

**FREE**

# Swan Supping



**Issue 98**

**Oct/Nov 2013**



**CAMPAIGN  
FOR  
REAL ALE**

**COVER STORY**  
**The Bell at Hardwick**  
**has reopened!**  
**Full details on page 4.**

**Newsletter of the Aylesbury Vale & Wycombe Branch of CAMRA**  
**[www.swansupping.org.uk](http://www.swansupping.org.uk)** **Circulation 6000**



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## NEWS FROM THE EDITOR

### Good News and Bad News

We have seen the return of both the **Bell** in Hardwick and the **Shepherd's Crook** in Crowell, which is fantastic news when we have lost so many pubs recently and further details appear later in the magazine.

The losses continue however and two from Aylesbury have recently occurred with the closure of the **Britannia** (hopefully only temporary) and the **Slug & Lettuce**.

At the end of 1999, the Aylesbury pub trade 'welcomed' four large brand new competitors with **Bar Med**, **Chicago's**, **Hogshead** and **Yates**. Only the **Hogshead** offered any serious attempt at serving real ale, they even ran a beer festival, but none of these four have survived in their original state. **Bar Med** is now the **Kingsbury** (via the **Litten Tree**) and **Chicago's** is now the **White Hart** and is run by **JD Wetherspoon**. **Yates** very soon closed to become a Tapas bar which in turn closed and with the closure of the **Hogshead** which had morphed into a **Hog's Head** before its next incarnation as the **Slug & Lettuce**, it seems fair to reflect that the surviving pubs offer a range of real ale and the ones that failed didn't. Can't say we didn't tell them where they were going wrong!

A pub closed for a different reason is the **Two Brewers** in Marlow, which was recently badly damaged in a devastating fire. This pub has a particular significance for me as it was the venue for the first local **CAMRA** meeting that I attended. That was over thirty years ago (time flies when you are having fun) and I hope that it will soon be open again!

### 20th Aylesbury Vale Beer Festival

October again sees the **Aylesbury Vale Beer Festival** which is run in conjunction with the **Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity** who raise money for the Aylesbury Hospice. The festival will once again be held at the Bucks County Council Sports & Social Club, Lower Road, Aylesbury. This is opposite the Ambulance Station at Stoke Mandeville Hospital. Regular buses (9, 55, 300) run past the venue.

The festival takes place over the weekend of Friday 18th and Saturday 19th of October. There will be about 25 real ales plus traditional ciders and perries. It will be open from 6:00pm - 11:00pm on Friday and 11:00am - 11:00pm on Saturday. Food will be available both days.

You can buy a ticket from all **Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity Shops**, by contacting the Charity directly or through Aylesbury Tourist Office. All profits will go to the charity, which needs to raise half a million pounds each year, and if you wish to sponsor a barrel, please contact the **Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity** on 01296 429975.

Local **CAMRA** volunteers are required for the festival. Please get in touch with me (contact details on page 22) if you wish to help either in the setting up, serving or helping to take down the barrels at the end. We can guarantee a great time (plus free entry!) and the more people that help, the less arduous the work will be. There will be a setting up session on the Wednesday evening before the festival followed by a social in Stoke Mandeville, so there is even more reason to join in and help.

This is the 20th festival that we have run to raise money for the charity and it corresponds with the 25th year of the Aylesbury Hospice. Drinking for charity! Wonderful!

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 once again to Colin Stanford for the cartoon.

Cheers!

David W. Roe - Swan Supping Editor



## NATIONAL CAMRA NEWS

### CAMRA toasts 150,000 members

Despite overall beer sales in Britain experiencing a steady decline, **CAMRA** announced at the **Great British Beer Festival** that membership of the campaign now exceeds 150,000 members as increasing numbers of people, particularly women, try real ale.

Overall UK beer sales have reduced in the last three years by more than 500 million pints whilst real ale has outperformed the market and even enjoyed a small increase in 2011.

In the same period, more than 250 new real ale breweries have set up business in Britain and new market research shows that the number of people trying real ale has grown from 34% to 53%. Women trying real ale for the first time has grown from 14% to 34% in this short period.

Colin Valentine, **CAMRA**'s Chairman said, 'We're enjoying a genuine and sustained revival in real ale as it shows the way to success for the UK beer market. There are now more than 1,000 breweries brewing in excess of 8,000 different real ales for consumers to choose from. More people are looking for something brewed locally and with so many breweries in Britain, everybody has a local beer to try. It's very exciting that more and more women are trying real ale. Our national drink threw off its flat cap

image years ago and now it is increasingly seen as a drink for women as well as men. That trend will help put the whole British beer market back on a track towards growth.'

In the last decade **CAMRA** membership has more than doubled from 65,000 to 150,000, with women now accounting for 22% of the membership. A growth of 20,000 members in the last decade.

### Good Beer Guide

A total of 187 new breweries started up in the UK in the last 12 months according to the **Good Beer Guide 2014**, released by **CAMRA** in September.

And with new breweries comes even more choice for drinkers, with the number of regularly brewed British beers now over 5200. The guide's editor, Roger Protz had this to say about the breadth of choice now available to real ale drinkers,

'There has been a boom in the growth of breweries over the last 12 months, resulting in a total of 1147 breweries now producing beer in the UK – and with more

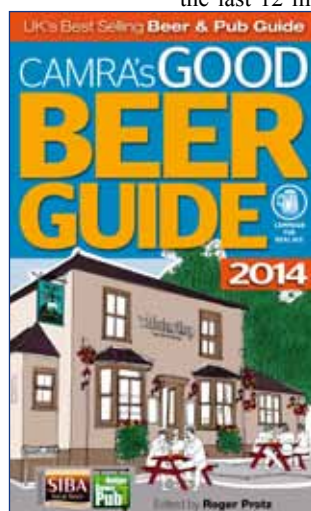
breweries comes greater choice for the drinker and more opportunities to buy locally produced brews.'

Breweries have popped up across the UK in the most unusual of places – from a beer brewing pizzeria (**CRATE Brewery** in London) to a transformed Dairy Farm (our local **Malt Brewery** in Prestwood) and a converted School outbuilding (**Old School Brewery** in Warton Lancashire).

One area which has seen astonishing growth in the last 12 months is London, with the number

of breweries inside the M25 doubling in the time between the 2013 and new 2014 **Good Beer Guide**, with 23 new breweries opening.

Plus one long-since-lost London brewery brand is now due to go back in to production. Once the second largest brewery in the UK, the old **Truman Brewery** in Whitechapel closed its doors in 1989, but the brand has been given a new lease of life with the grand opening of the new brewery taking place this week and beers due to hit bars across the capital in coming weeks.



## THE BELL AT HARDWICK REOPENS



After eighteen months of extensive renovation following three years of dereliction the **Bell** at Hardwick was opened again over the August bank holiday. The pub, featured on this issue's cover, is owned and run by Ian and Claire Tring (pictured below) who are wasting no time in re-establishing the **Bell** as an important part of the local community.

Ian has owned and refurbished other pubs previously, the **Thatch** at Adstock, the **Crooked Billet** in Newton Longville and the **Hunt Hotel** at Linslade. The

**Bell** (in recent years called **Ye Olde Jug**) closed down five years ago and when Ian bought it had been empty for three. The roof had leaked over this period causing major damage to the interior. As well as a new roof much of the woodwork had to be replaced or removed and renovated in addition to walls and ceilings. With great care they have managed to retain virtually all the structural timbers and the result is most impressive. Alterations to the original layout are minimal but effective use of space gives great benefits such as a larger bar area and much improved kitchen. A new flagstone floor has been laid in the bar and carpet elsewhere. Outside is a new patio and seating area secure from the car park and a new extension is nearing completion. This will be multi-functional; providing a sizeable function room, additional dining space, meeting room and so on.

Three ales from handpumps are currently **Hook Norton Lion Bitter**, **Sharps Doom Bar** and **Young's Bitter**. As this is a genuine free-of-tie house these will vary. They hope to start serving food in early October when the finishing touches to the new kitchen are complete. Traditional home cooked food with specials will feature every lunchtime and evening (except Wednesday and Sunday evenings) plus Sunday roasts.

