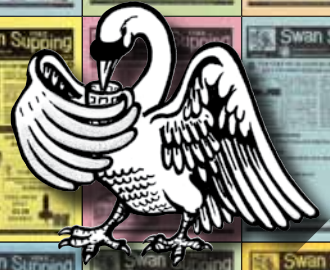


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Swan Supping

Issue 100

Feb/Mar 2014



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NEWS FROM THE EDITOR



Welcome to the 100th issue of *Swan Supping*.

When we started out in 1997, no one could have imagined that we would transform from a six-page issue with a print run of 1,500 into an award winning full colour magazine with a print run of 6,500. I can also assure you that even in my wildest dreams did I imagine that I would be editing for all 100 issues.

Besides the cover which features the front pages of all 100 issues, there are various articles covering the past 17 years (is it really that long?) which we hope you will enjoy.

We invited local brewers and landlords to contribute to this issue (we are happy to hear from them at any time) and we have been pleased with the response. We easily filled the extra four pages we've added for this issue and could probably have equalled our largest issue, number 79, which was a mammoth 32 pages!

To celebrate this tremendous milestone, we are holding a special social at the **Farmer's Bar, Kings Head** in Aylesbury, to which local dignitaries and press have been invited. All **CAMRA** members are also invited and there will be a buffet and the usual superb **Chiltern Brewery** beers to be enjoyed (plus at least one of the beers in their celebration of Porters, Stouts, Dark and Old Ales). The social starts at midday, so please come along.

Competition Time

As part of the celebrations for our 100th issue, we are holding two competitions. The prize for the first is a one litre Growler (pictured left), filled with the winner's choice of ale (worth £15) which has kindly been donated by **Malt The Brewery**. The prize will have to be collected from the brewery in Prestwood, but then again, any excuse for a visit to a brewery!

To win this prize, all you have to do is answer the following question:

Including this current issue, approximately how many copies of *Swan Supping* have been printed?

- A) 305,000
- B) 379,000
- C) 423,000

Please send your answers to the editor (email and snail mail details given on page 26) and the winner will be drawn from all the correct answers.

Our chairman, Alexander Wright (featured at the brewery in the photograph on the right), was lucky enough to be invited to assist in a brew at **Aylesbury Brewhouse** in January, treading in the footsteps of legendary beer writer, and editor of the *Good Beer Guide*, Roger Protz.



For our second competition, **ABC** have kindly offered the opportunity to assist in a special brew in commemoration of this milestone. There are three places available on a date to be arranged once the winners are known. To enter, send the correct answers to the following questions to competition@swansupping.org.uk.

- 1) Which year was *Swan Supping* first published?
- 2) The new **ABC** logo features what animal?
- 3) How many copies of the 100th issue of *Swan Supping* were printed?

Finally

The celebrations are tinged with sadness as we remember the passing of John Bazin, a good friend and a great loss to **CAMRA** (more on page 5).

Thanks once again to all the people who have given their free time to contribute to the production and circulation of *Swan Supping* and many thanks to Colin Stanford for the cartoon (who else could link our hundred issues celebration to the outbreak of the First World War!).

Cheers!

David W. Roe - Swan Supping Editor



NATIONAL CAMRA NEWS

Pubco Campaign gains 2014 momentum

Since the Government delayed its plans to introduce a Pubs Watchdog to ensure fair practices in the pub industry last year, campaign groups and Opposition Parties have mounted pressure on Vince Cable to stick to his clear promise and act before it is too late.

On Thursday 16th January **CAMRA** launched a petition to urge the Government to stick to its clear promise and introduce a Pubs Watchdog to retain fair practices in the pub industry.

The petition has since reached over 32,750 signatures, and secured 15,000 within 24 hours of launching. Please continue to urge others to sign the petition calling on Government to introduce a Pubs Watchdog on the following website:

www.pubscandal.org.

The petition was ahead of a Commons Debate on Tuesday 21st January where Shadow Business Minister Toby Perkins MP urged the Government

to stop dragging its feet and introduce legislation critical to the longevity of the pub industry

Thanks to the support of 3,000 **CAMRA** members lobbying their MP urging them to speak out about the desperate need for reform, MPs from all parties attended the debate and proved the overwhelming support to end the great British Pub Scandal.

During the debate, Business Minister Vince Cable who launched the consultation in January 2013, said: 'There is no attempt to kick this into the long grass. We are trying to do this properly'.

What happens now?

The next step is to increase the pressure on Vince Cable to introduce a Bill in this year's Queen's Speech (May 2014) to ensure there is sufficient parliamentary time to introduce a Pubs Watchdog before the next General Election in 2015.



100 ISSUES AND COUNTING!



I suppose I made a rod for my own back when I took up the mantle of Chairman of the *Aylesbury Vale & Wycombe Branch* of CAMRA in 1990!

One of the promises I made in my acceptance speech was to get a branch magazine going! Various attempts in the past had been made and we even had a branch typewriter which had produced a couple of editions of A4 typewritten news which were then copied and distributed.

However, in 1997, following various reminders and the willing help from fellow branch committee member, Bryan Spink, it was decided that we would use his new computer, complete with a new desktop publishing system, and get it started.

After deciding on the name (I take full responsibility!), taking it from the county symbol, the annual census of the swan population on the River Thames and my northern habit of 'supping' ale, we next needed a logo to go with it.

The swan logo which has been on our masthead since the beginning (plus our website and any

publications we do) was drawn by Brenda, the mother of Mark and Phil Stevens, the founders of *Vale Brewery*. We are very grateful to Brenda Beard (as she is now) as I certainly feel that her distinctive artwork has been a factor in the magazine's success.

The *Hogshead* in Marlow kindly offered to print the magazine for us and after a lot of discussion we decided on a first print run of 1500 copies. This launch issue (pictured bottom left) was only six pages long and was A4 size as this was the preferred size for CAMRA magazines at the time as it would have more of a presence on the bar.

We proudly stated in that first issue that CAMRA membership stood at 50,000. Compare that figure with the 158,509 members that were registered as we went to press! We celebrated the fact that the *Black Horse* in Lacey Green, which had been threatened with closure, had been saved and these days it features in the *Good Beer Guide*.

The second issue (10 pages), again printed by the *Hogshead*, was collated by ourselves at a branch social, but it was decided that it we ought to stand on our own and get it printed (and collated) by professionals. The interest garnered by the first issue ensured that we would be able to cover most of the costs from advertising, so from then on we had *Swan Supping* printed by various firms. We even managed to increase the frequency of the magazine, so only the first four issues were quarterly and all subsequent issues have been bimonthly.

As it was essentially a black and white magazine, we felt that if it was printed on coloured paper which varied each issue then it would be obvious to our readers when a new issue had come out! This worked very well except for the disaster of issue 27. Taking the advice of the printer, we used chilli coloured paper. This was so red it was very difficult to read - good job it was Christmas issue so we could say it was a special festive issue!

Speaking of errors, if you look very carefully at the covers on our front page, you will see that there is no issue 24, but there are two issue 23s. Thank goodness our proofreading has improved!

Our circulation steadily increased and the cost of colour printing became more competitive so we took the plunge and started with four colour pages in issue 45, then built up the number until we could produce the whole magazine in colour. We then decided to have a photo on the front and the lucky (unlucky) person to appear on the front first (issue 75 shown below) was Peter Lambert, showing off his (then) brand new brewery at the *Cross Keys*, Thame. This struck a chord with the judges of the *CAMRA Newsletter of the Year* as three issues later won the award for the *Most Improved Branch Newsletter* in 2010.

Swan Supping has been selected as the Regional Winner for the *Central Southern region of CAMRA* as best *CAMRA Magazine of the Year*. It will then be entered in the national phase of the competition, so here's hoping for some good news at the National AGM and Members Weekend in Scarborough later on this year!

We now regularly produce 6000 copies with at least 24 pages in each. This current issue has an extra 500 on the print run as we are going to send a copy to every CAMRA member in our branch.

This success, which we intend to build upon in the next 100 issues, is due to a lot of people. We have to thank all our advertisers, without whom we could not afford to produce the magazine. We try to at least break even with the cost of printing, and have more than done so over the 100 issues, with the surplus going to head office to be used for national campaigning.

We must also thank all our distributors who have to trail round the pubs delivering (a hard job) and all those who contribute articles (especially the ubiquitous Charlie Mackle) and all our members, readers etc. who send us news for the Local News section.

Paper copies are available for most issues and all 100 are available to be read on the new and improved website (www.swanswansupping.org.uk) after a lot of hard work from our chairman, Alexander Wright, plus lots of scanning by me!

Here's to the next 100!

David Roe



GONE, BUT WILL NEVER BE FORGOTTEN!

We previously reported that our longest serving **CAMRA** member, John Bazin, was gravely ill and it is with great sadness that we have to report that John passed away peacefully on December 11th 2013, aged 83. This was following a massive heart attack he had in February, and along stay in Wycombe Hospital.

Born in London, John spent his formative years in the West Country living in Saltash in Cornwall and then just across the border in Plymouth where he met his wife Mary. Blessed with a mixture of backstreet city locals in Plymouth, isolated moorland inns and lovely seaside pubs, a job move saw him move somewhat warily to Bucks at the very end of the 1960s. He rapidly realised however that in the Chilterns he was equally spoilt for excellent pubs, but at the time the creeping threat of keg beer prompted his early interest in **CAMRA**.

He joined **CAMRA** very shortly after it started (his actual membership number was 433), but we can't find out when he first attended a meeting as in those days so many people turned up that only the apologies were listed! However, John was always willing to help in any way he could and was particularly knowledgeable about our Oxfordshire pubs and, of course, Stokenchurch. When John had his recent hip replacement, his value to the branch was underlined as we couldn't replace him (and we still haven't) and his frequent trips to these pubs, just to have a half, say hello or deliver Swan Supping, and a proposed guide based on the Arriva 40 bus line had to be shelved. He also supported our Black Country trips, just having a half in most of the pubs, but thoroughly enjoying the day out.

The funeral service took place on Monday 30th December at Chilterns Crematorium, Amersham, with a gathering afterwards at the **Kings Arms** in Stokenchurch. Our condolences go out to John's wife, Mary, his son Richard, who helped with this article, and other family members and his many friends.

