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Swan Supping

Issue 116

Oct/Nov 2016



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Newsletter of the Aylesbury Vale & Wycombe Branch of CAMRA

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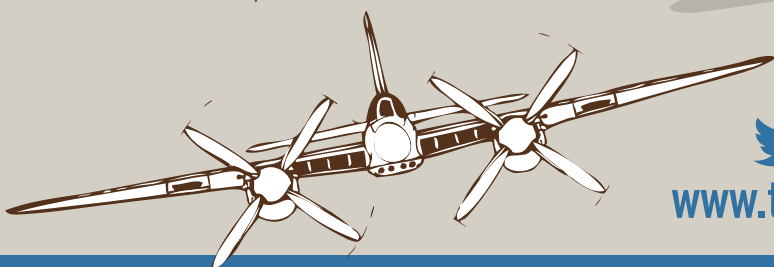
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D GYPSY MOTH DRAGONFLY SEA VIXEN VAMPIRE MOSQUITO COMET ALBATROSS HORNET HUMMINGBIRD
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NET HUMMINGBIRD DRAGON RAPIDE QUEEN BEE HOUND GYPSY MOTH DRAGONFLY SEA VIXEN VAMPIRE

TRING
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NEWS FROM THE EDITOR



The **Cross Keys** in Thame, which was our Pub of the Year, has gone on to be named **Regional Pub of the Year** for the **Central Southern Region** of **CAMRA**. Carl Griffin, our previous Chairman and our current Regional Director will be awarding a certificate on Wednesday 5th October at about 7.30, and everyone is welcome to attend. Naturally, this will feature heavily in our next issue as this is the first time I can remember that one of our pubs has gone on to win the regional title. Let's hope for further success as it goes up against the other regional winners.

The 23rd **Vale of Aylesbury Beer Festival** takes place at the Bucks County Council Sports and Social Club, Lower Road, Aylesbury on Friday 28th and Saturday 29th of October. Once again we are helping raise funds for the Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity. Volunteers are required to help set up, serve and take down. Please get in touch with me (contact details on page 18) if you want to get involved. Festival opening times: Friday 6pm - 11pm, Saturday 11am - 11pm. Tickets £5 in advance and £6 on the door. Drinking for Charity is always worthwhile!

If you can't wait that long for a drink why not support some other local **CAMRA** festivals:

The 19th **Oxford Beer Festival** is held from Thursday 13th to Saturday 15th of October. Hosted at Oxford's town hall the festival is offering over 140 different real ales and 60 plus ciders and perries to try. Due to the popularity of the festival on Fridays, the Oxford branch have arranged to have 50 duplicated beers available to replenish stock on the Saturday - ensuring you don't miss out! Entrance £10 (£8 for **CAMRA** members) which covers the cost for a souvenir glass and £6 of tokens.

The 23rd **Concrete Pint Beer Festival** is held from Wednesday 19th to Saturday 22nd of October. Located at Milton Keynes former bus station (Buszy), Elder Gate MK9 1LR, now a concrete grade II listed building. The festival is offering a selection of 100 beers including cask ales, a small 'keykeg wall' and a good selection of bottled Belgian beers. There will also have a fine selection of ciders and perries from the local Milton Keynes area, including award-winning **Virtual Orchard**.

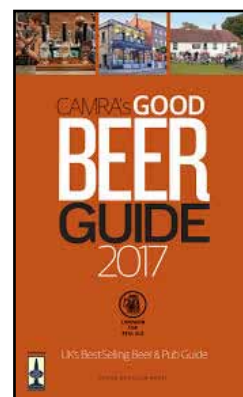
If after all that you still want more, why not head to the **Banbury Winter Beer and Cider Festival** Friday 18th to Saturday 19th of November at the Army Reserve Centre, Oxford Rd, Banbury OX16 9AN. Building work at the Army Reserve Centre prevented their regular May beer festival so this Winter festival is happening instead.

September saw the release of the latest **Good Beer Guide**. In it you will find four entries for Aylesbury which shows the dramatic improvement in the town's pub since the 2006 guide which didn't feature any at all. Having **Chiltern Brewery** takeover at the **Kings Head** followed by **Vale** buying the **Hop Pole** have helped turn what was once a beer desert into a beer-drinker's desirable destination.

To finish on a sad note, I'm sorry to announce the passing of Sam Parsons who was a regular on our Black Country trips. Further details are given on page 8 and the trip next year will be dedicated to his memory.

My thanks to all who have contributed to this issue of **Swan Supping** either by way of writing articles, sending pub news and pictures. Special thanks to Colin Stanford for the cartoon, and those hardy souls who deliver the finished magazine to the pubs, breweries and festivals etc.

David Roe, Swan Supping Editor



NATIONAL CAMRA NEWS



Bingham's Vanilla Stout is just Champion!

On the afternoon of 9th August the Grand Hall at Olympia was packed with eager drinkers on the opening day of this year's **Great British Beer Festival**. This is the place to be each year when the announcements are made for the **CAMRA Champion Beer of Britain** awards and this year was no exception.

The **Champion Beer of Britain** competition starts each year with **CAMRA** members voting for their favourite local beers in all parts of the country in up to 11 categories of beers and up to five beers in each category. Regional judging takes place throughout the land resulting in the short list going forward to two national events at the **Winter Ales Festival** and the **Great British Beer Festival**.

Vanilla Stout from **Bingham's Brewery** was announced as the Gold winner in the Speciality Beers category and went on to win the accolade **Supreme Champion Beer of Britain**. This is the first time the prestigious overall award has been presented to a speciality beer. Within a few minutes of the announcement a very long but orderly queue had formed at the bar with the **Vanilla Stout** handpump.

Chris Bingham had long been a keen home brewer and took the commercial plunge in 2010 establishing his brewery in an industrial unit in Ruscombe near Twyford in Berkshire. Different styles of beer are brewed here including bitters and several stouts. **Vanilla Stout** at 5% ABV is made with dark malts infused with vanilla pods to create a smooth-drinking dark beer.

Since the win the brewery office phone hasn't stopped ringing with pub and beer festival orders keen to acquire the Champion. Our congratulations go to Chris and all his team at **Bingham's Brewery**. Cheers!!

Silver went to **Old Dairy** from **Snow Top** which had won in the **Champion Winter Beer of Britain, Old Ale Strong Milds** category.

The winner of the Bronze award was **Death or Glory** from another brewery just outside our branch boundaries, **Tring Brewery**. It had also won in the **Champion Winter Beer of Britain, Barley Wine Strong Old Ales** category.

CAMRA members are urged to vote for their favourite local beers to go forward into next year's **Champion Beer of Britain** competition. Visit www.cbobvoting.org.uk and remember voting closes on 1st November.



BREWERY YARD ALE

There's nothing likely to get a ticker's pulse racing than the promise of an authentic recreation of a long-lost beer style. Browse the shelves of a posh supermarket and you'll find more than a few expensive beer bottles promising a genuine eighteenth century porter or IPA brewed exactly as it was when Britannia ruled the waves and a third of the globe was coloured pink.

But how can anyone be sure that these brews taste like the real thing? Sure, many beer recipes have survived down the ages and are a source of inspiration to many home-brewers. But there are so many other factors involved in the brewing of beer, such as yeast strains, provenance of ingredients, types of fermenting vessels, even the architecture of the brewery and the weather.

So developing a completely authentic tasting historical beer is something of a holy grail for the beer geek.

Beer historian Ron Pattinson (whose beer blog, barclayperkins.blogspot.co.uk, is beer geek heaven) set himself this task when his researches uncovered a nineteenth century beer called *Brewery Yard* ale.

Based on a Burton brewery recipe, the most characteristic feature of this strong ale was the bizarre way it was conditioned – literally left in barrels for months or even years and exposed to the elements in the brewery's yard with only a covering of straw thrown over when the temperatures became too extreme.

Ron figured that this extremely slow and unusual type of secondary fermentation would create a unique flavour – and, as the style died out by the early twentieth century, a taste that wouldn't have been experienced by any living beer drinker.

