

FREE

Swan Supping



Issue 88

Feb/Mar 2012



COVER STORY

Roger Protz, Editor of the Good Beer Guide, opens the Aylesbury Brewhouse flanked by brewers Simon Smith and David Renton!

See Page 4

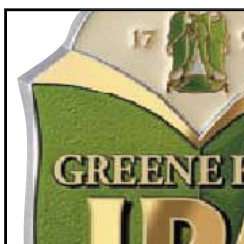
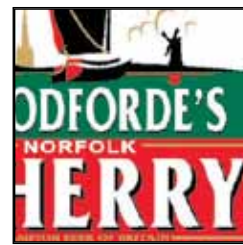
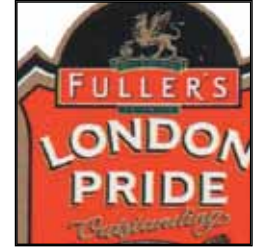
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NEWS FROM THE EDITOR



A 'Happy New Year' to all the readers of *Swan Supping*, let's hope it is an improvement on last year!

We have so far had both good and bad news about some of our pubs!

We feature the good news that the **Seven Stars** in Dinton has been taken over by the local community and we all hope that it is successful. It will need supporting, so why not pop in for a drink and see what can be done when local people get together and are prepared to do something instead of just standing back and moaning that their pub has disappeared.

We also feature the start of a similar fight to save the **Russell Arms** at Butlers Cross. We all wish them well in their quest to get enough money to buy the pub and keep their local community focal point open. This is especially important as the **Bernard Arms** in Great Kimble, which is one of the nearest pubs to the **Russell Arms** is currently closed. The campaign is being supported by the local **Chiltern Brewery** as their website is hosting the web pages for the enterprise. Pubs can be saved and we congratulate all those who campaigned on behalf of the **Wenlock Arms**, London (page 10).

The bad news is that we have heard that the **Cherry Tree** in Kingston Blount is closed and its future is uncertain. It also looks like we are going to lose both the **Kings Head** and the **Royal Oak** in Chinnor. All three of these pubs are in the Oxfordshire part of our branch and are a significant percentage of our public houses in this area. Unfortunately there doesn't seem to be local interest in keeping these pubs open (if I'm wrong, we will be happy to feature the fight to keep them open in our next issue!).

Back to the good news as we welcome the return of brewing to Aylesbury after a period of about 75 years. Since the closure of the **ABC Brewery**, it's been a tragedy that a county town with around 60,000 people couldn't support a place to brew our favourite tipple (well, it's my favourite!).

This came to an end in December when the **Aylesbury Brewhouse** was officially opened by Roger Protz, the editor of the **Good Beer Guide**.

This is the sister brewery to **Vale Brewery** in Brill, and is featured in an article on page 4 and on our cover. **Vale** brewers, David Renton and Simon Smith will have a fairly free hand to be able to brew different styles of beer as has already been shown by their initial brews. The only problem I've found so far is that the 'home-brew' tends to disappear very quickly!

To finish, I have to end on a very sad note. Ina Gabriel, wife of long-time local campaigner and committee member, Tony, passed away at Christmas after a long illness. Ina was a bright, intelligent, lovely lady, who enjoyed our Black Country trip, beer festivals and many socials, and she will be sadly missed. It is intended to dedicate this year's Black Country trip (provisionally Saturday 30th June) to her. Our condolences go to Tony and all of Ina's friends and family.

My thanks to all our contributors including Colin Stanford for another of his cartoons. Thanks to all our deliverers who have the hard task of going to a lot of pubs to drop off *Swan Supping*. We welcome articles from anyone interested in beer and local pubs and would also like help in the deliveries especially when it comes to 'topping-up' as we would hate it if visitors to our pubs missed out on their 'fix'.

David W. Roe - *Swan Supping* Editor

Local Pub of the Year Competition

CAMRA Members: Please send your vote for the best pub in our branch area to the editor (contact details of page 22) by Friday 17th of February or come along to the Branch AGM at the Cross Keys, Thame, on Monday 20th February at 8pm when the final decision will be made!

NATIONAL CAMRA NEWS

Community life in Britain's suburbs under threat!

In January, **CAMRA** has called for urgent Government action to save Britain's historic pub culture in light of new research showing how sixteen pubs now close across the country on a weekly basis. Particular concern was expressed that Government policy is failing communities on the peripheries of Britain's towns and cities, with half of these closures (eight a week) taking place in the nation's suburbs.

In just two years, 1,078 pubs have been lost in suburban areas, with many community locals battered by whirlwind beer tax hikes and deep alcohol discounting from nearby supermarket chains, bringing about a general decline in pub-going by consumers. Meanwhile, high street pubs are closing at a quarter of the rate – two per week – of suburban locals.

Mike Benner, **CAMRA** Chief Executive, said: 'While high street city centre venues are showing a degree of resistance in the current climate, both suburban and rural areas are under threat as wholesale pub closures deprive more local people of a community centre. Pubs are vital for social cohesion and cultural integration, and therefore the Government must act swiftly to repair the damage inflicted upon local communities by offering genuine support for enterprising and hard-working licensees.'

'This research also further underlines the major problems caused by many hard-working pub lessees being unable to buy their beer on the open market, restricted by punitive measures imposed by greedy pub companies. The number of tied pubs has fallen by over 3,500 in just three years, with free-of-tie pubs remaining better placed to weather these difficult economic times by having the ability to offer greater beer choice and lower prices to the consumer.'

These figures coincide with a groundbreaking new report by the Institute of Public Policy Research (IPPR) into the social value of community pubs. The report reinforces **CAMRA**'s figures by highlighting the need for a radical change in Government policy that recognises the important community function many pubs perform.

Recommended measures to provide vital support include business rate relief for pubs acting as 'centres of a community', reform of planning laws which prevent pubs from being demolished without the need for planning permission, and improving relations between large pub companies and their lessees to offer a guest beer option and an option to become 'free of tie' accompanied by an open market rent review.

IPPR Associate Director, Rick Muir, said: 'Government must stop using a one size fits all approach to licensed premises which is killing off our community pubs. Instead responsible well-run pubs should be encouraged and supported.'

'Our research shows community pubs aren't just places to drink but also places where people meet their neighbours; where local clubs hold meetings and events; and which support many important local services such as village post offices and general stores.'

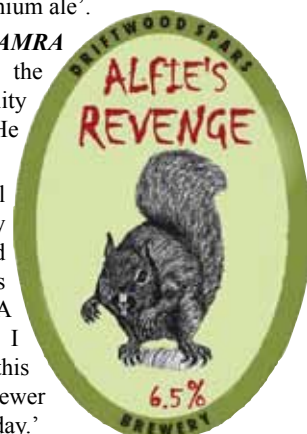
Champion Winter Beer of Britain 2012

Driftwood brewery's (of St Agnes, Cornwall) *Alfie's Revenge* has been crowned the **Supreme Champion Winter Beer of Britain 2012** by a panel of judges at the National Winter Ales Festival in Manchester.

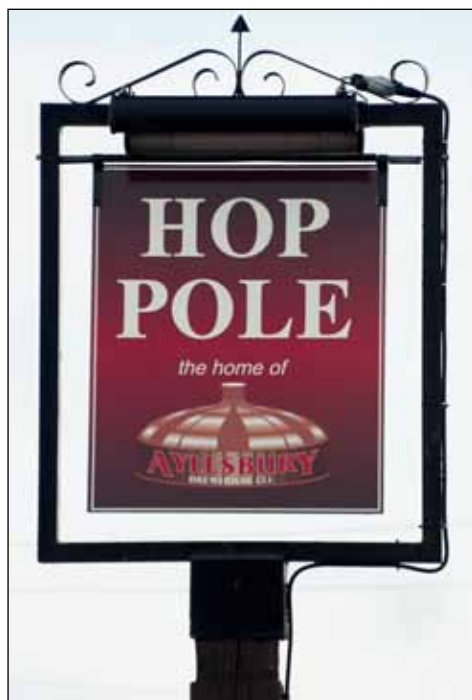
The 6.5% ABV old ale is described in **CAMRA**'s **Good Beer Guide** 2012 as a 'strong and fruity, well-balanced premium ale'.

Nik Antona, **CAMRA** Director, praised the outstanding quality of the champion. He said:

'The beer is well balanced, highly drinkable, and certainly belies its strength. A worthy winner, I congratulate this thriving Cornish brewer on their success today.'



BREWING RETURNS TO AYLESBURY!



The *Aylesbury Brewhouse* opened to the public on the 2nd of December last year, bringing brewing back to the town of Aylesbury after a gap of just under 75 years.

Situated behind the **Hop Pole** on the Bicester Road, the *Aylesbury Brewhouse Co* (a name which initially brings back a lot of memories) is run by the **Hop Pole** owners, Mark and Phil Stevens of the *Vale Brewery* in Brill.

