

FREE

Swan Supping

Issue 85

Aug/Sep 2011



COVER STORY

**The Rebellion Open
Day raising money for
charity
Page 5**



**CAMPAIGN
FOR
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PINK & LILY

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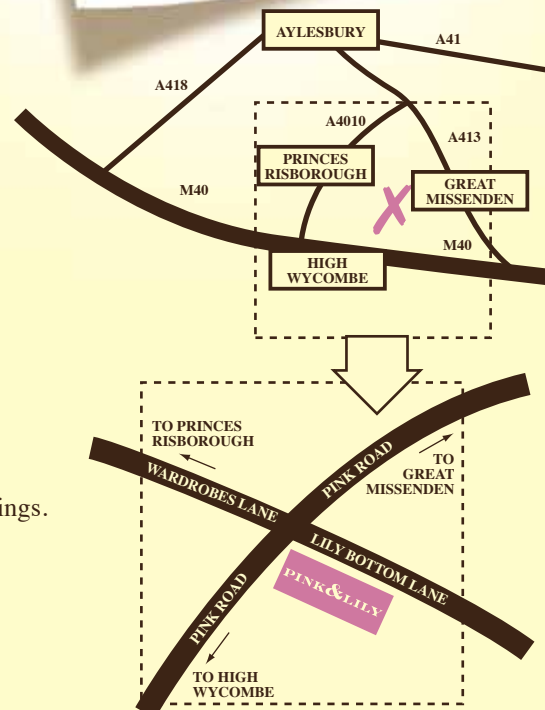
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NEWS FROM THE EDITOR



Welcome to another bumper sized edition of *Swan Supping*. When we did our first issue with 32 pages, I said that we wouldn't be doing it on a regular basis! However, as it was the August/September issue, it looks like we might be doing it as an annual thing.

This is due to the number of beer festivals that occur at this time of year. They seem to be like buses - you wait ages for one then a whole lot come along at once. I trust that they all will be successful and hope that the weather is kind. Please get along to at least one of them if you can!

We also have another brewery starting in the branch! We already know about the brewery being set up at the **Hop Pole** in Aylesbury, I can hear you cry! Well, there is another one! The **XT Brewery** is being set up at Notley Farm near Thame, and we have a report from the brewers on page 4. We will, of course, keep you up-to-date on the progress of both breweries. We thought that we were already blessed with a great selection of local brews, but I suppose we can't have too many!

In fact, we seem to have gone brewery mad in this issue as we feature a bevy of reports from all over Europe!

The branch has had a good couple of months with some great socials. We had our annual day out in the Black Country, which was thoroughly enjoyed by all those who came along. If you missed it this year, don't worry, we will be running it again next year!

Rebellion Brewery held an open weekend offering free beer, live music and food which raised over £32k for Wycombe Hospital Scanappeal. Branch members were well in evidence for both of the days. We also had a social at the **Haddenham Beer Festival** which raised around £29k for local charities. Both these events involved lots of people drinking and enjoying

themselves without so much as a hint of trouble. It is such a shame that the mass media tends to dwell on the downside of alcohol consumption and ignore the many good news stories that are out there.

The number of pubs that we can use is still declining! Recent closures have included the **New Zealand** in Aylesbury and the **Four Horseshoes** in Stokenchurch. Although the future of the latter pub is uncertain, it looks like the **New Zealand** is to become housing. We are planning a feature on pub closures in our next issue, so please make sure that we know if your pub is under threat, or has already been lost.

We have also been planning a regular feature on 'long-lost' pubs and we wanted to do an article on the **Friend at Hand** in West Wycombe. All we are lacking is a decent photograph (preferably colour) that we can use to compliment the text. If you can help, please let me know (contact details are on page 30). We will be happy to give you an acknowledgement as part of the article.

Last issue, we held a competition to win a bottle of **Adnams North Cove** oak aged vodka. We had a record number of people taking part, all of whom answered the four questions correctly, but the winner, which was decided by a draw at the July branch meeting, held at the **William Robert Loosley** in High Wycombe, is Louise Mathias, and **Adnams** will be sending the prize to her directly. Congratulations, and if you have trouble finishing it off, I'm sure we can find some volunteers to help you out!



My usual round of applause for all the hard work done by all our contributors and special thanks to Colin Stanford for another of his wonderful cartoons.

One last thing. As we were preparing *Swan Supping*, we heard that Mike Clemence, who regular readers will remember for his 'Tasted on my Travels' articles, had been taken into hospital. We all wish him well and hope that he has a speedy recovery.

David W. Roe - Swan Supping Editor

NATIONAL CAMRA NEWS



CAMRA has been working alongside Living Streets and Civic Voice to table an amendment to the Localism Bill. If passed it would enable communities to decide locally whether or not to extend planning protection to valued local services, such as Pubs, ensuring that planning permission is required for changing their use.

Currently, the planning system and use class orders are inadequate to prevent the demolition or change of use of local services. For instance, it is currently permitted to change a Community Pub into a betting shop, mini-supermarket or offices without planning permission or consultation with local people.

Lord Lucas, who tabled the amendment, said: 'I am delighted to be proposing this amendment to

the Localism Bill and expect broad cross-party support in the House of Lords. If planning is to be truly local, communities have to be able to protect local amenities and this amendment would simply ensure that they can do so.'

Alongside this, Living Streets have launched an e-action which encourages supporters to contact Eric Pickles MP, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and urge him to protect local shops and services in the Government's review of use classes. The website is now live and ready to use.

CAMRA is encouraging all its members, supporters and all English beer drinkers and pub goers to support the campaign and contact Eric Pickles MP.

Jonathan Mail, Head of Policy and Public Affairs, said: 'I urge all members and persons who want to defend their community institutions to back this campaign. If successful, the campaign could save many pubs from irreparable damage, and help communities hold on to their valued local services.'

World's Largest Pub!

The **Great British Beer Festival 2011 (GBBF)** at Earls Court is drawing ever closer, with **CAMRA** hoping for another record-breaking event!

In 2010, over 66,000 people attended the five day extravaganza, with over 1,000 **CAMRA** volunteers giving up their time to make the festival the biggest to date.

This year, festival-goers should expect 700+ real ales, ciders, perries and foreign beers from around the world, with **CAMRA** claiming to have something to suit every drinker's taste buds! To accompany this heady range, the festival offers a great choice of food from traditional cuisine to classic pub snacks, unforgettable live music, a wide variety of pub games to occupy your time, and an array of tutored tastings from some of the leading authorities in the beer world.

Opening Times: Tuesday 2nd 5pm - 10:30pm
Wednesday 3rd to Friday 5th 12pm - 10:30pm
Saturday 6th 11am - 7pm.

For further information on the festival, visit www.gbbf.org.uk.

A CERTAIN X FACTOR - A NEW BREWERY

The moment when reality slapped me square on, I was standing in a queue at the bank. My trousers were soaked in wort and my hands stained green from breaking up a block of hops. I had given up a cosy life in a nice office for early morning starts and constantly wet socks. Brewing is certainly not glamorous. But I smiled to myself and felt an inner glow; I had no regrets.

Beer! It's Britain's national drink for a reason. Good quality British Beer is one thing that makes living here so great; there is nothing else quite like it in the world.

I have lived in different countries but the one constant thing throughout it all has been a love of beer. It's a wonderful creation and people have enjoyed it since the dawn of civilisation. Beer served in a welcoming local pub is the lubricant and glue of a community.

There is such an amazing diversity of beer in this country from a range of wildly different breweries. However there are some very unfortunate people who think real ale is made from twigs and leaves, and much of the beer branding in this country does little to help.

Over the past year I have been researching, working at another excellent local brewery and raiding piggy banks in order to start my own new venture. Gradually that plan is coming together: the brewery site is leased, casks ordered, the brew kit is designed and will be proudly built in Britain. With a good wind from behind, the first brews should flow by autumn this year.

Based at Notley Farm, near Thame, the new **XT Brewery** will primarily produce a variety of quality cask real ale but we may dabble in the new style of craft keg beers as well. Real Ale is an honest yet sophisticated



drink; it should be presented in an unfussy and straightforward way to help widen its appeal and show people what they are missing.

So what's with the funny name, **XT**? In today's directory of brewers there was an obvious empty space between W and Y. Traditionally X was the standard method of naming beers; brewers simply added more Xs as the beer got stronger, and T signified the best ale kept back for the boss's own table. There is a strong link to tradition but it also has a modern ring to it.

A man and a woman walk into a pub.... how do they choose which beers to drink? How do you squish all the relevant information onto one little pump clip? What do I, and most other beer drinkers, want to learn about each beer in order to help make that all important decision about which one to try? Our labels will seem a bit different when you first see them, but we hope they will answer those questions.

Aren't there enough breweries in Britain now? Is there ever too much of a good thing? Competition is good; it can drive innovation, encourage better quality and bring a greater product variety. The growing army of enthused owner-operator micro breweries will expand the appeal of this wonderful product. We are not competing with other micro brewers but with the big multinationals that control the vast bulk of the beer market.

There is still a lot to be done before we can mash-in for the first time. We hope you will follow our progress as we dig drains (yes, more glamour), untangle red tape and refurbish our old farm building into a working brewery. You can follow our progress on Facebook, look for: XTbrewing.

Happy Drinking! **Russ and Gareth**, xt@xtbrewing.com

The Queens Head Wing

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LOCAL BREWERY NEWS

REBELLION BREWERY

Our cover photograph this issue shows some of the happy drinkers enjoying the **Rebellion** Open weekend which was held over Saturday 9th and Sunday 10th of July.

Free beer and brewery tours were available all weekend plus live music. The aim of the weekend was to say a big thank you to all our their customers and to raise as much money for the Wycombe Hospital Scanappeal as possible.

The previous event, held two years ago, raised over £19,000, but this year an attendance of around 6,500 people raised the terrific sum of £32,423. Lovely weather helped and the fantastic, happy atmosphere, made this event one of the highlights of the year. It's only a shame that we have to wait two years for the next one!

TRING BREWERY

Tring have announced their now annual 'Name the Beer' competition. The format is simple, all you need to do is come up with a suitable name for one of their beers. The best three suggestions will be applied to three of next year's monthly specials. The competition is open to anyone aged 18 years or over and the prize for your efforts is a free 9 pint tin of beer every month for the duration of 2012. A total of 108 pints.

