



# Swan Supping

Campaign for Real Ale  
Aylesbury Vale & Wycombe Branch  
www.swansupping.org.uk

**FREE**

Issue 68

OCT/NOV 2008



## LANTERN FINALLY FIZZLES OUT!



The **Lantern** tucked away in Silver Street, Aylesbury, is reopening as **My Place**. It has been changed drastically inside and will be used as a 'night-spot' in the evenings and as a restaurant during the day.

This strikes us as a sad fate for an historic pub with many connections to the Civil War.

The pub was previously known as the **Dark Lantern**, which is supposed to be from the practice of having it either lit or 'dark' depending whether there were Cavaliers or Roundheads in the pub. The pub cellar is supposed to connect to the tunnels that many believe link some of the pubs (including the long lost and still sadly missed **Derby Arms**) in the centre of Aylesbury and St. Mary's Church.



The massive changes to Aylesbury in the sixties meant the pub was overshadowed by the Friars Square shopping centre. This was followed by the extension of the pub into the next door hardware store in the eighties which changed its character totally.

It has had many landlords try and fail to restore it to its former glory, probably because they didn't go back to basics and do a good range of real ale and try and tempt tourists in as well as the locals by trading on the history of the pub.

At least one pub in the centre of Aylesbury believes in getting back to its historic roots as the **Square @ Aylesbury** is reverting back to its original name of the **Green Man** in early October.

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further details*

# Local News

## ASKETT

Renovation works have recommenced at the **Three Crowns**. A licence variation application notice is pinned to the door in the name of **Oxford Inns & Hotel Management Ltd** with an address in Dartford, Kent, and extended hours (to 1am) and permission for various types of music have been applied for!

## AYLESBURY

The **Hop Pole** will be holding their Winter Warmer Beer Festival from Thursday 6th November to Sunday 9th November. They will be offering a selection of over 30 real ales, ciders & perries, plus live entertainment every night and all day Saturday.

The Kingsbury Square Festival at the end of August was badly hit by the weather but it will go ahead again next year. Let's hope that global warming will have kicked in by then!

Claire Bignell is leaving the **Kings Head** after four years to become a consultant in Reading. In her time at the pub she has won many awards for herself and the team that she has set up. Although she will be sadly missed, we wish her luck with her future career. Neil Pickles will be taking over the running of the pub. Regulars

at the **Kings Head** will be pleased to hear that the **Chiltern Copper Beech** will soon make a re-appearance at the pub, followed by the **Three Hundreds Old Ale** at the end of October.

We have heard that the **Litten Tree** is going to become **Yates**, following the recent closure of the latter. As neither of them did any real ale we don't hold out much hope after the changes.

The **Old Plough & Harrow** is currently closed following the sudden death of the landlord, Mick Finnelly, at the end of August. We send our deepest sympathies to Mick's family and friends. **Enterprise Inns**, who own the pub, will take it back at the beginning of October and put in a new tenant.

Under its previous **Ember Inns** reincarnation, a number of interesting real ales were offered at the **Plough**, either as guests or as part of promotions. The assistant manager of the **Plough**, which reopened on 26 August under the **Sizzling Pub Co** brand, says that only **Greene King IPA**, **Fullers London Pride** and **Timothy Taylor Landlord** will be available in future. All good ales but it's a pity there will not be the variety there was before.

The **Rockwood** has replaced the **Adnams Bitter** with **Fullers London Pride**.

As we announced in the June/July issue, the **Square @ Aylesbury** will become the **Green Man** at the beginning of October. They have opened up a 24 seater restaurant upstairs offering real pub food including Sunday lunches. The two beers on offer are **Shepherd Neame Spitfire** and **Greene King IPA**.

## BRILL

The **Pheasant** is undergoing extensive refurbishment with a view to be open in December under new management. The pub will remain a village pub serving real pub food and real ale all in a pleasant **Pheasant** atmosphere.

## BUTLERS CROSS

The **Russell Arms** appears to be shut as it is in darkness every time it has been passed recently and it is still up for sale.