Partner Phil Stevens explained, 'Where better to place our second brewery than behind an award-winning real ale pub. After months of effort and much heartache, brewing commenced in Aylesbury on the 16th of November and we will be giving free rein to the creativity of our brewers to devise beers to delight our customers with limited edition beers'.

The original *Aylesbury Brewery Company* stopped brewing in 1937, although the offices and *ABC* brand with the Aylesbury Duck logo continued for many years. First under the



ownership of *Ind Coope & Allsopp* and then later *Allied Breweries*, until the offices were closed in 1989.

The new brewhouse was officially opened on Friday, 2nd of December, by famous beer expert, writer and real ale champion Roger Protz, who is best known to our readers as editor of the *Good Beer Guide*. He is featured with the brewers David Renton and Simon Smith on our cover.

As part of his very interesting and stirring speech, Roger commented '*Vale Brewery* has restored brewing to Aylesbury after a break of almost 75 years. The *Aylesbury Brewhouse* not only produces delicious beers but will tempt drinkers with special brews that go beyond the narrow boundaries of mild and bitter. The brewers are digging deep into old recipe books to recreate styles from the past and, most importantly, will involve customers in the **Hop Pole** in the creation of new beers. This is modern brewing at its best, a close and engaged relationship between those who make beer and those who drink it.'

The first beers produced were *Alph* (3.8%), *Red Right Hand* (4.2%) which were followed by *Electric Soup* (4.6%) which was based on Scottish 80/- bitters. The next beers brewed were *Dark Energy* (4.0%) described as a superb dark London Style mild with fantastic roast malt aromas and big malt flavours finishing with a subtle hoppy smack, *Twisted Bine* (4.5%), a classic truly English Pale Ale, crisp fruit and spicy hop notes with a balanced bitter finish.

An American wheat beer with the classic unfiltered hoppy appearance, called *Old Glory* (4.8%) was next. All American hops gave a fruity

aroma to this crisp light bodied beer made with 50% wheat malt.

Adding to the constant variety are the latest beers, *Black Path* (5.0%), a blend of five dark and roasted malts giving a complex character with a slightly silky mouthfeel and a well balanced bitterness, and *Weigh Anchor* (4.4%) which is a US Steam beer, often referred to as American Common.



The new brewery takes up half of what was the function room at the rear of the pub. The other half of the space is taken up with a brand new Brewhouse shop which is now up and running and well-stocked. There are over 100 different bottled beers available (and wine for the non-beer lovers). If any further encouragement is needed to visit, bring along your copy of *Swan Supping*, sign on to their e-mail list and you will be offered 10% off your first purchase.



There is also a Beer Club that links the *Aylesbury Brewhouse* with its sister brewery *Vale Brewery* which was launched in December 2011. This scheme offers customers of the shops in Brill and Aylesbury the chance to become club members and gain points on purchases, access to brewery tours along with free T-Shirt and a member's exclusive glass. Membership costs £15 which includes a member's card pre-loaded with 500 points worth £5.

On Saturday 18th February, they are holding an exclusive event for Beer Club members at the **Hop Pole**. This meet the brewer afternoon will be open between 12.30 and 4.30, and David Renton, the Head Brewer, will be on hand to meet and greet and will explain the brewing process and answer questions.

Four *Aylesbury Brewhouse* beers will be available: *Twisted Bine*, *Dark Energy*, *Black Path* and *Old Glory* plus a *Vale* special.

Entry is free to members, each of whom can bring up to two guests, with each person getting their first pint free. Additional pints and take-away pints are sold at £2 a pint. This is a members and guests only event, but customers are welcome to join up on the day.



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LOCAL NEWS

ASHENDON

The **Gatehangers** is still serving **Greene King IPA** which is somewhat strange for a Free House, but a number of regulars love it. **XT's 3**, their IPA, is being tested shortly to see if these regulars would like to try the **Locale** from three miles south as the crow flies. The pub's 'Lads Club' has been invited on a brewery visit to **XT** in February or March, followed by an instructional tasting session. Offerings from **Cottage** and **Tring**, as well as **Vale**, can be found here.

AYLESBURY

Batemans Winter Wellie was enjoyed at a recent visit to the **Broad Leys** where it appeared alongside **Loddon Hoppit** and **Sharps Doom Bar**.

The Farmers' Bar at the **Kings Head** has treated us during January to a celebration of superb and rarely found porters and stouts. This rolling beer festival will culminate in February with a very special one-off from the **Kernel Brewery**, being the first and only cask of their highly-rated bottled beer **Export India Porter**. This is a real coup for Aylesbury.

BIERTON

Martin White and his partner Amanda Cove, will be taking charge of the newly refurbished **Fullers** pub, the **Bell**, on the 14th April after two weeks of work following its planned closure on April 1st. The previous landlords, Pete and Angie, left the **Bell** on the expiration of their ten year lease on 7th January and the pub is being run by a reserve

manager at present until the end of March.

BISHOPSTONE

The **Harrow** tries to support our many local breweries and as such the 'mainstream' beers tend to be in the minority. However, they are unable to make a statement as to which beers will be available but guarantee a minimum of two real ales. They also have a quiz night every Sunday evening starting at 8pm and have special food offers on Tuesday (Steak), Thursday (Burgers) and Friday (Fish and chips) nights.

CHEARSLEY

The **Bell's Sharon & Oliver**, along with their band of regulars, continue to celebrate the pub's entry in the 2012 **Good Beer Guide**. They are trying to negotiate with their **Fullers** area manager whether they can sell an **XT** offering every now and again, as the brewery is less than a mile away across the fields – watch this space. As a **Fullers** house it serves **Chiswick**, **London Pride** and **HSB**. **Fullers** seasonal ales are also available.

CHINNOR

The freehold of the **Kings Head** has been sold but we have no details yet of the new owners and what their intentions are.

The **Red Lion** are doing their best to support as many of our local breweries as they can. Besides regularly offering beers from **Rebellion**, **Tring** and **Vale**, now that **XT** are on the **SIBA** list their beers can often be found, despite their 8 being described like Marmite as half the drinkers loved it and half took the

opposite view!

The **Royal Oak** has closed and its future looks very precarious as there are plans to turn it into flats.

CUDDINGTON

The **Crown** serves **Adnams Southwold Bitter** which is supported by **Fullers London Pride** and another **Fullers** beer such as **Jack Frost**.

DINTON

The **Seven Stars** is up and away and serving three real ales and food. The 64 local shareholders have invested in resurfacing the car park and are intent on returning the pub to its former glory, starting with some pointing work outside. Landlady Stephanie Guiraut maintains one real ale at £2.50, **Ruddles Best** currently, and a lager at under £3.00. Two other ales, one local, and one less local, will be on too. They had **XT 4** all through November and December and the **Locale** will be either a **Vale** or an **XT**.

EMMINGTON

The **Inn at Emmington** is currently sticking with its clientele's favourites, namely **Fullers London Pride** and **Brakspear Bitter**. As an alternative a **Rebellion**, **Vale** or perhaps even an **XT** will be on the third hand pump. Jerry is getting stuck into country life serving breakfasts for shooting parties, and learning beating from his regulars.

FORD

The **Dinton Hermit** is sticking with **Vale** beers. **Best Bitter** is always available and **Hopocalypse** is on at the moment.

GIBRALTAR

The **Bottle and Glass** keeps **Greene King Morland Original Bitter** on pretty much all the time. In the last issue we were hopeful that **Greene King** were going to be more flexible about allowing a **Locale** guest ale – unfortunately this has not come to fruition and so the guest will remain one from the **Greene King** stable – **Old Speckled Hen** at present.

GREAT KIMBLE

Local villagers were pleasantly surprised in the middle of January to wake up one morning to find a team of decorators working on the **Swan**. The only pub currently open in the village (as we reported last issue, the **Bernard Arms** has been closed since the end of August last year) has now been restored to its former glory in good time for the romantic Valentine's Day evening on February 14th when delicious food can be washed down with the ever-popular **Adnams Southwold Bitter** or **St Austell Tribute**.

HADDENHAM

Diary Date – Summer Beer Festival is on Saturday 7th July 2011 from 11 am to late (or early if too many people come and drink the place dry by tea time – shock/horror – surely not) – see www.haddenham-beer-festival.co.uk.

The **Rising Sun** continues to serve **Locales** and other intriguing offerings from around the country straight from the barrel at £2.75 a pint. A late Spring beer festival is at the conceptual stage, but is somewhat dependent upon the arrival of Rob and Miranda's third. **Vale**, and recently **XT** beers, from

under two miles away, are popular with the discerning imbibers ensconced in 'Compost Corner', relaxing and discussing sex, politics and religion. The place is heaving with darts players some nights and the return of the pool table and entry into a high league keeps the excitement level high in the low ceilinged village local.

At the **Green Dragon**, Clare and Steve have decided to move on to the **Olde Kings Arms** in Old Town, Hemel Hempstead. We wish them all the very best there. The new landlord from 3rd February will be Adam, former assistant manager to Rupert at the **Green Dragon**. He's been having a stint with **Sam Smiths** in London but has decided to return to the fold. Adam and his wife Emma have big plans for the 'Dragon' – come and test them out.