Before you start throwing random, rude or raunchy names at us, please bear in mind that any name needs to fit on a pump clip. Something like *Abbots Wonderful Clock* is about as long as they

can accommodate. The other thing to remember is that all **Tring Brewery** beer names have a story behind them, whether it is derived from local fact, history, literature, myth or legend. The story will need to be submitted with the name. Entries should be sent to the brewery and will be accepted up to midnight August 31st. The three winners will then be announced in September.

VALE BREWERY

Vale have had a very busy couple of months, the monthly specials have been selling well, and the beers have started appearing in larger pub chains recently. *Black Beauty Porter* was available in several **M & B** outlets, *Nicholsons*, *Ember* and *Vintage Inns*, including the **Bugle Horn** in Stone recently.

Gravitas is widely available in the *Wetherspoon* empire throughout August.

At the **Great British Beer Festival** in early August **Vale's Black Swan Mild** and the bat beer, *Bechstein's Best*, are featured. So it is worth a trip to Earls Court for that venue's last **GBBF**.

August sees another new monthly special. They hope they are not tempting fate, but this offering is called *Summer Storm*. At 4.2% this is a russet coloured bitter, with Northdown, Crystal and Chinook hops mixing to offer a floral aroma and a mix of flavours where tangerine and grapefruit are subtle but present.

As we enter September the Rugby World Cup starts in New Zealand. To commemorate this,

a special called *Lock, Prop and Barrel* at 4% has been created. This will be a traditional mid brown coloured beer with New Zealand hops.

The next **Vale Brewery** open day date has been set. So put the 24th September, in your diary. There will be a full range of beers available but this time a tutored tasting in the brewery, and in a separate area, tasters to try of all the different beers available. As last time, there will be at least two special brews available in addition to the regular range and monthly specials. Food will be available on site.



VALE BREWERY - Brill Beer!

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Head to Brill for choice and quality of bottled beers.

Over 65 different foreign bottled beers, and growing!

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Our Brill Brewed beers are available: Bottled Real Ale: £22 a case or £1.99 a bottle.

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**e-mail:
info@valebrewery.co.uk
www.valebrewery.co.uk**



LOCAL NEWS

ASHENDON

The **Gatechangers** active management team is hopeful a sign indicating the presence of the pub in the village will be installed in a farmer's field in the very near future. Currently serving **Greene King IPA**, ever popular with the villagers, plus one other. This could be an offering from **Vale** or **Tring**, but next on here will be **Cottage Brewery Mallard IPA**.

ASTON CLINTON

The **Oak**, a beautiful 500-year old thatched pub, is benefiting from the energy and enthusiasm of its two new landlords, Steve Russell and Joolz Ivan, who took over in November last year. Joolz has come from an impressive background with over thirty years in the catering world and has successfully turned round a number of pubs in his career. Steve, an upbeat character with great front of house skills, is proud of the quality of his ales on offer: **Seafarers**, **London Pride**, **Discovery**, plus a guest from the **Fuller's** portfolio. The **Oak** has an 'all you can eat' Curry night Friday every three weeks with live music, and always a luncheon and evening menu (and specials board) for those that like to dine, Tuesday - Sunday.

On the 27th - 29th August the **Oak** will be holding its Annual Beer Festival. There will be live music throughout, a Hog Roast and a BBQ as well as approximately twenty different ales, plus five or so different interesting ciders. All will be held in the large beer

garden with an additional huge marquee just in case the weather isn't quite right!

The **Oak** is in the finals, (last fifteen), for the prestigious 'Griffin Trophy' held by **Fullers** annually. Winning the trophy is the ultimate accolade for any **Fuller's** licensee, with every aspect of the pub's operation being heavily scrutinised over two rounds of judging. The overall winner is selected from the winners of three main categories including Best Country/Village Pub.

AYLESBURY

The **Broad Leys** held their first ever beer festival early in June. This was located in the new extension and comprised of 11 ales - five from the **Marstons** empire, one from **Vale** and five from **Rebellion**. They had a good beer menu complete with tasting notes, but this author stuck with four from the **Rebellion** stable and all were first class. The festival appears to have gone well and more may be in the offing in the future - a winter one would be great! Beers on offer when visited were **Loddon Hoppitt**, **Sharps Doom Bar** and **Ringwood Filly Drift**.

Recent work at the **Dairy Maid**, which converted it into a 'Hungry Horse', has resulted in an increase of trade by nearly 50%. The kitchen has been extended, and the previous dining area is now an adult bar area (no kids under 18) and the previous pool room has become the dining area which has also been extended into the patio area. The beers currently on offer are **Greene King IPA**, **Abbot** and **Morland Old Speckled Hen**.

The **Green Man** has opened 'Barkers' in their upstairs restaurant offering an

evening steak menu. The beef is from a local meat supplier and can be washed down with **Shepherd Neame Spitfire**. Their fresh, English, home-made breakfasts and lunches will continue as usual. They are also offering outside seating for a trial period arranged with the council as part of a plan to inject more life into the market square. After getting agreement with the County Council, District Council, Licensing authorities and the Town Centre management, it will be possible to eat and/or drink al fresco and enjoy what is left of the summer.

Richard and Lisa have returned to the **Hop Pole**! They will now be in charge when the brewery at the back of the pub starts producing what has been called a series of 'one-off eclectic brews'. Work is still progressing on the brewing equipment and test brews are due to start shortly. Trade has already improved at the pub and they regularly offer a choice of ten real ales. Opening times have increased with the pub open all day on Tuesday again (the pub opens midday, every day, except for Monday when it opens at 4pm). A beer festival is being planned for later on this year.

By the time you read this, **Chiltern Brewery** will just have launched the first of their limited edition brews for 2011, **Chiltern Gold** at the **Kings Head** - it will be available in August for as long as it lasts! They will also be doing a celebration of Scottish ales over the days of 19th/20th and 26th/27th of August. Two different casks will be available on each day and will be a good mixture of hoppy and malty beers, so there will be something for everyone.

The **New Zealand** has closed and been sold off for redevelopment. According to a nearby resident, the plot will be all houses by next year. Another one bites the dust! In our last issue, we gave the wrong details of the current housing situation for landlords Robbie and Chris and we apologise for any inconvenience this may have caused.

Building work continues at the **Queens Head** but this has taken longer than expected as underpinning has been needed at this listed building due to subsidence. No details yet about a possible opening date.

CADSDEN

David Cameron was recently spotted at the **Plough** having a lunchtime drink. A photo of him has shown him imbibing, although it's said he was drinking...**Guinness**...well, at least it was alcoholic.

CHEARSLEY

The **Bell** serves **Fullers Chiswick** and **London Pride** and **George Gale & Co Seafarers Ale** at 3.6%. Sharon & Oliver are planning a major event for September with tickets for adults at £30 for the weekend.

CHINNOR

The **Red Lion** is holding a 'Rebel Lion Beer Festival' on Saturday 20th August featuring **Rebellion** beers and real cider.

CUDDINGTON

The **Crown** has **Adnams Southwold Bitter** as well as **Fullers London Pride** and **Summer Ale**.

DINTON

At the **Seven Stars** you can choose between **Sharps Doom Bar** and **Fullers London Pride**. Thai menu with roasts on weekends and Bank Holidays. The Dinton & Westlington villagers' acquisition team is still working on a buy-out option for the pub.

FORD

The **Dinton Hermit** is now sticking with **Vale** beers. **Best Bitter** is always available with **Bechstein's Best** at 4.1% available when visited. Prior to that it was **Endeavour**.

GIBRALTAR

The **Bottle and Glass** keeps **Greene King Morland Original Bitter** on pretty much all the time but when visited recently a beautiful drop of **Hook Norton Haymaker** at 5.0% was sampled that went down a treat.

HADDENHAM

Diary Date - The Haddenham Beer Festivals Trust are pleased to announce the date for the WinterFest will be Saturday 10th December 2011 - see www.haddenham-beer-festival.co.uk.

The **Rising Sun** continues to serve all its beer straight from the firkin. Rob and Miranda try to have at least one, often two ever rotating **Vale** beers available, plus a third, or even a fourth, which could be almost anything, from almost anywhere. When visited recently **Wells & Youngs Waggle Dance** was seen. Recent requests from the Compost Club include **Loose Cannon Brewery Abingdon Bridge** and **Vale's** delicious mild, **Black Swan**.

At the **Green Dragon** there's a choice between the regular **Sharps Doom Bar** and two guests that change at least weekly. Recently **Brains Skull Attack (SA)** and **Fullers London Pride** have been available. Next up are **Black Sheep Best Bitter** and a **Vale** beer.

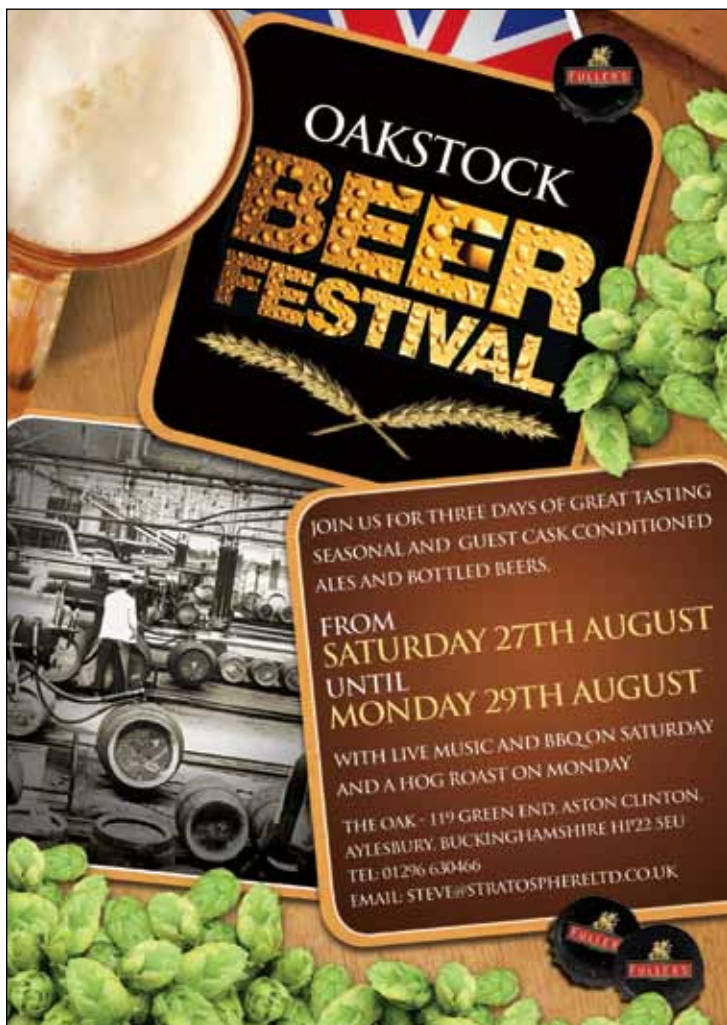
The **Kings Head** serves **Adnams Southwold Bitter**, **Fullers London Pride** and **Sharps Doom Bar**.