## CHINNOR

The **Red Lion** has won an **Enterprise Inns** competition and the prize is an evening with former World and British Darts Champion, Bob Anderson. This will be held at the Chinnor Reading

Rooms on Friday 10th of October. Tickets are £2 and you will have a chance to play against the champion.

## FLACKWELL HEATH

The **Maggie** is all boarded up and its future is unknown, but it is unlikely to ever be a pub again.

## FORTY GREEN

The **Royal Standard of England** is one of four finalists in each of the following categories for the **Publican 'Food and Drink Awards'**: Speciality Beer Pub of the Year, Classic Food Pub of the Year and Food Pub of the Year. If that was not enough, chef David Perron is a finalist in the Chef of the Year category.

## GREAT KIMBLE

To coincide (within a day at least) with Trafalgar Day, the **Swan** will be celebrating with a special French food menu and from the end of November, the **Swan** will be featuring guest Christmas ales to accompany its Christmas menu. They will be setting off their fireworks on 5th November outside the pub (always a good show) and there will be a fundraising quiz  
(Continued on page 23)

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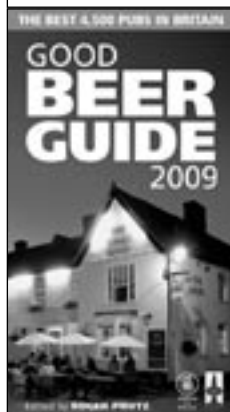
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# SUPERMARKETS ARE KILLING THE BRITISH PUB!



At the launch of the *Good Beer Guide 2009* in September, *CAMRA* called on the Government to introduce measures to prevent supermarkets selling alcohol as a loss leader. In response to the announcement that 36 pubs are closing every week, with a gloomy outlook for many more British pubs, the consumer group is urging the Government to introduce minimum pricing to reduce the gap between supermarket and pub prices.

At the launch, *Good Beer Guide* Editor, Roger Protz, blamed a large number of pub closures on supermarkets saying that the main reason is simple: people are abandoning their locals

because they can buy cheap supermarket beer at a fraction of the price charged by pubs.

Well-run community pubs provide a perfect environment for adults to enjoy alcohol responsibly, but as small businesses, they are unable to absorb tax and cost increases and cannot demand the wholesale discounts enjoyed by supermarkets. Pubs are no longer able to compete on a level playing field.

Industry statistics show that off-trade beer prices have fallen by 1% in the last year, while pub prices have increased by around 4.4%. Since 2002 Off-trade beer prices have fallen by 7% while pub prices have increased by 24%.

As a result of the 10% beer tax increase in this year's Budget, prices in pubs have increased by 4.4% in the last year and the average price of a pint of lager in a pub is now £2.82. In contrast, prices in the off trade have fallen by a further 1% as a result of huge price promotions. The

Great British Pub is being targeted by ruthless off-trade discounting that is resulting in falling pub visits and record pub closures.

*CAMRA* believes Government action is required to help pubs as they are the best place to enjoy alcohol responsibly in a regulated and socially controlled environment.

In a recent pricing survey, research found drastically low figures in the off-trade with mainstream global lager brands on sale for as little as 57 pence a pint.

People go to pubs for friendship, conversation, to enjoy an affordable meal, or just quietly read a newspaper, and pubs are regulated licensed premises. Publicans who permit bad behaviour such as heavy drinking will lose their licences.

Supermarkets face no such restraints. They have no idea what happens to cheap alcohol once it leaves their stores. In too many cases, it's passed on to under-age drinkers. It's the supermarkets, not pubs, that encourage binge drinking, with their massively discounted sales of alcohol.

Roger Protz describes the relationship between big brewers and supermarkets as 'the economics of the mad house'. *Coors*, the American giant that now owns the former *Bass* breweries in Britain, has seen its profits halve in recent years – mainly as a result of the deep discounts demanded by the retailers.

One solution is for England and Wales to follow the example of the Scottish government and consider a minimum pricing policy for alcohol sold in the off-trade. Urgent action is needed to help save that great British institution – your friendly, neighbourhood local.