He set out to find a brewer who'd have the skill to recreate the ancient recipe and the patience to mature the resulting beer – and the search led him to Chicago. *Goose Island* brewer Mike Siegel (pictured right) was up for the challenge and two years after their initial discussions, *Goose Island Brewery Yard* ale is the result.



This extremely limited batch of beer (only 2,700 bottles have been produced) was launched in September at events in Chicago and London – hosted by beer mecca, the **Rake** in Borough Market. I was fortunate enough to get an invitation to the tasting, along with luminaries of the beer world such as Roger Protz and writer Martyn Cornell.

Ron gave a Powerpoint presentation on the making of the beer, packed with historical research and technical tables featuring data confirming the beer's authenticity in terms such as attenuation and bitterness units.

Aged in wooden barrels for 11 months and at 8.4% ABV, *Brewery Yard* was certainly a distinctive beer. While the East Kent Goldings and American Cluster hops provided ample bitterness, I detected an unusual, slight sour note to the beer. I discovered this was due to the deliberate addition of *Brettanomyces claussenii*, a wild strain of yeast, normally viewed as a contaminant responsible for 'off' flavours but encouraged in certain styles of Belgian and Lambic beers.

Ron's research had discovered that barrel aged Burton beers of the time, like IPA, were likely to have been exposed to *Brettanomyces* mainly via infection of the wood in the Burton Union brewing vessels – the length of cask conditioning allows the slow acting yeast to substantially change the character of the beer.

At this strength, *Brewery Yard* is a beer that is best enjoyed with food and some excellent cheeses from a local cheesemonger in nearby Borough Market were handed out. The blue cheese cut straight through the beer's slight sourness and strangely transformed its character on the palate.

Brewery Yard is a fascinating beer – a unique halfway house between British pale ale and sour Belgian beers brewed with natural yeasts. It's much more likely that this resembles the taste of beers sent out on long sea journeys in the nineteenth century than the fresh, citrusy hopped IPAs that are nowadays ubiquitous in beer bars.

All credit to Ron Pattinson, Mike Siegel and *Goose Island* for authentically transporting our palates back more than a century.

Very limited quantities of *Brewery Yard* are available for £20 a bottle from a small number of outlets in London, including the **Rake**. **Mike Clarke**

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FEELING FRUITY



At the recent **CAMRA** social at Heidrun in High Wycombe, I came under some criticism for choosing a fruit beer – a raspberry Berliner weisse from the Danish brewer **Mikkeller**. Now admittedly it was a bit pink, but it was tart, refreshing, tasty and slightly dry – exactly what I was looking for on a hot summer's evening.

I don't know why fruit beers seem to be held in such low esteem in the UK. Maybe it's a legacy of the alcopop era, and of those horribly sweet fruit ciders that are so unaccountably popular in the pubs these days. Or maybe it's simply that people see our great traditional ciders and perries as the only fruit drink you need. However, other countries don't suffer from this prejudice – Belgium is famed for their tart cherry kriel lambics, whilst pumpkin beers are a seasonal highlight in the USA. Even in Germany, where the Reinheitsgebot law long preserved the integrity of beer / stifled brewing innovation (delete according to your point of view!), fruit syrups are often added at the point of sale to balance the sharpness of the Berliner weisse style.

So, if you do fancy trying fruit beers, are there any worthwhile ones in the UK which have survived the general apathy towards them. The answer of course is yes – whatever you want in beer terms, the fabulously active and diverse UK brewing industry is likely to provide you with it. Autumn is our main fruit harvest season, and is probably the best time to hunt for fruit beers on cask – with any luck, you'll find one made with fresh, locally harvested produce. I've been lucky enough to find a few fruit beers in bottle over the last year – all of them showcasing fresh fruits, rather than being overwhelmed by sickly sweet fake fruit syrups.

Old Luxters is one of our local brewers that you rarely see beers from – most of their output is reserved for sale at their own premises. My ever-loving wife found their **Damson Ale** (7%) at the Waddesdon Christmas Fair last year – and happily bought me some, packaged in an expensive-looking stoneware bottle. Hidden inside is an attractive chestnut-red brew, with a lasting beige head and a lasting beige head. The aroma is dominated by fragrant, fresh damsons. The first taste is a bit of a shock to the system – it's very tart, verging on sour, with a pronounced dryness. It made me think more of mouth-puckering sloe berries than damsons. Further tasting acclimatized my palate to this very unusual beer – damsons, plums and a little caramel from the base beer emerged. It's certainly not a beer you could knock back quickly, but at 7% you probably wouldn't want to. It's tasty, interesting and ultimately very refreshing, and I thoroughly enjoyed it. It's definitely the best beer I've had from this brewer.



In my latest Beer52 case (another gift from my wife!) I received a bottle of **Red Panda** (4.5%), brewed by the **Panda Frog Project**, the oddly-named 'experimental' arm of **Mordue Brewery** in North Shields. Mordue Panda Frog Project Red Panda (4.5%). Described as a 'US hop charged red ale infused with raspberries,

blackberries and strawberries', it's another chestnut-coloured brew. The strawberries are evident in the smell, although they're rather lost in a strong generic beery smell. On tasting, hops are very much to the fore – there's bitter grapefruit and pine from the off. The bitterness does mellow a little to reveal caramel and blackberries (but not strawberries or raspberries). There's a lasting bitterness in the finish. It's pleasant enough by the end, but the bittering hops have definitely been a little overdone making the fruit slightly redundant.



Back closer to home, **Compass Brewery** in Oxfordshire is one of my favourite brewers – on those all-too-rare occasions when I manage to find one of their brews. I tracked down a bottle of their **Berry** (5.6%) at Millets Farm Shop near Abingdon, a soured beer made with locally-grown raspberries. It pours reddish-amber with a thin white head, and is maybe just a tad too fizzy for my liking. It has a pungent whiff of raspberry cordial with hints of dry sherry. On tasting there are bucketfuls of fresh raspberries set against strikingly tart, sharp and sour background. Some woody notes come through and there's a little bitterness before a long dry finish. I loved this – it's superbly well-balanced, full of flavour and exceptionally refreshing.

Whilst it's not often that I do fancy a fruit beer, there's no doubt in my mind that when brewed well they can take their place amongst the other great beer styles of these isles. This autumn, in addition to trying a cider or perry pressed from the latest crop of apples or pears, why not put your prejudices aside and experiment with a beer brewed with one of the UK's other fruit crops? You might just be rather surprised with the result... **Anth Duffield**



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LOCAL NEWS



ASHENDON

At the **Hundred of Ashendon**, *Hundred IPA* from **Vale** is traditionally available with a second pump offering other locales. Featuring shortly will be *Copper Beech* from **Chiltern**, *IPA* and *Empire* from **Rebellion**, *XT 4* and *Sidepocket* from **Tring**. The pub is a finalist in this year's Aylesbury Vale Village Pub competition (results due in October) and has recently been awarded a place in the Good Food Guide 2016.

AYLESBURY

The **Green Man** (pictured above) is currently closed and its future is uncertain.

The **Grapes/Stars/Oak House/Tap House** (as it has been known in recent years) reopened as the **Snug** in August and offers one real ale (*Deuchars IPA* when visited) and Artisan Pizzas etc.

The **Hop Pole** is doing very well with manager Ian, chef Tony and staff really making the pub a great place to eat and drink. The dining area looks into the **ABC** brewhouse where the beer at the bar was made just the other side of the glass. You can't get more locally produced than that.

Following their success with **Paradigm** brewery in August, the **Old Millwrights Arms** are having another meet the brewer/tap takeover with **Leighton Buzzard** brewery on Thursday 27th October. Then Chris and Charles will celebrate having been at the pub for a year by holding a beer festival over the last weekend in November.