The **Red Lion's** 'Free-of-Tie Lease' is still for sale - don't miss this opportunity of a lifetime. This local's pub is popular with darts and cribbage teams. Permanent fixtures are **Black Sheep Brewery Bitter** and **Adnams Southwold Bitter** supported by a **Vale** beer such as **VPA**.

The **Rose & Thistle** is sticking to serving **Greene King IPA**, **Hardy & Hansons Olde Trip** and **Westgate Brewery Ale Fresco**.

HAMBLEDEN

The **Stag and Huntsman** will be holding its annual beer festival over the August Bank Holiday. Besides offering a large range of traditional ales and a cider, there will also be a field for camping available for those needing to sleep off the beer! A week later, after the last day of opening which will be September 4th, the pub will be closing for six months for major work to be carried out. There will be an extension, with a new kitchen along the side of the garden and the existing kitchen will be made into a bigger dining area. They are also going to go from having three letting rooms to eight.



HIGH WYCOMBE

High Wycombe Rugby Club will hold its ninth Beer festival on the 11th and 12th of November when on the Saturday they host Swindon Rugby Club, recently promoted to their league. The beers on offer will be based on the theme, Bucks Beers versus Wiltshire Ales in a County Challenge. If you do come along, besides enjoying good food, good music and fine ales from across these regions offering some of the finest tastes from both counties, you can help decide which is the best beer on show.

LITTLE KINGSHILL

The **Full Moon** pub and restaurant has been on record since 1830, but serving local and visiting folk since many a moon before then (if anyone has any further history do let us know). The pub was restored, rather than refurbished, in March 2011, back towards its original look and style. The pub has retained its original bar and salon rooms with flagstone and oak wood floors now run throughout, found under the old carpets. The bar's false back wall was knocked out to extend the staff's serviceable area (for the customer's benefit) and it's looking as original as one could ever imagine. The north garden comes with the discovery of what was or will be a Pétanque Piste (ashen Boule pitch) and a large hut, for which rabbits and/or hens are still being interviewed, considered for a possible residency.

LUDGERSHALL

As part of an evening social, we made a rare excursion to a sadly neglected part of the branch. The **Bull & Butcher** serves *Wells Eagle IPA* and *Vale Best* and has an Aunt Sally pitch. Recent alterations to the pub have created more space for the restaurant side but the changes haven't affected the area which the local drinkers use.

MARSH

A convoy of vintage cars descended on the **Prince of Wales** on the evening of 22nd June. It might be the most appropriate pub in the branch area for this as it's one of the most traditional and least changed of hostelrys, having been run by the same landlord, Horace King, for over 45 years.

NAPHILL

Size has always been an issue at the **Wheel**, so Mark and Claire have re-invented it! They are now pleased to announce that their Dining/Function room is now open for business. Although they have lost the majority of the back garden do not despair... Beer Festivals will now be held in the front garden, which means a bigger marquee, which means... well you know what they are getting at! In fact, you can find out for yourselves when the **Wheel** holds another joint beer festival with the nearby **Whip**, Lacey Green, on Friday 9th and Saturday 10th of September. At a recent social at the **Wheel**, we enjoyed *Conwy Beachcomber Blonde* as well as *Greene King H&H Olde Trip*, which was our other choice from the range of beers available.

PIDDINGTON

On a recent social we visited the **Seven Stars** which has been run by Bob and

Jackie for the last two years. They had taken over the pub at a low ebb when it had been a restaurant called **Cootz** and are steadily building up trade by making it a more traditional establishment. One beer from the *Vale* brewery is the only offering at the moment until demand warrants an additional beer. Live music every Sunday evening and a charity quiz on Tuesdays plus good quality food are the other attractions at this very animal friendly pub.

QUAINTON

The **George & Dragon** is holding a Beer Festival on Saturday 24th September from 12 to 12. This will be joined by the Steam Engine fair.

At the **Swan & Castle** there is to be a Summer's End Music and Beer Festival on Saturday 3rd September from 12 noon until late.

STEWKLEY

The **Swan** is holding a Music Showcase on Sunday 28th August with fine ales, four live bands in the garden, BBQ and fish & chips, plus a children's play area.

STOKENCHURCH

The second Stokenchurch Autumn Fayre and Beer Festival will take place on Saturday 3rd of September.

The **Four Horseshoes** is still closed.

THAME

On offer at the **Birdcage** at the moment are *Rebellion IPA* and *Smugglers*, while at the **Spread Eagle** opposite they also had the *Rebellion Smugglers*.

The **Cross Keys** has now increased the number of its pumps to nine (eight ales and one cider). *Thame Brewery* beers can be found, but they tend to be drunk within a day of being put on. If visiting Thame to specifically try *Thame Brewery* beers, ring beforehand to see if they will be on. In early August they will be selling a one-off beer, *White Hound*. This will come out somewhere between 5 to 6%. Only three firkins will be available and they will go fast. Again, ring to find out when it will be available. Last month, Roger Protz visited and gave a talk about beer – what else? He was even heard to say one or two complimentary words about the *Mr Splodge* mild, one of the beers being tasted. A firkin of *Thame Brewery Hoppiness* will be available at the Chinnor Beer Festival.

There is a new manager at the **James Figg** – Tom Goldsmith (Goldie to his friend) – I have left out the (s) – who has transferred from the **Thatch**. Tom is keen to keep the high quality level of his real ales which were *Purity Mad Goose*, *Vale Best*, *Wells Bombardier* and *Old Hooky*. They are getting their own set of Aunt Sally sticks so that customers can try this game whilst enjoying a pint or two. On 25th August (provisionally) they are hoping to hold another meet the (4 or 5) brewers evening. Ring pub nearer time for details.

Three ales are usually available at the **Rising Sun**, *Brakspears Best* and the seasonal beer *Hooray Henry* and currently *Marstons Pedigree*.

The **Star & Garter** has reopened under its former name as an Indian Restaurant and pub selling *Morlands Original*.

The **Six Bells** has reopened its patio area, after a large makeover with raised decking and lots of plants and new furniture, where you can enjoy the *Fullers London Pride*, *Seafarers*, *HSB*, their latest seasonal beer and a beer from the *Chiltern Brewery*.

The Thame Food Festival will be held on Saturday 24th September. *Chiltern* and *Compass* breweries will be having stands at the festival and the **James Figg** will be running a beer tent.

TURVILLE

The **Bull & Butcher** is now being run by Carlos and Joy who also run the **Grouse & Ale** in Lane End. The pub was closed for redecoration, but has now reopened.

TYLERS GREEN

The **Horse & Jockey** is hoping to hold a beer festival in September, but unfortunately we had no details at the time of going to press.

TOWERSEY

Towersey Festival has always had a vibrant, well-stocked, bar on the Showground, but this year they are pulling out all the stops and hosting a proper Real Ale and Cider Festival. Over twenty award-winning local and national brews will be showcased with daily tasting notes and sessions and a chance to win a trip round one of their partner breweries. The bar, run by *FestivAles*, will also have its own stage hosting bands and informal music sessions. A free tasting session in the main bar on Saturday morning will be opened by resident legend, chief ale taster and all round lovely man, BBC Radio's Ken Bruce with an opportunity

to win a day at a brewery. Open from 10am – 6pm Sat 27th – Mon 29th August. The car park is free, or if you are going to enjoy the beer, hop on the festival's Big Red Bus!

WING

The **Sportsmans** now has three ales available. Regulars are *Black Sheep Bitter* and *Wells Bombardier* with *Tring Side Pocket* and *Wychwood Hobgoblin* as alternating guests.

WHEELER END COMMON

The new person in charge at the **Chequers** is Dave Van Heerde who took over on 21st July. The beers currently on offer are *Fullers London Pride* and *Gales Seafarers* plus a guest beer.

WOOBURN GREEN

Greene King pub, the **Red Cow** has been bought and will be run as a restaurant.

A sign outside the **Wooburn Green Working Men's Club** was advertising *Rebellion* beers!

WOOBURN MOOR

The **Falcon** will be running another beer festival at the end of September (Friday 23rd – Sunday 25th) following their previous festival held at the end of July.

WYCOMBE MARSH

The **Disraeli Arms** is surrounded by fencing and has a sign saying 'Pub to let' which is promising as it seems the owners want to keep it as a pub.

The **Red Lion** has been renamed the **Junction** (for no very obvious reason). Due to open very soon.

The **Swan** is now open as an Indian restaurant.

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At the moment there are four beers on offer, but this will increase if the demand is there up to a maximum of six. As throughput is so important, Steve is making sure that the bar will be welcoming and comfortable for local drinkers as he is aware that in Lacey Green he has healthy competition from its two other real ale pubs.

Steve's Assistant Manager is David Poynton, who has a very experienced pub background. He developed the enthusiasm for the hospitality trade working alongside his mum, an award winning licensee herself. David demonstrated his abilities by branching out on his own and has held very responsible positions in both Orchid and Nando's. David plays a key role front of house, both with his technical knowledge and with his expert training. He will be in charge of the development of the team which looks after the customers.

The Head Chef, Chris Cheah, comes from a background of AA rosette winning establishments including the **Inn at Woburn**; **Auberge du Lac**;



IN THE PINK!