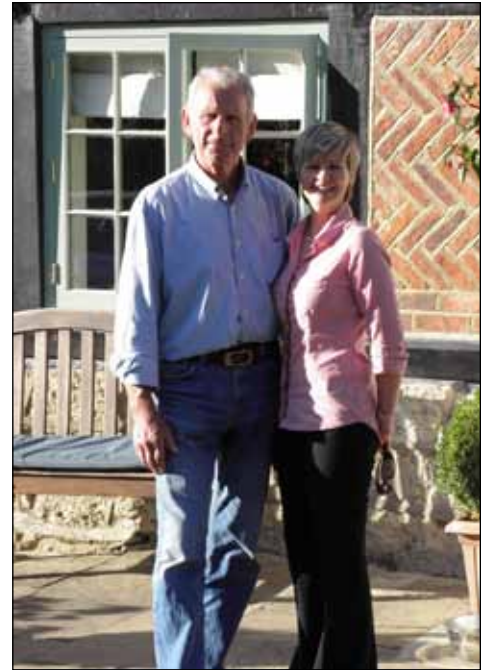
As they settle in more plans will emerge but in the meantime one date is the evening of Sunday 15th December when there will be Christmas carols in the garden accompanied by a brass band. Children and dogs are welcome and the event commences at 6pm.

It is great to see a pub opening these days especially when, after so long, it had seemed it may have been lost for good which has been the fate of so many recently.

An added bonus is that it has reverted to its proper name (which had been more than adequate as long as anyone can remember) and it will return to its central function in the village.

For further details phone 01296 640005 or go to [www.thebellathardwick.co.uk](http://www.thebellathardwick.co.uk)

*Mick White*



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# I'M A CELEBRITY - GET ME INTO BEER

Product endorsements by so-called celebrities have become all too common in recent years – manufacturers of fizzy drinks, cosmetics, crisps, and almost any other product you can think of have splashed out thousands or even millions of pounds just to get someone famous to flash a smile next to their goods.

Even beer, generally regarded as pretty down-to-earth, has not been immune to this – for instance, James May popping up in the *Fuller's London Pride* adverts. However, beer is possibly unique in the fact that people love it so much that they will not only promote it for free, but even help out in making it! The band Elbow have recently brewed the session bitter *Build a Rocket Boys* at *Robinsons*, whilst Bruce Dickinson from Iron Maiden rocked up at the same brewery to create a stronger bitter called *Trooper*.



Whilst it's great to have such love of real ale from such venerated musicians, imagine what could be achieved if a leading epicure helped to brew a beer. Such was the case when local baking star Will Torrent collaborated with *XT* brewery to create *XT 99 Roast Cacao* (5% ABV), a sumptuous chocolate stout perfect for matching with Will's creations. It pours dark brown with a small beige head and a light fizz.

On tasting, there's roasted malt to the fore, with plain chocolate and cocoa coming through and maybe a little sherry. The chocolate and the roast malt balance each other

out perfectly, and the beer does not fall into the trap that many chocolate beers do of being sickly sweet and syrupy. It tastes great, although it could perhaps do with losing some of the fizz which hides the smoothness of the beer behind (presumably this would be less of an issue on cask). You could perhaps accuse it of being a little one dimensional, but hey, what the hell, I like it so I'll forgive that!

If a chef can make a great beer, imagine what one of Britain's leading beer judges and writers could do. Roger Protz went to *Aylesbury Brewhouse* to brew *Sink or Swim* (6.8%), based on a Victorian India Pale Ale recipe and aged for 152 days to mimic the length of a sea journey to India in Victorian times. It's copper in hue with an off-white head and a light fizz. It's very dry and moderately bitter at first – almost too much so. Fortunately there's then lots of sweet malt and raisins to save the day (reading the label afterwards, Roger Protz's description of 'malt loaf' is bang on!).



Juicy marmalade comes through, with a little caramel in the finish. The alcohol is well hidden and it's very drinkable and more-ish. It's nothing like the modern American IPAs, of course, but I can well believe this is a reasonable recreation of an 'original' IPA (bar the effect of the ocean journey!). It's mellow and relaxing, although the flavours could be souped up just a little – apparently the alcohol and bitterness were toned down from the original recipe, which seems a shame. I can't imagine drinking it in the heat of India (where the modern IPAs may actually work better), but as a winter warmer in the UK it's pretty decent.

If a modern-day minor celebrity can shift produce, then you can understand a brewery thinking that great celebrities from history may sell even more. *Quill* (5.2%) from the *Tunnel* brewery in Warwickshire features a mug shot of that county's most famous persona on the label, Will Shakespeare

himself. It's chestnut in colour with an oddly yellow head that rapidly vanishes. There's a lovely rich sherry aroma that unfortunately fails to carry into the flavour. On drinking it tastes sweet with caramel up front, followed by some limestone and then a dry finish with white pepper, coriander seed and a little wood.

It's not bad, but it doesn't live up to its early promise. I'm pretty sure that the involvement of Mr Shakespeare's has, unlike that of Roger Protz, not given any degree of historical authenticity to the beer, but at least the proceeds do go to the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust.

In other products a celebrity endorsement often makes for an advert that seems shallow and tacky. However, by contrast, in all the beers I've mentioned in this article, there's been no sense of putting fame before substance (apart from maybe in the Shakespeare one!). The celebrities involved have barely been mentioned on the label, and yet their involvement has helped to create a far superior beer than any million-pound grin on TV could do. The love of beer is a great leveller, and one that has always enabled people to come happily together regardless of class, fame or any other perceived barrier.

As always though, the Bard himself can provide a finish to this article far more eloquently and succinctly than I could ever hope to, for as he wrote in *Henry V*: 'I would give all my fame for a pot of ale...'

*Anth Duffield*





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## LOCAL NEWS

### ASHENDON

Locales are the order of the day at the newly reopened **100s of Ashendon** with *XT*, *Vale* and *Tring* available. Food is served from their enlarged and revamped kitchen viewable from the restaurant area.

### ASTON ABBOTTS

Refurbishment and redecoration work nears completion at the **Royal Oak** and looks really superb (for a detailed report see page 18).

### AYLESBURY

The **Aylesbury Vale Beer Festival** which is run in conjunction with the **Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity** will once again be held at the **Bucks County Council Sports & Social Club**, Lower Road, Aylesbury HP21 9DR (opposite the Ambulance Station). The festival takes place over the weekend of Friday 18th and Saturday 19th of October. There will be about 25 real ales plus traditional ciders and perries. It will be open from 6:00pm - 11:00pm on Friday and 11:00am - 11:00pm on Saturday. Food will be available both days.

The **Britannia** has closed again! They tried real ale for a time but it wasn't popular enough to be retained and it looks like the pub has gone the same way! Let's hope this is not the end for yet another Aylesbury watering-hole.

The **Slug and Lettuce** has also closed down and is being converted to what we understand is to be a Japanese restaurant and noodle bar Wagamama. The chain, which serves east Asian food, has been advertising for a number of jobs in the town and we will be very surprised if real ale will be available.

### BOOKER

The **Squirrel** has had a fourth handpump installed. When visited recently they featured *Greene King IPA*, *St. Edmunds Golden*, *Dark Star American Pale Ale*, and *Trawler Boys (Green Jack) Best Bitter*.

### BOVINGDON GREEN

The **Royal Oak** has been awarded the **Good Pub Guide's** Dining Pub of the Year in Buckinghamshire for the fourth consecutive year.

### CHESHAM

**Red Squirrel Brewery** has recently opened the **Chesham Brewery Shop** at 8 Market Square, an off-licence also with real ale on tap to be tried there or take-away such as *Red Squirrel Red*

*Dawn mild* (3.7%) at just £2.00 a pint. The large selection of bottled beers (many bottle-conditioned) has been intelligently sourced from the likes of *Chiltern*, *Hackney*, *Kernel*, *London Fields*, *Meantime*, *Pressure Drop*, *RAW*, *Red Squirrel* (of course), *Weird Beard* and *XT* to name just a few.

### CROWELL

The welcome news that the **Shepherd's Crook** had reopened came too late for our last issue. Jonathan Russ-Silsby has bought the pub (completed June 28th) and after a lot of work it opened on 29th of July (even though it was still being rebuilt at the time). The pub looks largely like a new version of what it looked like before, but as you can see in the picture on the right, the outside has been very much improved.