The *Good Beer Guide* is available priced £14.99 (discounts are available for *CAMRA* members) at all good bookshops.

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## JOTTINGS

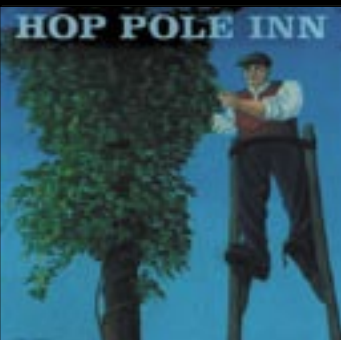
*The occasional jottings of an ardent real drinker*

At the end of June, Reg Saunders and I were booked for a driving experience course on the Welshpool and Llanfair Railway in mid Wales. We coerced two friends to join us, Alan Purdy, another **CAMRA** member, and Frank Butcher a real ale enthusiast. We were on our way to Porthmadoc but Reg, who was looking after the driving, decided that we should take a break in Kidderminster at the **King and Queen (GBG)**, part of the station of the Severn Valley Railway. There I made a start with an old favourite, **Bathams Bitter**. I followed this with some **Kinver Pail Ale**. Both beers were in super nick well up to the standards of the establishment.

We went on with the journey and logged into our hotel in Porthmadoc. We then had to decide where to go for a meal and decided upon the Tafarn Pencie where Alan and I had been on a previous visit. To wash down my dinner I had some **Bass**. We paid a visit to the Welsh Highland Railway which is running from Caenavon to Rhyd Ddu and will, next year, finish in Porthmadoc. At Waenfawr station there is an hostelry called **Snowdonia Parc (GBG)** where we paused to have lunch. I have been to this brew pub on a number of previous occasions so I knew that some good ale was sure to be found there. I went for **Jennings Dark Mild**, very nice.

On another of our days we went to see the Llanberis Lake railway and on the way there we thought we would take lunch at an hotel in Llanberis, the **Royal Victoria Hotel** where Alan and I had been before. Things had changed for the worse, as there was NO real ale!!! We remained to have some solid sustenance and I had a small measure of some unspeakably cold substance that masqueraded under the name of beer. My food order needed three tries before the kitchen could provide me with something. I don't think I'll rush to return! The one happier side to this was that Reg

## AYLESBURY'S PERMANENT BEER FESTIVAL



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## TASTED ON MY TRAVELS

was very content with the thickly carpeted floor in the bar!

That evening after dinner, we went to **Spooner's Bar (GBG)** part of the Ffestiniog railway station. There I sampled some *Sadlers Sorcerer* and some *Jennings Cocker Hoop*. They were wonderful and made up for the traumas earlier in the day. The next day we had a ride on the Ffestiniog Railway and happened to find seats in the buffet car. There I partook of a bottle of *Purple Moose Madocs Ale*. Very nice especially as the micro is in Porthmadoc.

We went off to Welshpool for the second part of the holiday and in the evening we went out to the **Lion** at Caerhowel for dinner. They only had the one ale, *Wye Valley Cheshire Cat*. Once we tasted our smiles resembled that on the proverbial Cheshire Cat!!

We had a day on the Llangollen railway but while we were in Llangollen I was coerced to navigate us to the **Wynstay Arms** for lunch. I had a very good pint of *Greene King IPA*.

On another evening we returned to the **Lion** for dinner. The *Cheshire Cat* had just 'gone' and they were putting on another beer. We only waited a few minutes for the new offering to be pulled through, it was pronounced servable and all of us went for it. Within a few moments the smiles spread over our faces even wider than before! It was positively GORGEOUS!!! By now a pump clip had appeared and this beer was *Monty's Sunshine*. As we were savouring it and studying the dinner menu a gent approached us and asked us what we thought of the beer. In no uncertain terms he was given very positive answers from our quartet and then he told us that we were the very first customers to drink this ale which was the first beer from a new micro and the brewer was his wife! The lady then appeared and we chatted with her until we were called away for dinner. Needless to say some further orders for ale went to the bar!