Steve Worrall is the new man in charge at the **Pink & Lily** in Lacey Green. He replaces Duncan and Shakira who had run the pub for the last ten years. The **Pink & Lily** had been shut for a while and has been redecorated and a brand new wooden floor installed, and was reopened in mid July.

Steve has been in the pub trade for over sixteen years and he has worked for both **Greene King** and **Scottish & Newcastle**. He wanted to find a pub that had history and that he could develop on the lines that he thinks a good pub should be run.

The **Pink & Lily** will not become just a restaurant, but will remain a traditional pub which serves great beer and food which is locally sourced, except for the fish which is delivered daily from Brixham. For the unenlightened few who don't drink beer (or are driving), the pub will offer a range of wine and 'Fairtrade' coffee.

The pub is part of the **Enterprise** pubco empire, but is free of any tie except for most of his draft beers. However, the **Enterprise** portfolio of ales available has improved dramatically over the past few years, so the range of beers on offer when visited would have seemed unbelievable only a short time ago.

The beers on offer were **Wadworth 6X**, **Timothy Taylor Landlord** and **Sharps Doom Bar**. The one handpump which is free of any tie will be used to supply a beer from one of the excellent range of local breweries we have and when we visited this was **Rebellion IPA**.



Notting Hill Brasserie and the **George Hotel & Brasserie** in Buckden. An experienced head chef, Chris is really helping to deliver great, locally sourced, fresh food all in a traditional pub environment. He likes nothing better than to show off his skills and a special fish night on the 16th August will provide a great platform for what he can do. The good news is, every day, they do their best to produce really excellent food, alongside great beer, wine and coffee.

As for history, the **Pink & Lily** has more than its fair share.

Most people know of the connection with the famous World War I poet, Rupert Brooke. He has a bar at the pub named after him, which has been often used by the **Aylesbury Vale & Wycombe Branch** of **CAMRA** for meetings (and socials). We will be back!

The poet's most famous work is 'The Soldier' where the oft-quoted line 'If I should die, think only this of me: that there's some corner of a foreign field that is forever England' comes from. The full text of the poem is in the Rupert Brooke bar.

The name of the pub is also part of its history. Initially a family home, built in the 1700s, it became a pub in the early 1800s. A butler named Mr Pink, who worked at Hampden House, was romantically involved with a chambermaid called Miss Lillie.

When Miss Lillie became pregnant out of wedlock, a situation which was intolerable in those days, the couple were shunned by the Hampden family and they were forced to move out. They set up locally in a hostelry and in 1833 Miss Lillie gave birth to a son, who went on to become the first registered landlord. The son named the pub after his parents and it is affectionally known by locals as the **Pink**.

The pub also famously featured on the front of our 300 Bus guide, despite the fact that the bus doesn't go past the **Pink & Lily**! It is, however, only a short walk from a 300 bus stop and will feature in a new version of the guide which the branch is planning on putting together in the near future if we can find enough volunteers to survey all the pubs on the route!

We wish Steve and his team at the **Pink & Lily** well for the future, especially in these difficult financial times, but if enthusiasm and hard work can succeed, they seem to stand every chance!

David Roe



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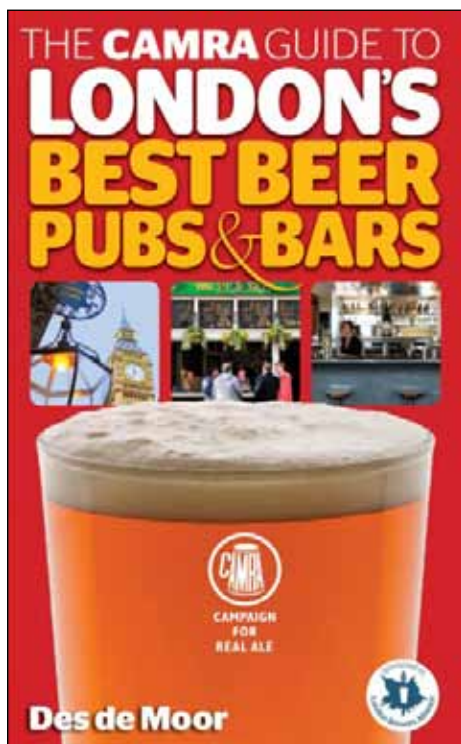
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When is a *Campaign for Real Ale* Guide not a real ale Guide? Some might say it's when it comes in the form of Des de Moor's *CAMRA Guide to London's Best Beer Pubs and Bars*.

This is a fine book, but those who have used the *Good Beer Guide* as their bible to the capital's drinking holes in recent years might be staggered by some of the selected venues – and be reluctant to stagger into some. For instance, there are trendy bars where no-one with a beard and beer belly has likely ever stepped over the threshold. There are bowling alleys and a supermarket. There are restaurants and, horror of horrors, places explicitly described as gastropubs.

And the most heretical revelation should only be whispered between consenting *CAMRA* members – some of the recommended drinking holes don't even serve real ale.

Naturally, those alternative venues do serve good beer – it's just that many don't serve it cask-conditioned. Some have great ranges of bottled

beers and foreign speciality brews. There's a great find in Shoreditch – a huge ex-warehouse that's a *Duvel* tied-house.

CAMRA traditionalists might forgive foreign beers their absence of cask conditioning but Des de Moor controversially recommends British brewed keg beers – even keg bitters, porters and IPAs. These are from the likes of the *Meantime Brewery* in Greenwich whose Alastair Hook is quoted in the book's brewery section as saying he doesn't want his beer quality compromised by pubs with bad cellar management who might spoil their beers. If he can't guarantee the supply chain then he'll brewery condition his beer instead. This is a problem that *CAMRA* members might argue shouldn't occur in *Good Beer Guide* pubs.

The style and tone of the book serve to differentiate itself from the *Good Beer Guide* as much as possible. This is probably a smart marketing move – there wouldn't be much point in buying a guide that was merely a regional subset of a much larger book.

There are many aspects of this London guide that complement the national *CAMRA* bible. It's in colour throughout and is laid out in a pleasing contemporary design with plenty of photographs of the pubs and bars. This emphasises the somewhat staid format of the *Good Beer Guide* pub section by comparison. This London guide is to the *Good Beer Guide* what *Beer* is to *What's Brewing*.

The descriptions are longer and more informative and there are some very helpful maps of small sections of London which could actually be used to navigate to the pubs. The book itself is small enough to carry around on a pub crawl without weighing one down too much. There are a few production errors, which is a shame (a couple of pages are headed with the south-west London suburb of 'Barns').

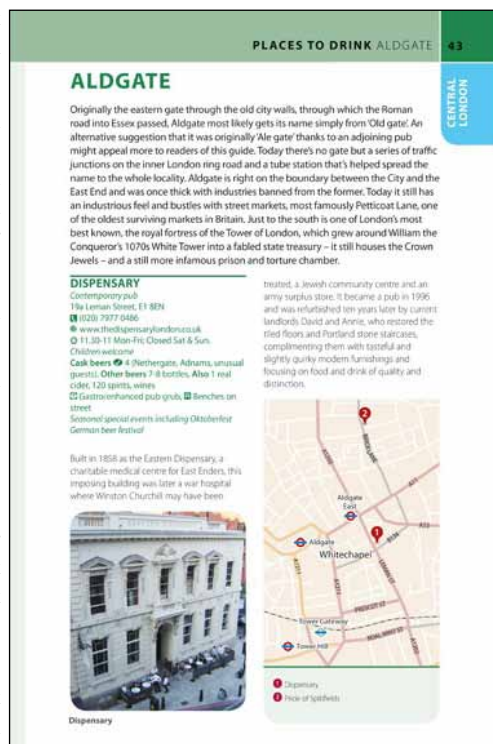
Perhaps because the guide is trying to avoid overlaps with the *GBG*, its selections may not be to every die-hard *CAMRA* member's tastes. The aforementioned gastropubs and trendy bars are given extensive coverage.

The book isn't organised by postcode but features small neighbourhood sections, prefaced by an informative summary of the area. So trendy areas, like Shoreditch and Hoxton, feature a number of designer-style bars. Islington has plenty of posh eating pubs.

This geographical organisation might be a little arbitrary at times. For example where do you draw the line between areas? The London guide places the famous *Wenlock Arms* in Old Street while the *Good Beer Guide* located it in Hoxton. But the book compensates by having innovative appendices that categorise pubs by nearest landmark or other themes.

The guide differentiates pubs into 'traditional' and 'contemporary' categories and is not afraid to champion the more modern establishments – to the extent that there are fifteen *J.D. Wetherspoon* pubs recommended – something that might ignite the letters pages of *What's Brewing*.

This leads to selections in certain areas that emphasise the changing nature of London drinking – the Paddington and Marylebone



section features *Wetherspoon's Metropolitan* Bar at Baker Street, the *Mad Bear and Bishop* at Paddington, Selfridge's Food Hall – and only two traditional pubs.

Nevertheless, it's difficult to think of a genuinely classic London pub that hasn't made it into the guide's pages. For example, the splendid art nouveau *Blackfriar* (pictured) is included, as is *CAMRA National Pub of the Year*, the *Harp* near Charing Cross Station (pictured on page 11).

The guide has a brewery section, which is divided into London breweries and those from further afield whose beers may be regularly encountered in the capital. These include our own *Vale* and *Rebellion* breweries and also the London brewery taps of the likes of *Hop Back* (the *Sultan* in South Wimbledon) or the Cambridge-based *Milton* brewery whose extensive range of classically named beers can be sampled at the *Pembury Tavern* in Hackney, which is well worth a visit (see photo).



While *Rebellion* is close enough to manage some *CAMRA LocAle* kudos in the book's brewery section, the same can't be said of some of the other featured breweries – which include *Nøgne-Ø* from Norway, *Goose Island* from Chicago and, even, *Little Creatures* from Fremantle in Western Australia – the journey from that brewery to any London pub is hardly carbon neutral. Well, the author does write a bottled beer column for *CAMRA*.

Overall, this book is something of a hybrid between a Time Out guide and the more traditional *CAMRA* publications – and it seems to have hit something of a gap in the market. In many non-beery ways London is not really representative of the rest of the country, being probably the most international city in the world. So a London guide shouldn't be parochial – it makes sense to reflect the amazingly cosmopolitan variety of beer styles available in the City.