GRANBOROUGH

The **Crown** at Granborough (pictured below) is now under new ownership. Business partners Andy Judge and Neil Hollingworth took over in June. Andy also has two other successful pubs, the **Thatch** at Adstock and the **Bell** at Beachampton, both in North Bucks. The pub was a **Marstons** tenancy until 2013 when it was purchased by Granborough Estates and extensively refurbished to create the popular village hub it is today. The new manageress is Emily Pyle who took up the position in July, having previously been at the **Swan** at Cranfield near Milton Keynes.

Emily is keen to maintain and develop the status of the **Crown** in the community and intends to run it

in the same proven direction as before - a successful restaurant operation appealing to all with a separate public bar. There are four handpumps with at least three ales on sale at all times. For the foreseeable future all three will be changed regularly. At the time of visit **Brakspear Bitter**, **Tring Ridgeway** and **Sharps Doom Bar** were available.

The pub is well equipped to handle various functions in the large conservatory style restaurant and there is also a large garden and patio area at the rear. Feature nights will continue, such as **Steak Nights** every Wednesday, **Fish & Fizz** on Fridays and a new monthly **Wine Club** evening with special menu commences on 4th October. Details of these and other deals and events can be found on www.thecrowngranborough.co.uk or phone 01296 670216. A free monthly **Crown Bulletin** is available via email: thecrowngb@gmail.com

HIGH WYCOMBE

The **Heidrun** (pictured below) is a new craft beer and cocktail bar that has opened in August on a small back street just off of the marketplace (not a place you'll discover by chance!), very close to the Swan Theatre public car park.

As well as serving cocktails and food, **Heidrun** also offers twenty beers on tap, of which six are cask, with one always being from the local **Rebellion Brewery**.

High Wycombe Rugby Union Football Club is holding a beer festival on Friday 28th (starts at 7.00pm 'til late) Saturday 29th (starts at Midday 'til late) of October. The entry fee of £5 includes a presentation glass and two half-pint vouchers.

All that remains of the **Nags Head** is the frontage which is being propped up during its conversion to an hotel.

As we announced last issue, **Red Squirrel** have opened a brewery shop (pictured on our cover) in the centre of the town. The shop is now serving five cask beers, two ciders and thirteen craft keg beers.

JD Wetherspoons have sold the **William Robert Loosley** to the **Stonegate** group who own among others the **Slug and Lettuce** and **Yates** chains. The change will take place in mid October, possibly the same time as the **Falcon** joins in the annual **JD Wetherspoon** October Real Ale Festival (12th - 23rd) which will also take place at the **Bell** and the **White Hart** in Aylesbury

The **Wycombe Swan** holds its fourth Beer & Cider Festival on Friday 28th (6.30pm-11pm) and Saturday 29th (12pm-4pm, 6.30pm-11pm) of October. Tickets £8 in advance, £10 on the door.



OVING

The **Black Boy** will be holding a Mexican Night on Thursday 13th October. A special sitting for juniors with a milder menu will take place between 4pm and 6pm with the full-strength menu available from there onwards. Quiz Nights continue to take place on the last Tuesday of each month. Ales on the last visit were **Wychwood Hobgoblin Gold**, **Leighton Buzzard Cuckoo** and **XT4**.

QUAINTON

The **George & Dragon** continues with a choice of five local ales, **Animal Osprey**, **Chiltern Beechwood**, **Tring Squadron Scramble**, **Vale IPA** and **XT 1**. Events coming up are: Harvest Auction on Friday 14th October at 8.30pm, Darts Knockout on Saturday 29th October at 7.30pm not forgetting Bonfire Night on November 5th from 6.30pm onward.

STEWKLEY

The **Swan** has changed hands again, for the fifth time in just under two years. New leaseholder is Jim Woolley who also has the **Hare** in Linslade, also an **Enterprise** owned pub which he has run successfully for 14 years. See article on page 9.

The **ACV** listed '**Carps**' remains closed but rumours abound of it being sold by **Punch** as an Indian Restaurant.

SYDENHAM

The **Crown** is currently closed for refurbishment with a sign in the window saying it will reopen shortly for both food and drink.

THAME

At the **Cross Keys**, they are awaiting delivery of a new fermenter in early October, so once it is installed and the brewery given a spring (autumn) clean, we should see the arrival of **Thame Brewery** beers, hopefully in time for his

beer festival On November 12th. It is hoped that **Mr Splodge Mild** will make a guest appearance alongside a potential 24 beers throughout the day. Not all on at the same time, but quite a few, so as one barrel empties, another will replace it straightaway.

The **James Figg** holds an open mic night on the first Thursday of the month in the Stables at the rear of the pub, where you can listen to a variety of musicians whilst drinking, at the moment, **UBU Purity**, **Vale Red Kite**, **Doom Bar** and **XT 1** which was in excellent form.

Across the road at the **Birdcage**, they sell a selection of Pieminister pies mostly at £6 - chips etc are extra and the beers to help the pies go down, at the moment, are **Deuchars IPA**, **London Pride** and a London beer - **Twickenham Naked Lady** a 4.5 hoppy beer.

The **Rising Sun** still does **Brakspear Bitter**, the monthly special which for September is **Varsity** and quite often **Wychwood Hobgoblin Gold**, a very palatable hoppy beer and at the **Swan** you can get **Greene King London Glory** and **IPA**. **Old Speckled Hen**, and **XT 4**. The **Lodden Hullabaloo** had just gone.

WENDOVER

Surprisingly the **Village Gate**, World's End, ceased trading after close of business on Monday 29th August. Large concrete blocks were placed across the car park entrances on Tuesday 30th and a notice on the door says 'closed until further notice' Surprising because when passing, it often seemed quite busy especially lunchtimes and weekends.

The pub dates from 1763 and was for many years named the **Marquis of Granby**. Latterly owned by **Punch Taverns Ltd**, it was renamed the **Village Gate** in August 2010.

WHITCHURCH

A Halloween Party with Best Costume event and kids games (6-7pm) takes place at the **White Swan** on Friday 28th October accompanied by live music from **Rondeau** from 9pm. Next up is a Race Night on 8th November at 8pm followed by a Karaoke Night on Friday 11th at 9pm. A Thanksgiving Turkey Dinner will be held on Thursday 24th November.

WOOBURN COMMON

The **Royal Standard** is holding a Beer Festival over the weekend of 28th to 30th of October. Forty beers and ciders will be available.

MICK ROLLEY REMEMBERED



In our last issue's Local News section we gave you the news of the sad loss of one of our best loved old landlords.

Mick Rolley, who with his wife, Wendy, ran the **White Hart** in Quainton for many years. An old fashioned landlord, in every good sense of the term, who delighted in playing down his role, even his advertising always had the tagline 'Nice pub, shame about the Landlord'.

We were going to feature photographs of the man and his pub last time, but we only obtained permission too late for use in the last issue.

He was renowned for his beer, his friendly banter and the good value pub food on offer, especially his ham eggs and chips which I always considered to be one of the best that I'd ever tasted.

If there was one thing that set him apart more from other landlords, it had to be his love of buses and the fact that he had his own double decker which can be seen to the left of the pub in the picture above. For many

years the number of people at the **Vale of Aylesbury Beer Festival** would be suddenly swollen as Mick's bus would turn up with a load of soon to be merry drinkers from the village. Although he could not drink at the festival, I've been assured that he made up for it after the return trip home. The fares he took for the ride were donated to the **Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity** that the festival is run to raise money for. His presence will be sadly missed at this year's festival to be held at the Bucks County Council Sports & Social Club, Lower Road, Aylesbury, on Friday 28th & Saturday 29th of October.



Unfortunately, the **White Hart** is no more. It finally shut its doors in 2003 and Mick took his well-deserved retirement. It was turned into housing shortly afterwards. On the final evening at the pub, it was heaving with people enjoying a last pint there. My abiding memory of that night was when Mick took me to one side when I commented on the numbers and said 'If a third of these people had used my pub once a week, we would not be closing'. A lesson that must again be stated 'Use your pub, or lose your pub!'.

Our condolences once again to all of Mick's family and his legion of friends.