The **Kings Head** serves **Fullers London Pride** and **Sharps Doom Bar** plus one off **Punch's** Finest Cask List, recently **Elbow Build a Rocket Boys**.

The **Red Lion's** 'Free-of-Tie Lease' is still for sale; how about a **CAMRA** branch buy-out? – don't miss this once in a lifetime opportunity to run a traditional real-coal-fire village pub, with its numerous darts, dominoes and cribbage teams, that caters for shooting parties with pre-shoot full English breakfasts and post-shoot drink-the-pub-dry sessions. Permanent fixture **Adnams Southwold Bitter** is supported by an ever changing cross-section of **Vale** beers.

The **Rose & Thistle** is serving **Greene King IPA** and **Hardys & Hansons Olde Trip** and **London Glory**, an amber 4% jobby. Get texted or tweeted by Spaz as to 'What's happening at the RAT'.

HAMBLEDEN

The **Stag and Huntsman**, which has been closed for refurbishment for almost six months, is set to reopen in early May with a new management team at the helm. It will be run by Hillbrooke Hotels, led by their managing director, Christoph Brooke. They specialise in country pubs with rooms and small hotels, believing in the importance of using local seasonal produce together with the value of local ales and so many of the dishes on the planned menu will feature produce from the Culden Faw Estate and other local suppliers. While the refurbishment has been designed to update the premises, both the owners and the management team are committed to retaining the look, character and feel of the former pub so that it can appeal to those who like a quiet pint as well as providing good fresh food for anyone wishing to enjoy a meal. In addition there will be nine bedrooms which have been refurbished and are likely to appeal to the many visitors who use Hambleden as a base for walking in the beautiful surroundings of the Chiltern Hills.

HIGH WYCOMBE

The pub in Totteridge that used to be the **Dolphin** and then underwent a large re-branding exercise to become the **Chameleon** has been re-branded again. It's now been decided that the new name (doubtless thought up at much expense) will be the **Dolphin**.

The **Falcon** will be taking part in the



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JD Wetherspoons beer festival from the 18th of March to the 1st of April. The festival will run at all 'Spoons' outlets and will consist of 50 different ales and 10 ciders at a reduced festival price. The **Falcon** also has *Veto Ale* on at the pub for a majority of the time, exclusively brewed for **JDW** by **Batemans**. The beer is 4.3 per cent ABV and is brewed using solely British ingredients, including Lincolnshire and Yorkshire malts and Bramling Cross and Challenger hops.

The **Glasshouse** (previously the **Anchor**) has re-opened and has been re-launched as the **Snug**.

The **Nag's Head** is open again and it's being run as a music venue. Not a music venue as we would term it, as there is a possibility of live bands appearing there again but the main direction seems to be pre-recorded.

KINGSTON BLOUNT

The **Cherry Tree** is currently closed and its future is uncertain.

LONG CRENDON

Converted former pub the **Star Inn**, was advertised for 'only' £844k in the **Thame Gazette** on December 16, 2011. To enhance the selling proposition the estate agents kindly mention that within walking distance you'll find the historic High Street with two traditional pubs.

LUDGERSHALL

The **Bull and Butcher** offers *Eagle IPA*, a standard favourite that will always suit most of the people. Unfortunately they are unable to offer a choice as there is insufficient demand for them to have two beers on pumps in the winter months. Most people have to drive to

this location and so there is no way to get more customers drinking.

QUAINTON

The **Swan and Castle** now offer a house ale, named after the pub called *Swan and Cast'ale* at 3.9% ABV which has proved very popular since it appeared at New Year. If you need other reasons to visit the pub, there's a Jon Bon Jovi and Freddie Mercury tribute on 25th March and they now have SKY Sports available in HD.

THAME

Emma Davis has written to us in desperation with regards to saving her family run pub, the **Black Horse Hotel**. It is a small pub, run by just her and her mother who has run the business successfully for the last 12 years and had a late license on a Friday and Saturday evening for the last 9 years without ever having a review. However, they have next door to the pub properties that were newly built in 2010. The decision to build was opposed, but with no success. Residents moved in early last year and since then some of these new residents have complained continuously about noise. They no longer have a Friday night DJ which they have had for four years, and smokers can no longer smoke in the beer garden which they have done for years. If they want to smoke it has to be out the front of the pub because of their noise, which has caused further problems because of so many people being on the streets. This has meant a terrible financial loss, as they also used to have band nights, with a different live band each week, or karaoke. These are all cancelled.

They are looking at soundproofing, but the building is 400 years old so don't even know if planning will approve this amount of work, as it will change the whole look of the pub, let alone the expense. An abatement notice has been served and opposed and a petition supporting the pub now has over 500 signatures. It's getting so bad that soon the **Black Horse** will no longer be able to survive, all because the pub has to change to suit new residents who must have realised the situation when they bought their properties!

Chinnor RFC serves *Vale Wychert* and *Brakspear Bitter* with a £2-a-pint guest ale straight from 'The barrel on the bar' on Saturdays. CRFC, at OX9 3JL on Thame ring road, are still undefeated this season in National League 3 South West, so come and watch a great game and enjoy a pint or two at the same time.

WING

The **Cock Inn**, a member of the **Orchid Inns** group, has had a change of management. Gary and Karen Dyson - Huff took over this popular and spacious village pub and restaurant/carvery in early December. Plans include restoring the pub's previous reputation for real ale. Gary wants to concentrate more on local ales where possible and to increase the range as soon as is practical. Their first beer festival will be held over the bank holiday weekend 1st - 4th June. A dozen or so ales plus cider are planned plus a pig roast. If it is a success it will become a regular event, as many will remember it was a few years ago.

Landlady Denise Redding of the **Queens Head** has recently taken on an

additional pub, the **Wheatsheaf** at Bow Brickhill. Whilst this **Charles Wells** pub is fractionally out of our branch area (Beds), if you were travelling to Milton Keynes, it is virtually en-route being just off the A5, Half a mile from the Happy Eater roundabout, so a welcome watering hole in either direction.

The **Sportsman** had a recent spell of closure in October. Since reopening, this former **Punch** owned pub has been on the market. Current landlord Lee works for a holding company and the ales served are **Black Sheep Bitter** and **Wells Bombardier**.

WHEELER END

Andy and Lynn Foulkes took over the **Brickmakers Arms** in late November. The pub is a beautiful traditional pub with three log fires one of which is an inglenook, coupled with an enormous garden capable of hosting hog roasts, beer festivals and functions it would appear to have everything. Unfortunately it has seen times of serious neglect and has suffered trade wise. Their aims are to turn around its reputation by serving good honest home cooked food and quality real ale at fair prices. **Rebellion** beers are very popular as are the ales they have had from **St Austell**.

WOOBURN COMMON

If you fancy some artwork as well as a pint, there is a gallery in the **Royal Standard**. All the paintings are for sale and are by local artist-cum-pub-regular Robert Thompson and feature new work reflecting the pub, its community, characters and surroundings. Proceeds from the sale will be in aid of the Henry van Straubenzee Memorial fund.