Perhaps the best aspect of the book is that it's great inspiration for a few pub crawls. I'd certainly like to broaden my horizons a little by exploring the likes of Shoreditch – assuming I'd be allowed to lug my beer belly into their trendy bars – and toast this inventive *CAMRA* guide with some fine bottled beer.

Mike Clarke

The CAMRA Guide to London's Best Beer, Pubs & Bars by Des De Moor

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In April this year I enjoyed a fabulous railway holiday to the Swiss Alps, including five days in Interlaken with trips to the Jungfrauoch and Schilthorn amongst others. I could go on at

great length about the joys of this trip but being a good **CAMRA** man I'll concentrate on the ale story.

On the one free day on this holiday I chose to visit Bern, the Swiss capital and a UNESCO World Heritage site. A fantastic, pedestrianised old town with medieval streets and arcades, pretty fountains and, most importantly, a fantastic microbrewery – the **Altes Tramdepot**.

The brewery and pub/restaurant is immediately behind the tourist office – sharing the same building – right by the Nydeggrücke (bridge over the river Aare) and the Bärensgraben (Brown Bear enclosure). The enclosure is a fairly large grassy area along the bank of the river where the bears have a fair degree of freedom to roam.



The brewery offers three regular ales – *Helles*, *Märzen* and *Weizen* described in detail below and seasonal ales too. On this fairly short trip I sampled the *Märzen* and the *Helles*, followed by a *Swedish Pilsner*. This was on offer as part of a Swedish theme week. All three ales were very acceptable, with

the *Märzen* my favourite and pictured above and the other picture shows someone definitely enjoying his work!

Details on the three beers available follow:-

Tram-Helles

Malt extract 12.0%, Alc by Vol. 4.7%

Non filtered lager beer brewed with Pilsener and caramel malt, mild hopping, bottom fermented

Tram-Märzen

Malt extract 12.5%, Alc. by Vol. 4.9 %

Non filtered, an amber beer speciality brewed with Wiener-, Pilsener- and dark Caramel malt and Saaz Hops, malty taste, bottom fermented

Tram-Weizen

Malt extract 12.5%, Alc. by Vol. 4.7%

Non filtered, wheat beer from Munich brewed with more than 50% of wheat malt, a typical bavarian speciality, top fermented

As for the pub/brewery, their beer is brewed with a Salm 16 hl Microbrewery and they have the capacity to brew 1,500 to 2,000 hl of beer per year.

Peter Hoade



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LETTERS PAGE

Re: Issue 84 Swan Supping

Thank you for the cover story about the **Black Lion** in Naphill. It was great to see the pub in all its glory also to read the informative article, however I was wondering if there is anyway you could rectify an error by your reporter.

Bob and I were very disappointed that there was no mention of Martin Marianczak who is the third person in the ownership of the **Black Lion** after specifically giving this information to your reporter.

Martin and his team spent a month completely refurbishing the whole of the **Black Lion**. Martin was on holiday at the time of the writing of your article after a well deserved rest. He built the back bar and is still making improvements to the house and provides the ongoing maintenance for the

building. Indeed this is one of the reasons we all decided to take the **Black Lion** on. Bob with his retail experience Martin with building experience and myself with my experience in the public house trade, a group of friends with the right expertise we hoped would make a winning team.

Once again, thank you for your coverage of our new adventure.

Yours faithfully

Mike Schmid & Bob Hathaway

< Mike & Bob,

Many thanks for your letter regarding the article about the **Black Lion** in the last issue of *Swan Supping*.

We are sorry that mention of Martin was missed from the article, perhaps our reporter was



enjoying your splendid hospitality too much when making the notes. However, to be fair to us, Martin was mentioned in the Local News section in the preceding issue (April/May 2011) when we first announced the news that the **Black Lion** was reopening.

We are glad that the rest of the article was OK and that you were pleased with the front cover picture which I felt was pretty stunning. We hope that the coverage given to the **Black Lion** helps it continue to be a successful venture.

At a recent social, the branch took advantage of the excellent 300 bus route and paid an evening visit to Naphill.

A group of us enjoyed the receding sunlight as we sat out in the garden at the **Black Lion** indulging in the selection of four real ales on offer. I remember that I was on the *Vale Special Bitter*, but the others also tested the *Rebellion IPA* and *Sharps Doom Bar*.

It is a sobering thought, but in recent years, both pubs in Naphill have been threatened with closure.

As part of the social we also visited the **Wheel** which was many people thought was a lost cause before Mark and Claire took over.

They have gone on to be regulars in the *Good Beer Guide* and won the coveted prize of *Aylesbury Vale & Wycombe Branch Pub of the Year 2011*.

With all the pressures on pubs these days and the temptation to turn them from amenities enjoyed by many into housing used by a few, it shows that they can thrive if they, and their customers, are looked after (and offered a great selection of real ale!).

Naphill is a large village and deserves to have two good pubs. This will continue to be the case as long as the **Black Lion** and the **Wheel** get the support from the locals and visitors alike. Ed.>

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BEST RURAL BUSINESS IN BUCKS



The Buckinghamshire Ambassadors' Enterprise Award for Rural Business 2011 has been won by **Chiltern Brewery**.

George and Tom Jenkinson, family owners of the brewery, were absolutely thrilled and delighted. Their brewery is situated at the foot of the Chiltern hills in Terrick, near Wendover, and with

over 30 years of family heritage brewing fine ales on a rural farm site, this is a truly befitting honour.

The Buckinghamshire Ambassadors' scheme was launched in October 2004 by Buckinghamshire County Council. It brings together key people from all walks of life to raise the profile of Buckinghamshire and promote economic growth in the county. The Rural Business Award evaluates the overall success of a business through location, use of natural resources, sustainability and suitability to the environment.

'We are extremely grateful to everyone at Buckinghamshire County Council for this fantastic award. It was a wonderful surprise and we feel very proud indeed' said George Jenkinson. 'The countryside of Buckinghamshire, and our location in particular, motivate us on a daily basis in our work and in our lives.'

The rural location of the brewery is one of its most important and defining characteristics. Many of the beer names are deliberately chosen to reflect this rural nature and location, for example the 300's of Aylesbury, *John Hampden's Ale*, *Beechwood Bitter*, *Chiltern Ale* and *Bodger's Barley Wine*.

The style of the day-to-day operation has been inspired by the local surrounding farmland that provides a relaxed and healthy location with beautiful views out over the hill from the brewhouse and brewery yard. The **Chiltern Brewery** would not exist in its current style and success had it been located anywhere else.

Chiltern Brewery are to launch the first of their limited edition seasonal draught ales, *Chiltern Gold*, on the 28th of July.



This summer ale is made to a special recipe with a hop which has only recently been grown in the UK (originally only in the USA) and promises the excitement of innovation and great taste. Refreshing and savoury on the palate

this is the perfect drink on a warm, summer's evening or as an ideal accompaniment to the best of barbecues.

Events at the brewery for the late summer / autumn period include:-

Friday 6th August - 'FIRST FRIDAY' a new beer tasting event on the first Friday of every month at the brewery shop from 1pm - 7pm!

Saturday 13th & 27th August - English cider tasting afternoon from 1pm - 5pm. A great opportunity to visit the brewery shop and taste from their range of *Sheppy*, *Gwatkin* and *Westons* ciders and perrys.



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THE DE MOLEN BREWERY



from the Czech Republic in a light industrial unit just a few minutes walk away.

The brewery is also home to an informal and friendly bar and restaurant where the emphasis is on fresh, mostly local ingredients to provide cuisine of the highest quality and presentation complementing not only their own wide range of beers but also an eclectic selection of beers from around the world. The restaurant and bar come under the expert management of Peter Paul Stil, a chef of considerable renown in The Netherlands.

Dave, who travels regularly in Belgium and Holland, had met Peter Paul on a number of occasions. Incidentally Dave's ability to find and report on craft breweries and beer cafés in out of the way places was acknowledged by Tim Webb in his *Good Beer Guide* to Belgium, published by **CAMRA**. So on arrival at the restaurant in time for lunch we were greeted by Peter Paul and his vivacious wife in most friendly terms. He also took time out from his busy schedule later not only to give us a whistle-stop tour of the nearby new brewery with its gleaming stainless steel precision made tanks and tuns, but also of the highly interesting windmill. The grain mill, known as *De Arkduif* (The Ark Dove), dates back to about 1697. It was restored in the 1970s by Bodegraven town council and is now owned by a Foundation who keep it in fine working order.

Heen & Weer (back & forth) is a Belgian style Abbey tripel (9.5%) from the innovative **Brouwerij De Molen** in the delightful town of Bodegraven in The Netherlands. It is also one of the superb beers a small group of us (Dave Thornhill, Mike Clemence and myself) sampled on a recent train trip to the brewery and its associated restaurant. They brew an enormous range of beers, regulars, seasonals, specials, porters and stouts. Some are American, Belgian, English and German in style whilst others are very much in their own evolving craft Dutch style. The beers often have quaint, paired word names, with the bottles having distinctive black on white labels that look almost as if they have been individually woodcut printed.

De Molen (The Mill) was founded by Menno Olivier some seven years ago having learned his craft as a home-brewer and then at breweries in Belgium and The Netherlands, becoming a master brewer at the *Stadbrouwerij de Pelgrim* at Rotterdam as per their website. The original brewery was installed in outbuildings adjoining a renovated 17th century windmill. The craft beers they produced in the cramped conditions there have been praised for their quality and innovation by beer connoisseurs around the world. Indeed such has been the demand, particularly from the USA, that the brewery has recently made a huge investment in state of the art, computer controlled equipment



ERY AND RESTAURANT



calmly asked her to start the process of plying us with the sample measures of each of the six draught beers all over again.... Suddenly, oh so suddenly, it was 10.30pm and time to catch the train back to our comfortable hotel back at Alphen aan den Rijn, one stop along the line. We slept well.

I for one definitely plan to be going 'Heen & Weer' to Bodegraven over the coming years. They have their two-day 3rd *Borefts* beer festival there on 23/24 September. Only breweries whom *De Molen* regard as the 'best of the best' are represented and the festivals attract beer enthusiasts from all over the world. The very select group of brewers invited include two from the UK this year: *Thornbridge* from Derbyshire and the new wave London brewery *Kernel* (see page 20).

