages the branch to continue with our policy to increase campaigning for community rights, pub preservation and to increase our support for the pub trade.

We encourage anyone to contact us should they wish for their favourite or local pub to be listed as an *Asset of Community Value*.

*Carl Griffin*  
Chairman

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## BRANCH WINTER PUB OF THE YEAR

In October, branch members were asked to vote on a shortlist of six branch pubs for *Branch Winter Pub of the Year*, which were nominated in the previous month by the same members.

Pubs were nominated for offering the ultimate Winter pub experience (open fires, seasonal events etc) which was a difficult process as we had just moved from Summer into Autumn. Members obviously had to recall their experiences from the previous Winter. I imagine that some of you would think it better to do the award at the end of Winter, however it would be of no benefit to the pubs in question to receive a *Winter Pub of the Year* award in Spring when the qualities being judge are no longer so attractive.



The shortlisted pubs were; **Bell** in Hardwick, **Lions of Bledlow**, **Pink & Lily** in Lacey Green, **Prince Albert** in Frieth, **Red Lion** in Chinnor and **Swan** in Great Kimble.

In all, there was a large increase in members voting in comparison to the *Summer Pub of the Year* (won by the **Stag and Huntsman** in Hambleden). All pubs received votes with three pubs forging ahead scrapping and ending the voting with a tight finish at the top. In the end, the **Lions of Bledlow** won the race to be named Winter Pub of the Year, one vote ahead of the **Pink & Lily** which itself was one vote ahead of the **Swan** in Great Kimble.

The Winner's and Runner-Up's certificates were awarded on Sunday 22nd November by Chairman Carl Griffin (see photo). Well done to all the pubs involved and in particular to our winners the **Lions of Bledlow**. Also, a big thank you to all those who participated in the voting and nomination stages.

The next seasonal pub of the year award will be held in late Spring and named *Summer Pub of the Year*. Please contact [chairman@swansupping.org.uk](mailto:chairman@swansupping.org.uk) if you would like to suggest any pubs or would like to comment on the awards procedure.

*Carl Griffin, AV & W CAMRA Branch Chairman*



# THE WHEEL

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# LOCAL BREWERY NEWS

## Aylesbury Brewhouse Co.

Aylesbury Brewhouse's presence has increased over the Autumn months, having big representations at local beer festivals, selling out of Limited Edition Beer in record time, and brewing the now infamous *Way Back When* - a beery ode to the original Aylesbury Brewing Company.

Regional CAMRA beer festival season went in a drunken blur, with the microbrewery's hand-crafted ales present at Ascot Beer Festival, Oxford Beer Festival and Bedford, including two at Aylesbury's successful beer festival!

The welcome problem of their Limited Edition Beers being snapped up by publicans as swiftly as they brew them is that Head Brewer, Hayden, must come up with new, spellbinding recipes just as quickly! But have no fear, as more are in the pipeline!



Currently doing the rounds is *Entropy*, a 4.1% red ale brewed with and dry-hopped with Cascade. *Entropy* is the measure of disorder, reflected in the complex flavours found in this beer!

Next up are the Christmas beers! *Lord of Yule* is a 4.5% deep ruby red named after the Bavarian lord of yule, Krampus. Krampus is a horned, anthropomorphic figure who, according to traditional narratives around the figure, punishes children during the Christmas season who have misbehaved, in contrast with Saint Nicholas, who rewards well-behaved ones with gifts.

*Midwinter*, the second seasonal offering, is a 4.7% dry-hopped English pale stout. It's the second pale stout they've ever brewed and if it's anything like how the first one, *White Leviathan*, was received you'd best hot-foot it down to the pub and get your landlord to get some in!

The ABC brewery shop, now relocated into the Hop Pole, will be open seven days a week over the festive period for you to pick up your Christmas beer! There's nothing better than fresh real ale, so drop by the shop and book your beer!



## Chiltern Brewery

Even though fireworks night has been and gone, the Chiltern Brewery has two limited edition draught autumn ale 'crackers' currently available - mellow and fruity seasonal winter ale *Foxtrot* 3.9% vol and robust *300's Dark Old Ale* 4.9% vol. You are being encouraged to try them to see which one is your favourite: a tough job, but someone has to do it! *300's Dark Old Ale* is the brewery's biggest award winning beer, so see if you agree with the experts!



The beers are available in pubs across the region and of course at the brewery tap, the Farmers' Bar in the King's Head, Aylesbury. They can also be bought from the brewery shop in Terrick in a variety of container sizes including the attractive 8 Pint Sharing Pack.