Watergate Bay, Newquay

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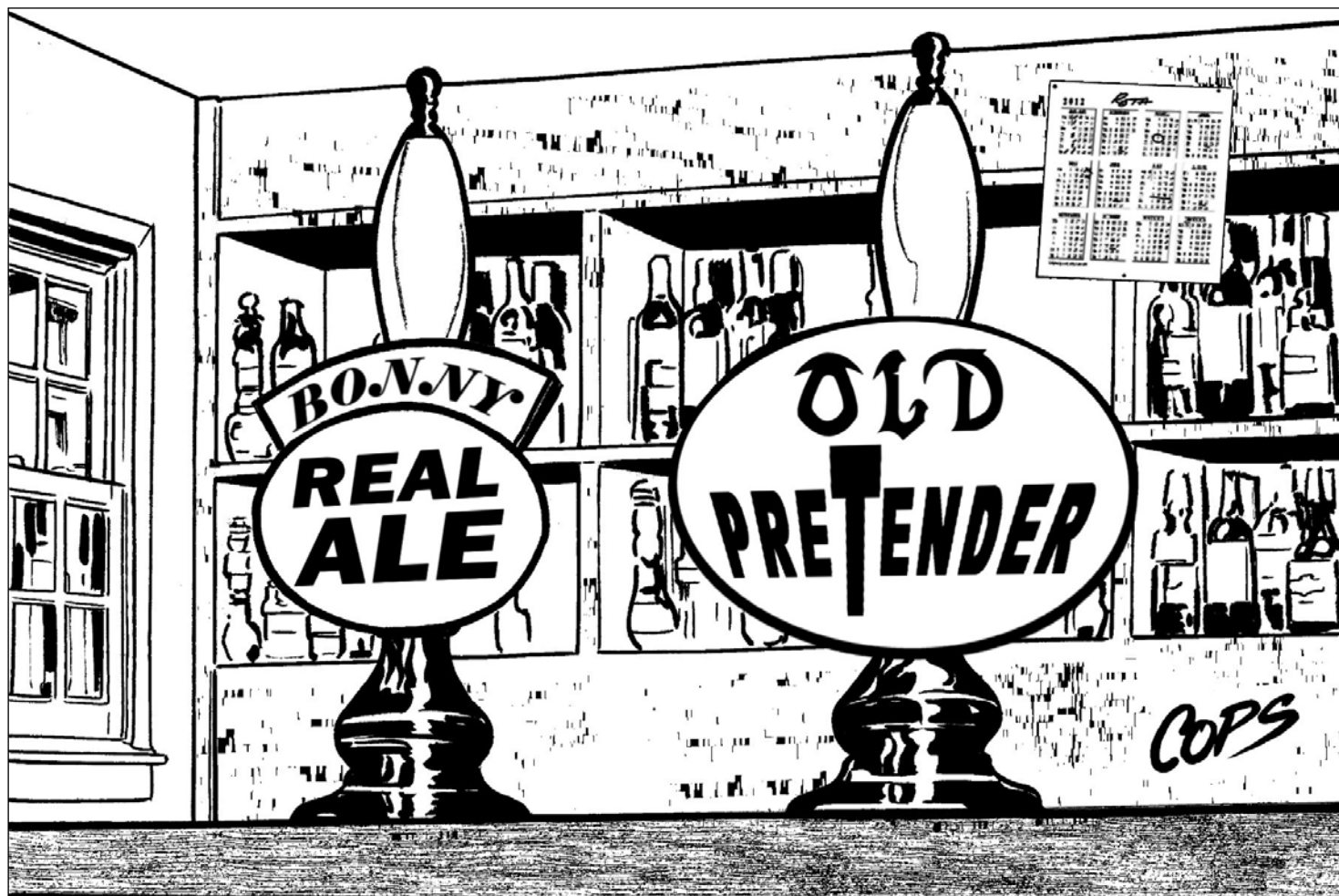
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GRAVEDIGGERS - PART FIFTEEN



After the Christmas and New Year rush seemed as good a time as any for James and Mazz to take some time off from running the Gravediggers. In the gloom of January whole weeks would go by without anyone walking through the door. That was partly because the regulars never walked: they crawled and staggered into the pub and were either dragged or thrown out of it.

So he could escape the madness for a week and to try and make the regulars appreciate his tolerance a little better James recruited a psychopathic relief manager. In keeping with Burns' night being at the end of January he hired Murdo McMurder, the most fanatical supporter of Scottish independence in the pub-trade. He'd been on the run in England from his previous job, which had been working for a cult microbrewer at Auchten-Glenfiddlediedie-Ochayethenoo in the Highlands. For a publicity stunt he'd sneaked into Balmoral and attempted to serve a sample of one of their unfeasibly strong beers, the 52% Numb Yer Trossachs, to the Duke of Edinburgh from a putrefied beaver's head.

Murdo had already covered up the picture of the queen with a grinning Alex Salmond and had overhauled the menu to ensure that every piece of food that came out of the kitchen had to visit the deep fat fryer at least twice. Deep-fried Scotch broth was a new culinary concept – more like an oil slick in a bowl – but it had proved wildly popular with the regulars.

Isla St. Jockstrap was Murdo's partner and they had a three-year-old child called Special Brew. To toughen him up his parents sent Special to munch his way through the glass recycling bin rather than suck on a dummy.

Murdo had already super-concentrated all the Gravediggers' beers – the session ale now started at 10%. The hard-stuff at 25% ABV was served only in pints. He used a clever gadget to freeze and remove most of the water in the beer. The theory was it would mainly leave just the alcohol behind. Yet even Murdo was surprised to see the bubbling, fluorescent gunge that constituted the remainder of the barrel of *Old Ratarsed* once the process had been performed. He provided a spoon for regulars to consume this noxious sediment when it settled at the bottom of the glass.

'S'al very well, yer Scottish food 'n' drink but where's yer famous culture – caber tossin' and bagpipin', Old Pete asked Murdo just before falling off his stool having slurped a pint of *Extremely Braveheart*.

'Och' aye, hoos about a haggis shoot and a spot a wee sword dancing then?' Murdo suggested.

The next day, Murdo's last, saw the haggis shoot take place in the Gravediggers' front garden. A haggis would be catapulted in the air and the locals would take turns to blast it out of the sky, becoming splattered with the offally unpleasant contents should they score a direct shot. As they consumed more and more of the condensed beer their shots became so erratic: only Special Brew who'd been on the kids' drink of *Ratarsed* and Coke could manage to point the shotgun in the air.

The party retired inside the Gravediggers for further refreshment and a spot of sword dancing. The regulars were merrily sizzled and happily changed into kilts at Murdo's suggestion. Isla piped 'Donald Where's Your Troosers' while the drunken sword dance got underway. Old Pete, Old Joe, Young Ben and Murdo performed a Highland Reel with swords – a dance which was remarkable in that none of the performers ended up decapitated. A slip of the weapon meant that Murdo was pinned against the wall by Old Pete, a sword just avoiding severing the tip of his sporran.

At that moment a troop of respectable women in smart hats filed into the pub. None of the revellers had thought to check in the pub diary and so had failed to realise that the local WI had booked the back room on the same night.

The prim ladies looked on at the spectacle just at the point where Old Joe, fuelled by Super Strength *Old Ratarsed*, began to gyrate on the spot. He rotated to the music so furiously that his kilt rode up higher and higher with the centrifugal force.

Several screams rent the air. Bodies collapsed to the floor. The music stopped and Young Ben said, looking on at a most traumatic spectacle, 'Old Joe, where's your underpants'.

Charlie Mackle



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WHIP INN FOR A PINT

SAVING THE WENLOCK ARMS

The **Wenlock Arms** in Hoxton, north London has been a real-ale rough diamond for many years. We visited the pub on our London crawl in the autumn and the last issue of *Swan Supping* mentioned that the pub was under threat from the bulldozers. The very end of last year saw some dramatic developments in the story with the pub at one point only days from demolition.

It's a story that should fascinate anyone who's ever made their way through the dingy back streets of N1 to the **Wenlock** and also illustrates many issues in planning law that are relevant to pubs threatened in our own branch area.

The **Wenlock** is a spit-and-sawdust, East-End style local (which looks from the outside rather like a more downmarket version of the Queen Vic from *EastEnders*). It's typical of an urban pub style that would once have been found on virtually every street corner in Victorian London.

However, the triple threats of German bombing in the Second World War, postwar redevelopment and the consequences of changing leisure time activities leading to changes of use have led to such pubs becoming increasingly rare.

If these buildings still stand as pubs then they're likely to have been either gentrified into 'bar and kitchen' gastropubs or be vile drinking-dens full of pool tables and fruit machines.

Not so the **Wenlock**! Mainly due to the pub's promotion of real ale from small and micro brewers and the subsequent patronage of the members of **CAMRA** and like-minded drinkers, the **Wenlock** has continued as a genuine community pub. For example, it hosts regular live music.

The phrase 'unspoilt by progress' (used by *Banks* for their beers in the West Midlands) could be accurately applied to its interior. The drinking area appears to have been under an informal preservation order that has seen a moratorium on any discernible decoration activity. This is no bad thing for many **CAMRA** members who go to the pub exactly to get away from makeover and property beautification programmes on TV.

But the **Wenlock** sits dangerously close to trendy-media-land. It's located in an area on the fringes of the Hoxton-Shoreditch urban renaissance — had it been any closer it would probably have been converted instead to a bijou-neon place called Bar iPad or something. Yet the economic winds of redevelopment finally reached the **Wenlock** during 2011 and an application was made to Hackney Council earlier this year.

In general terms, planning laws do not require a request for permission to change the use of a pub into a similar sort of establishment, like a bar or restaurant, so long as it's used to sell food and drink. This has been why many pubs have been ruined by being turned into failed eateries, although that doesn't stop crazy people from trying. In principle the planners probably wouldn't object to Ye Olde Thatched Inn becoming a kebab house.

Permission *is* required to change the use of the building to any other sort of commercial purpose and, particularly, for conversion into private housing and in practice, a very significant number of pubs in this part of the country are only protected from the raging forces of market greed by planning regulations.

As we know in our branch area, housing costs are so expensive in London and the South East that a pub's physical buildings (or even just the land it stands on) can be worth far more as an asset than the business will ever hope to generate. That's why so many pubs are owned by speculators or giant pub companies that securitise their property portfolios in the City in exchange for cash.

In the case of the **Wenlock**, an application was made to build at least five apartments on the plot. These would no doubt have sold for well over a million pounds collectively — creating a profit that would probably take a back-street boozer decades to realise.