I know that I have lost a very good friend and I will raise a toast to him on our Black Country trip later on this year which will be dedicated to him.

David Roe



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LOCAL NEWS

ASHENDON

At the **Hundred** (not the **Hundreds** as we have wrongly referred to it in previous issues - sorry about that <Ed>) Matt and Pia celebrated the birth of Bailey Benjamin Gill on 9th January. Normal service has resumed with the restaurant fully functional. **XT 4** is available with **Chiltern's Beechwood** or **Chiltern Ale**; **Vale's Best or Gold** or **Tring Side Pocket for a Toad** available as rotating alternatives.

AYLESBURY

The **Farmers' Bar** at the **King's Head** is running their first beer themed celebration of 2014 and what better than a celebration of Porters, Stouts, Dark and Old Ales. With a beer menu as long as your arm to whet your appetite and inspire your tasters, as always, the expert team have gone to great lengths to source a wonderful range of dark, and sometimes mysterious, ales which fit the bill. The celebration started on 16th January, but with over 30 beers to try and only one cask on at a time it should be running through February at least. The bar is also being redecorated and new furniture put in - watch this space!

The **Kingsbury** offers **Greene King IPA** and **Sharp's Doom Bar** for the vast sum of £2.05 per pint, but for slightly more, you can partake of one of the two guest ales from local breweries.

Matt, who runs four pubs, is the new tenant at the **Old Millwrights Arms**. It is still a **Greene King** pub under their 'Local Heroes' theme and offers up to eight real ales, four at least from local breweries such as **Chiltern**, **Rebellion**, **Tring**, **Vale** and **XT**. **Greene King IPA** and **IPA Gold** were also on offer when visited. Food is available from noon to 9pm every day with roasts on Sunday and breakfast available from 10am on Saturdays. All the food is home prepared using locally sourced ingredients and they are steadily building a great reputation for their cuisine.

The **Oak House** is the new name for **Stars** (ex **Grapes**). We checked it out as part of the Aylesbury pub crawl at Christmas and were rewarded with the sight of four handpumps serving beer from **Rebellion Brewery**. Two pints of **Roasted Nuts** later we were bopping away like young 'uns to various hits from the seventies! Not a pretty sight!



An extra handpump has been installed at the **White Swan** and **Theakston's Old Peculier** now appears alongside the **Wells Bombardier**.

BEACONSFIELD

We have received a quick update on the **Greyhound**, which seems to have had its interior completely gutted judging by the skips outside. The 'good' news is that it's not being converted into a house. The bad news is that it's becoming an Italian restaurant - the **Greyhound Enoteca Italian Wine Bar**. It was due to open late November and we suspect that **Rebellion** beer is not something that will feature very prominently on the menu!

JD Wetherspoon's have opened their first pub on a motorway at the Beaconsfield Extra service area at junction two on the M40 (see the article on page 17). Called the **Hope and Champion**, it's named after two of the stagecoaches that once plied the A40 between London and Oxford trying to dodge highwaymen. Two **Windsor & Eton** beers (£3.05/pint) were spotted among the ubiquitous suspects (please note: they're not allowed to accept the 50p/pint **CAMRA** vouchers). The pub sports a fine selection of old local photos on the walls and a lovely display of Beaconsfield Film Studios posters featuring Peter Sellers in the 1959 film **Battle of the Sexes**!

BUTLERS CROSS

The **Russell Arms** held a beer festival at the end of January. Russell Taylor of **XT Brewing** visited the pub (pictured) to meet drinkers of the two ales (2 and

9) which were featured in the festival, along with ales from local brewers **Tring** and **Rebellion**. The **Russell Arms** also features a line up of **LocAles**, including its close neighbour **Chiltern Brewery's Chiltern Ale**, as a regular on the bar.

CHEARSLEY

At the **Bell**, **Fullers London Pride** and **Chiswick** are available throughout the week with the addition of a guest at the weekend such as **Gales HSB**.

CHINNOR

Saturday 25th of January was the date of the Chinnor beer festival, which served 18 beers from **Locales**, mostly small polypins of racked bright beers, plus two or three ciders. Their next festival is on the Saturday of August Bank Holiday weekend.

The **Black Boy** pub looks like a lost cause - the only sign outside proclaiming 'No copper pipe left on site - only plastic!' In 1997, when **Swan Supping** was first published, there were seven pubs in Chinnor - how sad it is to report now in our 100th issue that there are only three left.

CUBLINGTON

Staff at the **Unicorn** announced with great sadness that their dear friend and colleague, Sharon Sletcher passed away after a short illness last Sunday 19th January 2014. Sharon had been with the **Unicorn** since 2004, always ready with a cheerful welcome for all their customers. She was a much loved and important part of the fabric and family of the pub and the community. Our thoughts go out to Sharon's family and friends at this difficult time.

DINTON

The **Seven Stars** has **Sharp's Doom Bar** and **Vale Best Bitter** on during the week and at the weekend a third such as **Rebellion IPA** is put on.

EMMINGTON

The **Inn at Emmington** retains **Fullers London Pride** and the ever popular **Rebellion IPA**, but Jerry rings the changes with the likes of **XT 6**; **XT 3** and **Chiltern 300s Old Ale**. Most of his **CAMRA** member drinkers appear to be visitors staying overnight in the guest rooms rather than locals.

FORD

The **Dinton Hermit** closed its doors at 4pm on Christmas Eve. Thanks to all customers etc etc.... No news in the village about its future yet but we will keep you informed.

GIBRALTAR

Ruddles County and **Old Golden Hen** are available at the **Bottle and Glass**, but still no **Locales** due to **Greene King's** practice of heavily surcharging the price.

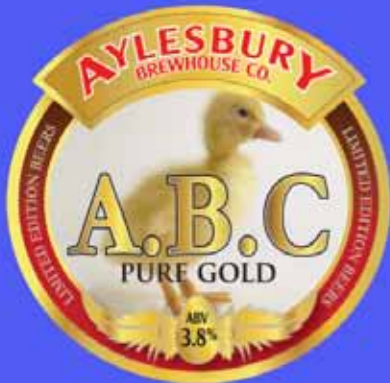
HADDENHAM

At the **Green Dragon**, **Sharp's Doom Bar** is supported by an **XT** beer as well as a guest. **Black Sheep Best Bitter** was on tap when our intrepid reporter visited as the 100th issue headed for the press.

The **Kings Head**, now **Cask Marque** accredited, offers **Sharp's Doom Bar**, **Brakspear Bitter** and **Fullers London Pride** regularly, but offerings such as **Rebellion IPA** and **Red Squirrel Conservation Bitter** will be available during February and March.

Locales and delightful rarities are the order of the day at the **Riser (Rising Sun)** with all beers still at £2.95 and straight from the barrel. A recent celebration in Compost Corner was the testing and commissioning of a brass-plated, birthday gift of a posh, cushion-covered, wooden, high bar stool for evergreen regular Dr. Phil (pictured bottom right).


The **Rose and Thistle (RAT)** now has its own real ale, **Hadding Tribe Finest Ale** at 3.9% ABV - go along and give it a try. The name was chosen from a poll of regulars after a number of ratty names were discarded. The Hadding Tribe came from Haddenham in Cambridgeshire and set up here many



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many moons ago - allegedly. *Greene King* IPA and *Olde Trip* remain as permanent features supported by the popular new beer.

HANDY CROSS

The **Blacksmith's Arms** Harvester has had handpumps reinstated after a gap of some years so that is great news. The two cask ales are from *Rebellion Brewery* who installed the lines and beers featured so far include *Mutiny*, *Roasted Nuts*, *Smuggler* and *Bullseye*.

HIGH WYCOMBE

The **Antelope** has closed. We understand that financial problems caused by the rent demands by the pub company have been cited as the reason as well as the closure of a night-club. The **Lope** (pictured above) is probably the oldest pub in Wycombe (only the **Hobgoblin** (ex **Three Tuns**) runs it close). This is by no means the only time that the **Lope** has 'closed for the last time' and we feel that the pub lost its character when the inside was gutted and the pub extended over 20 years ago. From that point on it became a youngsters' drinking den with very late opening and loud muzak. However, its closure is a sad day for us and for Wycombe.

LACEY GREEN

The selection of cask beers at the **Pink & Lily** over the last six months has seen some of the larger more popular brands on the bar as well as some of the lesser known beers from the *Sharp's* brewery at Rock. They have also had some beer from *Tunnel* brewery and get to try all their new beers first! It has been their local breweries that they have been concentrating on with beers from *Tring* and *Malt The Brewery*.

Their main supplier has been *XT* brewery, and they have been through all the numbers and the occasional letters

from their range as well as all of the animals from their *Animal* range and look forward to working closely with them and with all their other suppliers in 2014.

LEIGHTON BUZZARD

Although it is just outside our branch, it is worth noting that the **Black Lion** in the High Street has reopened after having been closed for two months. It is now part of a small group of eight pubs called *Burlison Inns* which specialise in traditional ales in traditional pubs. There are eight handpumps featuring regular beers such as *Draught Bass* and *Oakham Citra* and the rest are ales from local breweries.

LONG CRENDON

The **Churchill Arms** offers regular ales from *XT* (4 and 6) plus *Sharp's Doom Bar*.

At the **Eight Bells**, Paul Mitchell's new management is going great guns, committed to supporting *Locales* such as *XT* and *Vale*. The pub now serves *XT Bells* (*XT 4* in disguise), and continues to serve *Ringwood Bitter* (aka *Hell's Bells*). For Burns night *Caledonian Deuchars IPA* was served and future offerings include the likes of *Bridestones Pennine Gold* and *Cottage Brewery* beers. This remains a splendid real ale hostelry despite the departure of long-standing landlady Helen.

LONGWICK

The **Red Lion** is a busy local keeping four ales flowing for its thirsty crop of regulars. They are *Hook Norton Hooky*, *Greene King IPA* (which the younger set tends to drink), *St. Austell Tribute* and *Trelawny*. During the Summer months, after May, the ales may vary.