David Roe



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ANOTHER SAD LOSS

Regulars on the annual Black Country trip will be sad to learn of the passing of Sam Parsons who had been enjoying the trip for many years.

Sam was born on 15th of April 1933 and after living a full life died on the 12th of September at the ripe old age of 83 after suffering a massive heart attack whilst serving during a tennis match.

Sam's funeral took place at the Milton Chapel, Chilterns Crematorium, Amersham on Friday 23rd of September. Attending on behalf of the branch were myself, John Williamson (Noj), Ernie Essex and Sam's long-time friend, Colin Staines, who had travelled up from his current home in Devon especially for the occasion.

Colin had met Sam at Amersham International where he was working in the Despatch Department as a temp in 1994. He had been a Quantity Surveyor in his working life when he had lived in Wimbledon.

Sam was living in Horsenden when Colin met him. He left Amersham when he got to 65 and went to work at Rail Station Car Parks collecting money and then travelled for long distances collecting money for charity. He loved pets - he had a Standard Schnauzer dog that he and his wife Pam rescued as they had had a dog of the same breed previously. By then Sam was living in Princes Risborough when I got to know him.

Sam was a season ticket holder at Arsenal for around forty years and as I'm a fervent supporter of their main rivals in North London this lead to many heated, but friendly, discussions over the years in pubs in the Black Country. He also liked a game of crib and can be seen above concentrating on his next play over a pint at the **Bull & Bladder**, Brierley Hill, in 2014.



The funeral service echoed Sam's love of football and his coffin was covered in red and white flowers and draped with an Arsenal flag. The hymn we all sang was the one that is sung at every Cup Final, 'Abide with Me', and the recessional music that was playing as we left was the 'Match of the Day Theme'.

Moving tributes were given by Sam's brother, David, and his good friend, Pete, and we learned many new things about the man we had known for years. This included the fact that his family called him by his second name, Peter, and this was the name that most people knew him by until he worked in an office filled with others called Peter, So Peter became Sam and that's how we all knew him. We also learnt that his love of football had taken him to many cup finals including the famous 'Matthews Final' in 1953 when Blackpool beat Bolton Wanderers 4-3.

Sam liked his drink and meeting people and was easy to get on with. He was full of stories and you could not rush him on these as he had his own way of telling you things. After the service, we adjourned to the **Whiteleaf Cross** in Princes Risborough. There we had a choice of three ales available, **Morlands Bitter**, **Old Nutty Hen** and **Mordue Workie Ticket**. As the food and the drinks were consumed, the gathering celebrated Sam's life and everyone thought that Sam would also have enjoyed the event.

Our condolences go to his wife, Pam, the rest of his family and his many friends. As in the past when it comes to these sad occasions, we will be dedicating next year's Black Country trip to Sam.

David Roe



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Good Beer Guide: 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015 & 2016



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SWAN TRANSFORMATION

The **Swan** at Stewkley changed hands on September 6th and work started immediately on redecorating both inside and out. This is the fifth change of management since Karen Foster left in October 2014 after nine years at the pub. However, new landlord Jim Woolley has taken on a five-year lease at this **Enterprise** owned house and will run it together with the **Hare** at Southcott, Linslade.

Jim has run the **Hare** (also **Enterprise** owned) with much success for the last fourteen years, featuring in the **CAMRA Good Beer Guide** for ten of those. In 2012 the **Hare** was voted the **Enterprise** National Community Pub of the Year and has already been awarded the Regional Award for this year, placing it in the final for the National Award to be decided in October. Jim hopes he can achieve a similar result at the **Swan** in the not too distant future.

Jim has wasted no time in making it clear that he intends the **Swan** to become the focal point of Stewkley and has made a point of contacting all the local sports clubs and societies in order to find out what people would like to find at the pub. He runs many events throughout the year at the **Hare** and is well-known for supporting ex-services and acting services groups.

Already the exterior of the pub has been transformed with new signage and illumination and a long overdue redecoration. This is continuing indoors with repainting throughout and new back-of-bar shelving units, fridges etc. Toilets also are receiving a make-over and are to be replaced and re-sited



next year. The kitchen is being re-equipped and should be back in action within a fortnight. Many details continue to be rectified and there is a garden make-over planned for next year.

The number of ales on offer is now back up to four, all on handpump. The regular ale will continue to be **Courage Best** and the other three will vary to suit demand. Currently they are: **Butcombe Bitter**, **Timothy Taylor Landlord** and **Youngs Bitter** with **Ringwood 49er** lurking in the cellar in readiness. Jim will supply an outside bar for this year's Stewkley Bonfire Night celebrations, which was previously provided by the currently closed **Carpenters Arms**.

Running any pub is no mean task but two cannot be undertaken lightly. Whilst Jim will be overseeing both pubs the **Swan** will be run by his daughter Rachel and her partner Ollie Hack. Rachel has a lot of experience gained from working at the **Hare** over the years but has to finish working her notice for her previous employer before taking up full time duties at the **Swan**. For the last nine years she has worked as an A&E nurse at Milton Keynes. Meanwhile she has been putting as much time as she can, even helping painting the bars overnight, as well as helping her four-year-old daughter, Melisa Maye, settle into her new surroundings. Partner Ollie has given up his motor mechanic business in favour of this new venture. He also has a daughter, Sophie, 11.

It is delightful to see such a transformation taking place and the enthusiasm of Jim, Rachel, Ollie and all other staff involved. I wish them all success in their new endeavour. A new website is being developed but meanwhile developments and news can be found on Facebook, under the **Swan**.

Mick White



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A SHORT STROLL



Soho has long been thought of as London's most degenerate and hedonistic neighbourhood. So it's reassuring, if perhaps predictable, that Soho maintains what must be one of the highest concentrations of pubs in the country in the days of spiralling property prices in the capital and increasingly puritan attitudes towards drinking elsewhere in the country.

This stroll of less than a mile around the north-western corner of Soho takes in seven real ale pubs with many more just a few strides away. Start at Oxford Circus tube station, taking one of the exits out on to pedestrianised Argyll Street.

The **Argyll Arms** is on **CAMRA's National Inventory** of historic pub interiors and is a splendid example of late Victorian pub design, with a drinking area still partitioned into smaller areas, according to nineteenth century tastes. The glasswork and mirrors are said by some authorities

to be the finest in London.

A **Nicholson's** house, the pub is probably disadvantaged by its location right outside several of Oxford Circus tube station's busy exits and many customers choose to sit on the tables set out in the busy street rather than appreciate the pub's architectural merits.

The **Argyll Arms** serves a good selection of ales from the **Nicholson's** list through its eight handpumps, mainly from larger but still interesting breweries, like **St. Austell** and **Thwaites**.

Continue along Argyll Street towards the Liberty department store which, despite the number of tourists photographing it and the **Shakespeare's Head** pub round the corner (see later) is not the London birthplace of the Bard. The half-timbered revival exterior looks the part but it only dates back to the 1920s.

Turn left down Great Marlborough Street and past the old Marlborough Street magistrates' courts. Many famous people appeared before the beak in this building before it closed at the end of last century, including Christine Keeler, Mick Jagger, John Lennon and Johnny Rotten. Like a lot historic places in London, it's now been turned into a luxury hotel.

Rather than anything associated with the American West, it's actually Great Marlborough Street in Soho that lent its name to the famous Marlboro cigarette brand as Phillip Morris, the manufacturer, had its London factory on the street.

Nowadays it's dominated by Soho's media industry. You'll walk past prominent offices belonging to international companies like CNN and Sony Playstation. The excellent Photographers' Gallery on Ramilles Street, a narrow cut-through to Oxford Street on the left, is another reminder of Soho's historical association with film and the visual image.

A couple of hundred yards along, past the back entrance to M&S Parthenon Store and the specialist Harold Moore's record shop, is the **Coach and Horses**, a decent **Greene King** street-corner boozer where you'll find several real ales, mainly from the owning brewery.