After lobbying by pub-lovers and **CAMRA**, Hackney Council rejected the change-of-use application. This decision was reported and celebrated widely by many locals and real ale supporters.

However, there is a loophole which developers can try to exploit. Premises can be denied permission for change of use but, unless a building has listed status or is in a conservation area, then the owners can do what they like to it — including demolition.



This tactic has been used ruthlessly in the past where pubs have literally vanished overnight when developers have sent in bulldozers at midnight. (The famous **Tommy Ducks** in Manchester was an example, which was razed to the ground one night in 1993 at 3am in the morning. This pub used to have women's knickers pinned to the ceiling — I was once taken by teachers there after a school trip to the theatre — perhaps causing a deep-seated trauma which might explain a few things.)

The **Wenlock's** locals were disturbed to see a notice of demolition attached to the building at the end of November. This is apparently a technical process to inform the council of an intention to demolish a building and normally the council can only object to the method of demolition proposed (unless the building is listed, in a conservation area, national park or area of outstanding natural beauty).

So it appeared that the **Wenlock** was going to be turned into a patch of waste ground — with the presumed intention of later lobbying for the original residential development once the pub had become only a memory. Demolition of the building would have been illegal only if the building was listed or in a conservation area. However, the boundary of the Regent's Canal Conservation area fell just short of the **Wenlock**.

But the pub's supporters mounted yet another huge campaign (there's a Facebook group called Save the **Wenlock**, of which I'm a member) and mobilised a coalition of beer drinkers and lovers of vernacular architecture to lobby Hackney council themselves. The pub could have been demolished from about the 22nd December.

On Monday 19th December at a meeting of Hackney Council, the conservation area was extended to include the **Wenlock Arms**. The pub had been possibly days from demolition but has now been granted legal protection — the fabric of the building and its permitted usage at least. There's no absolute guarantee it won't be suddenly razed to the ground but to do so would now be illegal. Supporting the extension of the conservation is a very detailed historical and architectural account of the area - and an adjoining pub, the **King William IV** - on the council website.

Fortunately there won't be the traditional, short-lived rush to celebrate the preservation of an amenity that few people actually used — as happens often when economically struggling pubs are denied permission to change use. The **Wenlock** has never seemed to want for customers as is shown by the many individuals and organisations that have come to its defence.

With customers having less disposable income, beer duty and inflation (especially utility prices) rising fast, there are plenty of other pubs closer to home that may face the same threat as the **Wenlock**. This success story is rare but it's salutary and an example of what concerted community action can achieve.

Mike Clarke

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Saving Community Pubs.

It can be done!

Research by **CAMRA** released on 24th January* showed that 16 pubs close across Britain every week. That is over 800 pubs a year! Or in other terms, one pub closes per year in this country per brewery.

If we are to keep the amazing and unique variety of beer that we produce in the UK, we really need to campaign to remove the pressures our pubs are under. **CAMRA** recently won a significant victory when on the 12th January, following a lively debate on the floor of the House of Commons, during which the Government was heavily criticised for rejecting proposals by the Business Select Committee, MPs unanimously passed a motion criticising Government's lack of action on pub companies as falling short of their own commitments and requiring the Government to commission an independent review of self-regulation in the pub sector.

Mike Benner, **CAMRA**'s Chief Executive said: '**CAMRA** is delighted that MPs from all parties have highlighted the inadequacy of the Government's attempts to tackle unfair business practices in the pub sector and that the Government are now obliged to commission an independent review into the matter. Following the success of this motion the Government now has a chance to think again and to consult on meaningful proposals to ensure the survival of many thousands of pubs.

'The large pub companies must be encouraged to provide their lessees with free-of-tie and guest beer options accompanied by an open market

rent review. These steps would effectively self regulate the operation of tie agreements.

'The large pub companies have been living in the last chance saloon since 2004 during which time many thousands of valued community pubs have been lost forever while pub companies have failed to deliver meaningful self regulation.'

April sees the launch of a new **CAMRA** campaign, Communities Pubs Month. This campaign is taking place to help increase footfall in local pubs, to increase the awareness of pubs as invaluable community assets, and encourage licensees to organise and promote events to attract further trade. It's all about giving community pubs as much publicity as possible during these tough times.

For more information, please visit communitypubsmoth.org.uk and encourage your local to participate.

Another way of rescuing pubs abandoned by the large pub companies is an outright purchase, often turning a run-down local into a valuable community resource. Pubs that are bought by their community are usually far more successful, as the locals have both a real investment and a will for success.

There is no better definition of a community pub than a pub owned by the community.

In our branch (most of Buckinghamshire, and part of Oxfordshire) we have had several very successful buyouts in the past few years, the **Boot** at Bledlow Ridge and the **Red Lion** at Brill to name but two. Both pubs are now successful and popular businesses, despite what had been said about them before they were bought by their communities!

The Seven Stars, Dinton

Our most recent purchase by the community is the lovely 17th Century pub, the **Seven Stars** in Dinton, just off the A418 from Aylesbury to Thame.

The **Seven Stars** has existed, as a pub, since 1640, but was taken over ten years ago by a large corporate pub group (**Punch Taverns**) and since then it has seen ten landlords in ten years. Obviously, you are not going to get loyalty from the community without some continuity behind the bar!



On Friday 8th April 2010, a 'For Sale' notice was erected outside the pub, and this triggered the local villagers to form an Acquisition Team of an initial five people to see if there was sufficient interest from local residents to buy the pub.

An initial expression of interest was sought for investment in the region of £5000 to £10,000. This may seem high, but with half a million pounds to find, smaller investments would have required a prohibitive number of people.

Dick O'Driscoll, one of the Acquisition Team, described how people were investing for several different reasons. A large number of people did not want to see the pub go, but others were seeing the investment as a safe place for their money. At least one resident, who was looking to sell their house and move away from the village is planning on selling their share in the village pub as part of their house, as an added incentive to buy a house in the village!

The purchase was completed on 16th November, with the help of a grant, though the communal joy on securing the pub was overshadowed by the tragic and untimely death, three days before completion, of Chris Robinson whose passion and drive had helped secure the **Seven Stars**.

The pub had been saved for now, but this was only part of the story. The business had to be turned around, and the fabric of the building, that had been neglected for some time, repaired. As these repairs were being carried out, the Acquisition Team found themselves in the new role of running the pub while a permanent tenant was sought.

There was no desire for the return of short-term tenants, so bids were sought from a small number of people who had expressed interest in the pub. The villagers sought someone with a good vision for the business, while providing a reasonable return on their investment. Above all the pub should thrive!

Stephanie Guiraut and her business partner David Berry were duly appointed, and to quote Dick O'Driscoll, 'It was a good decision to hire a professional!'

The Russell Arms, Butlers Cross

As mentioned at the beginning of this article, 16 pubs are closing a week, so it was of no great surprise that we have recently heard of another pub under threat. The **Russell Arms**, a great pub just off the main road from Aylesbury to High Wycombe and on the 300 bus route, is for sale for £450,000 with people looking to turn it into housing or another Indian restaurant. It would be scandalous if this establishment, that has allegedly hosted several visiting dignitaries from nearby Chequers were to close!

Luckily, the 'Friends of the **Russell Arms**' are busy trying to raise money to purchase the pub for the villagers of Butlers Cross. At their latest meeting, it was agreed to put in an initial bid of £350,000 as an 'expression of interest', but further money is still required. The share structure will be in £500 units, sold in blocks of ten, with 100 blocks being available initially.

Following the successful purchase of the **Seven Stars**, the Friends are planning on using their model for the purchase and eventual running of the **Russell**.

If anybody is interested in purchasing shares, please get in contact with the Team at friendsoftherussell@gmail.com.

Obviously, we at **CAMRA** wish them every success, and hope that the community can keep its valuable hub.

Alexander Wright (Chairman)

For more information on how the **Seven Stars** was saved for Dinton, please visit www.savethestars.co.uk.

Information on the progress of the **Russell Arms**, and those of you interested in investing can visit the 'Friends of the Russell' at www.chilternbrewery.co.uk/friendsoftherussell.

* Pub closure figures compiled by CGA Strategy



REBELLION CRYPTIC PUMP CLIPS SERIES 2011



January

As we have featured in many issues of *Swan Supping* last year, one of our local breweries, *Rebellion* from Marlow, have been naming their monthly series of beers in the form of a series of clues forming their Cryptic Series Competition for 2011.

Their range of monthly beers has had either the pump clip pictures or names linked to a special theme. The competition for the imbibers of the ales was to work out the link/theme and they



February



March

could go on to win a great prize.

Once all the beers/pump clips had been announced by late November, people could then have a guess and enter the competition.

Forms for this competition allowed you to put forward your suggested theme plus an explanation as to the clues relating to the four final beers of 2011 (September to December).

All the forms with the correct series answer



April



May

were then be assessed and the person whose four additional answers matched the judges answers would be the winner.

The judges' decision was final and the winner, a regular at the brewery shop, was announced just in time for Christmas on 23rd December.