MARLOW

Alfred The Grape Off-Licence closed just before Christmas and this is a great shame as it always stocked a

large choice of bottled beers from local breweries. Richard who worked in the shop is now at **Spirited Wines Off-Licence** in Institute Road where one can find a choice of bottled beers from *Rebellion*, *Binghams*, *Meantime*, and *Innis & Gunn*.

MILTON COMMON

At the **Three Pigeons**, keen new landlord Edward Madden is pushing *Locales* from *Shotover*, *XT* and *Vale* starting off with polypins and pins and bottled offerings too. He has a large

paddock and is in discussion with *Vale Brewery* regarding a possible beer festival this year. Opening hours are currently: Monday-Thursday 9am-5pm, Friday & Saturday 9am-11pm and Sunday 11am-5pm.

SAUNDERTON

There is a planning application proposing the conversion of the **Chiltern Hotel** (previously the **Rose & Crown**) into residential properties (13/08104/FUL). This was where our branch was founded and although it hasn't served real ale since before the name change, it will be a huge loss in terms of our branch's history. We appreciate that history doesn't pay the rent, but we can't allow this to happen quietly!

SYDENHAM

The **Crown** is currently closed following an unsuccessful tenant moving in to run this 'village buy-out' pub. We assume the village is looking for a more competent tenant to take on what was up until recently a going concern.

WINSLOW

The ninth *Winslow Beer Festival* takes place on Friday 14th and Saturday 15th of March at the Public Hall, Elmfields (MK18 3JA). A selection of over 40 beers and ciders this year from around Britain. Run by the Lions Club of Winslow, this is their major fund-raising event for local charities, so go along and 'Drink for Charity'. Last year they raised over £10,000! Session entrance fee (£5) includes a commemorative glass and programme. (CAMRA card carrying members receive a complimentary drink voucher). Light refreshments will be available. Tickets can be obtained in advance from 1st March from the **Bell Hotel**, Market Square, Winslow.



CYGNET-TURE BREWS

So, 100 issues in and our *Swan Supping* magazine is all grown up, and no longer a cygnet (although even this milestone doesn't really allow me to get away with that terrible pun in the title – sorry about that!).

It goes without saying that we should all raise a glass (or two!) of beer to celebrate. What beer, though? I haven't seen any beers celebrating Swan Supping's big milestone yet (although I'm hoping our local brewers will step up to the challenge), so unfortunately I couldn't review one of those. Beers with the number "one hundred" in the title would have been another obvious choice, but there weren't any in my beer 'cellar' (ahem, box). What I did have in my box (cellar, I mean) were several beers celebrating longevity, and they seemed just the job.

One of our local breweries was chosen last year to brew a beer to celebrate the 40th anniversary of *CAMRA's Good Beer Guide*. At 7.2% ABV, *Chiltern Ruby Anniversary Ale* felt like a great beer to celebrate our anniversary with too – especially as by drinking it (well, by first paying for it and then drinking it) a shiny pound will be donated to a Good Cause (ie *CAMRA*).



Despite the 'Ruby' in its name, it actually pours a chestnut-brown. A light fizz shows the bottle conditioning is up and running properly and results in a lasting creamy head – Ruby is, in fact, rather a looker.

On tasting her, there's port and lots of fruit up front, and she feels smooth and rich. She packs a punch though - the alcohol is evident, but it works well - she's not raw or harsh. Chocolate follows, with hints of thyme and earth, and there's a growing roasty bitterness in the finish. She's kind of halfway between a porter and a barley wine;

tasty, voluptuous and alluring, yet at the same time mellow and traditional. Ruby is, in short, a bit of all right!

Whilst *Ruby* celebrates the *Good Beer Guide's* longevity, the guide itself likes to celebrate other survivors. Their 'Famous Four' are the only brewpubs that still existed at the time of the first *Good Beer Guide*, and I believe that they're all still going strong today. The *Three Tuns* (in Bishops Castle, Shropshire) truly has a claim to longevity, dating back to the civil war – it may well be the oldest brewery in the country.

Three Tuns' Cleric's Cure (5% ABV) is a deep gold in hue with a big white hat on top and too much fizz for my liking. It's grassy and floral up front with (unfortunately) a little cardboard. Some lemon comes through, but then there's a mineral bitterness in the finish.



It tastes more like a pilsner than the strong celebratory ale I was hoping for. The thin body and light flavours of the *Cleric* makes him feel a little too austere for our celebration, but I think he's rather lost down here in Buckinghamshire anyway. I feel he's a parochial chap, and may feel more at home in the casks of his Salopian brewpub – hopefully I'll get to visit him there one day.

The civil war beginnings of the *Three Tuns* brings to mind another war-linked beer; *Tring Death or Glory* (7.2%). *Tring Brewery* is officially over the border in Hertfordshire, but their beers make their way onto our patch so often that they feel like one of our own.

It's named after the regimental motto of the Queen's Royal Lancers, and is brewed each year on 25th October to commemorate the anniversary of the famous Charge of the Light Brigade (the 17th Lancers) in the Crimean War 1854. It pours a deep amber bordering on mahogany, with a thin off-white head. There's a little red wine at first, before lots of malt and Weetabix develop. There is some fig in there too, but the beer is mainly all about the grain. Initial sweetness is well balanced with the dusty bitterness of wheat chaff blown from a combine harvester. It's a proper traditional barley wine (with the emphasis on the barley), and is certainly a decent enough brew to toast both the bravery of the Lancers (both in the Crimea and nowadays!) and also the success of *Swan Supping*.

I wonder if the writers of the first edition of *Swan Supping*, back in 1997, also wondered whether the publication was heading for an early death or long-term glory – after a hundred issues I think we now know it was the latter. So I'd like to raise my glass to all the people who have made it such a huge success over the last 100 issues, and to those who will help take it through the next 100... and beyond! Cheers to you all!

Anth Duffield



**FRESH NEW LOOK,
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CHEERS AND ENJOY!

AN ENGAGING CRAWL



What better way to put the post-Christmas blues on hold and say hello to the New Year than to spend a day visiting a selection of some of the finest pubs a famous drinking city has to offer. On the first Saturday of 2014 Simon was charged with navigating our hardy bunch around the alehouses of Oxford.

We missed the great floods of Oxford by a couple of days. Had the rain come earlier and we'd have included some of the city's marvellous riverside pubs, we might have had to dial 999 to be rescued from an inundated hostelry (or maybe that call would have been made when the beer ran out?)

Not far from the bus station, the crawl's first call was the **Four Candles**, a *Wetherspoon* house – named after the classic Two Ronnies' sketch due to Ronnie Barker's old school being nearby – and the great comedian also cut his

teeth on the Oxford (and Aylesbury) stages.

Close to the **Four Candles** is the **Grapes**, a rare example in the area of a *Bath Ales* tied house. All the West Country brewer's beers are available – I find *Gem* is particularly engaging – and we were treated to *Festivity*, their seasonal special.

We didn't forget that, as some of the best Oxford pubs are a distance out of the historic centre, we needed to be a little more mobile than in some more compact crawl cities. The **Rose and Crown**, a ten minute walk and just off the Banbury Road, was our next call. Painted bright pink outside, this traditional pub

serves a selection of interesting ales – the **Box Steam Brewery Steam Porter** was something to



phone home about. And with an old-fashioned, multi-roomed layout you'd need to be a lager-swilling android not to savour it.



After a quick stop at the **Gardeners** over the road, we set off on the relatively long-distance leg to the **Lamb and Flag** on St. Giles – where their wide selection of ales provided us with a great reception (as can be seen in the centre photograph). We then had a swift pint in the **Eagle and Child** over the road – a pub famous for hosting meetings of the Inklings in the mid-20th century, a group of Oxford writers that included J.R.R. Tolkien and C.S. Lewis. Who knows – Tolkien may well have worked here on the text of the *Hobbit* (ironically the latest filmic instalment of the book was probably showing in a cinema down the road as we drank).

From there it was on to another literary themed pub – **Far From the Madding Crowd** – a modern, open-plan bar where I couldn't wait to get my hand set on one of the excellent selection of ales. By this point,



charged with a good half-dozen pints our wires were beginning to get a little crossed and, fitting in stops at the **Royal Blenheim** and **St. Aldates Tavern**, our collective batteries began to become more depleted.

Nevertheless, Oxford is so blessed with pubs that the diehards at the end of the evening were unable to mute our enthusiasm and we didn't get too hung up about sticking to the published itinerary – slipping in a few more extra, unadvertised stops. We certainly wouldn't have been caught napping and missed an impromptu visit to the **Crown**, just around the corner from the fascinating **Chequers**, hidden around a corner off the High Street.

In all it was such an excellent crawl that some of us were left hoping we'd make up the next day with a reason to force us to go straight back to Oxford to revisit some of these wonderful

pubs again.

Charlie Mackle



Pubs of High Wycombe

It's becoming an increasingly easy task for ale drinkers to find a decent pint in High Wycombe, not to mention a nice evening out in pleasant surroundings. While those in search of cut-price doubles and tasteless faux-European lagers are more than catered for in town-centre chain pubs, the more discerning drinker is being treated to a wide range of beers in a number of the town's friendly locals and independents. Step through the right doors and you'll not only find some tasty brews but, in a climate that threatens the very existence of local pubs, some top-notch entertainment too.



In terms of sheer range of beers, there's nowhere quite like the **Bootlegger** (pictured above). Situated opposite the train station, they stock in excess of 300 bottled beers from around the world, as well as having at least two **Rebellion** ales on draught, plus ever-changing guest beers. With their expansive garden and decking area, it's the perfect place to waste away a warm summer afternoon. Entertainment is limited, but the pub is known to draw a large crowd when televising rugby, and a DJ often provides an eclectic mix of tunes on Saturday nights, playing anything from Rush to Rhianna, Pink Floyd to Pulp. There is also an acoustic open mic night every Tuesday, where anyone is welcome to take the stage. The pub also operates a 'bring your own food' policy, and will even clear up after you!