It is intended that it will remain a village pub with a restaurant offering good quality food, predominantly English (from local suppliers) with a continental twist. Five ales were on offer when visited: *Black Sheep Bitter*, *Holdens Best Bitter*, *Rebellion Blonde*, *Vale VPA* and *West Berks Good Old Boy*. The three tested by the editor were excellent!

### FLACKWELL HEATH

A recent tour of Flackwell Heath was well attended by members of the branch with a local member attending a social for the first time. The first stop on the tour was the **Cherry Tree** where *Brakspear Bitter*, *London Pride* and *Doom Bar* were on offer. Our next stop was the **Three Horseshoes** serving three real ales including *Rebellion IPA* and the best beer of the evening *Rebellion XX Ale*. Quite a distance from the village centre was the **Green Dragon** serving *Rebellion Mutiny* and *IPA*. The picturesque **Crooked Billet** was serving *Young's Special* and *Brakspear Bitter*. Finally, we visited the **Stag** with its amazing view across the valley towards Oxfordshire, where *Hop Back Summer Lightning* and *Rebellion IPA* were enjoyed.

### GREAT KIMBLE

The **Swan** is holding an Oktoberfest beer festival on the weekend of 4th-6th October. Building on the success of a smaller beer festival in the spring, the beer list is anticipated to strongly feature local breweries along with live music, morris dancing and other entertainment. The pub is easily accessible by public transport, being a ten minute walk from both Little Kimble station and the Arriva line 300 bus route.



### HADDENHAM

Winterfest 2013 takes place on the December 14, midday to 5pm at the Village Hall Complex on Banks Road.

The **Green Dragon** is now fully functioning again, with locally brung-up Haddenhamites in managerial positions, a web-site is being developed. Three real ales are available with *Sharps Doom Bar* in permanent residence 'as it sells more than the other two put together'. An *XT* offering such as *1*, *2*, *4* or *8* is on one of the other handpumps and the guest pump will be a Locale from *Vale*, *Tring*, *Rebellion* or *Concrete Cow* with possibly an interloper, such as *Caledonian IPA*, to add a bit of additional interest. Seasonal and Christmas special ales will be served.

Barbara at the **Kings Head** has achieved **Cask Marque** status for her cellar and beer handling. Her tenancy tie with **Punch Taverns** has changed with respect to real ales. She is now able to sell up to two beers bought directly from **SIBA** listed breweries that produce less than 6,000 barrels a year. She will be experimenting with Locales and will probably keep *Brakspear Bitter* on permanently as it's very popular and no one else does it in the village. We look forward to these interesting developments.

At the **Rising Sun**, beer is still at £2.95 a pint. The ever-rotating range of Locales come from *Vale*, *XT*, *Tring*, *Lodden* and *Rebellion* and very recently, for the first time, *Chiltern*. *Beechwood* was in splendid form when our intrepid taster/reporter ventured into Compost Corner. Ales continue to be served straight from the barrel.

At the **Rose & Thistle (RAT)**, *Olde Trip*, *Old Speckled Hen* and *Greene King IPA* are served.

### HARDWICK

The **Bell** has been fully restored and reopened over the August bank holiday (see the more detailed report on page 4).

### HIGH WYCOMBE

On Thursday 15th August the time tested tradition otherwise known as Hat Day at the **Great British Beer Festival** was (as always) a very interesting one! The two winning entries of 2013 were by Alex Wells from High Wycombe and Jim Dillon from Ramsgate (pictured above right). Congratulations for being crowned the Hat Day Champions of 2013!

The landlady who used to run **Terriers** (formerly the **Black Boy**) is now running the **Beech Tree**.

The **Belle Vue** will be holding their 'Summer's End Beer Festival' over the weekend of 25th to 27th of October. Besides a great selection of real ales and ciders based on patrons' favourites, there will be three sessions of live music.

Mandy Rowell is the new landlady at the **Half Moon**. The only real ale on the three handpumps was *Sharps Doom Bar* when checked, but this will increase as trade picks up.

**High Wycombe Rugby Club** are holding another beer festival on Friday 8th and Saturday 9th of November. The theme is for wicked, evil named beers for example, *Witches Wand*, *Wild Rider*, *Nightmare*, *Black Witch* and they have a barrel from *Rebellion* which is their special beer for the month - *Pickled Ghoulies!!!* Open from 6:30pm on the Friday and from midday on the Saturday



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when they will be showing the England versus Argentina game. Live band on both nights and a hog roast on the Saturday from 7pm onwards.

## LEDBURN

Almost a year after it closed the **Hare & Hounds** remains closed. The future looks bleak for this former Rothschild building, owned by **Greene King**.

## MARLOW

**Bar Baroosh** (High St.) continues to be the focal point of the town, with socialites arriving from far and wide to this new modern cocktail/wine bar, but a welcome addition to the Marlow imbibing scene! Three handpumps deliver Hertfordshire's **McMullens County** (4.3), **IPA** (4.8) and monthly special **The Halo Trust** (3.9).

The **Britannia** (Little Marlow Road), **Bar Baroosh's** little sister, is still ever popular since its mega-makeover and new identity! Both competitively priced cuisine and drinks proving an attraction

to the local pub goers and with four **McMullen's** real ales to accompany the food, the **Britannia** is again a refreshing change to the Marlow scene. **AK** (3.7), **County** (4.3), **IPA** (4.8) and the monthly special are showcased at the bar.

The **Chequers** (High St.) offers four ales from the **Marston's** portfolio. **Brakspear Bitter** (3.4), **Gold** (4.0) and **Wychwood Bountiful** (4.0), **Hobgoblin** (4.5) were encountered on a recent visit to the pub.

The **Duke of Cambridge** (Queens Rd.) serves **Rebellion** stablemates **IPA** (3.7) and **Mutiny** (4.5), with the occasional guest ale on over the weekend. **Slater's Autumn Red** (5.0) was on handpump as **Swan Supping** went to press.

The **George & Dragon** (The Causeway), now a **Premier Inn**, still offers real ale in the shape of the stalwart **Fuller's London Pride** (4.1) and a monthly changing beer. **Marston's Pedigree** (4.5) was the September guest

with **Charles Wells Bombardier** (4.3) on the month before that.

The **Ship** (West St.) has also received a lick of paint to the front façade of the building. Inside under the low beams (mind your head), you will find **Rebellion IPA** (3.7), **Smuggler** (4.2) and **Blonde** (4.3).

The **Slug & Lettuce** (High St.) had been closed for several weeks, has now been reopened after a refurbishment of the bar and a new colour scheme. **Greene King IPA** (3.6) and **Rebellion Smuggler** (4.2) were available after a recent pint there.

The **Two Brewers** (St.Peters Street) has a huge roofed scaffold shadowing the burnt structure of the pub, as work has begun to reassemble this historic and fabled Marlow public house. A severe fire ripped through the pub at the end of August and it was very fortunate that no one lost their life in the blaze which is thought to have been caused by an electrical fault. Eighty percent of the roof was damaged along with the first floor and water damage throughout the rest of the pub. Let's hope that it won't be too long before this 18th century pub is open for business again.

## MEDMENHAM

The **Dog & Badger** is currently closed. No further news available as we went to press.

## OVING

The **Black Boy** is currently offering pensioners a two-course lunch on Wednesdays for £9.95. They do really good chips! Beer on tap recently included **Vale Wychert**, **Hook Norton**

**Hook** and **St. Austell Tribute**. Live music Fridays. Amusingly Google Maps software blurs out the face on the pub sign!

## STOKENCHURCH

The landlord of the **Fleur de Lis** was not impressed when a planned pub crawl social starting at his pub was only attended by one person. However, your editor enjoyed the trip anyway!

## THAME

The **Cross Keys** will be holding a beer festival on Saturday 9th of November.

## WHEELER END

Planning permission has been sought for the site of the **Brickmakers Arms**. Let's hope that we haven't lost another pub.

## WHITCHURCH

Licensee Louise King has left the **White Swan** after three years for a new venture in early September. Ably assisted by her parents Elsa and Steve they have turned the pub around after a bleak period in the two years preceding, and will be sorely missed. On the 2nd September Andy Sturge took on the tenancy of this **Fullers** owned village local. Originally from Dover, Andy has run many pubs before, most recently the **Three Crowns** in Wolverhampton. He is encouraged by the popularity of the ales here and hopes to develop it further as soon as he has settled in. Meanwhile the pub is open all day throughout the week with food served as before. Ales on hand pump when visited were **Fullers London Pride** and **Seafarer**.