Talking of great present ideas

and to save you having to join the crush in your local shopping centre in the coming weeks the Chiltern Brewery website [www.chilternbrewery.co.uk](http://www.chilternbrewery.co.uk) and shop at Terrick near Wendover have some exciting gift ideas, including new wooden beer



tasting paddles with three 1/3 pint glasses and stylish new wooden crates of 12 selected bottled beers. Luxurious Christmas puddings made with the brewery's delicious *Lord Lieutenant's Cream Porter* are amongst other treats also available. The brewery shop is a delight at this time of year although, disappointingly, Head Brewer Tom Jenkinson has once again refused to dress up as Santa or build a grotto!

Chiltern started 2015 with a visit to the 'dark side' with the introduction of a third permanent draught ale, *Chiltern Black* 3.9% vol, with treacle tones and a chocolaty aroma, to complement regulars *Beechwood Bitter* 4.3% vol and *Chiltern Pale Ale* 3.7% vol. Along the way there have been awards aplenty - a best ever year for the brewery in fact which Tom and brother George are delighted about.

Tom and George and all the staff at the brewery would like to thank readers of *Swan Supping* for their support throughout the last 12 months and pass on their very best 'compliments of the season'.

## Malt The Brewery

After running out of their hand-bottled, bottle-conditioned ale at the end of 2014, Team Malt have been busy building stocks to ensure no one is disappointed this year. Almost 10,000 bottles have been filled. The bottles are now gradually maturing before they'll be labelled, ready for sale.



Malt The Brewery are proud to hand make all their bottle-conditioned ale. They have been rewarded with Gold Stars for both Malt Golden Ale and Malt Dark Ale in the Great Taste Awards as well as being accredited as Real Ale in a Bottle by CAMRA.

Malt Starry Nights has recently joined the Malt ale line up. It's already hugely popular with visitors to the brewery tasting bar. *Starry Nights* is a light fruity ale with a dark side. At 4.0% ABV it's a great option for Christmas.

The Brewery Tasting Bar will be open every day until 7pm in the Christmas week - 21st - 24th December. Team Malt hope to see you there!

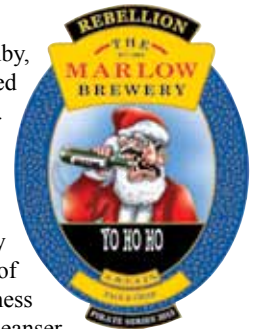
## Rebellion Brewery

*Roasted Nuts* is back in November 4.6%. A deep ruby, complex and flavoursome winter warmer, packed with intense and distinctive malt and hop character.

Rebellion were very pleased to have won beer of the festival at the Swindon Beer Festival for their October beer *Old Seadog*. Their December monthly special is *Yo Ho Ho* at 4.2% which is a very crisp and fresh beer filled with the festive flavour of citrus peel. This pale ale has a lovely clean bitterness and is light on maltiness making it an ideal palate cleanser to accompany all the festive feasting you can manage.

Their 2016 monthly beer series will feature the 'English Greats', including beers called *Lionheart*, *Waterloo* and *Drake*. For January, the monthly special is *Activist* which is a red and hoppy 4.2% beer and for February it is the copper and floral *Roundhead* also at 4.2%.

The Brewhouse developments are coming to their completion including a new copper, mash tun and mill. The new higher capacity brewery will allow more flexibility to the brewing schedule.





# MORE LOCAL BREWERY NEWS



They'll be at Marlow, Henley and Bourne End for late night shopping events spreading Christmas cheer.

## Tring Brewery

Tring have been working on names for the 2016 monthly specials and, as with previous years there's a theme that carries across all 12 beers. This year it's De Havilland aircraft. Why? Well, De Havilland was originally based just up the road in Hatfield. Whilst the factory and offices are gone there is a museum dedicated solely to this great manufacturer, just outside St Albans. The museum stands on the site that De Havilland purchased to develop the now famous mosquito. The museum actually has three mosquito aircraft, one of which is the restored prototype. This particular aircraft is the only remaining example of a WWII prototype and is 75 years old this month. The museum has a variety of historically significant aircraft, some of which are suffering as a result of exposure to the elements. To counter this problem the museum is raising funds for a new hangar and improvements to the site.

They've agreed to help with this project by running a couple of promotions. First off, anyone who purchases (a minimum) two litre bottle from their shop will automatically be entered into a monthly draw. Each month they'll make a donation to the museum on behalf of the draw winner. A plaque will be placed in the museum engraved with the winners name and the pumpclip for that month...BUT here's the great bit. As a monthly winner of the 'De Havilland draw', you and a partner would also be entitled to join other winners on a free tour of the museum and a free evening brewery tour. On the brewery tour evening more draw will be held, where the lucky winner and partner will win a flight in a De Havilland biplane.