Just for fun, you can try and figure out the solution before turning to the answers on page 21. A hint is that the winning prize was two tickets to see England versus Australia at Lords.



June



July



August



September



October



November



December

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LOCAL BREWERY NEWS



VALE BREWERY

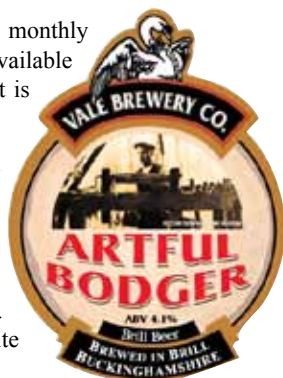
Vale started 2012 with a monthly special called *Hopocalypse Vale*. In line with the film theme they used Chinook hops to create a fresh golden ale at 4.3%. This beer was very well received and the brewery hoped that they had lifted spirits in the typical gloomy month of January.

Maintaining an optimistic theme their February special is called *Spring Promise*. This is a copper-coloured bitter with a fresh clean taste that reminds us that spring is not too far away.

Then in March they have *Artful Bodger*. This is a mahogany-coloured bitter with a fruity finish at 4.1%. Named after Bodgers who were skilled craftsmen who worked in the Chiltern woodlands making chair legs for the local furniture industry. They turned chair legs on pole lathes. One is featured on the pump badge. The picture is supplied courtesy of Wycombe Museum.

Due to the popularity of one of last year's monthly specials, *Red Kite* has become a regularly available beer. It has been slightly 'tweaked' so that it is slightly weaker at 4.0%.

Red Kite is a refreshing chestnut red beer with a bitter finish. Maris Otter Crystal, Chocolate and roasted barley provide a full body whilst Northdown, Fuggle, Williamette and Brewers Gold hops combine to offer a subtle starting bitterness with a strong bitter finish. More details can be found on their website www.valebrewery.co.uk.



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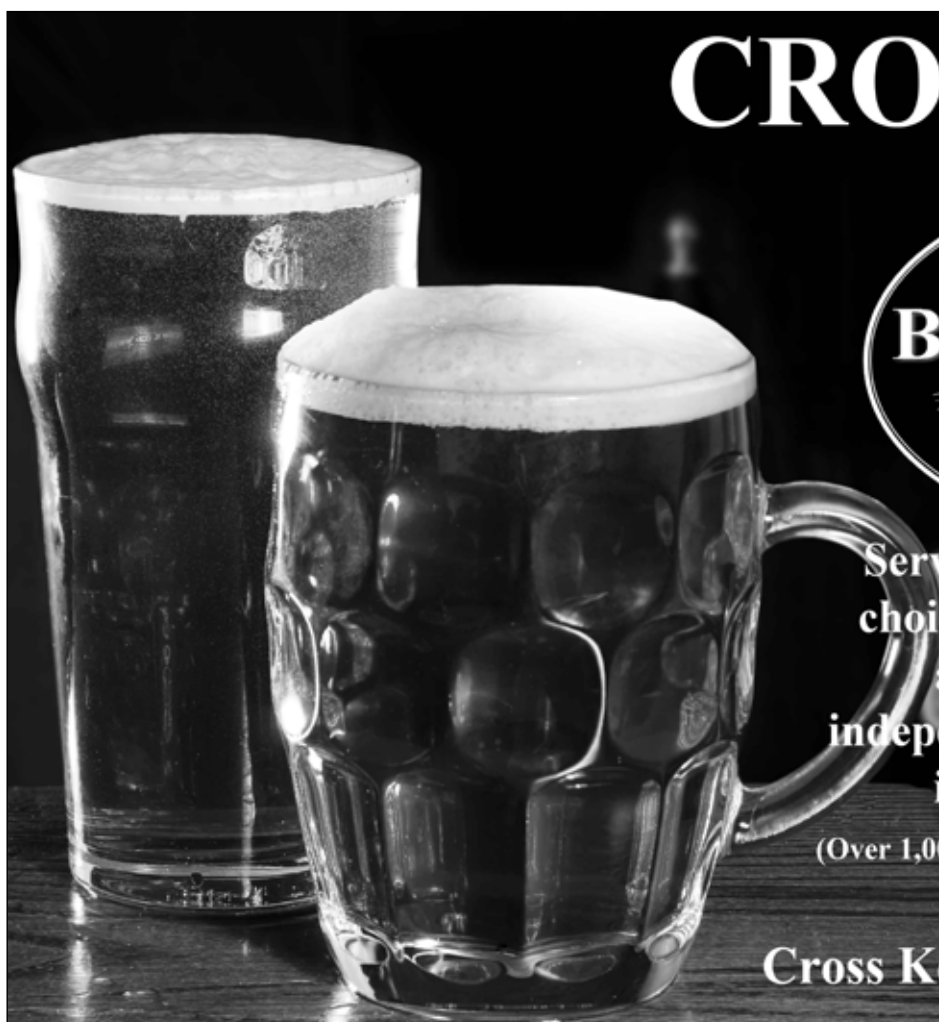
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LOCAL BREWERY NEWS

CHILTERN BREWERY

The new beer menu at the *Chiltern Brewery's* tap, the **Farmers' Bar** in the historic **King's Head**, Market Square, Aylesbury, has been very well received and proved to be a great success. January and February saw a celebration of old style Porters and Stouts featuring a host of hand-picked guest beers from breweries across England. Only one cask of beer was brought in from each brewery and only one tapped at a time. The festive spirit seemed undiminished in Aylesbury and the cask beers quickly sold out. George Jenkinson and his team at the **Farmers' Bar** are now hoping to hold many such celebrations throughout the year so 'watch this space', or more accurately watch the website on <http://www.chilternbrewery.co.uk/> or Twitter @Kings_Head for more information.

George and head brewer brother Tom have also launched a porter of their own. It combines five varieties of malt and wheat to create an almost black, superbly rich and truly complex dark porter that has a wonderful subtle sweet aftertaste of vanilla (pods are used in the brewing process). The porter reflects the tradition and heritage of this famous beer style.

There is more 'good beer' news for this won't be the last of the special limited edition ales from *Chiltern Brewery* for 2012, with plans for bottled and draught beers to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and the Olympic Games. Do look out for further details of what are certain to be very special beers.

For those of you lucky enough to live close to the site of the brewery in Terrick near Wendover, or those tempted to make it a destination for a great day out, the fabulous brewery shop in the famous beautifully restored cow shed is now open until 7 pm on Fridays with beer tasting on the first Friday in each month between 5pm – 7pm. You could also try one of the new collection of eight pint sharing packs, a fresh concept that is proving incredibly popular. In addition to all this, the excellent brewery tours have now been improved and offer a fascinating insight into the brewing process and the history of the Chiltern's oldest independent brewery.



T. 01296 613647 E. enquiries@chilternbrewery.co.uk

www.chilternbrewery.co.uk

The limited edition seasonal *Winter's Ale* was very popular and sold out within a few weeks, as did the aged *Vintage Buckinghamshire Ale*.

The introduction of wooden casks for the seasonal *300's Old Ale* has been well received. At the launch the brewery took the opportunity to hand over some labelled 40th Birthday bottles of beer to local **CAMRA** members to celebrate **CAMRA's** 40th birthday. The brewery advises that they intend to brew further dark beers for the casks as the seasons progress.



LODDON BREWERY

This year sees the tenth anniversary of the founding of **Loddon Brewery**.

It was founded in 2002 by Chris and Vanessa Hearn and the brewery has won a number of national and regional awards for its traditional real ales.

As well as organising an evening early on in February to enjoy their beers as well as some food by way of celebration, **Loddon Brewery** will be unveiling their new branding for their beers.

This announcement was just too late to feature in this issue of *Swan Supping*, but we are hoping to be able to feature it in the April/May edition.

A big 'Happy Birthday' to everyone at the brewery and let's hope that their success continues for at least another ten years.

HELP US WITH THE HISTORIES OF OUR PUBS!

You are invited to participate in a project on the histories of all Bucks (and Oxon Thame & Chinnor areas) pubs. The eventual goal is to put it all on a website very much like [gloucestershirepubs.co.uk] to preserve the work for future generations to expand upon.

Of course it requires a lot of work with a lot of attention to detail. Luckily for us Bucks County archives has a wealth of data on the history of pubs. See [buckscc.gov.uk/bcc/archives/Public_houses.page]

And we are also lucky in using the collection of data and papers from the late Mr. Laurence Wulcko who unfortunately died before he could publish the fruits of his work, but his papers are available in the county archives.

A lot of work already has been done in some areas of the county.

Thame was mostly sorted out in 2000 by Allan Hickman & Dave Bretherton, the authors of 'Thame Inns Discovered'. For High Wycombe Harvey Coltman already has done most if not all of the work. You can see the work he did prior to 2003 at Ken Goodearl's page [ccgi.petergoodearl.plus.com/hwpubs/hwpubs.php]. At the moment Harvey is wading through all the old Wycombe area newspapers for any snippet of information that can tell something about any of the Wycombe pubs. His database now contains over 3500 items.