With the doors of the historic **Nags Head** on London Road seemingly never to reopen, a few other pubs in Wycombe are really stepping up to the plate when it comes to hosting live music. Leading the way is **Scorpios Bar**, pictured below, which puts on live music, comedy and film events with staggering frequency. Hip but not cliquey, grungy but not grubby, **Scorpios** can be found on Crendon Street, just down the hill from the **Bootlegger**. Live bands and DJs play every Friday and Saturday night, and can range from punk and heavy metal to ska and country. They have cultivated quite a reputation for their live music events over the last couple of years, and often draw a large and diverse crowd.

The last Wednesday of each month plays host to Eat My Short Shorts, a showcase of short films from up-and-coming film makers, all under twenty minutes in length. While most of these films are made by local directors, work from around the world is often featured, and has included films from Spain, France, The US and Scandinavia. Expect animations, comedy and more avant-garde efforts, all no doubt best enjoyed with a drink in hand. As if all this weren't enough, **Scorpios** also have stand-up comedy nights entitled Comedy Rocks, a regular pub quiz, and are soon planning karaoke evenings.



Real ale is enjoyed more and more these days by folks of all (legal) ages (I am reliably informed that Bucks University's Rock Music Society all meet at **Scorpios** and drink **Rebellion**), and nowhere is this more clearly illustrated than at **Scorpios**. They serve a few bottled ales including *Hobgoblin* and *Iron Maiden's Trooper*, as well as keeping three **Rebellion** beers on draught, including current winter favourite *Roasted Nuts*.

Although **Scorpios** (pictured above) tends to draw a fairly young crowd, they provide such a friendly and welcoming atmosphere that nobody is going to feel out of place there. Talking to their staff, what shines through is how fiercely proud they are of their independent status, and being free from corporate ties. In keeping with this, they insist on all their events staying free to customers. 'Music is for the people', Dave, one of the managers tells me, 'and beer goes really well with that'.

There are few town centre establishments as conducive to ale drinking as the **Hobgoblin**. Long associated with rock music from all eras, the pub has changed hands several times over the last few years but still managed to keep a number of its loyal regulars thanks to its appreciation of good music and great beer. Draught ales (shown below) currently include *Hobgoblin* (as you would hope), *Trooper* (hugely popular with the **Hobgoblin's** crowd), *Brains' Rev. James*, and *Purity's Mad Goose*. The pub offers a nice secluded garden and a warm atmosphere (just watch out for that low ceiling!), as well as live music most Friday and Saturday nights. Six or so bands play there regularly, building a familiarity between the acts and the punters which helps the bands build a solid local following. Fridays tend to draw a younger crowd, while Saturdays see a slightly more mature



audience cut loose to the sounds of acts such as ska covers band Ska Pressed, and Nemesis, a massively entertaining rock band who cover tracks by the Rolling Stones, Black Sabbath and the like.

Another Wycombe pub building a reputation for quality live music is the **Belle Vue** (pictured right), a proper ale drinkers pub on Gordon Road which may just be the friendliest local in town. Landlord Alan puts on a couple of beer festivals each year, each of which features around twenty different beers and ten or so ciders. And considering the modestly sized pub, this is quite a feat. *Adnams Broadside* is served all year round, with their *Ghost Ship* also currently on draught. Also currently on tap is *Young's Special*, *Morland Old Golden Hen*, *Bombardier* and the multi-award winning *Enville Ale*. The pub is also known for its impressive range of ciders.

As well as their popular Thursday quiz night, the **Belle Vue** hosts live music almost every Friday and Saturday from a variety of local and regional bands playing mostly blues, rock and folk. The place becomes pretty packed on Saturday nights, but you can easily escape to the coolness of the attractive and secluded beer garden. Sundays are (as Sundays should



be) a slightly more chilled affair, with relaxed afternoon jam sessions on the first and second Sunday of each month. Anyone is free to step in front of the microphone, and the levels of talent in the local area elevate the sessions above many other comparable occasions. In addition, the pub also puts on a monthly ukulele session on the first Wednesday, catering for all abilities.

The **Belle Vue** also houses art and photography exhibitions in its cosy snug area. Currently displayed is a set of images from local photographer Mike Farrants, focusing on the changing ways in which we create and share photography.

There really is so much more than just great beer to be found in Wycombe's pubs, if you know where to go and when to go there. With different venues offering unique and varied atmospheres and catering for diverse crowds, everyone with a taste for beer is sure to find something to enjoy. There may be few large stages in town, but there's certainly no shortage of live music and events in Wycombe, and with real ale becoming less merely the reserve of the older gentleman, there's little to stand in the way of a decent pint, either.

Kevin Farrow

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LOCAL BREWERY NEWS

Chiltern Brewery

The **Chiltern Brewery** is thrilled to have been invited to brew a 20th Anniversary beer for Mix 96 radio station. As part of year long celebrations, the beer will be available throughout April at the brewery shop, the **Farmers' Bar** and other local stockists, and five pence from every pint will go to support Mix 96's chosen charity, St Tiggywinkles in Haddenham. Stockists of the beer will get a live mention on air and five stockists picked out of the hat will get the option to have Mix 96 come in to run one of their brilliant pub quizzes during the month of April.

All of the fun is to be kicked off with a 'Name The Beer Competition' which everyone (over 18) is welcome to enter. The competition runs from 27th January to 24th February and it is simple to enter. Just think up a brilliant name for the beer and go to either mix96.co.uk or chilternbrewery.co.uk to enter. The winner will be announced live on air and will receive a brewery tour for two, plus an invite to the launch event on 1st April 2014.

The beginning of the year is a great time to mention the line-up of seasonal and limited edition ales from **Chiltern**. On reading this, the first of the season's **Chiltern Black** 3.9% ABV may just be on the wain but a new limited edition for 2014, **Chiltern White** 3.9% ABV, should be on tap and waiting to be tried. White, smooth, creamy and almost pearlescent in colour, this is a pale ale with a very refreshing bite to savour and enjoy.

Finally, if you haven't visited the brewery shop in Terrick recently it is well worth going. The shop has had a revamp and now includes a wealth of interesting information about the beers and the producers of their beer inspired chandlery, so do pop in when you are passing!

Malt The Brewery

February will see the development of the fourth seasonal ale in **Malt The Brewery's** range. Nick, the brewer, skipped the Spring Seasonal Ale last year as it coincided with the arrival of the brewery's lighter core ale, **Malt Golden Ale**. The new brew, **Spring Board**, will be ready for the arrival of Spring and if it's as popular as its seasonal predecessors it may just be 'Spring Boarded' into the main range. It will be the ninth brew in the brewery's range.

Malt The Brewery has been open for just over a year and are offering prizes for a competition to celebrate our 100th issue. Full details are on page 3.

Tring Brewery

After a two year stint, Tring Brewery have dropped the use of single UK hop varieties in their monthly specials and have instead opted to select varieties from around the world.

They commented that '24 different beers with 24 different experimental and established UK hops threw up some amazing results and taught us a lot but now it's time to look further afield again. We will of course continue to champion UK hops as they are a key component in our core and seasonal beers but for the monthly beers we are looking further afield, from Austria to Argentina, Northern Europe to New Zealand. Each of the 2014 monthly specials will take its name from a bird or mammal native to the same country as the hop variety and also which features in the nearby Tring Natural History Museum collection. It is with the Museum and also Woodland Trust that the brewery are collaborating on a number of projects in 2014 and not all of them are focused around beer'.

The brewery have announced that they will be crafting another batch of the widely acclaimed bottle conditioned beer **Crowning Glory** and are shortly to release another batch of **Kotuku**, a lighter coloured version of **Waimea**, the beer that picked up Silver at last October's **JD Wetherspoon** beer festival.

XT Brewery

XT have purchased their first pub (pictured top right)! They took over the **Prince of Wales** in Hinckley, Leicestershire, in November 2013. It is a large three roomed 1930s pub with a function room upstairs.

XT closed the pub for a month to carry out an extensive refurbishment and install more handpumps and new cellar equipment. They have removed



the games machines and piped music and reinstated the separate rooms. It now has six handpumps which it is hoped to increase to eight in the near future. Two or three **XT** or **Animal** beers feature along with a wide range of carefully selected guest beers from around the country. **Elliswood**, the local brewery, also features permanently. Food is available – it is honest pub grub to complement the beers.

The first of many planned beer festivals was a great success – with over twenty beers available including a range of twelve dark ales. The festivals will become a regular feature through the year.

The **Prince of Wales** (52 Coventry Rd, Hinckley, Leicestershire, LE10 0JT, Tel: 01455 614044) is open every day except Sundays from midday to midnight.

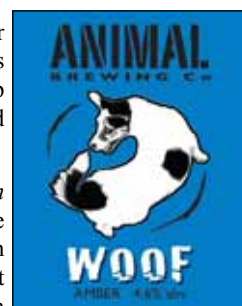


At **XT** they enjoy sharing ideas and occasionally like to brew with their friends at other breweries. In January they made a collaboration brew with **Elephant Brewing Co** from Brentwood – making a black **Saison** at 4.2%. This is based on a Belgian Farmhouse beer style that is becoming very popular – think of it as a kind of Scrumpy Ale. A fresh fruity taste from a beer that is naturally slightly hazy, usually a paler beer – they have made a more offbeat darker variant.

Following the dark **Saison** they have developed a more traditional paler version but more generously hopped than the Belgians would expect – this will be their 2014 special: **XT-14** at 4.5% ABV. This will be available from late February.

The **Animal** beer range has proved very popular and the latest of their little creatures is **Woof!** This is a roast rye amber ale with a series of late hop additions using Motueka hops from New Zealand and Admiral hops from England.

In the spring **XT** are launching **Long Crendon Cider**. A real cider which will initially be available for draught dispense in pubs and from their brewery shop, but with a bottled version coming later. Look out for more details in the next edition of **Swan Supping**.



XT Brewery now sponsor Wheatley Rugby Club and Long Crendon Football Club – both great teams and they now have rather stylish new kit!

Last year they also brewed a special beer to support the Poppy Appeal and in January they had the pleasure to meet up again with the wonderful team at the British Legion for the presentation of the funds you all helped to raise by drinking so much of the **Lest We Forget**. A full report and a picture appear on page 20.