## WOOBURN COMMON

There will be a beer festival at the **Royal Standard** over the weekend of 25th-27th of October.

## A Campaign of Two Halves

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01/06

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**Enjoying Real Ale & Pubs**



# LOCAL BREWERY NEWS

## AYLESBURY BREWHOUSE

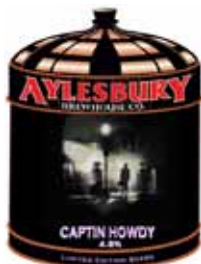


*Aylesbury Brewhouse* will be travelling the beer world, reading George Orwell, and exorcising demons with their new limited edition beers!

First on the map is a golden German 4.2% pilsner-style ale, *In Ernst*, named after German surrealist painter Max Ernst and brewed with German malt and hops. Then it's across to Russia for *Red Star*, a deep red 3.6% ale that uses Russian hops to give it a hoppy punch. Then, finally, it's over the Pacific Ocean to the U.S. to find the

*American Dream*, which will be over the top in every way; very malty, very bitter, and very hoppy!

With All Hallows' Eve just round the corner it was only fair for *Aylesbury Brewhouse* to get in on the act, but don't be afraid of what they'll be brewing! Named in honour of one of the scariest films of all time, *Captain Howdy* will be helping to exorcise your demons with a 4% beer that is as dark as it gets.



Now, all animals are equal, but some are more equal than others and *Napoleon's Farm* falls into the latter category. A 3.8% pale bitter brewed without the assistance of animals, with seemingly pleasant aromas but a surprising bitter aftertaste.



Don't forget, brewery tours are always welcome down at *Aylesbury Brewhouse*, and the *ABC* brewery shop will have all these beers to takeaway. Find out more information on their website, Facebook and Twitter.

## CHILTERN BREWERY

It has been a golden summer. The *Chiltern Brewery* has won two Gold Stars for three of their bottled beers at the Great Taste Awards – perceived as the 'Oscars' of the food and drink world – including for their *Bodgers Barley Wine* 8.5% vol. Although summer has faded away there is plenty to look forward to in the new season.



*Copper Beech*, the autumn ale is a 4.4% vol, smooth red beer, slightly sweet and gently hopped, which was released in September. It celebrates the autumn colouring of the leaves in the Chilterns and may still be available, whilst October sees the arrival of *Three Hundreds Old Ale* 4.9% vol, a traditional robust and dark beer with a real depth of flavour. You can enjoy these at the brewery's tap, the *Farmers' Bar* in the *King's Head* in Market Square, Aylesbury, and from the brewery shop in Terrick near Wendover.

The shop at Terrick recently won a 'Highly Commended' Certificate in the Chiltern Society's inaugural Farm Shop Awards judged by the public and designed to encourage retail outlets to source their stock from local producers and raise awareness of all the fabulous food and drink offerings to be had in the Chilterns.

Talking of awards, the *Farmers' Bar* was shortlisted for 'Pub of the Year' in the first Buckinghamshire and Berkshire Life magazine food awards in September whilst George Jenkinson and his team were finalists in the Great British Pub Awards 'Best Bar Team 2013' hosted by the Morning Advertiser. The popular, innovative and well-stocked beer menu has played a big part in this success, as well as the care and love George and the team expend on the choice and presentation of their beers. You can look out for a craft ale and lager from the USA on the menu this October.

## TRING BREWERY

Over the past months they have developed a pump-clip for the recently launched film 'The World's End'. Penned by Edgar Wright and featuring

Nick Frost and Simon Pegg (amongst others), the film charts a reunion of friends and an attempt to complete a legendary pub crawl. *Tring* worked with Edgar and his team to develop an 'imaginary' beer called *Crowning Glory*, along with a pump-clip. Whilst the beer is mentioned in the movie the pump-clips were never shown to the public at large. This soon changed as a very small quantity of firkins were set aside for the recent *St Albans Beer Festival* and if you couldn't attend, there will be around 3000 bottles arriving at the brewery for sale in mid October. Be warned, this 6.5% bottle-conditioned ale packs a punch.



For the first time in the brewery's history they decided to enter bottled *Side Pocket for a Toad* and *Death or Glory* into the 2013 *Great Taste Awards*. This annual competition is open to all food and drink producers with products being blind taste tested by individuals from across the industry. Both beers picked up gold stars (two for *Death or Glory*). The bad news is that *Side Pocket* in bottles sold out for a while, but was back in the shop by mid September.....the price of success!



The latest seasonal beer is *Squadron Scramble* which is a golden 4% ale brewed to commemorate the Battle of Britain. This ale is characterised by a debonair medium-light colour and a daredevil maltiness that compliments a courageous hop aroma.

## VALE BREWERY

The *Vale* Open day on the 7th September was a big success, the weather was bright until departure time, but all who visited enjoyed the twelve Vale and Aylesbury beers available, the music and great pig roast.

None more so than Jim Crews from Shabbington (pictured right pulling the first pint) who was the winner of the competition in association with Thame Food Festival to name the breweries special beer. *Thame 'in of The Brew* was a massive success and is now available locally and was the featured beer at the Thame Food Festival on the 28th September.



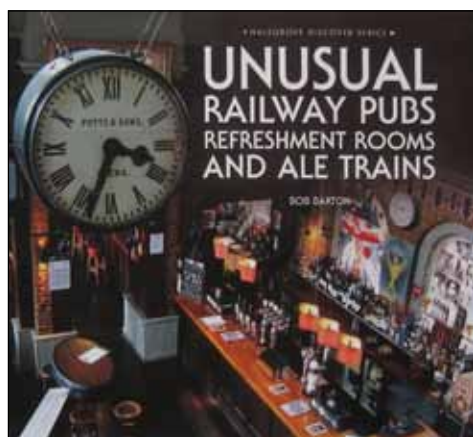
The *Vale* special brew for October is *Emperor Ale* a 4% ruby-coloured bitter. David Renton described this as a 'well-rounded bitter with a caramel aroma and a smooth finish'. This beer is named after the Purple Emperor butterfly found locally in Rushbeds Wood. This area is one of the last remaining fragments of an ancient Royal hunting forest called Bernwood.

At the end of October is Hallowe'en and the ever popular special brew for this event is again available. *Something Wicked* is a 4.8% deep mahogany brew; it has strong rich malt flavours and a bitter finish. Then for November we have *The Knowledge*, a 4.2% Bronze coloured fruity and floral bitter, named after the famous London Taxi test. As we deliver to London occasionally this is something our drivers are keen to learn!





## BOOK REVIEW



### UNUSUAL RAILWAY PUBS REFRESHMENT ROOMS AND ALE TRAINS

by Bob Barton

Hardback, 144  
pages, 214x230mm,  
illustrated in colour  
£16.99

ISBN 978 085704 173 9

Published by  
Halsgrove in June 2013

Queen Victoria's private waiting room; the setting for the film classic *Brief Encounter*; a Lincolnshire signal cabin; a pre-war parcels van; a gas-lit ladies' waiting room; and a wooden carriage of 1876... some of the locations that serve as station pubs with a difference. You can, quite literally, drink in Britain's railway history (and dine too) in the world's first purpose-built railwayman's inn, or the Metropolitan Railway's headquarters, or the terminus of the late lamented Somerset & Dorset Joint Railway. The author, Bob Barton, has spent five years visiting remarkable hostelrys where cask ale and coffee is served along with generous portions of railway heritage and now you can too, with the help of this lavishly illustrated guide.

Stations both large and small once had licensed refreshment rooms of the type immortalized in Noel Coward's *Brief Encounter*. During the nineteenth century, a new generation of railway pubs on and adjacent to stations became the successors to coaching inns, for which the railways had sounded the death-knell. Bob Barton traces the 175 year-old relationship between railways, refreshment rooms and the brewing industry through this guide covering everything from main line termini to rural branch line halts. It includes the growing phenomenon of steam-hauled Ale Trains on heritage railways, and features reproductions of pump-clips of railway

themed beers. The book will appeal to railway enthusiasts as well as both armchair and actual travellers (the places featured can all be visited, most of them by train as well as by car) in addition to real ale lovers and those who like their nostalgia infused with the sight or spirit of steam trains.

Bob Barton is former senior press officer at tourist board Visit Britain and has written travel features in magazines and newspapers worldwide; he is also a member of CAMRA and the Pub History Society.