The Bucks Archaeological Society is conducting more localised surveys, see [bucksas.org.uk/hbgprojects/2009_2.html]. They completed Winslow and Weston Turville, while Wendover, Stewkley and Whitchurch are in progress.

For Chesham Ray East and friends published 'Pubs and Inns of Chesham and Villages', already in a second edition. And of course many local historians mention pubs in their books, for example Julian Hunt and David Thorpe on Beaconsfield. And some have kindly put most of their data in the public domain, e.g. [julianhuntlocalhistory.co.uk].

Unfortunately we also know of a few cases of someone doing a lot of research just before dying, and all the detailed work getting lost forever (unlike Mr. Wulcko's collection which survives in the Bucks archives).

Need for accuracy!

It's no use just reiterating past work some of which is not necessarily all correct, so we'll have to check and double-check and document our sources extensively, so future exercises can easily track our route.

For example can we be absolutely sure that the **Black Boy** and the **Buckingham Arms** both situated in Aylesbury's Buckingham Street (earlier known as Back Street) actually occupied the same building, be it at different times, or was the former actually in a different building that doesn't exist anymore? The conclusions may differ, but the facts on which they are grounded shouldn't.

You're welcome to participate. If you only want to do one specific pub, only one village, or only a specific period, that's all fine. Even if you just want to contribute a copy of a unique photograph, drawings or pictures of the pub you're more than welcome.

Soon we hope to have a website available, initially just for sharing our work, but eventually with a rudimentary database with pubs names to make participation even easier.

Where are we now?

So far we are transcribing primary sources like the 1577 Return of Vintners, the 1872 Return of public houses in Buckinghamshire, and the pubs data of several old trade directories for Bucks (and the Oxon area).

And we've also located many lost pubs on old OS maps. So we think we have sufficient data to create an initial listing of Bucks pubs.

What's next?

First of all we are generating a little publicity to get more interested people on board. We'll also create a website at [beerinbucks.org.uk].

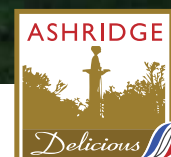
And depending on the number of persons who want to get involved we'll organise a few meetings around the county (probably near or in the Records Offices as that is where all the primary sources material are stored. You can contact us at [info@beerinbucks.org.uk].

Harry Coenen

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MALT TEASER

With the current fashion for hop-driven beers, and new varieties of ‘even tastier’ hops springing up on a monthly basis, it’s easy to forget that hops are purely a flavouring, and cannot in themselves be used to make beer.

Let us, just this once, celebrate the wonder that is fermented vegetable starch instead. Before that statement puts you off your beer, let me assure you that in your glass this ‘fermented vegetable starch’ refers to (hopefully) the finest British malting barley. In actual fact though, beer can be made from any grain you like, and the original ‘beers’ made around the world were based on whatever grain grew locally. For instance, in the Far East rice was used (for saké); in Germany wheat made German Hefeweizen beers whilst in Belgium it made the Belgian Wit style. Elsewhere, in the US maize has been used for, erm, cheap lagers, in Africa sorghum made strange white milky beers, but generally barley-based beers have become prevalent, and these are therefore what I’m going to focus on.

To understand the impact that barley has on our beer, it’s necessary to go right back to basics. First of all, you need to decide when to grow your crop. German and Czech brewers prefer barley sown in spring, which produces a cleaner, sweeter-tasting crop suitable for pilseners. British and Belgian brewers prefer winter-sown crops which produce a firmer flavour, more suited to Belgian and British beers styles.

Next you need to pick your barley variety. Barley is classified as two-row, four-row or six-row depending on how many fertile grains are in each row on the stem. In the US, the warmer climate generally dictates that six-row is used, producing a slightly rougher, sharper beer. European brewers have traditionally gone for the two-row as it has more starch and less husk – this tends to give a slightly fuller-bodied beer. Two-row Optic is the biggest selling malting barley due to its high yield and disease resistance. In Britain Maris Otter is the preferred barley; although it has a lower yield than Optic, it is recognised as one of the highest-quality and best-flavoured barleys in the world. Which does make one feel quite smug about British beer...!

Barley in its harvested form is no good for making beer at all. It purely contains starch, and contains no fermentable sugar that yeast can turn into

alcohol. When the grain senses the ideal conditions for growing (ie warm and damp), the starch will be converted into sugars inside the grain thus providing the food for the new barley plant to grow – this is known as germination. Maltsters seek to replicate this by making grain warm and damp for long enough that starch is turned into sugar – the grains are also turned regularly and kept well ventilated to prevent them going mouldy. The process takes up to a week.

Now – one problem with starting germination is that you are effectively starting to grow the barley. If you don’t use it immediately you’re going to end up with plants rather than malt – and more to the point, your precious fermentable sugars will have been used up. So having started germination, you need some way of stopping it at just the right point. And (the squeamish should look away now) the way that maltsters do this is by cooking the poor little grains in a big hot oven until they’re dead.

This cooking or ‘kilning’ affects the flavour of the malt (and thus the resulting beer) more than anything else. Malts that are gently roasted will give a lighter colour and more delicate flavours to the beer, while heavily roasted malts will give a beer a darker colour and more intense flavour. In practice a brewer will often use several different malts to achieve their desired consistency, and will usually be dominated by a paler malt type (for example, an English bitter might be about 90% pale ale malt, 5% crystal and 5% biscuit), whilst even stout tends to be dominated by pale ale malt, usually containing less than 10% black malt.

We may not be able to achieve the same masterful balance of different varieties of malt as our fantastic brewers (not forgetting matching the right blend of hops to them). However, by learning the impact that malts have on a beer you can at least have some idea of what the beers on offer might taste like, and choose one that suits you! Hopefully the list below might help with this...

Anth Duffield

BARLEY

PILSNER AND LAGER MALTS:

Pale gold colour, very mild flavour

PALE ALE MALT:

Pale amber, light toast flavour

BISCUIT MALT:

Deep amber colour, bread and biscuit flavour

BROWN MALT:

You guessed it – it’s a brown colour; gives a dry biscuit flavour.

MILD ALE MALT:

Brown colour, nutty flavour

VICTORY MALT:

Orange colour, nutty flavour

MUNICH MALT:

Amber, very malty flavour.

VIENNA MALT:

Similar to Munich but lighter and sweeter.

DEXTRIN MALT:

Adds little colour but gives a richer body and a great deal of sweetness. Must be used sparingly.

CARAMEL MALTS:

There are a variety of these, all of which have been ‘stewed’ after roasting to

produce some more complex sugars that give a richer, more malty beer with caramel sweetness. **Crystal Malt** and **Caramalt** are the best known of these. Darker, more roasted versions add a raisin notes.

SMOKED MALT:

Pale ale malt that has been smoked over smouldering wood (often beech wood). Gives (surprise, surprise) a smoked flavour.

CHOCOLATE MALT:

Deep ruby-black, bittersweet chocolate and roast flavour.

BLACK PATENT MALT:

As black as the name implies. Adds a charcoal flavour, which can be harsh – it’s invariably balanced against sweeter malts such as caramalt.

ROAST BARLEY:

This is not actually a malt (it is barley that is roasted before germination), so cannot be used to ferment beer on its own. However, mixed in with other malts it will add a dry coffee flavour to the resulting beer.

NON-BARLEY GRAINS USED IN BEER

WHEAT MALT:

Wheat malt is famously used to make

Belgian Wit beers (like *Hoegaarden*) and German Hefeweizens (eg *Erdinger*).

In a predominantly barley malt beer, the addition of a little wheat malt aids head retention.

RYE MALT:

Adds a spicy note to beers. American craft beers often use this.

FLAKED MAIZE:

Adds corn flavour, clarity and sweetness; often used as a cheap alternative source of fermentable sugar in mass-produced beers. Avoid!

FLAKED OATS:

Adds body, smoothness and a creamy head; it’s often used as a cheap way to improve the mouthfeel and appearance of mass-produced beers

RICE:

Rice is famously used to make saké, which as a fermented grain drink is technically a variety of beer!

It has often been used to give a lighter, crisper feel to lager (especially in Japan and North America), but unfortunately, like maize, is also used to cut the barley needed and thus save money.

LOCAL BEER FESTIVALS



7TH WINSLOW BEER FESTIVAL

March 16th & 17th (Friday & Saturday): Winslow Beer Festival, Public Hall, Elmfields, Winslow, Bucks. MK18 3JA.

Three sessions - Friday Evening 7pm - 11pm, Saturday Matinee 11am - 7pm (with Live RBS Six Nations Rugby being shown - if available from BBC), Saturday Evening 7 - 11pm.

Over 40 beers. This is a festival run by the Lions Club of Winslow in association with the *Milton Keynes CAMRA* and run as a charity fundraising event for local charities, last year they raised over £10,000, so come along and 'Drink for Charity!'