On the next day we went to Llanfair to see the railway. Come lunchtime we went off into the village to the **Black Lion** for lunch. There we sampled *Wye Valley Butty Bach* followed by *Purple Moose Glaslyn Ale*. Both were very good, as was the ham sandwich, which I had for lunch. That evening we went to the **Cottage** in Montgomery. To wash down dinner we had *Bishops Castle Goldings* and later a drop of *Bishops Castle 1859 Premium Ale*.

For our final day Reg and I were doing our driving experience courses on the Welshpool Railway, me in the morning and Reg in the afternoon. Very enjoyable it was! After we had both finished, and as we had cups of tea with lunch we wandered up to the **Black Lion** for, in my case, some *Glaslyn Ale*.

That evening we went to the **Lion** again, I being armed with some *Swan Suppings*. We had to have some *Salopian Shropshire Gold* as the *Montys* had been consumed. As we were getting to the end of dinner, Pam Honeyman, *Montys'* master brewer, came over to chat. She was saying that she had done a course at Brewlab in Sunderland which includes formulating recipes and that brew was done there. She is now getting the equipment together and hopes to start brewing in November 2008.

On our journey homewards we went through Kidderminster and then passed through Chaddesley Corbett where we stopped at the **Swan (GBG)** for lunch. To complement the lunch I had some *Bathams Mild* followed by *Bathams Bitter*, both very good. So ended a super holiday with very good company and good ale – not forgetting our railway interests!

Mike Clemence

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## BOSTEEL'S TRIPEL KARMELIET

*Beers of the World* is an international magazine based in Norwich, first published in 2005, dedicated to celebrating just what it says on the cover. The magazine's annual 'World's Best' awards are coveted accolades of excellence. They are the result of tastings by an international panel of judges, chaired by Roger Protz, of hundreds of entries from the UK, mainland Europe, Australia and beyond, to find the winners of each style. The style winners are then tasted 'blind' by a panel of UK brewers to select the best beers in each category: 'World's Best Lager', 'World's Best Ale', 'World's Best Stout/Porter' and 'World's Best Wheat Beer'. The 2008 winners were respectively, *Primator Exklusiv* (Czech Republic), *Bosteels Tripel Karmeliet* (Belgium), *Rogue Shakespeare Stout* (USA) and *Kaltenberg König Ludwig Weissbier* (Germany).

But why am I singling out *Bosteels Tripel Karmeliet* for the heading of this piece? Why indeed should it feature especially in *Swan Supping*? Well for a start, because this wonderful brew also won the category award 'World's Best Pale Ale' and the sub-category award 'World's Best Strong Pale Ale' (it's 8.4% by the way). Those who read the last issue of *Swan Supping* closely should quickly make the connection with this feature. I wrote about *Bosteel's* tradition of touring Belgium with their magnificent horse-drawn dray, giving away free beer. The brewery were so pleased with the article that they invited me, through CAMRA, to join them at the brewery in Buggenhout for a celebration of their 'World's Best' awards.

And boy do they know how to celebrate! Not with extravagant razzmatazz, not with elaborate fanfares – but with an informal style and elegant panache, underpinned with attention to detail and quality, true to the traditions of this sixth-generation family brewery dating back to