In Lincolnshire he found an old signal cabin that claims to be the smallest pub in the world, which gives us an excuse to use a photograph taken by Mark Bradbury, a local real ale drinker from Haddenham, of the **Signal Box Inn**. This diminutive pub, opened in 2006 claims to be the smallest on the planet. The claim is contentious, but more than four customers seated and two standing does make it rather crowded! Located immediately adjacent to Cleethorpes Light Railway, the size of the building is approximately to the same scale as the trains that use the track.



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## CHAMPION BEER OF THE YEAR



After a year of local tasting panels and regional heats leading up to the finals, CAMRA announced that **Elland 1872 Porter** has been crowned the best beer in Britain at the **Great British Beer Festival**, Olympia, London.

The West Yorkshire brewed real ale was judged the Supreme Champion over a host of other finalists in seven different beer categories (Bitters, Best Bitters, Strong Bitters, Golden Ales, Milds, Winter Beers, and the Speciality class), including beers from both small microbrewers and large regional brewers.

CAMRA Chairman, Colin Valentine, who chaired the competition, spoke in praise of the winner. He said: 'It was a really tough decision but **Elland 1872 Porter** is a fantastic beer and a well deserved winner. A 6.5% abv, rich and strongly flavoured porter with flavours of coffee and dark chocolate, this result makes it two years in a row that our **Champion Winter Beer** has gone on to win the **Champion Beer of Britain** competition.'

Michael Wynnyczuk, Head Brewer at Elland, had this to say, 'I'm utterly shocked. It's a great beer but after we won the Winter Ales competition you wonder about it in the summer **GBBF** competition, as people may prefer different styles of beer in warmer weather. But we know it's a great beer and we're really proud to be crowned **Champion Beer of Britain**.'

### Overall winners:-

Gold: **Elland 1872 Porter** (West Yorkshire)

Silver: **Buntingford Twitchell** (Hertfordshire)

Bronze: **Fyne Ales Jarl** (Argyll)

### Mild category:-

Gold: **Great Orme Welsh Black** (Conwy)

Silver: **Cotswold Spring Old Sodbury Mild** (Gloucestershire)

Bronze: **Fernandes Malt Shovel Mild** (West Yorkshire)

### Bitters category:-

Gold: **Buntingford Twitchell** (Hertfordshire)

Silver: **Moor Revival** (Somerset)

Bronze: **Surrey Hills Ranmore Ale** (Surrey) and **Butcombe Bitter** (Somerset)

### Best Bitters:-

Gold: **Mordue Workie Ticket** (North Shields)

Silver: **Surrey Hills Shere Drop** (Surrey)

Bronze: **Purple Moose Glaslyn** (Gwynedd), **Woodfordes Nelsons Revenge** (Norfolk)

### Golden Ales:-

Gold: **Fyne Ales Jarl** (Argyll)

Silver: **Buntingford Polar Star** (Hertfordshire)

Bronze: **St Austell Proper Job** (Cornwall)

### Strong Bitters:-

Gold: **Beeston On the Huh** (Norfolk)

Silver: **Marble Dobber** (Greater Manchester)

Bronze: **Castle Rock Screech Owl** (Nottingham)

### Speciality Beers:-

Gold: **Growler Brewery, Nethergate Umbel Magna** (Suffolk)

Silver: **Saltaire Triple Chocolate** (West Yorkshire)

Bronze: **Conwy Honey Fayre** (Conwy)

### Champion Winter Beer of Britain (from category winners announced in January):-

**Elland 1872 Porter** (West Yorkshire)

**Bartram's Comrade Bill Bartram's EAIS Stout** (Suffolk)

**Kelburn Dark Moor** (Old Ale/Strong Mild) (Glasgow)

**Hog's Back A over T** (Barley Wine/Strong Old Ale) (Surrey)

### Champion Bottled Beer of Britain winners:-

Gold: **Molson Coor's Worthington White Shield** (Burton on Trent)

Silver: **St Austell Proper Job** (Cornwall)

Bronze: **Harvey's Imperial Extra Double Stout** (East Sussex)

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## ALES IN HIGH PLACES



**Tan Hill Inn, Yorkshire Dales – 1732ft a.s.l. (England's highest pub)**

Two years ago whilst visiting the famous **Tan Hill Inn** in the Yorkshire Dales National Park, I was inspired to take up the challenge of visiting the ten highest pubs in England.

The **Tan Hill** is well known as being the highest pub in the UK at 1,732ft (528m) above sea level. It is also famous for its Everest windows adverts and three-day lock ins when snow traps New Year revellers. This is really a pub that has to be visited to understand how remote it really is. Standing with your back to the pub, the only obviously man-made structure you can see is the road winding its way up the heather-coated hill. Situated on the Pennine Way path it is a very popular stop off for walkers taking a well-earned rest as well as those who have decided to make the less strenuous journey by car. A range of accommodation is available for those who would like quite literally to soak in the atmosphere with B&B, hostel, bunk barn and camping facilities being on offer. **Theakston** and **Black Sheep** ales are always available along with a house beer named *Ewe Juice*.

So now I've spoken about the pub that everyone has heard of, where was my next stop? The **Kirkstone Pass Inn** is positioned in an isolated spot at the very top of the incredibly steep Kirkstone Pass (hence its name). It is five miles North of Windermere, halfway between the town and Ullswater. Standing at 1498ft (459m) this pub is the fourth highest in England. Since 1498 this inn has been slaking the thirst of weary drovers as they completed the gruelling 1 in 4 gradient. It must have felt like a piece of heaven as they reclined in front of the fire and refreshed themselves for the next stage of their journey. Again, like the **Tan Hill Inn**, the **Kirkstone Pass Inn** has a house beer named *Kirkstone Porter* by **Hesket Newmarket Brewery** alongside other Cumbrian ales. The food is also almost uniquely sourced from Cumbria. Another similarity with the **Tan Hill** is the range of accommodation on offer with four-poster beds, B&B and bunk rooms being available. This place



**Kirkstone Pass Inn, Cumbria - 1498ft a.s.l. (England's 4th highest pub)**

makes a great base from which to explore the Lake District.

The next pub on my itinerary was the only pub in the southern half of England to be included on the list. The **Warren House Inn** near Postbridge in the middle of Dartmoor stands at 1425ft (434m) above sea level making it the ninth highest in England. Though very isolated, it was not always so, as it served the many tin mines that once were abundant in this part of Dartmoor. It is named due to the rabbit warrens that once stood on the site and provided the local miner's favourite meal of rabbit pie. The fire is reputed to have been continually burning since the inn was rebuilt in 1845. The Bronze Age settlement of Grimspound is visible from the pub and a walk around the ruins makes for a good way to burn off calories after a hearty meal. Ales on offer here include *Otter Ale*, *Doom Bar* and *Tribute*.

My next trip completed six of the top ten highest pubs as they are all contained within a triangle created by the towns of Macclesfield, Buxton and Leek within the Peak District. Being within ten miles of each other they make a very popular route for ambitious cyclists. The **Cat & Fiddle Inn** on the A537 between Buxton and Macclesfield gives its name to the Cat & Fiddle Pass which is regularly heard to be blocked by the slightest of snowfalls on national traffic reports. At 1689ft (515m) above sea level this is the second highest pub in England. This is a **Robinson's** pub and has an extensive range of their brewery's ale. Moving on, the next pub encountered was England's 3rd highest pub, the **Traveller's Rest** (often called the **Knight's Table**) between Buxton and Leek on the A53, standing at 1,500ft (457m). There is a strong



**Warren House Inn, Dartmoor - 1425ft a.s.l. (England's 9th highest pub)**

focus on the enticing menu and knight theme making the experience feel more like a medieval banquet. Three handpulls offer a range of excellently kept ales. B&B accommodation is available if you need a lie-down after your banquet and the accompanying ale.

Less than a mile away in England's highest village stands our 5th highest pub, the **New Inn** in Flash at 1470ft (448m). This is a real local's pub concentrating solely on the beer. *Bosley Cloud* by **Storm Brewing** was the highlight of the visit. The **Royal Cottage** further along the A53 towards Leek is a very difficult pub to visit due to its restrictive opening hours. Generally it only opens on Friday and Saturday evenings from 8 until the last drinker leaves. Its restrictive hours unfortunately do not make it conducive to serving real ale, therefore keg beer is the nearest thing you'll find. Like the **New Inn** it stands at 1470ft (448m) making it the joint 5th highest in England.