Out and About with Swan Supping

Swan Supping has not only diligently brought its readers the latest real ale and pub news from the Aylesbury Vale and Wycombe area for the last hundred editions, it has also played its part in getting our readership out and about to explore some of the wonderful pubs we have within the branch – and a few outside our boundaries too.

Murdering a Pint

Not wishing to encourage anyone to go over the limit, the vast majority of the pub excursions featured in these pages have either been on foot or by public transport. A couple of exceptions, by necessity, were the pair of articles in 2009 which featured the many local pubs used for the filming of the exceptionally popular crime series, *Midsomer Murders*.

Two car tours were described, which took in bucolic gems frequented by Inspector Barnaby such as the **Lions of Bledlow**, the **Stag and Huntsman** in Hambleden (pictured below), the **Bell** at Chearsley and the **Eight Bells** in Long Crendon. Fortunately all the pubs and the TV series itself continue in good health to this day, despite some personnel changes.

A Ring of Beer

There's nothing more traditionally English than a walk in the countryside followed by a pint (and maybe some food) at a country pub. And, because we cover a large part of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, we're blessed in this branch with some superb examples of rural hostelries.

In fact, many of our branch pubs regularly feature in weekend national newspaper supplements or the pub walk guidebooks that populate the local area section in *Waterstones*. *Swan Supping* has featured many pub walks over recent years – but with a crucial difference. Whereas most other pub walks tend to start and finish with a single pub, our rambles normally take in four or five – proper drinkers' walks.

The most extreme example was also in 2009 – covering the thirty-mile length of the Aylesbury Ring – a series of footpaths that encircles Aylesbury. No,



this wasn't a route-march of a one-day bender – the route was tackled in five sections in successive issues of *Swan Supping*.

In places the route wasn't for the thirsty – a huge section between Weedon, north of Aylesbury, and Aston Clinton had no pubs at all. In fact the walk provided evidence of the scarcity of country pubs towards the north of the branch area – and since it was published we've lost one on the route – the **Bakers' Arms** in Waddesdon. Another on the route, the **Olde Jug** at Hardwick, was closed at the time of the articles but has now happily reopened under its original name of the **Bell**.

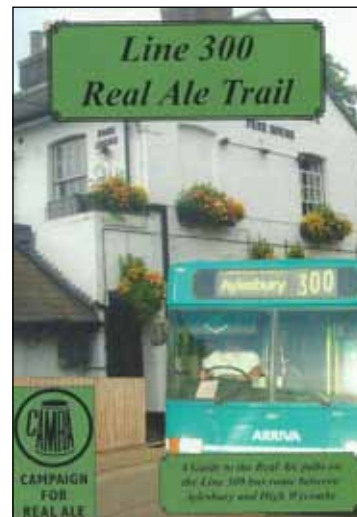
The northern section of the Aylesbury Ring is a warning of how the future might look if we don't support our rural pubs in the places they're currently spread more generously on our green and pleasant land. And there are few more pleasant and archetypal examples of the English country idyll than the slopes of the Chilterns.

It may be that the area's status as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty has deterred the speculators but the villages perched on the Chiltern escarpment continue to have a higher concentration of pubs per mile of footpath – with gems like the **Le De Spencer Arms** at Downley, the **Hampden Arms** at Great Hampden (in an sublime position by the village cricket ground) and the **King William IV** at Speen providing reliable watering holes for the thirsty *Swan Supping* reading walker.

Unfortunately one strategically placed stopping point, the **Rising Sun** at Little Hampden, was converted into private housing in 2010. This relatively isolated pub was a sad loss and leaves a large gap on the map. It was a convenient stop just off the Ridgeway – which now lacks any nearby pubs on the stretch from Cadsden to Wendover.

Bus-ting for a Pint

Ironically, the local branch's most significant achievement in mobilising drinkers to get out and about and visit local pubs was actually a spin-off from *Swan Supping*, rather than a feature in the magazine itself.



In 2007, the branch produced, in conjunction with Bucks County Council, a guide to pubs on the Arriva Buses Line 300. This route, newly rebranded at the time, links High Wycombe with Aylesbury – and, crucially, with reasonable frequency at times that most drinkers would want to visit pubs en route (i.e. evenings and weekends).

The free guide was an enormous success, quickly disappearing from tourist information centres and the like, and even possibly inspiring a letter in the *Daily Telegraph* last year that recommended the many marvellous pubs on the route.

Of course, 2007 was pre-smoking ban and before the world's economy came close to disappearing into the financial equivalent of the slops tray. Nearly seven years on, it's interesting to see how the pubs on the route have fared in the meantime.

At the Aylesbury end, it's been generally good news in the town centre, with two new **Wetherspoon** pubs, the **Bell** and **White Hart**, opening in the interim to complement the refurbished **Broad Leys**, **Hop Pole** (now with new brewhouse and beer shop) and the consistent **Chiltern Brewery** tap at the **King's Head**.

It's a different story just a few hundred yards from the 300's route out of Aylesbury with all three pubs on the Southcourt and Walton Court estate having closed since the guide was published. The **Steeplechase** made valiant efforts to build trade before it was boarded up, whereas the **Greyhound** (aka **Skinny Dog**) has become an Islamic community centre. The **Huntsman's** closure is saddest of all from *Swan Supping's* perspective as this magazine was born at the pub.

WITH SWAN SUPPING

Stoke Mandeville's three pubs are all happily trading, although all have undergone changes, some very dramatic. The **Bell** has changed hands but is now a *Charles Wells* house, committed to real ale. Long-term licensee Stuart Brierley sadly left the **Bull** which subsequently had an extended period of closure. Fortunately the pub has been reopened, regained its place in the *Good Beer Guide* and hosted a recent branch meeting.

The **Woolpack** was virtually destroyed by a huge fire in April 2009 (as shown below) but was rebuilt with extraordinary speed before the end of that year. The pub is firmly aimed at the dining market, with great success, but also welcomes drinkers and has a respectable range of ales.



The next pub in the guide, the **Russell Arms** in Butler's Cross, is one of a growing number of pubs saved from speculative developers by their communities. When the previous owners put the pub up for sale, a consortium of villagers banded together to buy and refurbish their local. Under the management of the team behind the Wendover delicatessen, Two Pound Street (not to be confused with Poundland), the pub aims to satisfy the most demanding foodie. However, with four real ale handpumps the pub demonstrates a commitment to real ale, with a house ale provided by a local brewery. In January the pub held its first beer festival, featuring *LocAles*.

Unfortunately, Arriva decided last year to reroute most of the line 300 services along the main A4010 road, bypassing the **Russell Arms**, which is sad for those of us who'd like to enjoy what the villagers have valiantly managed to preserve.

Ironically, the 300's route still passes the **Bernard Arms** in Great Kimble. Since this historic pub served its last pint in 2011, it has been disgracefully allowed to fall into a state of dereliction, as the photograph, top left, shows only too well. Situated opposite the back entrance to Chequers, the pub is most famous for hosting a Boris Yeltsin impromptu drinking binge. However, the pub has played host to presidents (including Dwight Eisenhower) and was frequented by many British Prime Ministers up to John Major. Sadly, Blair, Brown and Cameron have been notable by their absences.

The owners of the building, reportedly a property company based in West London, do not appear to be in a hurry to reopen the pub – to put it very mildly. Fortunately, with assistance from the local *CAMRA* branch, the local parish council has listed the pub as an Asset of Community Value, giving the local community the right to bid to buy the pub if the owners decide to sell.

Fortunately for those alighting the 300 in Great Kimble, there is a source of good food and beer a ten-minute walk away down the lane from the Bernard Arms. Over the last few years, the **Swan** at the other end of the village has consistently served good beer (the **Bernard Arms**' inconsistency in this vital department may have been a contributory factor to its sad decline).

Happily the ale quality has been maintained after a recent change of ownership, with Mick and Helen Caffrey buying the free house from previous landlord Tim Woolnough. In the cellar Alex Samuel has been doing a great job with very well kept beer from local breweries such as *ABC*, *Tring*, *XT* and *Vale*. The **Swan** has also ventured into hosting beer festivals, with



last year's Oktoberfest featuring rustic, country entertainment, such as nail driving. Footage of a hilarious 'hammer-off' between Simon and Carl, two of the branch committee, has made its way to Youtube – search for 'Swan Kimble nail driving' and enjoy a snippet of priceless video.

The 300 guide included a few pubs between Great Kimble and Princes Risborough that are slightly off the bus route. The **Three Crowns** in Aslett closed for well over a year not long after the guide was published but has now successfully reopened. While the focus is on the dining market, real ale is still available.

The **Plough** in Cadsden has been extended since the 300 guide was published, having added letting rooms to take advantage of its location on the Ridgeway. However, it has gained recent fame as the pub where our rather careless PM David Cameron left his daughter behind after Sunday lunch there. (Keep your eye out for stray Prime Ministerial offspring when you're sipping on beers from the pub's *Greene King* portfolio).

The **Red Lion** in Whiteleaf is less of a walk from the bus stop – only a third of a mile or so – and remains an unspoilt country pub. It also recently hosted a beer festival.

Princes Risborough town centre's pubs are all still present and correct compared to 2007. The **George and Dragon** has benefited from a substantial refurbishment. Sadly the **Black Prince**, a thirties style roadhouse on the south edge of the town, is now boarded up after a number of reincarnations as an Indian restaurant (pictured below as the **Poppyseed**).

Continued on Page 16



MORE SWANNING ABOUT

'Out and About with Swan Supping' - Continued from Page 15

It's amazing that the 300 guide states that the **Whip Inn** in Lacey Green was a new entry in the 2007 **Good Beer Guide** – it seems to have been serving a head-spinning array of fine real ales for longer than seven or so years. Landlord Nick Smith turns over 800 real ales a year – that's going on for three every day. This phenomenal demand for the **Whip's** quality ales isn't harmed by the regular bus service from right outside the pub.

A mile or so down Pink road from the **Whip** is the **Pink and Lily** – famous for being the pub on the front of the 300 guide that didn't actually have the bus route running past it (oh, the joy of Photoshop!). It's also a wonderful country pub that we feared had been lost after it lay closed for the best part of a year. Fortunately a local family bought the historic building – with its timeless Brooke Bar – and has reopened the pub to phenomenal success.