A short distance up Poland Street to the left is **Brewdog Soho**. It's the maverick brewery's closest bar to the centre of London and advertises itself with a neon sign championing 'Beer Porn'. Expect a pricey selection of **Brewdog's** own range plus beers from other trendy 'craft' breweries like **Beavertown**, although **Camden Town** is unlikely to be on offer.

Despite the likes of **Punk IPA** being well over £5 a pint, the two-storey bar gets very busy in the evenings. The local **CAMRA** branch report that one real ale



has recently been made available – **Live Dead Pony Club**, undergoing secondary fermentation in keykegs.

Turn right down Poland Street and past the famous Phonica Records shop and Time Out's top London restaurant, the Social Eating House. Towards the end of the street is the **Star and Garter**, a cosy pub that feels a world away from a city centre once you walk inside and features in the new edition of the **Good Beer Guide**. The beers (**Fuller's London Pride**, **Shepherd Neame Spitfire** and **Greene King IPA**) are obviously in good nick. However, they are eclipsed in interest for the ticker by the ancient beer engine displayed on the wall opposite the bar which was apparently in use until the mid-1980s.

A few strides away is Broadwick Street, site of much recent redevelopment with a new building on the corner closest to the **Star and Garter** nearing completion. The large building with the ground floor Pret a Manger (a veggie pop-up branch over the summer) is the UK headquarters

of Hearst Magazines, publisher of many famous titles (although they're all eminently respectable and not of the type most traditionally associated with Soho).

Apparently the Hollywood film 'London Has Fallen' used the address of the veggie Pret as the base of their bad guys and the source of all known evil. I didn't think their artichoke and tapenade baguette was *that* disagreeable.

Those with a knowledge of London's history (or the history of sewage) will know that Broadwick Street played an important role in public sanitation. The Victorian doctor, John Snow, identified from analysis of patterns of disease that cholera was linked to a water pump in the street.

The water pump (or a recreation of it) has been traditionally displayed in the street but recently seems to have been hidden by building work. Its original location is marked by a coloured kerbstone outside the **John Snow** pub.

This is a **Samuel Smiths** house. **Sam Smiths** compete with **Wetherspoons** for being the most inexpensive places in London to buy a pint. While cheapness is the prime (if not only) reason for real ale drinkers to walk through the doors of a **J.D. Wetherspoon**, at least there's usually a choice on offer there.

Sam Smiths' London pubs usually offer a selection of one real ale – their **Old Brewery Bitter**. At the John Snow even that is unavailable – the pub is currently keg only.

A good example of a high-ceilinged, wood-panelled Victorian pub, the **John Snow** gained notoriety in 2011 when it drew protests after allegedly requesting a pair of gay men to leave who'd been kissing in the bar. A Twitter-organised protest led to a gay 'kiss-in' on the street outside the pub, creating



AROUND SOHO



a short-lived flurry of media attention. Maybe similar direct action could lead to real ale being made available in the **John Snow**?

From the **John Snow**, head along Broadwick Street and turn right on Marshall Street past William Blake's birthplace – not the concrete high-rise that now stands there but a previous house on the site.

Just to the left, on Ganton Street, is the **Shaston Arms**. This **Hall and Woodhouse** pub, unlike virtually all the others on the route, is a relatively new addition, converted from a couple of shops. Notwithstanding its recent ancestry, it has a traditional feel with lots of walls dividing the interior into many discrete drinking areas.

A few yards around the corner on Newburgh Street is the **White Horse**. Another **Nicholson's** house, this busy pub (with its lively outdoor drinking area) has two bars on the ground floor and a drinking area tucked away at the back at a slightly lower level. There's a long corridor that leads to the toilets, giving the interior the feel of a rabbit warren. The beer selection can be surprisingly interesting.

Head further down Newburgh Street past the trendy boutiques and coffee shops and turn left down Foubert's Place to emerge on to Carnaby Street. Once the epicentre of the fashion world of the Swinging Sixties after which it suffered a descent into tourist-tat hell, Carnaby Street is now home to upmarket designer fashion chains, many of which originated in the US. This somewhat defeats the object of the pilgrimage of the many tourists who flock here to soak up the area's Union Jack-waving ambience.

It might seem inevitable that the only pub on Carnaby Street (although its address is officially on Great Marlborough Street) is called the **Shakespeare's Head** – with a bust of William Shakespeare protruding over the street from the

corner. However, rather than being so-named as a cynical tourist trap, the pub actually does have a connection with the bard, having been owned by distant relatives in the eighteenth century.

From the **Shakespeare's Head**, continue down Foubert's Place to Kingly Street and then turn right to find the **Clachan**. This corner pub boasts an impressive Victorian exterior, with the construction date of 1898 emblazoned in gold lettering over the door and impressive tiling in the entrances.

Like many of these pubs, it's busy in the evenings, particularly towards the end of the week, with a tendency to play music at a high volume. The pub has a good selection of real ales, with local London ales from micros, such as **Truman Brewery's** *Zephyr* likely to be available.

Head through the Liberty store archway back on to Great Marlborough Street. Go back up Argyll Street to return straight to Oxford Circus tube station. If you're still after another drink, there's an **O'Neill's** a few yards away at the junction of Carnaby Street.

Like all of the pubs on the route, you may need to wade through a crowd of the pub's vibrant, predominantly youthful clientele who often spill out on to the street at all times of the drinking day and night. Such crowds proving those doomsayers wrong who predict the decline of the pub as inevitable. On the contrary, sociable Soho would be unimaginable without its many and varied pubs. Other areas take note.

Mike Clarke



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in Wing

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THOUGHTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN

After a great week at the **Great British Beer Festival (GBBF)** at Olympia, where a good time was had by all who attended (that's me below on the Thursday night which is traditionally Hat Day), it is now back to reality. The dates for next years **GBBF** are August 8th to August 12th, so put it in your diary now as the festival is always worth a visit.

The start of voting for the **Champion Beer of Britain (CBOB) 2017** is underway and the closing date for this first round of voting is 1st November. Vote now so your favourite beer on the list has a chance of making it to the finals. (Yes, I know we have only just chosen the 2016 champion, but there are an awful lot of beers to select from). This is only open to **CAMRA** members so if you want to vote become a member and you can enjoy the benefits of membership which includes **Wetherspoons** vouchers and reduced entry to **CAMRA** beer festivals and vote for your favourite beer. As always if you can think of anything your local branch can do for you please email me at chairman@swansupping.org.uk.

Over the next couple of months we have various socials arranged if you wish to join us please do if you only come to only one pub on the night it will be good to see you. Please say hello someone is normally wearing a

CAMRA branch polo shirt so can be easily identified.

As mentioned elsewhere in this issue we as a branch will be hosting the National Executive and Regional Directors (NERDS) to Aylesbury on the weekend of the 3rd of December.

I will be sending out an email nearer the time inviting members to attend a couple of functions we are arranging so you can meet and have a chat with the National Executive and Regional Directors, a rare but great opportunity.

The C word is approaching and we as a branch will be arranging some socials for those interested with two socials on Christmas Eve, one in Aylesbury and one in Wycombe. Look out for these and other events in the December/January issue.



If you have a favourite pub you would like us to visit serving good real ale let us know and we can try to arrange a social in the future. Email addresses in the back of this issue. If you wish to join **CAMRA** then please do so using the form in this and every issue and be part of a band of real ale and real cider lovers.

My congratulations go to the **Cross Keys** in Thame on reaching the last sixteen in the **CAMRA National Pub of the Year Competition**. Lets hope they can go all the way and win it!

Finally I was sad to hear about the passing of Sam Parsons, whom I only had the pleasure of meeting on a couple of occasions. See the obituary elsewhere in this issue.