Giles du Boulay (photos: Mike Clemence)



We started what turned out to be a marathon *ten-hour* session in the bar with sample measures (about a third of a pint) of each of the six *De Molen* beers on draught that day, working slowly upwards through the strengths, savouring each sip. We accompanied this with a light snack of tangy local blue cheese with freshly baked baguettes. The first beer up was *Op & Top* (4.5%), amber, golden, citrus and hoppy with, to my mind, a glorious mouthfeel not unlike *Thornbridge Jaipur*. This was followed by the more subtle and sweeter *Borefts Blond* (6.2%) and then in a leap in strength by *Amarillo* (9.2%), brewed with American Amarillo hops, powerful and superbly balanced. *Heen & Weer* (9.5%) followed – I had bought a bottle of this from *Beers of Europe* near King's Lynn last year, and was so struck by its depth of flavour, outclassing many Belgian brewed tripels, that I immediately resolved to visit the brewery. Next on the menu was *Mout & Mocca* (9.5%), a stout which is outstanding in its balance of 'malt and mocha' coffee. We finished the samples with *Rasputin* (10.7%), a limited edition imperial stout that had us lost for superlatives – it was simply a triumph of craft brewing.

We moved on then to 75cl bottles shared between us: *Premiant Hopburst* (6.2%), IPA style, caramel and citrus flavours; *Vuur & Vlam* (6.2%) (fire & flames) another IPA style, floral, and not quite so good we thought. Lastly, for our sins, we were cast into *Hel & Verdoemenis* (11.9%) (Hell & Damnation) an imperial stout which is highly regarded by many, but I found it earthy and vinous and I was not sure that our bottle of it was in perfect condition.

Having made purchases of bottles to take home from the well-stocked brewery shop and consumed a superb dinner, the ever-attentive Sabina who served us with style and perfect, idiomatic English, was astonished when we

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Bus routes : 1, A40, 35, 37

THE GRAVEDIGGERS - PART TWELVE

It was a hot summer's day outside the Gravediggers but it was quiet as midwinter. James stood in the doorway surveying the beer garden. Old Eddie sat slumped on a bench waiting for the sun to further warm his lukewarm pint of *Florally Flatulent*. Half a dozen dead wasps floated in the fetid liquid. Eddie woke up and downed a huge mouthful, insects included.

'That beer's got a kick to it James, just how I likes it,' he declared. 'Not surprised it won a prize at your beer festival.'

'I wish there were more people to enjoy it, Eddie,' said James. 'Where is everyone?'

'Well, if it wasn't for my bad back, I'd be out hiking up them hills on the Chalkway on a fine day like this.' Or if it wasn't for the fact you can't walk past any pub's front door without having to go in and drink yourself senseless, more like, thought James. But Old Eddie had given him an idea.

'I don't know why we've not thought of it before,' James said to Mazz. 'All those hikers on the hills must be parched on a day like this -- desperate for a good pint and ravenous for a square meal.'

'There is a flaw to your plan...' said Mazz, collecting the slops from the drip tray.

'What? That you serve beer that strips the enamel from teeth and food that's so rancid it stays in your system for six hours max if you're lucky?' chipped in Horsey Heather leaning against the bar. 'No offence,' she added.

'We're two miles away from the Chalkway and there's no proper footpath here -- people would have to walk down the bypass, past the sewage works, landfill site and abattoir to get here.'

'I'd forgot the village had so many tourist attractions,' said Old Pete.

James picked up the partially full glass of slops and held it in front of Mazz. 'You see the trouble with you people is that you see this as half empty whereas I see it as half full. Positive thinking is required -- marketing.'

James placed the glass on the bar. Old Pete immediately grabbed the beer and downed the slops in one gulp.

'Even you can't say it's half full any more Jamesy-boy,' said Pete.

The next day James strolled up through the meadows and hills towards the Chalkway to check on the progress of his marketing initiative. He found the stall with no trouble -- a trestle table had been set up next to the prehistoric hill fort, complete with leaflets and a large banner which read: 'Visit the Gravediggers Arms -- friendly-ish country pub with decent beer and OK food. Just down the hill. Follow your nose.'

A metal beer cask sat in the centre of the table. When James tapped the barrel, it sounded a hollow ring. It was virtually empty. James looked under the table and found Old Joe and Alky Al sound asleep. Taking a glass from the table, James drained the remainder of the beer and threw the liquid over the two.

'I was dreaming it was raining beer,' said Alky Al, coming round.

'It's three o'clock and we haven't had a single walker come to The Gravediggers. That barrel of *Old Filthy* was for samples for the hikers -- not for you two to drink yourself stupid all day.'

'Well, you know, quality control and all that,' hiccupped Old Joe.



'Right -- I have a cunning plan B. When you two have sobered up tonight you can join me on a working party when it goes dark,' said James.

The sun was shining yet again the day afterwards but a steady stream of slightly worried-looking hikers was snaking through the village and into the Gravediggers.

A jolly-looking chap with a beard ordered from Mazz. 'Pint and ploughman's when you're good and ready.'

'A ploughman's what. I

wonder?' muttered Old Pete.

'Do you know, young lady, how long the emergency diversion of the Chalkway will be in place?' asked the walker. 'The first we knew of it was when we saw the skulls and crossbones all over the woods and the red danger signs. Must be good business for your pub -- but it puts a couple of miles on our route.'

'The authorities can't be too careful -- look at foot-and-mouth,' said James, winking at Old Joe,

'And with people saying it's bubonic plague, then they had to act,' said Mazz. 'Word is that it was festering inside a Neolithic barrow and the germs escaped into the open air. Could kill half the population of the country, it's rumoured. That's why there's been a news blackout -- no-one knows except us villagers.'

'Well, I can see the diversion was set up in something of a hurry. The farmer hasn't even had time to take his bull out of the field that we were diverted through.'

'All the better for us,' said Mazz. 'If the bull chases people then they'll get here quicker and they'll need a drink.'

As the walker left the bar, James noticed a bespectacled, studious looking man at a table in the corner. He stared at a laptop computer which was plugged into some complex-looking scientific equipment.

'Hello, I'm Professor Heinz Hugebrain, the leading expert on eradication of dangerous diseases. I was tipped off about the plague on the hills by one of my colleagues who's a rambler -- seems the government has been rather slow in informing me officially. I was just calibrating my equipment while enjoying a pint of your *Florally Flatulent* and I happened to spill some of the liquid into my Petri dish but made the most serendipitous discovery.'

'Er, well it's home brewed and did win a prize at our beer festival,' said James.

'I've found that your beer, quite remarkably, kills all known pathogens, including bubonic plague. In fact it appears to eradicate all biological activity whatsoever.'

'There's not much left. It was only a one-off batch,' said James.

'That may be no bad thing,' said the professor. 'I think this stuff may be so potent that that it might break international treaties on biological weaponry. The Russians and Chinese might kill for it. Better all round if I take a few flagons of what's left with me up on the hills. I can douse the area with this marvellous liquid, nip this health scare in the bud and not worry about national security. Will a thousand pounds cover it? We could have the Chalkway re-opened by the morning.'

As the professor drove away with the beer barrel, James couldn't decide whether his glass had been left half empty or half full.

Charlie Mackle

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THE KERNEL BREWERY

I mentioned at the end of my article on the *De Molen* brewery on page 16/17 that two craft brewers from the UK will be represented at the 3rd *Borefts* beer festival this year: *Thornbridge* from Derbyshire and the London brewery *Kernel*. As the latter brewery was not known to me I thought a little investigation would be worthwhile.

Kernel appears in the *Good Beer Guide* as a new brewery and is described as producing bottle-conditioned beers in a four-barrel plant, their regular offerings being a Pale Ale (5.5%), Porter (6%) and IPA (7.9%). Their website <http://www.thekernelbrewery.com/> gives details of other beers, tasting notes, open days and places from where the beers can be obtained.

The brewery has only been going since 2010 but they have already won four *SIBA South East* awards (three golds and a bronze). Their *Export Stout* (7.8%) also won the *SIBA* champion bottled beer of the UK in March 2011.

Whilst in London recently I took the opportunity to make a visit to the brewery at 98 Druid Street, one of the many specialist businesses located under arches below the elevated main railway lines between Southwark and London Bridge.



Despite turning up unannounced one of the founder brewers Evin O'Riordain gave me a warm welcome, an unhurried slice of his time, and a drink of their IPA on the house. On the evidence of the IPA alone I could immediately understand why *De Molen* had invited them to the festival!

The golden English malt beer made with American Simcoe hops is strongly and cleanly bitter without being too astringent and has a full citrous mouthfeel, and a lingering flavoursome finish.

Evin is an ex-cheesemaker (shades of the *Life of Brian* there – 'blessed are the cheesemakers'!) which may explain why the Victorian railway arch is also home to the specialist Ham & Cheese Co. Before leaving the brewery I was able to buy a few bottles to take away – the IPA (7.9%) as well as an Export India Porter (5.7%) and an Imperial Brown Stout (10.1%).

It is clear that British craft breweries like *Kernel*, *Thornbridge* & *Marble* are pushing the boundaries of beer making and in my view should be supported at every opportunity.

As Evin put it somewhat philosophically 'the kernel of the barley is the essence of the brew, the kernel of truth'.

Giles du Boulay

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A WANDER IN WOOBURN

The **Falcon**, Wooburn Moor, is a traditional oak-beamed pub, close to the M40 motorway – the nearest junction (3) is close by near Loudwater. However, I came by bus; the 74 from Wycombe which has a stop right by Watery lane - and it's only a four minute walk via the M40 underpass.

A group of us met here as we heard there was a weekend beer festival, one of many they have had throughout the years. They had a beer list of 21 ales plus the ones found at the bar, and it was a good list at that as I read down their beer tasting notes; none of the 'big' brewers were present, just large 'regionals' such as *Adnams* and *Thwaites* down to 'local' breweries such as *Maggie* and *Concrete Cow*.

The three pints I tasted were kept well although they lost their condition a little quicker than I would have liked. The first pint was *Thwaites Nutty Black*, a highly quaffable dark mild with a roasted taste and dry finish. I followed this up with *Blue Monkey BG Slips*, a golden ale with fruity overtones and noticeable bitterness.