Further towards High Wycombe, the **Black Horse** remains a fine family-run, local pub with a good selection of real ales and an Aunt Sally pitch in the back garden.

In Naphill, the **Black Lion** has also changed into more local hands since the bus guide was published – the changes being the cover story on a not-too-distant edition of **Swan Supping**. The **Wheel**, threatened with closure within the last ten years, has expanded its restaurant with a large extension and continues as a model community pub – it was our pub of the year in 2011 – serving some fine real ales and is pictured on page 15.

At the end of the route in High Wycombe, the **Falcon** and **Hobgoblin** remain reliable places to sup real ale, whereas the **Bell** appears to have focused more on its Thai food business in the intervening years. The appearance of a second Wetherspoons outlet, the **William Robert Loosley** (pictured right), can only be a good thing for bus crawlers at the end of the route.

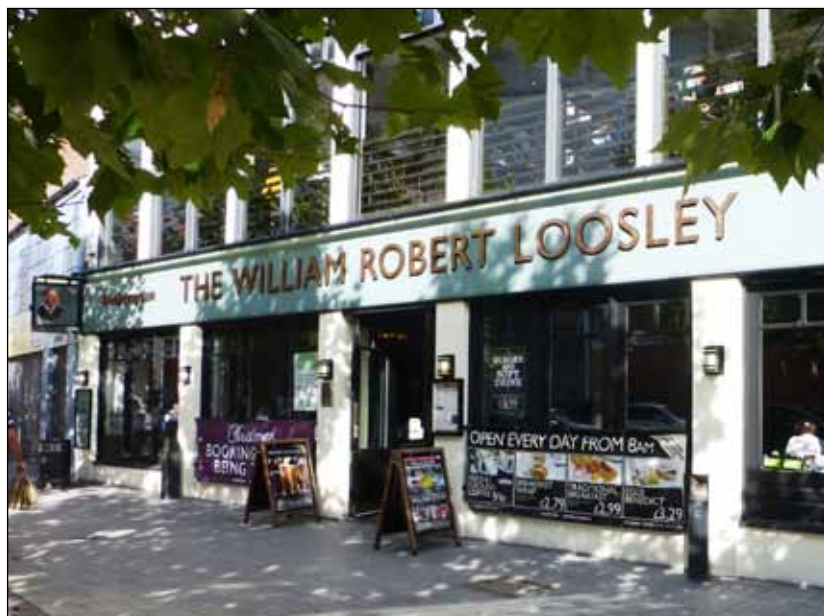
So the line 300 route offers a fairly representative microcosm of the upheavals in the pub industry in the last seven or so years. There are couple of pubs that, if not lost, are certainly very sorry

sights but there's also a community-bought pub, embodying all **CAMRA's** localism principles.

It's been a bumpy ride for many of the pubs in the years since 2007 – with many management and ownership changes. Also, approaching half the pubs have had periods of closure lasting several months during the last seven years, which is rather shocking.

The large majority are still trading but, as always, use them or lose them – and with line 300 offering a service every fifteen minutes in peak times and running seven days a week until closing time then there's really isn't an excuse not to.

Mike Clarke



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PUB OF THE YEAR 2012

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DRIVEN TO DRINK?



Doom Bar and *Fullers London Pride* are the national brands which share the bar.

The construction of a pub at a motorway service station has provoked much controversy in the press, with speculation that the availability of draught beer in a service station will increase the temptation to drink and drive. However, it's now commonplace for the Tesco Extra or equivalent at a roadside petrol station to not only sell alcohol but promote it aggressively (something the motorway *Wetherspoon* has pledged

not to do).

CAMRA is adamantly against drink driving and, as a look back through past issues of *Swan Supping* would confirm, the local branch promotes the use of public transport wherever practical (with walks, bus and train crawls). Given the press coverage and the fact the motorway police tend to also park at the services, it would be a very stupid, as well as irresponsible, drinker who would risk going over the limit at the *Hope and Champion*.

However, drivers are probably in the minority at a motorway services and there should be plenty of passengers who will be able to enjoy a decent pint of beer, providing their bladders can stretch to Oxford services northwards or South Mimms or Cobham on the M25.

Yet, while real ale on the motorway is a 'nice to have' for those able to take advantage of it, anyone who's ever eaten a meal in a *Wetherspoons* pub will know that the catering trade is the key to the pub's potential. While it's clearly not Michelin-starred grub, *Wetherspoon* food is normally quickly served, very good value and does what it says on the tin (or microwave) - something we found when we had an excellent and very convivial branch Christmas meal at the *White Hart* in Aylesbury. And, of course, the provision of decent and reasonably priced food at motorway service stations is, to say the least, something of a glaring gap in the market.

Therefore the majority of the 120 jobs the pub is forecast to produce in the local area will surely be generated by food and soft drink sales. And while the lucky passengers can try some of our excellent *LocAles* as they pass through, the *Hope and Champion* will hopefully not be a fixture on anyone's motorway pub crawl.

Charlie Mackle



Britain's first motorway services pub opened at the very edge of our branch on the morning of 21st January. The *Hope and Champion*, a *J.D. Wetherspoon* free house, has been built at a reported cost of over one million pounds at the Beaconsfield Extra service area at junction two of the M40.

Your intrepid *Swan Supping* reporter managed to get a sneak preview of the new pub on the day before it opened. The bar sports five handpumps with two *LocAles*, ready for serving on the opening day: *Windsor and Eton Knight of the Garter* and *Windsor Knot*. The manager of the new pub, Steve Baldwin, told *Swan Supping* that he intends to rotate other *LocAles* on these two pumps, which will give a good showcase for local brewers to whet the tastebuds of ale lovers from far and wide. *Greene King IPA*, *Sharp's*



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BREWING CHANGES SINCE 1997 AND ITS FUTURE

The *Swan Supping* centenary edition seemed an appropriate time to take a look over the past 17 years and reflect on the changes in the beer and pub world we follow so closely.

Since *Vale Brewery* started in Haddenham in March 1995 we have seen changes in every area of the business.

If we start first with breweries, in April 1997 there were about 370 breweries in the UK, new start-ups were an unusual occurrence and a cause of much local interest. In 1997 for instance 81 breweries switched on their mash tuns and fermenters, although 39 closed for good.

We now have over 1150 breweries in the UK, in 2013 alone there were 159 new breweries starting.

Brewpubs were in the minority in late 1997, and recently most towns have a pub brewing their own beers. In our area the **Cross Keys** in Thame started brewing in 2009, the **Hop Pole** in Aylesbury started in late 2011 under the *Aylesbury Brewhouse Co* name.

As a brewer, the use of ingredients has changed a lot since 1997. A predominance of traditional Fuggles and goldings has been replaced with a plethora of hops from across the world. Zesty Citrus American hops led the way giving rise to beers such as *Vale Pale Ale (VPA)* and *Gravitas*, and more recently New Zealand hops and even Russian hops have been used to create a range of beers available to local drinkers that would not have seemed possible in 1997.

It is not only hops that have changed, whilst most if not all Buckinghamshire brewers used malted barley in the mashing process, a short cut was taken by several breweries and brewpubs across the UK where malt extract was used. This didn't result in quality beers and as with most things if the quality is not there then the sales fall.

An interesting change in the pub scene is seen in the cellar. When we started *Vale Brewery* we bought in Firkins, the standard 9-gallon beer container, but it was also necessary to buy a batch of Kilderkins. These 18-gallon containers were used in high turnover pubs, but today are seldom seen.

The image of beer has changed significantly; the stereotype of a bearded big-bellied beer drinker is now out of date. However some can still be found in the area! But beer has got fashionable, twenty something's have taken to real ale, and from being a predominantly male beverage, it is great to see women enjoying our national drink more often.

Nowhere is this more apparent than at beer festivals. While the number of festivals has increased dramatically, the number of pubs has reduced. And there is the challenge for the next 100 issues. If beer is popular, festivals attract a broad spectrum of real ale enthusiasts, why is pub usage still declining!

So what of the future of brewing, drinking, and pubs over the next 100 editions of *Swan Supping*?

While not claiming to have a crystal ball or the middle name Nostradamus, there are encouraging changes afoot in the pub and brewing industries, helped by the campaigning and encouragement of Europe's largest single-issue consumer group.

It's no secret that current consumer trends in food and drink feature demand for quality and character, with ever increasing focus on locally produced and environmentally friendly goods - all areas in which real ale scores strongly. One in five cask ale drinkers tried it for the first time in the last four years, proving cask is attracting new drinkers. The popularity of cask ale will continue to increase across a wide range of the UK's population; more women will try it at the ever increasing number of beer festivals, and younger drinkers will be spurred on by cask ale's new image and wide range of beer styles, helped by the emergence of craft beer. Real ale will become even more inclusive; for example, *CAMRA* have an ever expanding Lesbian & Gay Real Ale Drinkers (LAGRAD) Group, with 'Queerale' pub crawls and beer festival visits.



With further net increases in the number of independent breweries in the UK there will be ever greater pressure on large pub companies to open up their ale pumps to *LocAle*. While the Office of Fair Trading continue to fail to see eye-to-eye with *CAMRA* that the beer tie restricts consumer choice, and the British Beer and Pub Association peddle statistical inaccuracies that more pubs would close if the free-of-tie option was enacted, there will be an important emergence for independent breweries; the rise of the independent pub companies. These smaller pub companies, comprising of anywhere between two and twenty pubs, will emerge as they snap up the viable pubs left behind by Large Pubcos dramatically reducing the size of their estates. They will continue to champion local ale and improve the environments offered in their pubs, appealing to the wide audience that cask ale now enjoys, whilst continuing to show the Large Pubco model as outdated.

With these increases in cask ale popularity and the decreasing influence of the Large Pubcos, brewing will

go from strength to strength. The emergence of the IPA to become the most popular beer style - which does have a hint of history repeating itself - will increase mainstream exploration into other styles, with greater influence from America and Belgium, coupled with new varieties of hops for brewers to play with.

We must continue to cherish our cultural habits. Support those establishments that aren't just another 'profit centre' in a large portfolio of pubs. Support the landlords and ladies that work tirelessly to create a social hub for their community. Support *LocAle*. Join *CAMRA* in their quest for a better future for our beloved beer.