Session entrance fee £5 including commemorative glass and programme (card carrying *CAMRA* members also receive a complimentary drink voucher). Refreshments are available.

Tickets will be available in advance from 1st March from the Bell Hotel, Market Square, Winslow.

This is their seventh festival and has proved to be very popular so ensure you get your tickets early, as venue capacity will restrict numbers.

Speaker of the House of Commons and local MP, John Bercow will be at the Official Opening at 7pm on the Friday 16th March.

They hope to be showing Live Six Nations Rugby on a large screen on availability through the BBC during the Saturday Matinee session together with live music sessions from 'J B Band' a local quartet playing acoustic sets of Jazz, Blues, Country and Middle of the Road during the Saturday Evening session.

More details on their website www.winslowlions.org.uk.

22ND BATTERSEA BEER FESTIVAL

The 22nd Battersea Beer Festival will be held at the BAC (Battersea Arts Centre), Town Hall Road, Lavender Hill, London SW11 5TN

Festival Dates & Times: Wednesday 8th to Friday 10th of February. Open daily 12 noon until 11pm. Admission £4 (£3 before 5pm on Wednesday), *CAMRA* members get £1 discount at all times.

150 kils of real ale from around country, traditional ciders and perries, country wines and continental beers. Hot and cold food. Soft drinks available.

Contact: info@batterseabeerfestival.org.uk



28TH LONDON DRINKER BEER & CIDER FESTIVAL

The 28th London Drinker Beer & Cider Festival is to be held at the Camden Centre, Bidborough Street, London WC1H 9AU

Contact: ianshacklock@gmail.com
www.camranorthlondon.org.uk

Dates: Wednesday 7th - Saturday 9th March

Opening and Admission: Wednesday-Thursday: 12 - 3pm (free), 5pm-10.30pm (£3.50, £2.50 *CAMRA* members); Friday: 12-10.30pm (£3.50, £2.50 *CAMRA* members). Last admission 10pm.

Wheelchair accessible. 70+ real ales plus great range of imported beers, ciders/perries. Tombola, table games and excellent food every session. Music free! London LocAle bar.

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Quiz Night 1st Thursday in the month

BEER IN AMERICA



As promised I'm sending you my analysis of 'Beer in America', though this statement may be a little zealous as so far I haven't actually left the Orlando area. From my experiences in drinking and selling beer here I can only advise one thing to the hardened real ale drinker: don't come to Florida. There really isn't much for you here. And honestly I can understand why. I don't believe real ale would keep well here due to the high temperatures all year round. I've only been here since October and we have had roughly five cold days... Today

for example, a day in mid January, the temperatures are forecast to be an average of 25°C. I hate to think what summer will be like!

I am working in the UK pavilion of Epcot at Walt Disney World. This is meant to showcase the culture and flavours of the United Kingdom and doesn't do a bad job. They have a band that plays covers of British rock music like the Beatles, the Who, the Police and many others. There is a fish and chip shop that even uses beer batter on the fish, there's the typical sports shop which sells football merchandise, and there's even a tea shop where you can stock up on Twinings. But most importantly there's a pub and a beer cart where you can purchase British beer! Now while the pub is an area I am yet to infiltrate (got some exams to do first) the beer cart is a place I work several times a week. The selection

available there disappoints me: bottled cider (*Strongbow*, *Woodpecker* and *Magners*), canned *Guinness*, *Stella Artois* (which is from Belgium!) and *Bass Ale* which I've never seen sold in a pub in the UK.

The only other ale I've seen on sale in bars around the area is *Samuel Adams* which is pleasant enough. Ale here is all kegged and therefore as cold and carbonated as lager, which is why I feel it would disappoint many of the real ale drinkers of *CAMRA*. However my friend introduced me

to *Dundee Beers* which

are made by a New York brewing company which do an amazing range of bottled ales, porters, lagers and IPAs. Buying a multipack is like a mini beer festival! And while I am yet to find any of these beers sold in bars it gives me hope that in some parts of America good beer is appreciated.

So the search continues! But I'd like to leave you with one last comment. I heard from an American guest that made me bite my tongue and later (after I had gotten over the shock) chuckle about. The gentleman turned to a stranger in the line who was having trouble deciding what to go for and remarked 'If you want to have a really good beer you should definitely have the Stella!'

Ani Crawley



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CRYPTIC ANSWERS

Answers to the **Rebellion** Cryptic Pump Clips Theme 2011 (page 14).

January: *Sticky Wicket*

Cricket, rolling of a batting crease.

February: *Three Sheets*

Captain's hat blown off into sea

March: *Eclipse*

Cricket ball

April: *Short Pint*

Looking at the glass in the mirror, the reflection says POINT and is backwards relative to how you expect to see it in a reflection, hence 'Short Backward Point,' a position Andrew Stauss sometimes fields at.

May: *Infinity*

Difficult one! You can fit the letters A & S (Andrew Strauss' initials) into the shape of the symbol of infinity

June: *Twelfth Man*

Cricketing term

July: *Googly*

Picture is cricket related to batting as is Googly.

August: *Cackhandler*

Signifies left hander, which Andrew Strauss is.

September: *Dr Bob*

Dr Bob is a muppet and one of his nicknames is Muppet

October: *Decomposed*

Has bats in it and Decomposer could suggest Strauss the German composer

November: *Handyman*

ANDY is in the title, the man is wearing Levi Strauss jeans and there is a crease in the centre of the picture.

December: *Santus Rewards*

Anagram of Andrew Strauss

Theme: **CRICKET**. Final Answer: **ANDREW STRAUSS**.



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Branch Diary

Everybody welcome to all socials and meetings!

February

Friday 3rd CHARLES DICKENS 200TH BIRTHDAY CRAWL

6.00pm Cittie of York, 22 High Holborn, WC1V 6BS * (Chancery Lane)
6.45pm Knight's Templar, 95 Chancery Lane, WC1A 2DT #
7.30pm Ye Old Cheshire Cheese, 145 Fleet Street, EC4A 2BU *
8.15pm Ye Old Mitre, 1 Ely Court, Ely Place, EC1N 6SJ #*
9.00pm Craft Beer Company, 82 Leather Lane, EC1N 7TR
9.45pm The Old Tun, 125-6 Saffron Hill, EC1N 8QS #* (Farringdon)
(# = GBG pub, * = Significant Dickens association)

Thursday 9th EARLY EVENING HIGH WYCOMBE SOCIAL

6.30pm Belle Vue, 7.30pm Bootleggers'

Wednesday 15th SOCIAL

8pm Seven Stars, Dinton, 9pm Dinton Hermit, Ford.

Monday 20th BRANCH AGM

7.30pm Cross Keys, Thame, OX9 3HP

All local **CAMRA** members should attend as we review the last year's campaigning and decide the priorities for the New Year.

Friday 24th PRE LENT LONDON PUB SOCIAL

5.00pm Royal Oak, 44 Tabard Street, SE1 4JU (near Borough station)
5.45pm Charles Dickens, 160 Union Street, SE1 0LH
6.30pm New Wheatsheaf, 24 Southwark Street, SE1 1TY
7.00pm Market Porter, 9 Stoney Street, SE1 9AA

7.30pm Rake, 14 Winchester Walk, SE1 9AG

8.00pm Southwark Tavern, 22 Southwark Street, SE1 1TU

Monday 27th GBG SELECTION MEETING

8.00pm Bell, Aylesbury

March

Tuesday 6th LANE END AND WHEELER END SOCIAL

8.00pm Brickmakers, Wheeler End, 8.45pm Chequers, Wheeler End Common, 9.30pm Grouse and Ale, Lane End.

Monday 12th BRANCH MEETING

8.00pm Broad Leys, Aylesbury

Tuesday 20th BRANCH SOCIAL

8.30pm Peacock Hotel, Henton; 9.30pm Lions of Bledlow, Bledlow.

Wednesday 28th NORTHERN SOCIAL

8.30pm, Swan Inn, Stewkley, 9.15pm Cock, Wing, 9.45pm Queen's Head, Wing

October

Vale of Aylesbury Beer Festival, Bucks County Council Sports & Social Club, Lower Road, Aylesbury, Friday 26th & Saturday 27th of October.

Further details can be found on our website
www.swansupping.org.uk

CATCH UP DURING BRANCH SOCIALS:-
PHONE 0792 215 8971



Buckinghamshire County Council Trading Standards
County Hall, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire HP20 1UP
t: 08454 040506 (Consumer Direct for advice)
t: 08453 708090 (for business advice)

Oxfordshire County Council Trading Standards
PO Box 618, County Hall, Oxford, Oxon. OX1 1ND
t: 0845 0510845 f: 01865 783106
e: trading.standards@oxfordshire.gov.uk

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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

Swan Supping

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E-Mail : editor@swansupping.org.uk

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Copy deadline for next issue, due out 1st April, is 14th March 2012.

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 for each edition you wish to receive to the Editor 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).

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

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

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