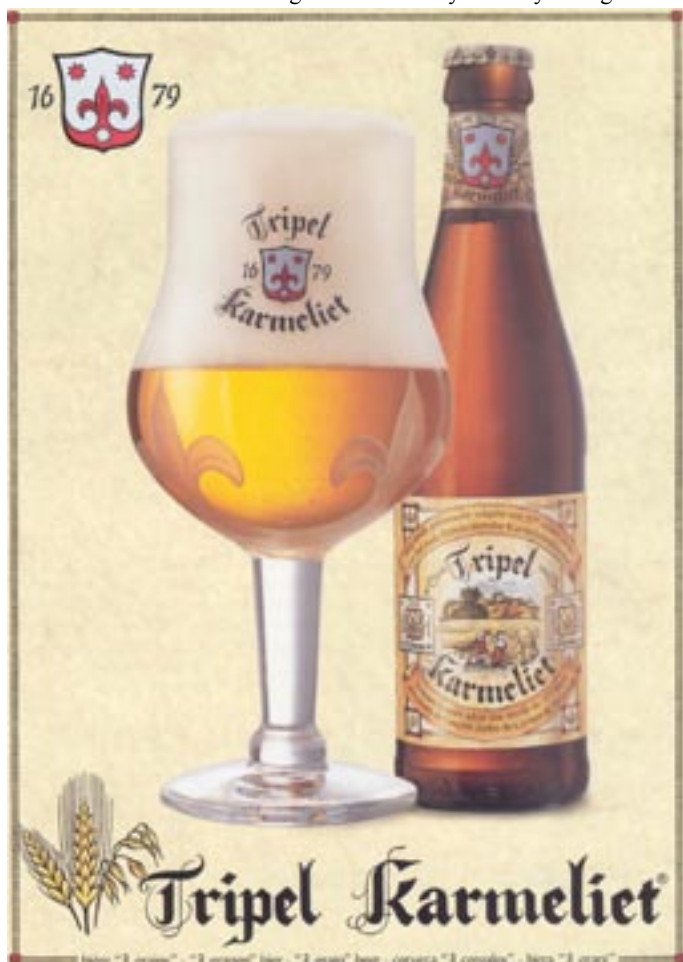
*The 'King and Queen' of Buggenhout*

1791. The welcome and hospitality they extended to their guests was exceptional.

I arrived in Brussels by Eurostar on Thursday 11 September, completely oblivious to the fact that it must have been the last train let through before the tunnel had to be closed due to a serious fire that afternoon. I made my way onwards by rail to Buggenhout where I was met by the charming Mrs Bosteels who gave me a lift to my very comfortable B&B on a farm just outside the town, and then a lift to a restaurant back in town where my evening meal was provided courtesy of the brewery. It was not until the next morning that I learned of the incident in the channel tunnel – so, fantasising about being stranded in the brewery all weekend, I made my way to the awards press reception. Mr & Mrs Bosteels showed me round their small museum of historic brewery coaches and vehicles, the smart brewery shop and hospitality bar, where I watched a film about the history of the brewery, whilst supping a glass of *Tripel Karmeliet*. It was interesting to note that the brewery recycles all its bottles, also using those of the same standard from other breweries. The returns are achieved through deposits on the bottles – a system long abandoned in this country. Scouring the neighbourhood for much-prized bottles was a means of obtaining valuable income for me as a schoolboy. Meanwhile in the background, arrangements were quietly being made for my evening ferry passage home and a lift all the way to Calais. Bang went my dream of being marooned amongst the coppers and casks – *what me...alone... trapped in a brewery all night...with my reputation...*

The press reception was more like a happy family gathering. On introducing me to the Mayor of nearby Dendermonde (the town has a historical association with the brewery), Mr Bosteels told me of an old Flemish saying which roughly translates to 'in a town the Mayor is a Prince, but the brewer is King'. Some of his brewer ancestors were also Mayors of Buggenhout – they must have been doubly royal men commanding immense power and prestige.

'HRH the King of Buggenhout', as I jokingly addressed Mr Bosteels thereafter, then entertained us royally to lunch at the Michelin two-star *Pastorale* restaurant at Rumst-Reet – exquisite. The three prime *Bosteel's* brews – *Deus Brut des Flandres*, *Pauwel Kwak* and *Tripel Karmeliet*





## THE WORLD'S BEST ALE



were served in the manner of fine wines perfectly complementing each course. *DeuS* is a barley wine for the connoisseur, which once brewed, is sent to the champagne district of France to be transformed into a sparkling aperitif with subtle aromas and, at 11.5%, to be savoured with care from a champagne flute. A double fermentation is followed by a third fermentation in the bottle and then months of conditioning where the bottles are gently turned with the object of collecting the yeast in the neck. Bottles are positioned with their necks tilted downwards. Over a period of weeks they are turned slightly and at the same time gradually tilted upwards until ultimately the neck is vertical. The yeast is removed from the bottle by freezing its neck. The frozen bung of yeast is driven out by the pressure in the bottle.