## Vale Brewery

By the time you read this, the much loved Vale Christmas beer will be ready in cask and bottle! *Good King* is a full-bodied, deep ruby winter ale at 5.0% with hints of red berries, chocolate, and malt bitterness.



'Ah, distinctly I remember it was in the bleak December; And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon the floor..' and so Edgar Allan Poe's 'The Raven' tells of a talking raven's mysterious visit to a distraught lover, tracing the man's slow fall into madness. Vale's *The Raven* is a deep red 4.1% bitter brewed in December for those with a clear conscience...

January brings images of haggis, neeps and tatties for many pubs, quite rightly, celebrate the birth of Robert Burns on 25th January. *Hornbook* is named after Burns' infamous poem *Death and Doctor Hornbook*, describing how the Scot poet once met death. Brewed in an 80/- (shilling) style, raise your glass to one of our island's greatest wordsmiths.



Vale's brewery shop in Brill will be open every day over Christmas and New Year, apart from Sundays, Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day!

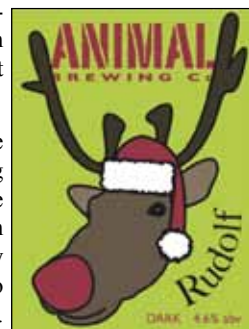
## XT Brewery

The brewery extension at XT is nearly finished – new storage area, cold room and brewing space have been completed and the new brewery tasting room is now ready. The tasting room provides a new space for beer tastings and to buy fresh beer in mini-casks and bottled beer to drink at home.

No less than three new special Christmas beers are available from XT: the XT 25 at 4.5% is cold-brewed burgundy 'AltBier' slow fermented for a smoother deeper flavour; *Animal Robin* is a bottle only 'Rockin Ruby Ale', at 4.5% it's a rich malty winter ale; *Animal Rudolf* which is a cappuccino stout 4.5%. This is a collaboration beer brewed with their friends at Dusty Ape Coffee and using their very special 'Silverback' Espresso. Silverback delivers a punch that is worthy of the king of primates! Intense and fruity, this coffee, has a sweet aroma with blackcurrant and plum notes.

Syrupy and full-bodied with a fresh lime finish. Blended with lactose to give a really smooth stout – a perfect Christmas drink.

The next XT beer club evening is Thursday the 3rd December, a members only event showcasing some one-off experimental beers. This will be followed by the next open day on Saturday 5th December from 10:30am. The new brewery shop and tasting room will be open from 9:30 to 4:30pm Monday to Saturday from December 1st.



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## GRAVEDIGGERS - THIRTY-SEVEN

After making yet another ostentatiously obsequious bow to their honoured guest, David Camerwong and George Poshborne lifted their noses in unison off the tarmac. It was the state visit of the Lord Great Supreme Ruler of Cheaptatistan – President Uzi Thatimongna-Uzi.

‘Your lord supreme highness, could you sign this next trade agreement?’ Poshborne said, pushing a contract into President Uzi’s hand as they boarded the limousine. ‘We so respect your country’s stacks of oil money, sorry I mean, culture.’

‘Human rights? Ha ha ha,’ Camerwong said, splitting his sides in a jolly laugh. ‘You’ll see we’re eminently flexible on such details, depending, of course, on the size of your import market.’

‘We’re doing a buy-one-get-one-free on our army divisions, oh, great leader,’ Poshborne said, his tongue licking the toes of President Uzi’s jackboots. ‘And we’ll throw in a few nuclear subs for free.’

The motorcade sped down Whitehall towards the Houses of Parliament. President Uzi ignored the entreaties of Camerwong and Poshborne, preferring to stare out of the window through his mirrored sunglasses. As the limousines entered Parliament Square the Lord Great Supreme Ruler whispered into his interpreter’s ear.

‘The president. He want that for his newest Great Palace,’ the interpreter said, pointing towards Big Ben.

‘Such wonderful taste,’ oozed Poshborne.

‘We’ll have it gift-wrapped with a bow and sent over straight away,’ Prime Minister Camerwong cooed to the President while whispering into Poshborne’s ear: ‘Lick harder. We might have a chance of reducing the deficit to half of what we inherited.’

‘But what Lord Great Supreme Ruler demand most of all is roast beef and Yorkshire pudding and pint of real beer at English country pub served by Queen – just like President Ironphist from Fracktopia got from you,’ the interpreter declared. The Lord Great Supreme Ruler nodded along sagely.

‘Your wish is my command,’ Poshborne smirked.