Simon Isted

Branch Chairman

CAMRA Aylesbury Vale & Wycombe Branch



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CHANGES TO LOCAL BUS SERVICES IN OUR BRANCH AREA

A number of changes were made to bus services from early September in the Aylesbury and Wycombe areas affecting the routes that can be used to get to some of favourite watering holes. In summary the main alterations are:-

Service 300 (Aylesbury, Princes Risborough, High Wycombe)

On Mondays to Fridays the 15 minute off-peak frequency is maintained, but one of the four buses each hour is renumbered as X30 and between Princes Risborough and High Wycombe operates direct along the A4010 via Saunderton (**Golden Cross**), Bradenham (**Red Lion**) and West Wycombe Road instead of via Lacey Green and Naphill. Previously only Red Line service 321 served the A4010 with seven journeys each way on Mondays to Fridays only and these continue unchanged).

The new X30 reduces the end to end journey time by around 10 minutes to 50 minutes from Aylesbury to Wycombe but it does mean that the frequency over the ridge through Naphill and Lacey Green is rather uneven with 15/15/30 minute intervals each hour between buses. Best check times when visiting the **Whip, Black Horse, Black Lion** or the **Wheel**.

Saturdays are unchanged (every 20mins all route 300 via the Ridge) and Sundays/ Bank Holidays remain hourly. Monday to Friday and Saturday evenings are also unchanged at hourly (all 300s) with the last bus leaving Wycombe at 23.55.

Service 280 (Aylesbury, Thame, Oxford)

Again on this route the current 20 minute frequency is maintained on Mondays to Fridays off-peaks but this is now augmented by an additional express bus (numbered X8) between Thame and Oxford every hour. These do *not* serve the M40 services stop or go through Wheatley Village thereby saving about 10 minutes on the journey time (Thame to/from Oxford Carfax in about 40 minutes). There are a couple of X8 journeys in the peaks that run to/from Aylesbury which also do *not* serve Haddenham – be at the High Street/Turl Street stop at 16.26 or 17.06 for a fast run home after the Oxford Beer Festival! (13th or 14th Oct, and also open Sat 15th).

The broadly half-hourly evening service (Monday-Saturday), 20 minute service Saturday daytime and 30 minute service Sundays (all 280s) continues as before, and remember that the last bus from Thame back to Aylesbury is at 00.08 on Mondays to Thursdays, 01.16 or 02.48 Fridays and Saturdays and 23.44 on Sundays/Bank Holidays!

Service 55 (Aylesbury, Stoke Mandeville, Wendover, Great Missenden, Amersham, Chesham)

This handy Monday to Friday only service (approximately every two hours) has transferred from operation by Arriva to Red Line Buses. The timetable is unchanged apart from the sad withdrawal of a late evening return trip at 19.40 from Aylesbury and 21.15 from Chesham.

Service 800 (High Wycombe, Marlow, Henley, Reading)

This long-standing Arriva service continues to run every thirty minutes (Monday to Saturday) alternate 800 (via Binfield)/850 (via Wargrave), Hourly evenings (Wycombe – Henley only) and Sundays (increased to half –hourly shopping hours, Wycombe – Henley).

Additional competitive journeys now run hourly on Carousel route X80 between Wycombe and Henley following the same route as 800 except they go direct from Henley to Caversham along the A4155 not via Binfield Heath and Dunsden Green.

The X80 also runs on Saturdays (hourly) but there is no service by Carousel on Sundays or Public Holidays (but Arriva 800 operates).

John Wood



THE BLACK HORSE, LACEY GREEN

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CHRISTMAS MENU

STARTERS

WARM WHOLE MINI CAMEMBERT (V)

Served with onion chutney and warm crusty bread

SMOKED SALMON AND BEETROOT GRAVADLAX

smooth smoked salmon and beetroot terrine,
with salad, and brown bread and butter

TRIO OF PATE served with salad, chutney and Melba Toast

Chicken Liver and Brandy, Hog Roast Pork, Game en Croute

TOMATO & BASIL SOUP (V)

Served with a warm crusty baguette

DELUXE PRAWN COCKTAIL

Served on a bed of lettuce with Marie Rose sauce,
lemon wedge and brown bread and butter

MAIN MEALS

ROAST TURKEY CROWN

with all the trimmings

BRAISED LAMB SHANK

Lamb shank slow cooked in a red wine and rosemary sauce

ROAST SIRLOIN OF BEEF

Yorkshire Pudding

PAN FRIED STUFFED BREAST OF GUINEA FOWL

Stuffed with leeks and bacon and served with a red onion & Madeira sauce

WILD ALASKAN PINK SALMON SUPREME

with a White Wine and Dill Sauce

CHEDDAR CHEESE, CORNISH CLOTTED CREAM AND LEEK TART (V)

ALL SERVED WITH ROAST POTATOES AND SEASONAL VEGETABLES

DESSERTS

SELECT A LUXURY HOT OR COLD DESSERT FROM OUR SWEET MENU, FOLLOWED BY COFFEE AND MINCE PIES

CHEESEBOARD £5.95 per person extra

Two courses plus coffee and mince pies £21.99

Three courses plus coffee and mince pies £25.99

£5 PER PERSON DEPOSIT - NON REFUNDABLE

OPEN ALL DAY. BOOKINGS ONLY. AVAILABLE FROM NOV. TO JAN.

LOCAL BREWERY NEWS

Aylesbury Brewhouse Co.

It's been all go at **ABC** with beers coming out left, right and centre and there's still a load more to come. Throughout the next few months you can expect to find dark, hopped delights alongside pale Germanic styles and massively hopped citrus lovelies.

What's coming up:

Horten 4.4% Crisp light German malts and hops. The Horton Brothers designed many flying wings and were to fly the first jet-powered all-flying wing in 1944 way ahead of its time. This pale, crisp, well engineered beer is made from the finest German malts and hops.

Australis 3.8% Pale amber citrus hops. The Aurora Australis is the southern hemisphere's night-time spectacular similar to our northern lights. Loaded with soft Amber malt and southern hemisphere hops for a citrus easy drinker.

S*M*A*S*H 4.3% Pale and hoppy. Nice and simple this one: Single malt - Maris Otter and Single hop - Simcoe. Done.

Inertia 4.1% Traditional copper bitter. The resistance to any change in motion. It's always hard to get started but once you're off it gets so much easier. A traditional style beer: nothing mad, weird, or over the top just a good old pint of ale.

Δ 4.6% Heavily hopped IPA, low colour crystal malts and tonnes of hops (Citra, Chinook and El Dorado) for those addicted to the latest super hoppy hand crafted accessory. To satisfy the hardest hop users they're going to be dry hopping this one too.

Mutant Ale 4.7% Dark & Hoppy. As part of the Artist's Edition range at **ABC**, Mutant Ale is inspired by artwork from up and coming artist Tom Rees from Herefordshire. How on earth can you have a black IPA? It's in the name, Indian PALE ale. Things mutate and ale is now beer, is now craft this and called blah blah blah now. Dark malts and lots of hops. Call it what you want but it's going to be a good one. £2 of every cask sold goes directly to art therapy.

Chiltern Brewery

The Great Taste Awards, held each year, have been organized by the Guild of Fine Food for 25 years and are the world's most coveted blind-tasted food awards. At the end of August, **Chiltern Brewery** had news that five of their bottled beers have won a total of 6 Gold Stars between them, taking the grand total of stars from the Oscars of the food and drink world over the years to 27. This now means that every single one of their bottled beers currently holds a Great Taste Award.



Three Hundreds Dark Old Ale 5.0% was the star of a packed show, winning two Gold Stars and **John Hampden's Golden Harvest Ale 4.8%**, **Monument Gold Pale Ale 3.8%**, **Lord-Lieutenant's Cream Porter 6.0%** and seasonal **Glad Tidings Winter Stout 4.6%** all with one Gold Star each.

October sees the release of a brand new draught ale from the **Chiltern Brewery** – **Red Rye Beer 4.0%**.

A beautiful claret red colour, with biscuity and citrusy flavours and gentle roast and hoppy aromas, the brewery are hoping that this will become an instant classic in the finest tradition of their draught ales. Not to be missed.

Speaking of which, October also sees **300's Old Ale 4.9%** back on draught for the first time since January. Many of you will be familiar with this robust and rewarding award-winning dark amber ale, which is available in bottles throughout the year but is a seasonal offering only in draught.