Only a couple of hundred metres further along the road is the **Winking Man**, so named due to a rock formation opposite the pub which remotely looks like a winking man's face. The extra few hundred metres means that it stands lower than the **Royal Cottage** at 1,440ft (439m). This pub is less traditional than all the other pubs on this list. It regularly holds music events in its expansive bar area. The larger part of the pub is devoted to the restaurant. A real relic of the past lurks on the bar by the name of *Greenall's Mild*, albeit in keg form. Thankfully there are a couple of pumps devoted to real ale. Also at 1,440ft (439m) above sea level stands the **Mermaid Inn**. Named after the nearby Mermaid Pool (the scene of the only inland mermaid legend in the UK). Standing a few miles off the A53 this really is a remote pub. It can be





**Cat & Fiddle, Peak District - 1689ft a.s.l. (England's 2nd highest pub)**

hired out by large groups as a private pub with accommodation. Obviously this could disappoint if you've made a special effort to visit the place. The dining room area has huge windows which allow you to absorb the great views whilst you're enjoying your meal.

The final pub on my quest, the **Miner's Arms**, is England's tenth highest pub located in Nenthead on the Durham / Cumbria border. Not as remote as the other pubs as it stands on the edge of a small village at 1,410ft (430m) above sea level. Being within a village, the pub had a lot more atmosphere than all the other pubs as locals mixed with cyclists using the C2C (coast to coast) cycle route that passes outside the pub. The 18th century pub reportedly almost closed in 1823 due to miners preferring 'books to beer'. I can't see why they couldn't have combined both activities in this welcoming hostelry. Accommodation is available for those needing a rest after an arduous journey, particularly if you've cycled uphill from the coast. *Saddle Sore* by **Brew Star** is quite fittingly served, due to the nearby cycle route, alongside beers from the **Black Paw Brewery**.

I'm now searching for a new theme to base my pub tours on. Thinking pubs on small islands may be equally as stimulating.

**Carl Griffin**

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# CROSS KEYS BEER FESTIVAL 2013

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## 9th NOVEMBER

# MORE LOCAL BREWERY NEWS

## REBELLION BREWERY

For their seasonal beer for October, *Rebellion* have brought back from the grave, the eternal *Pickled Ghoulies*.

Despite being buried for several years, this reincarnation remains surprisingly full bodied, with a clean, fresh and fruity complexion.

It is a brown and malty 4.2% beer which will be one of the many ales available at the High Wycombe Rugby Club beer festival in early November.



The seasonal offering for November is the 4.2% amber and citrus *Tanked Up*.

## XT BREWERY

*XT* have just released this year's *Fresh Hop One*, a beer brewed with hops taken straight from harvest to brew within twelve hours. Normally hops are dried, but once a year they get the chance to use fresh 'green' hops to give a really fresh flavour. Look out for it while stocks last!

They also felt that it was a great honour to be selected by the Royal British Legion to brew a limited edition beer for the poppy appeal.

From October they will be brewing *Lest We Forget*, a 4.2% amber ale. *XT* will be giving all profits from this beer to the poppy appeal. It will



be available from Legion bars and local pubs, and a full appreciation of this magnanimous gesture appears on page 17.

The *Animal Brewing Co* beers are selling fast .. the latest little creature is *Mioun* (Meow in German), a roasty amber ale made with plenty of Australian and New Zealand hops on German Malts. It's another one-off beer, get it while you can.

They are also making a special small batch beer for the Aylesbury Beer Festival – code name *FN25*. It will be a fruit beer at 4.2%

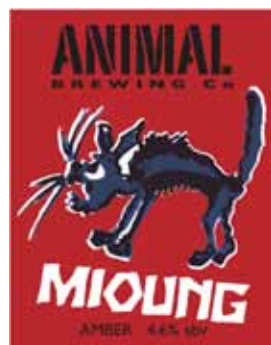
made with fruit, barley and hops all locally grown in Buckinghamshire.

Saturday 30th November – will be our Open Day to celebrate our second birthday – expect some one-off beers for the event, and demonstrations of the *XT-Hopinator*.

*XT* are now the proud sponsors of Wheatley Rugby Club, the team will be playing in their smart new kit this season and enjoying *XT* beers in the club house after the matches. They are a great local team and always on the lookout for new players if you fancy wearing an *XT* rugby shirt??

The equipment is being installed, apples collected and crushed. Real Long Crendon Cider will be maturing slowly over the winter and should be available early next year.

Later this year they will be announcing the opening of their first pub .... More details in the next edition.



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## WHAT PUB?

**CAMRA** has launched its first ever national online pub guide – <http://whatpub.com> - dedicated to helping the public find the best pubs to suit their needs both locally here in the Aylesbury Vale and Wycombe area, and across Britain as a whole.

Following an extensive two year project by thousands of **CAMRA** volunteers, including some of you reading this magazine! Whatpub.com features 47,000 pubs, around 36,000 of which serve real ale – making the site the most definitive online guide to real ale in the UK. This includes 269 pubs in the branch area that serve real ale.

**Whatpub.com**, which has been designed to automatically optimise for use on laptops, tablets and mobile devices, offers over thirty different search fields ranging from dog friendly pubs to those that offer newspapers or live music, making the results customizable to each person's individual preferences. Another key feature is that of the 35,800 real ale pubs featured, around 22,000 have details of the real ales being served – taking the guesswork out of a visit for real ale lovers.

Andy Shaw, **CAMRA** Director said 'CAMRA has developed **WhatPub**

to be the ultimate online pub guide for all pub-goers. It may even help encourage people who have stopped using pubs regularly, since **WhatPub** will help them find the ideal pub to suit their needs."

**WhatPub** entries are written by local **CAMRA** members and then approved by dedicated branch volunteers. A full entry offers a description and pictures of the pub, the address, opening hours, who owns it, lists the regular real ales they stock, states whether the pub offers Guest Beers, highlights the pubs main features e.g. availability of food, gives a map of where the pub can be located, sat nav reference, OS reference and highlights the local transport available

**WhatPub** also allows **CAMRA** members to score the quality of the real ales served in the pub. This is a vital activity that helps us select pubs for the Good Beer Guide, as well as other awards given out by the branch.

### Beer Scoring

The **Good Beer Guide 2014** has just been released, and it is time for us to think about the pubs that will be in the 2015 guide. A vital part of this process is performed by **CAMRA** members as they visit pubs. Beer Scoring is **CAMRA**'s way of rating the quality of beer available in pubs around the country. Beers are scored using the following scale:

**0 No real ale.** No cask-conditioned ale available

**1 Poor.** Beer that is anything from barely drinkable to drinkable with considerable resentment.

**2 Average.** Competently kept, drinkable pint but doesn't inspire in any way, not worth moving to another pub but you drink the beer without really noticing.

**3 Good.** Good beer in good form. You may cancel plans to move to the next pub. You want to stay for another pint and may seek out the beer again.

**4 Very Good.** Excellent beer in excellent condition.

**5 Perfect.** Probably the best you are ever likely to find. A seasoned drinker will award this score very rarely.

**What Pub** introduces a new and easy to use way of entering your beer score. Simple login using the link at the top right of the page. The username is your six digit membership number, and password is your postcode in capitals with the space removed. Search for the pub on **WhatPub**, and add the score in the panel on the right hand side. **CAMRA** members can add scores for any pub they visit, not just your local!

If you are not a member, we'd still like to hear from you. Use the 'Send an email to the branch' link to send us your news.