Finally I tried the *Adnams Gunhill*, a ruby ale with a notable malty



only, but hopefully they will extend this to the evenings in due course. They had three *Rebellion* beers on; *Blonde*, *Smuggler* and *IPA* – the latter was kept well, and my friend enjoyed his *Smuggler*. For the food side of things we walked across the green to the *Red Cow*, a large rambling pub complete with pool table. They had an extensive food menu however there was only the solitary *Greene King Abbot*; however this was well kept and as such was dangerously drinkable!

Simon Allen

character. Note must also be mentioned of their ciders; a good choice including perry and bottled fruit infused ciders, as well as four draught ciders. In summary the pub did a good selection of ales, dark and light, weak and strong.

It was a shame to leave, but we had some business in nearby Wooburn Green to attend to – that is the pub side of things. We were interested in the **Queen & Albert**, as it had come under new management.

Unfortunately for my friend they were not doing food this Friday evening, currently only lunchtimes

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CHARITY BEER FESTIVALS



On a perfect summer day, the **8th Haddenham Real Ale Festival** took place at the Youth and Community Centre.

A record attendance of 2,500 consumed 5000 pints of real ale, 2500 pints of ciders, lagers and international beers, 1200 half pints of Pimms, and 660 glasses of wine, plus a mountain of good food, while enjoying the entertainment programme.

An amazing record surplus of £29,000 was collected for local charities and good causes. The committee want to take this opportunity to thank all their sponsors, helpers, and all who made the day such a success. With a special big thank you to **Vale Brewery** for their help in sourcing, storing and transporting so many of the beers, plus of course their own range of splendid ales.

The committee also hope to see everyone at the **Haddenham Winterfest** on 10th December, and the **9th Haddenham Real Ale Festival** will be on 7th July 2012. Details when available on www.haddenham-beer-festival.co.uk.

Local **CAMRA** members held a very enjoyable social at this event, which must now be one of the largest real ale festivals held in the county. Most of us travelled there by bus and were appreciative of the fact that Arriva were one of the main sponsors and that they advertised the festival on the 280 bus route which links Aylesbury to Haddenham, Thame and Oxford. Remember, pubs and buses must be used or they tend to disappear!

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REAL ALE IN NORMANDY



Approximately one and a half hours from the ferry port of Ouistreham in Normandy, France, you will find a unique brewery at Joue du Bois. It is set on the site of an old cider farm down a long and winding drive. Its approach is beautiful and natural and reveals the old farm house and beyond the brew house. Here you will find a modern and up to date operation producing five stock beers and occasional guests.

The brewery is owned by Stephen Skews who runs it with his wife and assorted helpers.

He not only sells beer in barrels but also has a bottling plant and there is a nice little shop there where you can buy the bottles or two or four litre containers.

The brewery started production in Spring 2001. It is situated 5km from La Ferté Macé in the direction of Carrouges in the commune of Joué du Bois. You may visit on their preferred opening days of Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

Steve Skews, the founder and Master Brewer, initially produced two beers. A blonde beer known as *Norman Gold* with a strength of 4.9% abv using four different malts and two varieties of hops and a brown beer known as *Conquérant* with a strength of 5.5% abv using five malts and two varieties of hops. Two additional beers have since been added. *Odo*, a rich English milk stout (6.6% abv), and an Amber beer (5.1% abv) produced in the Autumn brewed using freshly picked hops grown at the brewery.

The beers are characteristic of the English style top fermented 'ales'. The condition of the beer is a result of gas from the fermentation process. No gas is added to preserve the beer. The beer is not pasteurised, not filtered and there are no added chemicals to affect the flavour or characteristics of the beer.

You can visit the brewery for a tasting but why not give yourself a treat and seek out one of their two tied houses - not a million miles from the brewery.

The **Norman Knight** at Couptrain and the **Hidden Knight** at Champsecret. They are both like English pubs inside, but check opening times as they tend to vary.

However if you would like to try these ales a little closer to home then visit the **Shepherds Crook** at Crowell over the August Bank holiday for their annual and original beer festival, where at least two will be featured.

Elizabeth Scowen & David Roe



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The advertisement features three circular award medals for Skinner's beer. The first medal on the left is for 'CORNISH ALE' and 'KNOCKER', with the text 'TWICE SUPREME CHAMPION OF THE SOUTH WEST' and 'WINNER'. The second medal in the center is for 'BETTY STOGGS' and 'QUEEN OF CORNISH ALE', with the text 'BEST BITTER OF GREAT BRITAIN' and 'CAMRA CHAMPION'. The third medal on the right is for 'HELIGAN HONEY', with the text 'WINNER NATIONAL CHAMPION SPECIALITY BEER' and 'WINNER'. Below the medals is a colorful illustration of a parade with people in traditional costumes, a band, and a dog. The word 'SKINNER'S' is written in large, stylized letters across the middle. At the bottom, contact information is provided: 'Contact Dayla for more information', 'Tel: 01296 630013', 'Fax: 01296 633349', and 'E-mail: sales@dayladrinks.co.uk'.

Contact Dayla for more information

Tel: 01296 630013 Fax: 01296 633349 E-mail: sales@dayladrinks.co.uk

HIP HOP

Hops, glorious hops! Today they are venerated by beer lovers worldwide (and occasionally by cider lovers – there's a few hopped ciders around nowadays!).

However, hops have not always been held in the reverence they are today. Beer (or, at least, alcoholic beverages from fermented grain) has probably been around for at least 10,000 years, although the first archaeological evidence of it does not occur until 5,500BC (ironically in the now largely teetotal Iran). It's not until 822AD that the first mention is made of continental monasteries using hops in their beer; not only did the hops add flavour (and bitterness) to the beer, but they also helped preserve and clarify it. By 1300AD adding hops to beer was commonplace across much of Europe; as ever, the UK resisted these strange continental methods for as long as possible and even in the 18th century people would still claim that unhopped 'ale' was better than hopped beer.

However, when hops finally caught on in Britain, it was with an enthusiasm which (coupled with the then dominant British Empire) would send British beers around the world. The India Pale Ales and Burton Pale Ales of the 19th century were very highly hopped and are famous to this day. In Britain this enthusiasm was soon to wane, as public tastes turned to the less-hopped mild ale and pale lager styles that were to dominate the 20th Century. It is only in recent years that British brewers have once again started to experiment with strong hop flavours.

Despite this proud history, if a *Humulus Lupulus* (as botanists call it) happened to wander into your garden, you would do well to remove it as quickly as possible – we're talking about a plant whose shoots grow several inches a day, and where a single plant can eventually cover twenty square metres. With equally long roots, it will come back to plague you year after year!

Fortunately, there are some people out there who are willing to grow this pernicious weed for us, keeping it neat and tidy using a distinctive system

*Hop facts:**Hops are the county flower of Kent.**Hops also have medicinal properties – they are claimed to relieve tension and aid digestion.**Hops are poisonous to dogs*

of tall poles and wires. These are instantly recognisable when you travel through the UK's principal hop-growing areas in Kent and Worcestershire, but the UK is dwarfed in hop production by Bavaria in Germany, and the north-western USA. New Zealand is an up-and-coming hop area which, along with the USA, is at the forefront of producing new hop varieties.

The only part of the hop plant used in beer production is the female flower, which resembles a small green fir cone. Generally they are dried before being used in beer (although some brewers have experimented with 'green hop' beers).

Tastewise it is preferable to use whole hop 'cones', but unfortunately economics dictate that most brewers use the cheaper options of pellets, powder or extract.

The exact impact of a given hop on beer depends on when it is added. If it's added at the start of the mash, it will add bitterness. Added towards the end of the mash, or to the barrel ('dry-hopping'), hops will give flavour and aroma rather than bitterness. With this in mind, hop growers have bred scores of different hop varieties designed to add different levels of bitterness and different flavours – there are at least 70 hop varieties commercially available, and the number is growing.

As a result, when you go to a beer festival, the tasting notes bombard you with a list of hop names that mean little to you. Wouldn't it be better if someone could provide you with a handy cut-out and keep guide to the flavours of the most common hop varieties that you could take along with you? Oh, hang about, what's that at the bottom of this article...!

Just don't forget that hops are not the only thing that contribute flavour to a beer – the malt, yeast, water and any other ingredients will all add their own twist to create the exciting multi-dimensional taste explosion that is real ale...

Anth Duffield

GBBF Hop Guide**AMARILLO:**

US hop strong aroma of flowers and oranges and a spicy finish.

BRAMLING CROSS:

English hop with a mild, fruit and blackcurrant aroma.

BREWER'S GOLD:

Another English variety that offers blackcurrant and spice, but is mainly used for its bittering qualities.

CASCADE:

The most famous of US hops, which gave the American craft beer movement its own distinctive flavour. Assertive grapefruit and pine, very bitter.

CENTENNIAL:

Akin to Cascade, but slightly crisper, sweeter and fruitier.

CHALLENGER:

Fruity English hop mainly used for bittering.

CITRA:

Highly rated new US hop with big lemon flavours and some tropical fruit.

FIRST GOLD:

A spicier, more bitter version of Goldings.

FUGGLES:

One of the traditional English hops, but its rough, earthy, woody characteristics are losing favour with many brewers.

GOLDINGS:

The other main English traditional hop; this adds soft farmyard and floral notes.

NELSON SAUVIN:

The New Zealand 'wonderhop' offering a distinctive bouquet of grapes, passion fruit, gooseberries and (according to some) cat wee!

NORTHDOWN:

English bittering hop.

PACIFIC GEM:

Another NZ effort with blackberry and

wood flavours, often used for bittering.

NUGGET:

US bittering hop that also offers pine, herbs and flowers.

SAAZ:

Premier Czech lager hop, offers soft spicy, floral notes.

SIMCOE:

American variety, has a pine aroma but is mostly used for bittering.

SORACHI ACE:

A brand new Japanese hop with an unusual sherbert, bubblegum and strawberry flavour.

STYRIAN GOLDINGS:

A Slovenian hop with woody grassy notes. Often used as a smoother substitute for Fuggles.

TARGET:

English bittering hop.