Foxtrot 3.9% is another regular seasonal draught ale with hints of dark berries and chocolate, mellow and fruity, it makes the perfect late autumn beer and will be available in November.

Last, but not least, award-winning bottle-conditioned **Glad Tidings Winter Stout 4.6%** is available from October until December. This aptly named beer is black in colour, with roast, chocolate and spice tastes and orange and spice aromas and will grace any pre-festive occasion.

Malt The Brewery

It's that time of year again. Join **Team Malt** on Sunday 9th October for Maltober. This year in addition to live music there will be a number of comedy acts entertaining the crowd as they enjoy fabulous, locally made ales and delicious BBQ food from RS Trout in Hazelmere.

Anyone who managed to get tickets for 'Malt's' comedy night earlier this year will not want to miss this event. Starting at 1pm, Maltober is set to be another great day in HP16's annual c a l e n d a r.



Tickets are available in advance from the brewery tasting bar for a discounted price of £8 or on the door for £10. If you are lucky enough to be a brewery club member you'll be able to use your Maltsters' discount to buy tickets.

Everyone who attends will receive a souvenir Maltober 2016 pint glass. For more details visit www.maltober.uk.

Some readers may be disappointed to know that there will be no **Malt Harvest Ale** this year....the brewery has had such success with their new brews, **Malt Starry Nights** and **Malt Icknield**, that there has not been enough time to brew it. Perhaps if there are enough requests **Malt Harvest Ale** may make a comeback next year!

Rebellion Brewery

The new larger mash tun is now in situation inside their Brewhouse as well as the new larger hot and cold liquor tanks, all of which are still to be plumbed in.

The walkway around the top of the Brewhouse is almost finished, but is already allowing access to some of the tanks.



At the end of last year, **Rebellion** installed and started using their new heating system (pictured above). They've been using it to boil their wort in the brewhouse, and in the next month they will complete the pipework allowing it to heat their hot liquor required for the mashing process.

Previously the hot liquor was acquired as a by-product from the heat exchanging process during the brew. The temperature is then controlled by electric heaters, which will be replaced by the new more efficient system.

Rebellion are proud to be one of only a handful of breweries to use an oil system rather than the more traditional steam. The benefits of the new system are that it's easier to control and safer to use as it doesn't need to

MORE LOCAL BREWERY NEWS



operate under the very high pressures required by the steam system. It's also more energy efficient and requires less ongoing maintenance, reducing running costs.

Their October seasonal ale is *Victory*, a 4.2% which is described as a copper bitter with a crisp and citrusy hop aroma. As the beer is named after Nelson, they had to use the bold New Zealand hop Nelson Sauvin, which is blended with the English hop Jester.

Both have a crisp citrusy character and work excellently together.

November: sees the release of 4.2% *Gravity* which is amber and malty and this will be followed in December by the 4.2% *Finest Hour* which is described as golden and crisp.

Roasted Nuts 4.6% will be available from November and also *Roasted Nuts Extra* will be available in 500ml bottles for Christmas.

Tring Brewery

The year started well for **Tring Brewery** with *Pale Four* being awarded **SIBA's** best bottled Pale Ale in the National finals. This was followed by a number of other awards and accolades, recently culminating in the best of all, a Bronze award for *Death or Glory* at the **Champion Beer of Britain** finals. *Death or Glory* has been part of the brewery's core range since 1993 and whilst a 7.2% Barley wine might not be your choice for a Friday night session, it's a superb tippie, especially alongside strong cheeses, chocolate and rich meats. If you've not tried it, the brewery usually have a good supply available in draft or bottles from the brewery shop.

Alongside their very successful de Havilland themed monthly specials, the brewery have been making full use of their small 'experimental kit'. Over the last few months this has been used to produce a variety of beers, typically destined for local beer festivals. Four of these, a *Rye IPA* 4.5%,

Smoked Porter 5.2%, *Oatmeal*

Mild 3.9% and an *IPA* 6.8% will be available at the St Albans Beer Festival. Expect to see some of these become more readily available over the coming months when the brewery commissions another brew kit.



Vale Brewery

Vale are proud to have supported a number of successful beer festivals over the summer, which seems to have kept them out of mischief!

Whilst working hard to keep up with demand, they have been working on what's coming next.....and are pleased to offer the following beers to ease us into Autumn.

Beer in the pipeline and coming soon include:

Dorian Gray 3.9% Tawny. Travel down the road to perdition with this devilishly handsome tawny ale. English hops and malt combine to make a beer of timeless quality and appearance. Brewed with First Gold & Archer hops, to create a soft malty flavour with berry fruit aromas.

Desire 4.2% Ruby. A box office smash on its release in 1951, 'A streetcar named Desire' launched Marlon Brando's career, but it is the movie's female star, Vivien Leigh, whom they pay homage to with this ruby red stunner of a beer. A quintessentially English beer. All English hops are combined resulting in a well-balanced ruby red ale with a hit of mango and passionfruit.

Paradise Lost 4.0% Golden. **Vale** are going against the grain and brewing a golden beer for December. With tropical flavours they aim to offer a taste of summer in the depths of winter, but worry not.....as their additional Christmas ales will be announced shortly!

XT Brewery

The latest **Animal** creation is the *Chimp* – Rauch Bier – brewed with German Smoked malts, a Bamberg classic. Its smoky flavour is achieved by exposing the malt to the intense, aromatic smoke of burning beechwood logs. Once upon a time all beers were effectively smoked beers; with the ancient kilning methods of drying green brewer's malt over open fires, all grains picked up smoke flavours and passed them on to the beers. Well worth trying this rare beer style while stocks last.

SIBA, the British Brewer's association have launched two new initiatives:

Assured Independent British Craft Brewer

– attempts to define the term 'craft brewery'

and provide greater clarity for consumers looking to purchase beer from genuinely independent craft breweries. **XT** were one of the first breweries to join the scheme; you should begin to see the new logo being used by true independent brewers.

Assured Safety and Quality – is a new **SIBA** accreditation process involving detailed third party auditing of all stages of beer production, including: raw material selection, packaging, brewing processes, health and safety, record keeping, ecological and sustainability practices. **XT** were one of the first breweries to have been awarded the new accreditation.



The next open day is set for Saturday 1st October for the annual 'OXToberfest' at the brewery from 10:30 – Live Music, Local Food Stall, Kids Fun, free entry for all and a range of beers for just £2 a pint.



PUB QUALITY BEER

...AT HOME

Drink Rebellion cask ale at home, fresh from the brewery shop

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GRAVEDIGGERS - PART FORTY-TWO

'Back to school time' and the **Diggers** was seeing the traditional rise in its lunchtime takings with the return of *Don't Need No Educashun Ale*. It was a beer the pub had started brewing especially for the under age truant market after James heard the boss of a well-known pubco boasting on TV about how his chain made mega-profits by turning a blind eye to the school uniform market. 'If you can't beat 'em, join 'em,' he figured.

The beer was variously flavoured with bubble gum, chocolate, cigarette smoke or whatever floated the youth market's boat that year.

Mazz was also working on a strategy to target the village's alcoholic yummy mummies who spent their day drinking vast quantities of sloe gin between dropping off and picking up their obnoxious offspring at the nearby prep school.

She'd temporarily converted the lounge bar into a nail bar during slow afternoons but received complaints from the mothers when, whatever colour nail polish had originally been applied, the customers' toenails invariably turned a nasty dark green, oozed pus and then dropped off.

When Mazz had the misfortune to see Old Pete's bare feet dangling in the fermenting vessel for the traditional Ancient Ceremony of the Harvested Toenail she realised that the source of the infection – and that any effort to eradicate it would be futile.

One morning, while collecting fungus in the **Diggers'** beer garden, James was surprised to see a crocodile of dozens of primary school children walking up the lane towards the pub. They were led by Miss Burns, the fearsome, young headmistress.