## Visit The Farmers' Bar

The Chiltern Brewery's historic courtyard inn in the heart of Aylesbury



Enjoy fine English ales from our own brewery in the Chiltern Hills

Savour fresh regional recipes from our seasonal Bill of Fare



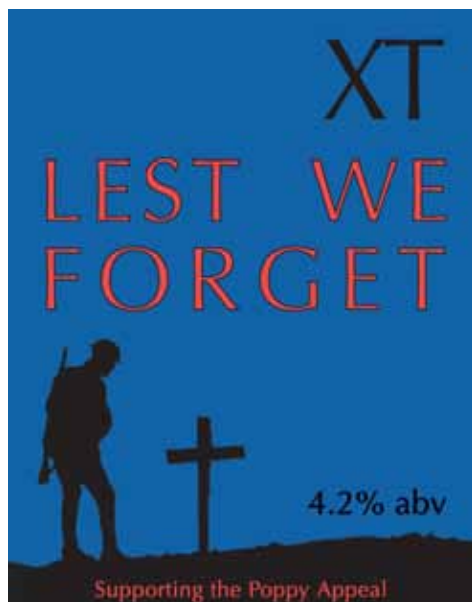
[www.farmersbar.co.uk](http://www.farmersbar.co.uk)

at The King's Head, Market Square, HP20 2RW





## A NEW XT BREW TO AID THE NATIONAL POPPY APPEAL



To mark the month of Armistice this year, (October 13th until November 12th), innovative local brewers **XT** from Long Crendon, have brewed an unique one-off charity beer to raise both awareness and much needed funds for the Royal British Legion (RBL) Poppy Appeal.

Aptly named *Lest We Forget*, this 4.2% ABV, red malty beer will be available for the discerning imbiber at local Royal British Legion Clubs throughout the three Central Southern Counties of Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire, plus a plethora of real ale establishments, mainly of *CAMRA Good Beer Guide 2014* credentials.

When the Marlow RBL Club Committee approached the **XT** brewery on the possibility of brewing a new Armistice Ale for the RBL Poppy Appeal, **XT** brewers Russell Taylor and Gareth Xifaras embraced the opportunity to create a new ale to honour the fallen in past conflicts from our country's armed forces. **XT** have kindly offered to donate £10 for every firkin of *Lest We Forget* sold, to the RBL Poppy Appeal, a most generous and gracious gesture indeed.

*Lest We Forget* - three words renowned across most countries to show our remembrance of those who fought, and those who died fighting for freedom. It means that we will never forget! We honour the period of remembrance by wearing poppies, a flower that bloomed throughout the fields of battle grounds in France and Belgium during World War One. The wearing of the symbol of the poppy was made popular due to the poem, 'Flanders Field', written by Canadian physician and Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae after witnessing his friend and fellow soldier struck down in the midst of battle in the First World War.

The Royal British Legion, founded in 1921, is the UK's leading Service charity. They provide practical care advice and support to serving members of the Armed Forces, veterans of all ages and their families. The Royal British Legion boasts some 360,000 members, they are not only a campaigning organisation challenging those in authority, with a fund-raising organisation reliant on a huge network of volunteers, but the RBL are

the nation's custodian of the Remembrance.

With this in mind, we are overjoyed that a local Bucks brewery wishes to brew an unique real ale for this year's Armistice, a time of sombre reflection and national pride. So please seek out and purchase a pint of *Lest We Forget* and raise a glass to both Russell and Gareth from **XT** and importantly 'Those Who Gave Us Our Tomorrows'!

If you are interested and would like to purchase a barrel of *Lest We Forget* in aid of the Poppy Appeal, then brewers **XT** can be contacted by telephone: (01844) 208310, e-mail: [xt@xtbrewing.com](mailto:xt@xtbrewing.com), and their website: [www.xtbrewing.com](http://www.xtbrewing.com).

*Alan Sheppard* (Marlow RBL Club Secretary)



## The Shepherd's Crook



The Green, Crowell, Chinnor, Oxfordshire OX39 4RR  
(01844) 355266  
[www.the-shepherds-crook.co.uk](http://www.the-shepherds-crook.co.uk)



### Real ales

(Rebellion, West Berkshire, Holdens, Black Sheep, and more)

### Good food

(locally sourced fresh produce, skilfully prepared)

### Fine wines

(extensive wine list and interesting bin ends)



The Shepherd's Crook has recently reopened under new ownership. We offer a warm welcome and a convivial atmosphere. We are open 7 days a week.

## CHANGES AT THE ROYAL OAK



Over the last few months the **Royal Oak** at Aston Abbots has undergone a gradual progressive makeover with remarkable results. The main difference is that the drinking and dining areas are more separate and clearly defined as well as changing location. Both benefit from an improved layout creating an impression of more space and the practicalities of the changes can be seen in many ways. All the work has been carried out by landlord Gary Moulton, his wife Teri and family, ably assisted by colleague Andy Gilson.

At first glance from the outside there is no obvious change other than redecoration – until you find that the bar entrance is now at the left side, behind the well (as opposed to previously

when it was up some steps to the right). The new entrance leads to a lobby area with access to the B&B facilities, a seating area with door to the garden and then into the main bar, which is now in the middle of the pub.

The room to the right of this, which was the bar, is now distinctively a restaurant complete with several alcoves which lend a more intimate atmosphere. Being closest to the kitchen this means that no longer do meals have to go through the

drinking area. The new bar has been purpose-built using many timbers from its predecessor and elsewhere in the pub and features two barrels



for gravity dispense in addition to the three hand pumps. The rear garden benefits from a new patio and seating area plus smoking shelter as well as clearer access from the building. This is soon to be further enhanced by wheelchair access and decking is also planned to the front of the pub. Overall it is an impressive transformation, set off with décor which is in keeping with the nature of the building.

Gary and Teri have now been here for over twenty years and also run the **Dog House** at Broughton Crossing (once known as the **Old Moat House** and originally the **Prince of Wales**) which they took on in 2005 and have also much improved.

Up to four ales can be found here normally including **Vale**, with **Fullers London Pride** and **Sharps Doom Bar** at present. Next up for **Vale** is **Thame'n of the Brew** – a harvest time bitter at 4.1%.

Viewing (and sampling) highly recommended.

*Mick White*

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**Food served 7 days - lunch & dinner**

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**Large beer garden**

**Beautiful rural setting**

**23rd October Pie night.**

**27th November Bingo night.**

**Christmas menus now available!**



A Halloween-themed poster for the HWRUFC Wicked Beer Fest 2013. The background is a gradient of red and orange, resembling a sunset or fire. Silhouettes of bats and a hand holding a football are visible. A yellow box contains the text 'Good Music....', 'Good Food.....', and 'Good Times!....'. The event details are listed below.

**HWRUFC Wicked Beer Fest 2013**

Good Music....  
Good Food.....  
Good Times!....

Friday 8th November, 2013 starts 6.30pm until midnight  
Saturday 9th November, 2013 starts 12 noon until midnight

High Wycombe Rugby Union Football Club  
Kingsmead Road, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, HP 1JB  
T: (01494) 524407 W: [www.hwrufc.com](http://www.hwrufc.com)  
Bus routes : 1, A40, 35, 37

f 

A photograph of the Horse and Jockey pub in Tylers Green. The pub is a two-story building with a grey roof and white walls. A large sign above the entrance features a jockey on a horse and the text 'HORSE & JOCKEY'. Below the main sign, there is a smaller sign that reads 'Real Pub Food', 'Beer & Ales', and 'Beer Garden'. The text of the advertisement is overlaid on the image.

**Peter and Neuza welcome you all to the  
Horse and Jockey, Tylers Green HP10 8EG  
Tel: 01494 815963**

**We have five regular Real Ales plus one Guest Ale  
Food Served every session. Food Special Nights  
Open all day Friday, Saturday and Sunday  
Good Beer Guide Listed  
Quiz Night 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday in the month**



## GRAVEDIGGERS - PART TWENTY FIVE



The **Gravediggers'** microbrewery in the old cow shed was falling into a something of a rut. The regulars in the pub were happiest swilling its flagship ale – *Diggers' Worst* and the special *Even Worse*. A few specials were concocted for tickers at beer festivals but, strangely, *Old Sludge*, *Septic Fleabite* and *Undescended Gonad* didn't garner many repeat orders. James decided what was needed was some innovation.

'We need to get into this craft beer movement,' James said to Mazz, looking at the sales figures.

'What's makes craft beer different from what we normally brew?' Mazz asked.

'Well, it seems to be that you just have to triple your prices, generate enough marketing and PR telling everyone how brilliant it is and then make it so mouth-numbingly strong and hoppy that only nutcases will drink it in the sort of quantities we sell to our regulars,' James said, reading the letters page in *What's Brewing*.

'I'm all for progress,' Mazz said, scraping the residue from the gutter cleaning to use in their next special – *Gutterbuster*. 'I've got my own idea to give trade a shot in the arm – with Hallowe'en coming up, ever thought about a murder mystery?'