\*\*\*\*

An hour or so later and the Lord Great Supreme Ruler was becoming visibly impatient as the motorcade was stuck in a huge traffic jam along a narrow, high-hedged country lane near the Prime Minister’s country residence.

‘I’m so sorry your most wonderful Excellency and ultimate deity,’ Camerwong said, ‘But since our visit with President Ironphist to the **Disembowelled Fox**, these narrow country roads have been jammed. There are so many Fracktopians paying homage to the place their leader feasted on Toad in the Hole – unfortunately too literally for the local amphibian population.’

‘If you could find your way to signing over a couple of hundred million for a new motorway then this unfortunate occurrence would be eliminated in any of your most welcome future visits,’ Poshborne pleaded. ‘And we’ll divert HS2 to stop right outside the pub.’

The Lord Great Supreme Ruler stared out of the window again into the dark countryside and tapped his interpreter on the shoulder. ‘His most excellent greatness says he can see pub in distance from window. He wants to go to that one.’

‘Of course, sir, anything you say,’ Poshborne said, instructing the driver to change course.

Camerwong whispered in Poshborne’s ear: ‘That’s another omnishambles mess you’ve got me into, you oily creep. Don’t you realise that pub’s the **Gravediggers!**’

\*\*\*\*

A quiet winter night in the **Gravediggers’** public bar and the regulars were happily comatose on the floorboards while Mazz blasted their superbug-encrusted glasses with a pressure washer of sulphuric acid.

Suddenly the door flung open and George Poshborne entered, shouting ‘All hail his excellency the Lord Great Supreme Ruler of Cheaptatistan – President Uzi.’

Poshborne lay down on the beer covered floor to allow President Uzi to walk over him on the way to the bar. The interpreter approached James to



ask him to recount the available beers.

‘Well, we have *Old Septic Tank*, *Undescended Gonad*, *Rancid Pus Infection IPA*, *Toxic Sludge* and our craft beer *Deadly Lethal Ammonium Nitrate Head Exploder*,’ James said, proudly indicating the range of handpumps and the steaming tap for the keg beer.

The Lord Great Supreme Ruler’s interpreter translated the list of beers for his master, who nodded his head increasingly enthusiastically at the sound of each ever more foul-sounding brew.

‘He says they sound wonderful drinks to give to our happy comrades in our mind-re-orientation camps,’ the interpreter said.

‘Would you like a taster of any of our fine brews?’ Mazz asked.

‘He would first like these local people to drink the beer before him because the Lord Great Supreme Ruler say he doesn’t trust these obnoxious creeps, Camerwong and Poshborne, as far as he could throw them.’

‘Oh, how droll,’ Poshborne smiled. ‘I’ll pay for the poison test, er, I mean I’ll get a round in.’

‘Oi, lads, free beer!’ Mazz yelled.

Immediately the figures lying on the floor jumped up and Old Pete, Old Joe and Old Moses eagerly downed their complimentary pints in one quick gulp with only a huge collective belch being the evidence of any side-effect.

The Lord Great Supreme Ruler pointed at each of the handpumps in turn, indicating he wanted to try a pint of each.

He gingerly sampled *Old Septic Tank* with a grimace but kept persisting until he finished the pint. He slurped *Undescended Gonad* with more gusto and when he’d finished his *Rancid Pus Infection IPA* he slammed his glass on the bar in appreciation.

After downing a pint of *Toxic Sludge* he asked his interpreter to take a selfie with Old Pete. His interpreter declared the image was going to appear on Cheaptatistan’s newest form of currency – the 1,000,000,000,000 Cheapodollar bank note.

After a pint of *Deadly Lethal Ammonium Nitrate Head Exploder*, Lord Great Supreme Ruler was positively mellow, instructing his interpreter to draft an amnesty to empty all Cheaptatistan’s happy-person camps and to issue the ex-inmates with vouchers to purchase a pint of ‘brewed-under-licence’ *Undescended Gonad* every day.

President Uzi danced a sultry tango with Mazz after which he offered to make her Lord Great Supreme Mistress of the Ultimate Homeland. She politely declined, saying that after a shift at the **Diggers** she was going to be busy for days washing her hair.

Poshborne smirked at Camerwong as they both sat on rickety bar-stools, wiping sweat off their brows in relief that their VIP visitor had found a home-from-home in the filth and squalor of the **Gravediggers’** public bar. In fact the Lord Great Supreme Ruler was enjoying himself so much he offered, through his interpreter, to buy his hosts a pint.

‘Lord Great Supreme Ruler ask “What is *your* poison?”’ the interpreter enquired.

‘A pint of *Blandweiser*, please your most munificent excellency,’ they replied in unison.