WILLAMETTE:

A milder American one offering soft fruit and flowers

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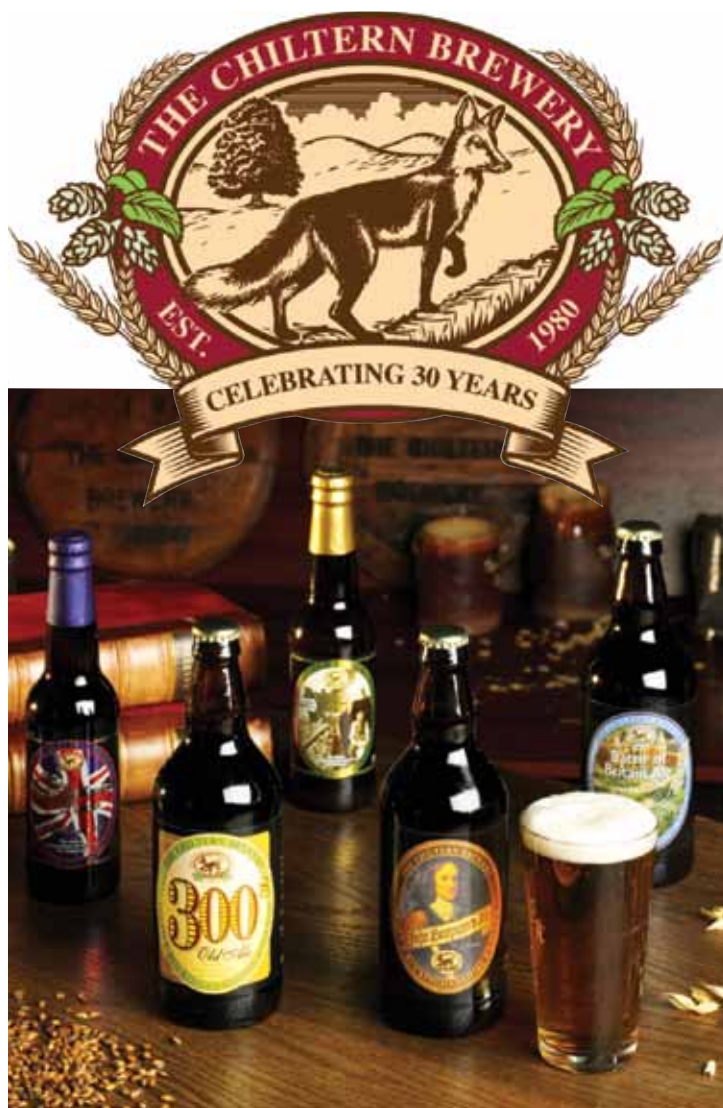
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BREW PUB BY THE BEACH!

Whilst on a break in Northumberland in April and armed with the *Good Beer Guide*, many pubs of fine character and quality were found. We were exploring the coastal area either side of Holy Island, Lindisfarne and staying at Seahouses. Although the weather was bright, sunny and warm inland, there was a constant mist over the sea which would occasionally move in over the coast bringing with it a good 10 - 15° drop in temperature. At these times pubs seemed the most attractive proposition.

The two most memorable share similar names – the **Olde Ship Inn** at Seahouses and the **Ship Inn** at Low Newton by the Sea.

Situated by the harbour in the small port of Seahouses the **Olde Ship Inn** has been run by the same family since 1910 and is a real heritage pub. Formerly a farmhouse it became licensed in 1812. Walking into the main bar for the first time is quite an experience not only due to the six or so



handpumps but also the incredible amount and weight of maritime artifacts hanging from the ceiling and adorning every other conceivable location. It reminded me of my first visit to the **Waggon & Horses** at Halesowen – with the mountainous array of bottles covering every speck of wall space. (In the 19th century, Seahouses was a busy port for shipping out corn and locally quarried limestone as well as having its own herring fleet).

Two or three local ales such as *Hadrian & Farne Island* are on offer with a selection of others from all over the country. Still a multi-roomed pub there are several drinking areas and a new beer garden overlooking the harbour with views of the Farne Islands. Crab and fish feature with other traditional favourites served both lunchtimes and evenings in the Cabin Bar or Locker Room. Next time we may stay here, four-star rated rooms are available.

The **Ship Inn** at Low Newton by the Sea was more difficult to find but well worth it.

A rather faded sign for the **Ship** can be seen at the turning off the main coast road B1339/1340. As we arrived in the village we found a pub in the process of being renovated or rebuilt with a different name and wondered if that had been the pub we sought but thankfully we found the **Ship** at the far southern end of the road where it ends by the sea. To quote from the *GBG*: 'In the corner of a three-sides-of-a-square arrangement of former fishermen's cottages and graced by a small village green the location is unique. Virtually on the beach fine sea views can be enjoyed on the short walk from the car park' – except that when we were there the mist prevented this but created a pleasantly surreal atmosphere, or was it the home-brewed ales?

Landlady Christine Forsyth bought the pub in 1999 and in 2008 realised a long-standing ambition to open a brewery by converting the garages adjoining the pub. With the creativity of brewer Michael Hegarty (pictured) the initial successes have led to further development, with more vessels installed so that after three years they are self-sufficient in ales. 24 nine gallon casks are produced each week to make 14 different ales on a rotational basis. Four are usually available at any time and there are occasional guests.

Blond beers: *Sandcastles at Dawn* 3.8%, *White Horses* 4.2%, *Indian Summer* 4.4%

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BEER FESTIVAL

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Afternoon Jazz

Food Available

Beer Tent Open Friday 12-11pm Saturday 12-11pm

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The Whip Inn, Pink Road, Lacey Green, Bucks Tel: 01844 344060



Wheat beers: *Sea Wheat* 4.0%, *Sea Coal* 4.0%
 Bitters: *Dolly Daydream* 4.3%, *Ship Hop Ale* 4.0%, *Red Herring* 3.8%,
Trade Winds 4.2%
 Rye beers: *Rye PA* 4.1%, *Red Rye* 4.1%
 Stout: *Sea Dog* 4.2%
 All beers are now also available in bottles.

All this plus seasonal guests! On our visit I tried four of the above. All were radically different and in fine form, proving Mr Hegarty's innovative style. My favourite of the day was the *Sea Coal*, a dark wheat beer approaching a stout in stature – excellent.

Though we were there in April the pub was constantly busy with many groups of walkers, ramblers and other visitors taking advantage of the freshly prepared snacks and meals, consisting of vegetarian food and old-fashioned puddings. Most fish is locally caught with the 'Lobster man' walking up the beach with his catch to the pub. Meat is also locally produced.

Must visit these and others in the area again as soon as possible.

Mick White

SWAN & CASTLE

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Summer's End Music Festival

Saturday 3rd September 2011

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to select an Ale from the SIBA list each week.

'Your Choice' Ale - ask inside for details

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 High Wycombe
 HP13 6EQ



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Branch Diary

Everybody welcome to all socials and meetings!

August

Tuesday 2nd - Saturday 6th GBBF

The world's largest pub will be at the Great British Beer Festival, Earls Court, London

Thursday 4th GBBF BRANCH SOCIAL

5.30pm onwards, Earls Court, London

Try calling the social phone to locate us!

Wednesday 10th STOKE MANDEVILLE SOCIAL

7.30pm Bell, 8.30pm Bull, 9.30pm Woolpack

Saturday 20th 60 BUS ROUTE CRAWL

Start 12.15pm, Crown, Granborough, 1.20pm Pilgrim, North Marston,

2.30pm Black Boy, Oving then on to Whitchurch and Aylesbury (see website for full details)

August Bank Holiday BEER FESTIVAL MAYHEM

So many beer festivals, so little time! All these are advertised, so try and support as many as possible (and email us to see who else is going!):- Oak, Aston Clinton, Brill Sports & social club, Brill, Shepherd's Crook, Crowell, Stag & Huntsman, Hambleden, Royal British Legion, Marlow, and the Towersey Festival at the Showground. There are probably a lot more, so do your best!

September

Saturday 3rd REGIONAL AUNT SALLY AND BEER FESTIVAL

12 noon, Mason's Arms, Headington Quarry, Oxford.

Monday 5th BRANCH MEETING

8.00pm, Hop Pole, Aylesbury

Friday 9th JOINT PUB BEER FESTIVAL SOCIAL

5.30pm Wheel, Naphill, 7.30pm Whip, Lacey Green

Saturday 17th BRIGHTON DAY TRIP

Start noon at Lord Nelson Inn, 36 Trafalgar Street, BN1 4ED.

This will be followed by a series of excellent pubs, culminating in a trip to the Evening Star where we will probably stay far too long and risk missing the last train back to Victoria! See website for further details.



Wednesday 21st EARLY EVENING HIGH WYCOMBE SOCIAL

6.30pm Belle Vue, 7.30pm Bootleggers.

Friday 30th WESTMINSTER, VICTORIA & PIMLICO CRAWL

A pub crawl inspired by Des de Moor's London Guide which is reviewed on page 10.

Start 5.30pm St. Stephen's Tavern, SW1A 2JR, 6.15pm Buckingham Arms, SW1H 9EU, 7pm Cask and Glass, SW1E 5HN, 7.45pm Willow Walk, SW1V 1LW, 8.45pm Cask Pub and Kitchen, SW1V 2EE.

October

Monday 3rd BRANCH MEETING

8.00pm, George and Dragon, West Wycombe (Venue to be confirmed).

Friday 28th/Saturday 29th AYLESBURY BEER FESTIVAL

Bucks County Council Sports & Social Club, Lower Road, Aylesbury (opposite the Ambulance Station). Please note the change of venue from previous years!

Further details can be found on our website

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

Swan Supping

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E-Mail : editor@swansupping.org.uk

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10% discounts for payment in advance. Block bookings for six issues available.

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

Copy deadline for next issue, due out 1st October, is 14th September 2011.

Subscriptions :- *Swan Supping* is distributed to over 250 pubs 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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Complete the Direct Debit form and you will receive 15 months membership for the price of 12 and a fantastic discount on your membership subscription. Alternatively you can send a cheque payable to CAMRA Ltd with your completed form, visit www.camra.org.uk/joinus or call 01727 867201. All forms should be addressed to Membership Department, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, AL1 4LW.

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12/10

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