'The main murder mystery about this pub is why no-one's yet been fatally poisoned by the beer,' James said.

'No – an innovation of my own – using my performance art background,' Mazz said. 'You know, get actors in to do a real-life Cluedo and the customers pay a tanner each to work out which one's the murderer.'

'I like the sound of the tenners but not paying all these actors. Now where can we find a free supply of people who'd make convincing psychopaths or realistic corpses?' James said.

'Er, the public bar?' Mazz said.

\*\*\*\*

Come Hallowe'en, the **Gravediggers** staged possibly the world's first ever combined craft brewery launch and murder mystery evening. In keeping with the best marketing traditions of extremely strong beers, Old Amos had been dispatched to scour the roads in the woods for appropriate roadkill to be converted into serving vessels.

He'd brought back a squashed, rotting badger whose carcass was lovingly fitted around a handpump. This was dedicated to the **Diggers'** first craft ale – *Deadly Lethal Ammonium Nitrate Head Exploder* which by some mysterious brewing process clocked in at 99% pure alcohol (the 1% was apparently a

dead mouse that crawled into the mash tun). Servings were to be strictly limited to one half-pint at the end of a session.

Mazz greeted the amateur sleuths in the lounge bar and gave a lowdown on the evening's activities.

A motley bunch of 'resting' actors would re-enact a grisly murder – a body would be found and then the customers would gather evidence by interviewing the witnesses until finding a suspect. Obviously the witnesses would be more talkative the more beer they were plied with.

Sadly, the **Diggers** didn't stretch to a ballroom, drawing room or, even, a conservatory so the locations included the fetid cellar, derelict pig sties and the old games room that no-one had entered for the last five years. Weapons would be the likes of poisonous toadstools, catapulted conkers and hay pikes

inserted in uncomfortable orifices.

Old Pete, Old Amos, Old Joe, Young Duwayne and two other regulars whose names everyone had forgotten years ago were dispatched to the various locations and given strict instructions as to how to be bribed to answer the paying guests' queries.

It wasn't long before a 'corpse' was located – Old Joe collapsed in a puddle in the doorway to the gents. A couple of intrepid investigators prodded and poked his immobile body. They found no agricultural equipment embedded in awkward places but commented on the exceptional realism.

After a few minutes, it appeared that this was a murder mystery with a startling twist – another body was found slumped over a table in the garden, then another on the stairs to the cellar. It had become more of a massacre mystery and the amateur detectives had yet to find a suspect inside or outside the **Diggers**.

Several of the customers cornered Mazz and angrily complained about the impossibility of solving a crime when all the witnesses were apparently dead – and from a cause that seemed to be a complete mystery.

James tried to head off trouble by announcing a free half of the extremely rare and expensive new craft ale as compensation. Anyone who felt short-changed could enjoy on the house a rare brew that normally sold for £50 a third. He started to pull the first beer through the pump to realise the barrel was completely empty. All became suddenly clear: when the mystery customers were being briefed, the handpump had been left unsupervised in the public bar.

One of the paying guests announced that he was a doctor. 'I'm certainly impressed with the level of realism you've gone to but did you have a licence to remove this corpse from the morgue – it's got no pulse.'

He stood over Old Pete whose face was blue and body apparently in the early stages of rigor mortis. The customers looked uneasily at each other. They hadn't bargained for a real dead body.

Suddenly a loud belch sounded from the floor and Old Pete miraculously staggered to his feet and grabbed a glass. At the same time the other corpses slowly resurrected themselves and began swaying and tottering like a mute army of thirsty zombies towards the bar.

There was a commotion of shrieks and screams and the murder mystery guests stampeded for the door. Old Pete placed his glass under the dead badger. 'That craft beer, it gives you a bit of a hangover but I think it'll catch on.'

**Charlie Mackle**

## Branch Diary

*Everybody welcome to all socials and meetings!*

### October

#### Thursday 3rd HIGH WYCOMBE EARLY EVENING SOCIAL

Start William Robert Loosley 6.30pm, Bell, 7.15pm, Falcon 8.00pm, Hobgoblin 8.45pm.

#### Saturday 5th BEER FESTIVAL SOCIAL

12 Noon, Swan, Great Kimble

#### Monday 7th BRANCH MEETING

8.00pm, Pink and Lily, Parslow's Hillock, Lacey Green.

#### Wednesday 16th STOKE MANDEVILLE SOCIAL

Help required early evening setting up the beer festival followed by: 8.30pm Bell, 9.30pm Bull.

#### Friday 18th/Saturday 19th BEER FESTIVAL

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

Our annual beer festival raising money for the Aylesbury Hospice. Help setting up, serving and then taking down the equipment is needed. Please contact the editor if you wish to volunteer.

#### Friday 25th BEER FESTIVAL SOCIAL

6.00pm Belle Vue, High Wycombe

#### Saturday 26th BEER FESTIVAL SOCIAL

12 Noon, Royal Standard, Wooburn Common

#### Tuesday 29th BRANCH SOCIAL

8.30pm The Hundred of Ashendon, 9.30pm Bell, Chearsley

### Thursday 31st HAUNTED SOCIAL

7.30pm, King's Head, Aylesbury.

### November

#### Thursday 7th BRANCH SOCIAL

8.00pm, Old Red Lion, Tetsworth, 8.45pm England's Rose, Postcombe, 9.30pm Shepherd's Crook, Crowell.

#### Saturday 9th PUB BEER FESTIVAL SOCIAL

Cross Keys, Thame.

#### Monday 11th BRANCH MEETING

8.00pm, William Robert Loosley, High Wycombe

#### Wednesday 20th BRANCH SOCIAL

8.30pm Derehams Inn, Loudwater, 9.30pm General Havelock, Wycombe Marsh.

#### Saturday 23rd BIRMINGHAM PUB CRAWL

Going via Chiltern Railways Line to start at lunchtime. Check e-mails on members' mailing list/Facebook page for details/itinerary closer to event.

#### Tuesday 26th BRANCH SOCIAL

8.30pm White Swan, Whitchurch, 9.00pm Bell, Hardwick, 9.30pm Five Elms, Weedon.

Further details can be found on our website

[www.swansupping.org.uk](http://www.swansupping.org.uk)

**CATCH UP DURING BRANCH SOCIALS:-  
PHONE 0792 215 8971**



## DON'T MISS OUT!

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

[www.swansupping.org.uk/joinin](http://www.swansupping.org.uk/joinin)



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## Swan Supping

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We can even create the advert for you at no extra charge! All bookings are taken as run-of-paper. You can now pay for a year of adverts in advance and avoid any possible price increases! Please make all cheques payable to **CAMRAV & W**.

Copy deadline for next issue (due out 29th November) is 14th November 2013.

**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 **CAMRAV & 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 most issues of *Swan Supping* can be downloaded from our website ([www.swansupping.org.uk](http://www.swansupping.org.uk)).

### ©Aylesbury Vale & Wycombe CAMRA 2013

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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## CAMRA Membership Benefits

For just £23\* a year, that's less than a pint a month, you can join CAMRA and enjoy the following benefits:

- A quarterly copy of our magazine BEER which is packed with features on pubs, beers and breweries.
- Our monthly newspaper, 'What's Brewing', informing you on beer and pub news and detailing events and beer festivals around the country.
- Reduced entry to over 160 national, regional and local beer festivals.
- Socials and brewery trips, with national, regional and local groups.
- The opportunity to campaign to save pubs and breweries under threat of closure.
- The chance to join CAMRA / Brewery Complimentary Clubs that are exclusive to CAMRA members. These clubs offer a variety of promotions including free pint vouchers, brewery trips, competitions, and merchandise offers.
- Discounts on all CAMRA books including the Good Beer Guide.

Plus these amazing discounts...

£20 worth of JD Wetherspoon Real Ale Vouchers.**	15% discount with National Express coach services.	10% discount on toprooms.com.
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10% discount on booking with cottages4you.	10% discount on booking with Houses of Parliament.	Up to 52% off - with attractions for the family too numerous to name.

For more on your CAMRA Membership Benefits please visit [www.camra.org.uk/benefits](http://www.camra.org.uk/benefits)  
\* This price is based on the Direct Debit discount. \*\* Joint CAMRA memberships will receive one set of vouchers to share. CAMRA reserves the right to withdraw any offer at any time without warning and members should check CAMRA website for updated and details of current offers.



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