My fellow drinkers, ask not what your pub and beer can do for you, but what you can do for them. *Alex Smith (Aylesbury Brewhouse Co)* and *Ian Mackey (Vale Brewery)*

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A DECADE AT THE WHIP INN!



gastropub is 'A pub that specialises in quality food'. You will note that there is no mention of beer in the definition. As a pub and ale man I wanted to have a PUB and my definition was and still is 'A pub serves high quality beer and simple but high quality food', and it was on that premise that we started and is still our mantra today.

The other in vogue thing at the time, for some strange reason, was to change the name of the pub. I assume it was some marketing company that made shed loads of money by persuading people that to change your pub's name from the **Red Lion** to the

Pickled Parsnip would make them wealthy.

Pubs in their name alone preserve history! They hold stories of ghosts, and green men, memories of royalty such as the **King Harry** or the **Old King Lud** and of trades like the **Carpenters Arms** or the **Bricklayers** and the **Woolpack**. Most have preserved their historical names and the days of the **Slug and Lettuce** and the **Ferret and Radiator** have passed as a momentary aberration.

The latest fad to strike is the intriguingly named Craft Ale. My experience of it so far is to have visited two 'Craft Ale' pubs in London and had a pint in each. Firstly the prices were a staggering £4.80 and £5 for each pint and secondly it is keg beer. So let us stop for a minute and remember all those years we endured the Red Revolution and

Watneys Red Barrel, do we want that back. Well call me old-fashioned but it is not for me. Very shortly the Nationals and Regionals will be on the bandwagon with the Craft Revolution *John Smiths Smooth Craft Ale* will be everywhere but rebranded of course probably as 'Yorkshire's Finest Craft Ale'.

The last ten years has been difficult for many industries, and has been very tough on the pub trade. In this area alone we have seen three of the pubs closed, some more than once, however all three are now back up and running successfully again which is good to see. The interesting point to note about all three is, their resurrection, in all cases is due to local commitment whether it be an individual or a group of local residents.

This is simply because at ground level people realise that pubs in many areas are the heartbeat of the community. It is a shame that time does not seem to change the fact that, whoever is in government is unable to see the pub's value not only as a vast employer and revenue earner but also in stabilising community spirit.

Embarrassing as it is, it took a Frenchman, Hilaire Belloc, to recognise their true worth! He said 'When you have lost the inns of England, drown your empty selves for you will have lost the last of England'.

So I am off to the bar for a Great British beer with the words 'Vive Le Pub' ringing in my ears.

Nick @ The Whip Inn

Just over a decade ago Julie and I took on the **Whip** inn which at the time was a gamble as the pub was losing tens of thousands of pounds and struggling. So it was a case of roll your sleeves up and get stuck in! At the end of that first year we had taken it from a large loss into a very small profit, and I mean a small profit, £1500 pounds to be exact. Which meant that we had earned £2.05p a day each over that period or about 17p an hour, so for anyone complaining about a minimum wage try working for yourself for a while.

Of course that was just the beginning and since then we have had twenty beer festivals, served around 500,000 pints of real ale, and over 4100 completely different ales from around the UK.

When we started the gastropub was still very much in vogue. The dictionary definition of a

WWW.TRINGBREWERY.CO.UK



For 2014 our monthly specials will be crafted using carefully selected hop varieties from around the world, from Austria to Argentina, Northern Europe to New Zealand. Available in local pubs and from our brewery shop.

NEW BREW RAISES THOUSANDS!

When the local Long Crendon *XT* brewery was approached by both the Chairman and Secretary from the **Marlow Royal British Legion (RBL)**, to brew a unique new Armistice ale last summer for the month of Armistice 2013 and more significantly for the Royal British Legion Branch Poppy Appeal, joint owners/brewers Gareth Xifaras and Russell Taylor said they would be pleased and honoured to undertake this task. In fact *XT* announced that they would donate £10.00 from every firkin (72-pint barrel) that they sold of this ale. Initially only going to be a 65-barrel batch, the new brew christened *Lest We Forget*, far exceeded all expectations and another two batches had to be brewed.

This flavoursome amber 4.2% ABV malty ale was available at the **Marlow RBL** for some six weeks continuously, besides being distributed to a plethora of public houses and beer festivals throughout Southern England and beyond, by *XT* with their network of contacts, to maximise the sale of *Lest We Forget*.

After the last mouthful of *Lest We Forget* was supped, *XT* kindly made a donation of £1500 from their barrelage sales of the Armistice ale, which in turn was matched by the **Marlow RBL Club Committee** from the profit made through the Club bar on the sale from the 18 or so barrels of *Lest We Forget* that the Club members imbibed at their Station Approach HQ in Marlow. This £3000 sum was a fantastic achievement for all concerned.

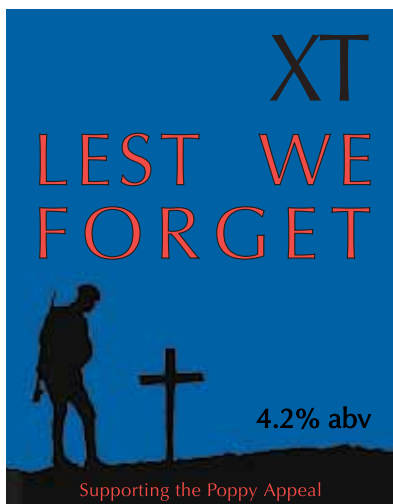
Also, there was a cheque of £500 presented to the Branch Poppy Appeal from Mrs. Diane Beaty, widow of the recently deceased



2nd Battalion Scots Guards and Scot Guards Association Pipes & Drums war hero Mr. Archie Beaty, who died tragically after the Armistice parade at the **Marlow RBL** on Remembrance Sunday 10th November of last year. This money was originally offered to Mrs. Beaty by the Club Committee on the behalf of all at the Marlow Legion as a mark of respect for her late husband, but Diane kindly donated this sum to the RBL Branch Poppy Appeal, a most gracious gesture indeed.

The cheque presentation ceremony was held on Friday 17th January at lunchtime and attendees in the photo above are (from left to right); Mrs. Diane Beaty, son Max Beaty, daughters Claire & Lynn Beaty, Alan Sheppard (Club Secretary), Lee Wiltshire (Club Chairman), Suzanne Brown (Town Mayor), Russell Taylor (*XT* brewery owner/brewer), Les Rowley (foreground, Branch Vice-Chairman), Mike Barry (RBL County Chairman), Jeremy Jones (Club President), John Chapman (Branch President).

Alan Sheppard (Club Secretary Marlow RBL)



The Marlow Royal British Legion

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ALE

A LOCAL XT ALE

AN ALE FROM THE
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OF SIX BREWERIES

AN EVER-CHANGING
CAMEO GUEST

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WWW.RBLMARLOW.CO.UK



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MORE LOCAL BREWERY NEWS

ABC Brewery

2014 promises to be a big year for **Aylesbury Brewhouse**, starting with a Brewery Tour & Tasting on Saturday 22nd February! Sample their limited edition beers, quiz the brewer on his beery knowledge whilst drinking a free pint, and have an in-depth talk on how they do things differently down on the Bicester Road. The event starts at 12.30pm, tickets are £10pp or just £7.50 for their Beer Club members!

You can also brew with **ABC** if you win our competition - see page 3!



The exciting news continues with a brand new brewery logo! Designed by Head Brewer Hayden Overton, it incorporates an iconic Aylesbury Duck silhouette with a stronger emphasis on the brewery's initials; a nod to the history of brewing in Aylesbury but with the focus firmly on the future of the modern day microbrewery.

And the rebranding continues with updated pumpclip designs. *Pure Gold*, their only permanent brew, has had a makeover, whilst their limited edition pumpclip designs have a stronger



focus on the individuality of the beer produced.

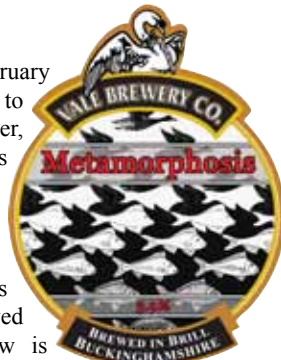
More events for this year are being planned as you read this, so keep up to date with breaking brewery news down all the usual social networking channels, or pop by the Brewery Shop to talk beer, brewing, and Belgian beers with Alex!

Vale Brewery

Still around in early February you should still be able to catch a pint of *Metamorphosis*. For lovers of bitter, hoppy beers this is one worth searching for. This straw coloured beer is packed with Hops from the UK, Australia and New Zealand and is a stunning tasty bitter full of flavour.

In February, just as the Six Nation Rugby kicks off, so does *Lock, Prop and Barrel*. This is brewed for each championship, but each years brew is different, this year the beer is tawny coloured and is 4.1% ABV. Smooth and easy drinking was the brief, so a beer to savour slowly.

Then in March they launch *Spring Forward*, a 3.8% copper bitter that marks the optimism of the longer days.



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KONSTANZ AND THE BRAUHAUS JOH. ALBRECHT

With my family, I stayed for six days in early October in Wallhausen – a tiny harbour village on the shore of the Bodensee in Southern Germany, also known as Lake Constance. We spent the days exploring many of the towns and villages accessible by boat from Wallhausen and, more often, from nearby Konstanz. In this vicinity, the lake touches upon Switzerland and Austria as well as Germany, with the typical picturesque and floral bound buildings typical of the area. Our hotel was such a building. Three notable trips by bus and boat were:-

Mainau Island – like a little tropical paradise. Its freak microclimate, combined with the utilisation of scientific techniques, means that at least part of the gardens covering the island is in bloom for half of the year.



Friedrichshafen – best known for its distinguished place in aviation history; the first tests of Zeppelin airships were performed here and the Zeppelin museum is well worth a visit.

Meersburg – best visited out of peak season as it's so popular. A 'must see' is the Altes Schloss (old castle) which is reputed to be the oldest surviving castle in Germany.

Of more importance than these trips, of course, was that we discovered on our first evening in Konstanz (just 30 minutes away by bus with free travel



by Hotel issued voucher) the **Brauhaus Joh. Albrecht and Restaurant**.