‘*Blandweiser!!*’ President Uzi exclaimed, stopping dead and shooting the pair a deathly stare through his sunglasses.

‘Um, yes, we’ve already negotiated a deal to sell our personal drink preferences for sponsorship by the *Very Bland Corporation of America*,’ Camerwong said, sheepishly. ‘They paid a rather good price, didn’t they George?’

However, George had already bolted for the door as the Lord Great Supreme Ruler made a series of shooting gestures with his fingers in his hosts’ direction.

‘The Lord Great Supreme Ruler say at least he has *some* ethics – he would *never* be seen drinking *Blandweiser*,’ the interpreter said. ‘All those trade deals are off. You can have your country’s assets back.’

President Uzi happily collapsed into a pile of writhing bodies with Old Moses while David Camerwong blushing and rosy-cheeked asked James if he could settle up for his drinks on credit.

Charlie Mackle



## Branch Diary

*Everybody welcome to all socials and meetings!*

### December

#### Thursday 10th BRANCH CHRISTMAS MEAL

7.30pm, Bell, Aylesbury (please book with branch in advance)

#### Saturday 12th HADDENHAM WINTERFEST

12.00 noon, Village Hall, Banks Road, Haddenham.

#### Friday 18th AYLESBURY CHRISTMAS CRAWL

Start 7.00pm Hop Pole.

#### Thursday 24th CHRISTMAS EVE POST-SHOPPING SOCIAL

12.30pm, King's Head, Aylesbury

#### Thursday 24th CHRISTMAS EVE SOCIAL

5.00pm, William Robert Loosley, High Wycombe.

#### Monday 28th BANK HOLIDAY LUNCH SOCIAL

Queen and Albert, Wooburn Green.

#### Wednesday 30th POST-CHRISTMAS THAME CRAWL

Start 6.00pm, Six Bells, then 6.30pm Rising Sun, 7.00pm James Figg, 7.30pm Birdcage, 8.00pm Black Horse, 8.30pm Nag's Head, 9.00pm Swan, finishing at 9.30pm Cross Keys.

### January

#### Saturday 2nd BERMONDSEY BEER MILE

Meet 11.00am Foupure Brewery, 22 Bermondsey Trading Estate, Rotherhithe New Road, London SE16 3LL, and then (provisionally) 12.00 noon Partizan Brewery, 1.00pm Kernel Brewery (offsales only), 1.30pm Brew by Numbers,

2.15pm Anspach and Hobday, 3.00pm Southwark Brewing Company, 3.45pm Dean Swift (pub), 4.30pm Draft House Tower Bridge (pub), 5.15pm Bridge House (pub). (Please note most of these breweries serve only craft keg beers and opening hours may be affected in holiday period).

#### Monday 11th BRANCH MEETING

8.00pm, Royal British Legion, Marlow (venue tbc)

#### Tuesday 19th WEST WYCOMBE SOCIAL

8.00pm Swan, 8.45pm Plough, 9.30pm George and Dragon.

#### Thursday 21st WENDOVER CRAWL

Start 7.00pm Pack Horse, 7.45pm George and Dragon, 8.15pm Red Lion, 8.45pm White Swan, 9.00pm King and Queen, 9.45pm Shoulder of Mutton.

#### Wednesday 27th OXFORDSHIRE SOCIAL

8.00pm Shepherd's Crook, Crowell, 8.45pm Crown, Chinnor, 9.15pm Red Lion, Chinnor, 9.45pm Inn at Emmington.

### February

#### Monday 8th BRANCH MEETING

8.00pm, Bricklayers' Arms, Aylesbury

Further details can be found on our website

[www.swansupping.org.uk](http://www.swansupping.org.uk), facebook and meetup.com

**CATCH UP DURING BRANCH SOCIALS:-  
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[www.swansupping.org.uk/joinin](http://www.swansupping.org.uk/joinin)

# Swan Supping

Swan Supping is distributed free of charge to pubs in the branch area.

Circulation **6000** copies.

Edited by David Roe

Editorial Address : 16 Jasmine Close, Aylesbury, Bucks HP21 9SH.

Tel : 01296 484551 E-Mail : [editor@swansupping.org.uk](mailto:editor@swansupping.org.uk)

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Published by the Aylesbury Vale & Wycombe branch of the *Campaign for Real Ale* and printed by *Pelican Print*, Unit 14, Aylesbury Vale Industrial Park, Farmborough Close, Aylesbury, Bucks. HP20 1DQ Tel: 01296 422100



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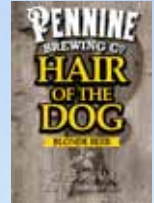
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