'Miss Burns,' James said in a state of panic. 'I know we can be a little flexible in our interpretation of the licensing law but I don't think the **Diggers** can get away with serving a bunch of six year olds. Why not take them into **Sunnyforks** in town?'

'I need a huge favour. We've had a disaster with our integrated heating and lighting system – the anaerobic digester couldn't cope with the effluent from Old Moses's farm and its dung macerating mechanism exploded into a million pieces. Health and Safety have made us homeless. And please call me Sadie,' she said, flashing James a cheeky ankle and bending her cane in front of her seductive smile.

'Well, I'm sure we could fit you in for a while,' James said.

The arrangement worked well. And, as the noxious fumes from the broken anaerobic digester meant the two-mile exclusion zone included the school, the sharing of space between pub and school started to settle into a routine.



The children arrived in the morning and were taught by Miss Burns in the lounge bar until noon when, in a serendipitous piece of timing, they exited into the garden. There they played with abandon in the makeshift playground while the locals shuffled in to start their hard work of drinking themselves stupid.

The garden proved a rich source for impromptu teaching, especially in the sciences. The children made quick work of dismantling a rusting tractor with only a few trips required to accident and emergency to remove swallowed spark plugs or reattach limbs sliced off by the disc harrow attachment.

Chemistry was a particular winner with mysterious bubbling pools found springing up close to the **Diggers'** microbrewery. Miss Burns borrowed a mass spectrometer from the local university to examine what foul concoction the little terrors had been found in which to dunk each other. This led to some particularly tricky punishments. Miss Burns lost count of the times she had to say, 'Tiny Duwayne. Write ten thousand times, "I must not push Tiny Elvis's head into puddles of hexobenzoicdiacytylicsaccharomycesestersofdichloricifidumifidum acid (otherwise known as E101)."'

School dinners proved a lucrative sideline for the **Gravediggers'** kitchen – with no one complaining about their normal everyday special: a disgusting, tasteless, watery concoction of boiled slugs and cabbage. 'It's a lot tastier than what we normally gets at school,' the grateful youngsters chirped to Mazz as she slopped the gunk onto their plates.

The **Diggers'** microbrewery also took the opportunity to revive the ancient style of 'boys' bitter' to wash down the lunchtime fayre, although to reflect modern times it was renamed *Boys and Girls Not So Bitter*, although being brewed at the **Gravediggers** it clocked in at rather more than the traditional strength of under 3%.

Once lunchtime was over, it was back into the pub for afternoon classes – the locals having passed out on the floor from their own midday indulgences. Jumping between the comatose bodied provided the pupils with a challenging form of hopscotch.

Miss Burns occasionally had to raise her voice to

counter the drunken snoring and if one of the locals began to stir she'd soon beat him down to the floor with a few strokes of her cane. After all, they forever boasted that corporal punishment never did *them* any harm at school so they were in no position to complain. From the number of times Old Moses staggered back to his feet James could have sworn he was enjoying the flogging.

Come half-past-three the little darlings were picked up by their parents and the **Gravediggers** could abandon its daytime restraint and indulge in its usual debauchery, until the next morning.

Word about this revolutionary pub-school combination reached the local council, who, spotting the chance for making a few quid, flogged off the school's old buildings as soon as the anaerobic digester had been repaired by a fleet of robots unaffected by the lingering stench.

Government ministers got wind of this new kind of 'free school', being particularly enthused that free meant not having to pay for any school buildings – or anything much at all. Michael Grope, the Education Secretary, dashed to the **Gravediggers**, desperate to see the pub-school experiment's success for himself.

After a conversation with the incoherently plastered locals, he was so impressed by their lack of knowledge and expertise on any subject whatsoever that he offered Old Pete and Old Joe contracts on the spot as his special advisers.

But the **Gravediggers'** competitors had followed the success of the venture closely and, as Grope was just about to ask Sadie for a practical demonstration of her corporal punishment prowess, Nigel Smart burst through the door with a poster in his hand.

'Come to the **Sunnyforks** Academy. We've converted the closed-down steelworks into the world's most characterless pub. It's cheaper and even nastier than here and has loads of room for rows of Victorian style desks! Sign the contract now, Grope!'

'Cheap and nasty *and* hopelessly old-fashioned!' Michael Grope said approvingly before signing his name with a flourish. 'Sorry. The people have spoken – or me, the only person who matters – and the decision cannot be reversed. Take them to **Sunnyforks**!'

Miss Burns was so incensed about the ministerial interference she flexed her cane in irrepressible anger but she was powerless to change the decision.

Nigel Smart shepherded the schoolchildren on to a waiting bus with Grope following up the rear, a huge smile on his face as Miss Burns whacked him with her flailing cane in protest.

Charlie Mackle

Branch Diary

Everybody welcome to all socials and meetings!

October

Monday 3rd BRANCH MEETING

8.00pm, Hop Pole, Aylesbury

Wednesday 5th REGIONAL PUB OF THE YEAR PRESENTATION

7.30pm, Cross Keys, Thame.

Tuesday 11th HIGH WYCOMBE SOCIAL

6.30pm, Red Squirrel Brewery Shop, 9.00pm William Robert Loosely (if still open).

Thursday 20th SOCIAL

8.00pm Clifden Arms, Worminghall, 8.45pm Rising Sun, Ickford, 9.30pm Fox & Goat, Tiddington

Thursday 27th SOCIAL

9.00pm Bull, Stoke Mandeville

Friday 28th & Saturday 29th BEER FESTIVAL

23rd Vale of Aylesbury Beer Festival, Bucks County Council Sports & Social Club, Lower Road, Aylesbury. Once again we are helping raise funds for the Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity. Volunteers are required to help set up, serve and take down. Please contact the editor (details below) if you want to get involved. Beer always seems to taste better when you are 'Drinking for Charity'.

Festival opening times: Friday 6pm - 11pm, Saturday 11am - 11pm. Tickets £5 in advance and £6 on the door.

November

Wednesday 2nd GREAT KIMBLE SOCIAL

8.30pm, Swan, Great Kimble.

Monday 7th BRANCH MEETING

8.00pm Queen and Albert, Wooburn Green

Saturday 12th BEER FESTIVAL

Noon onwards Cross Keys, Thame

Monday 14th ONE PUB SOCIAL

7.00pm onwards, Whip, Lacey Green.

Wednesday 23rd AYLESBURY SOCIAL

7.30pm Bricklayers' Arms, 8.30pm Old Millwrights' Arms.

Saturday 26th RAILWAY TRIP TO BURTON-UPON-TRENT

National Brewery Museum and seven Good Beer Guide pubs. Leave High Wycombe/Princes Risborough/Haddenham and Thame around 8.30am for 11.15am start. More details to be advertised nearer the date.

Further details can be found on our website
www.swansupping.org.uk, facebook and meetup.com

CATCH UP DURING BRANCH SOCIALS:-
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www.swansupping.org.uk/joinin

Swan Supping

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Copy deadline for next issue (due out 30th November) is 14th November 2016.

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 £1.50 for each edition you wish to receive to the Editor at the address above (please make all cheques payable to **CAMRA V & W**) 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 (www.swansupping.org.uk).

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Opinions expressed in *Swan Supping* are not necessarily those of the editor, or the *Campaign for Real Ale*.

Acceptance of an advertisement in *Swan Supping* by a pub or its availability there does not guarantee CAMRA approval.

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2016

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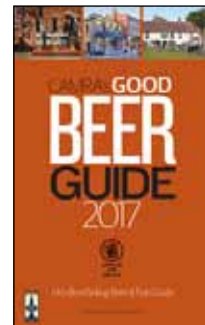


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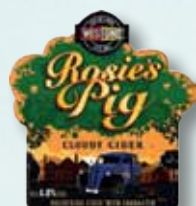
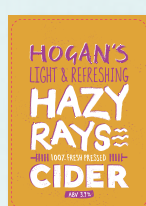
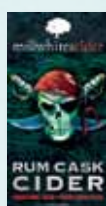
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