So impressed were we with the beer and food, that four of our six evenings away were very happily spent here before staggering back to the nearest bus-stop for our journey back to Wallhausen. I'm afraid I was, perhaps, rather boring with my choice of beer as I stuck with my first choice each evening. I'm a dark ale fan and, though different from a British real ale, was happy to stick with the *Kupfer* ale without sampling the *Weiss* or *Messing*, Pilsner style offering. Like many such Brauhaus in Germany, just two or three different beers are offered but of excellent quality.

Their brewery website describes the two speciality ales as *Kupfer* (Copper) – the malty-mild dark ale and *Messing* (Brass) – the hoppy, herby bright ale. The beers are brewed before your eyes in the middle of the bar area and brewery tours are on offer.

Below are pictures of the beers being served, a *Kupfer* ale prominent in front of my fellow diners and a couple of *Weiss* beers and many bags of malt alongside the copper vats.

Not my first visit to this area and certainly not my last.

Peter Hoade



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GRAVEDIGGERS - PART TWENTY SEVEN

Mazz surveyed the ceiling in the **Gravediggers**' public bar. A mass of gruesomely-titled pump clips from the **Diggers**' microbrewery ale were wedged between the rafters. The display had started accidentally: the uncontrollable gas explosions emanating from the handpumps when the first few barrels opened had blasted the labels off the pumps, embedding them in the ceiling like shrapnel.

Other clips had spookily flung upwards when the local vicar performed an exorcism on the beer engines after a few particularly rough pints. Some said they'd stuck fast to the ceiling with ectoplasm but others thought the gloopy dregs of *Undescended Gonad* boasted stronger adhesive properties – and were even scarier.

'How many ales have we brewed so far,' Mazz asked James, misty-eyed. 'Seems like only yesterday that our first customers were bolting to the toilets, clutching their bellies.'

James could barely hear through his chemical hazard suit, being about to commence the weekly sandblasting of the beer pipes, followed by the customary sulphuric acid rinse.

'You're up to ninety-eight precisely,' Terry the Ticker interjected, notebook in hand. 'I've kept a diligent record for the local **CAMRA** branch. Us hardcore tickers wouldn't miss a sip of any of your new brews. Word is, their fame's getting around to the die-hards at national level.'

'Die-hards – that's an appropriate description for fans of our beers,' Mazz said. 'So only two more ales until our beery century?'

'Number ninety-nine's curdling away as we speak,' James said.

'Curdling?' Terry asked, intrigued.

'A creamy milk stout – made with the extra pus from Old Elvis's mastitis-riddled, hand-milked herd,' James said, proudly. 'The ale will be so clotted that the complimentary Badbury's Flake will stand erect of its own accord.'

'His idea of appealing to the female market,' Mazz lifted her eyes to the ceiling again.

'The ladies had better be quick. I can't wait. I'm going to tweet the **CAMRA** branch members to bring their spoons,' Terry the Ticker enthused.

'And then it's on to the big one hundred. Difficult to believe we've got there,' James said.

'It's more difficult to believe we've still got any surviving customers,' Mazz replied, wiping the algae from glasses behind the bar.

'Our beer might have the opposite effect – given the average age of the drinkers round here,' James said.

'Like the proverb – 'what doesn't kill you makes you stronger'?' Mazz suggested.

'Either our beer or some weird preservative effect from the toxic waste tip down the road. After all, it's Old Moses's hundredth birthday in a couple of weeks.'

'Again?' Mazz asked. 'But, hey, any excuse for a party. And it's obvious – the hundredth brew should give Old Moses the ale drinking experience of his life.'

In honour of Old Moses's century, James worked tirelessly for a week on the **Gravediggers**' hundredth ale. After much testing of the maturing liquid and many sudden, rushed visits to the toilets straight afterwards, the beer was christened *Burning Tush* – a title suggested by Mazz's American brother, Randy Hopper.

Craft brewing's finest principles were applied to the recipe: chucking in as many odd ingredients as possible and brewing it to head-exploding strength.

The ale was advertised as containing a hundred different hops. Unfortunately, even with Randy's stateside connections, only fifty varieties could be mustered on brew day. But Young Duwayne had the brainwave of genetically mutating each hop strain by storing the sacks overnight in the local radioactive waste dump's ventilation shafts.

When only twenty-five types of malt could be sourced, the Diggers' Scottish comrade, Murdo McMurder, was recruited to give each variety

three additional treatments – delivering a century of combinations. Two batches were roasted over sacrificed haggis and peat respectively (sadly not Old Pete). And each type of malt also underwent a 'fungal seasoning' in Murdo's sporran.

Sadly, the array of ingredients meant it was impossible to make the beer one hundred per cent alcohol, as the locals would have preferred. But an innovative process of emptying the barrels into freezing slurry tanks and removing overnight ice allowed the **Diggers** microbrewery to come remarkably close.

The beer was unveiled at Old Moses's centurion birthday bash. His lifelong collection of friends and relatives were invited – all five of them – Old Pete, Old Joe, Young Duwayne, James and Mazz.

It was exactly like every other night in the public bar in the **Gravediggers** until – as the first pint began to gurgle through the handpumps – a bunch of masked men burst through the door. The two leaders ran to the bar, ripping off their disguises.

'I'm Dodger Clots,' announced a fervent-eyed, bearded revolutionary. 'Leader of the Extreme Ale Drinkers' Brigade and also editor of their bible *One Hundred Beers to Avoid If You Want to Stay Alive*.'

The other unmasked agitator was none other than Tim the Ticker.

'Tim, you're one of these extremist drinkers?' Mazz said, dumbfounded.

'I had to break cover,' Tim explained. 'When I heard about the hundred-hopped beer, I couldn't keep the intelligence from Dodger.'

'A pint of your worst,' demanded Dodger, pulling out his **CAMRA** membership card. 'And a discount please.'

'Sure you can handle it?' Old Pete asked. 'Folks round here are suckled on this strong country beer.'

'An American-Scottish multi-hopped, mega-malted luminous IPA – surely one of the world's most flavoursome beers? I demand it.'

Wearing a face mask, James served the pub, including Dodger and his gang, several pints of *Burning Tush*. In time-honoured fashion, Old Moses and friends soon collapsed in a comatose pile after downing their pints in the birthday celebration, as did all but one of the Extreme Ale Drinkers.

Something odd began happening to Dodger. His hair thinned and whitened. Lines suddenly etched deep into his face. He shrank and stooped. Rather than a well-seasoned fifty-something, he'd metamorphosed into a wizened old man of about, er, a hundred.

As Dodger clung on to the bar, a TV outside broadcast van pulled up outside the **Gravediggers**. Sue Breathless, the local reporter, bounced into the bar. She shoved Chris the postman through the door before her, telegram in his hand.

'On Her Majesty's Service at the pub that serves the rumoured elixir of life,' Sue pouted into the camera and scanned the fallen bodies around the bar. 'That must be him there – the hammered, dodderly old git. Oops! Sorry, forgot I was live on air! Hurry up then, Postie.' She pushed Chris the postman impatiently towards Dodger.

'That don't look like Old Moses,' Chris said, presenting the royal commendation. 'He must have drunk a really bad pint.'

'No. Just a very extreme ale, young man,' Dodger croaked, staring baffled at the telegram. 'That hundred hop flavour was truly once in a lifetime – except I didn't expect it to fast-forward mine.'

'There is an antidote for those who react against our beers,' James said. 'But it's so painful you're not going to like it – ten pints of tasteless lager a day for a year.'

'Here's your first,' Mazz said, handing over a pint of ice-cold *Blandweiser*. 'Aaargh! A fate worse than death!' Dodger snatched Old Moses's walking stick and hobbled away through the door.

Charlie Mackle



Branch Diary

Everybody welcome to all socials and meetings!

February

Saturday 1st SWAN SUPPING 100TH EDITION SOCIAL

12 noon King's Head, Aylesbury

Friday 7th LACEY GREEN SOCIAL

7.30pm Black Horse, 8.30pm Whip Inn.

Monday 10th BRANCH SOCIAL

8.45pm, Swan, Great Kimble.

Thursday 13th WENDOVER SOCIAL

7.30pm Shoulder of Mutton, 8pm White Swan, 8.30pm Red Lion, 9.15pm Pack Horse

Monday 17th GBG FINAL SELECTION MEETING

8.00pm Belle Vue, High Wycombe

Monday 24th BRANCH AGM

7.30pm, King's Head, Aylesbury

Every local CAMRA member should come along. Besides the formal meeting, there will be a buffet and a bottle raffle.

Wednesday 26th BEACONSFIELD SOCIAL

7.30pm, Beech House, Beaconsfield, 8.30pm Hope and Champion, M40 Services

March

Wednesday 5th BRANCH SOCIAL

7.45pm Lions of Bledlow, 8.45pm Boot, Bledlow Ridge

Monday 10th BRANCH MEETING

8.00pm, Wheel, Naphill

Saturday 15th March, BEER FESTIVAL SOCIAL

1.00pm Winslow Beer Festival

Thursday 20th M40 SOCIAL

8.15pm, Hope and Champion, Beaconsfield Services, 9.15pm Lambert Arms, Aston Rowant, 9.45pm Cherry Tree, Kingston Blount.

Tuesday 25th MARLOW SOCIAL

8.00pm Britannia, 8.45pm Royal British Legion, 9.30pm Duke of Cambridge.

Monday 31st EDITOR'S BIRTHDAY SOCIAL

8.00pm, Hop Pole, Aylesbury.

July

Saturday 12th BLACK COUNTRY TRIP

Proposed date for the best day out of the year!

October

Friday 24th & Saturday 25th BEER FESTIVAL

21st Vale of Aylesbury Beer Festival, Bucks County Council Sports & Social Club, Lower Road, Aylesbury

Further details can be found on our website

www.swansupping.org.uk

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www.swansupping.org.uk/joinin

Swan Supping

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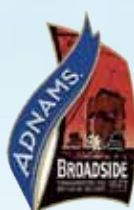
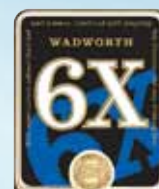
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