*Pauwel Kwak* is named after a brewer in Napoleonic times at the **De Hoorn** inn at Dendermonde. Mail coaches stopped there every day but the coachmen were not permitted to leave their coaches and horses unattended to quench their thirst, so the landlord had a special glass blown which could be hung on the coach. Thus the tradition started, carried on to this day, of serving the rich amber and malty *Kwak* (8.0%) in a special round-bottomed glass in a wooden holder.

There is also a distinctive glass made for *Tripel Karmeliet*. The beer comes in standard 33cl bottles, but the large high-necked brandy goblet, engraved with fleurs-de-lys, has a capacity of 600ml (1¼ pints). The bowl and neck are designed to contain the sparkling head and aroma as the bottle-conditioned golden ale is carefully poured. The *Tripel* refers not only to its third fermentation in the bottle but also to its three-grain, lightly hopped brew from wheat, oats and malted barley. Mr Bosteels told me how the brewery strove for years to perfect the blend, and having done so, discovered that they had unwittingly almost reinvented an old Carmelite recipe dating from 1691. It has a wonderful orangey nose with a refreshing light sweetness and balance on the tongue, followed by a lingering spicy aftertaste.

The three-hour lunch with top beer and culinary journalists as companions certainly fortified me for the long journey ahead. As promised, one of **Bosteels** staff drove me all the way to Calais where, inevitably, a certain air of (*mal*)entente cordiale prevailed at the ferry terminal – but we all tried to be British about it - and I eventually arrived home at 1am on Saturday morning, tired but very happy.

Congratulations to the *Brouwerij Bosteels* on their awards and thank-you for a highly memorable and enjoyable day.

*Giles du Boulay*



## SUMMER SOCIALS 2008

It's tempting to try to forget what was laughably termed the summer of 2008 but, now autumn has arrived, a look back at the branch social diary for the summer shows there were a few highlights worth remembering.

Our June branch meeting was held at the **Prince Albert** in Frieth. This is an unspoilt gem of a pub, located on the edge of the village. The main bar is quiet and traditionally furnished with an inglenook fireplace. We held our meeting in the adjoining room, which was ideal for the purpose.

While the pub's interior has a timeless feel, it has responded to modern legislation outside with a patio hosting a new sheltered area for exiled smokers. Most importantly, the landlord is keen on his real ales and we enjoyed several good pints of **Brakspear's** beers.

Our branch area stretches from the Thames in the south-east almost to Bicester in the north-west and we aim to spread our socials geographically as wide as possible. The villages in the north-western extremity are a good half hour drive even from Aylesbury so, rather than visit a couple in an evening, we took a Saturday afternoon to visit four. These included the **Crown** at Twyford, where *London Pride* was on offer, the **Sow and Pigs** at Poundon (**Brakspear's Bitter** and *Oxford Gold*) and the **Greyhound** in Marsh Gibbon, where *Greene King Abbot Ale* and *Marston's Pedigree* were on offer.

We finished up in the beer garden of the **Plough** in Marsh Gibbon – note that this was in June when the chances of avoiding a thorough soaking were slightly higher than zero. The **Plough** is the de facto brewery tap for *Oxfordshire Ales*, which are brewed in the village. It is also has an excellent adventure playground, which was a big hit for the big kids in our party – and we did have some real children with us – not just the committee members who, after several pints, couldn't resist the obstacle courses.



In June we also visited the two pubs in Birtton, as well as **Bob's Barn** at the golf club, which also serves real ale. The **Red Lion** had an impressive selection of four real ales, including a tasty *Ansell's Mild*. The **Bell** had its usual range of well-kept **Fuller's** ales.

The following week we visited the **Plough** at Cadsden whose recent extension was featured in a previous *Swan Supping*. We went on to visit the **Red Lion** in nearby Whiteleaf – another historic pub that has recently been extended in a sympathetic manner. Preparations were underway at the **Red Lion** for its midsummer beer festival.

Most socials tend to be on weeknights or Saturdays but occasionally we organise something different. In mid-July we combined the two great British traditions of Sunday roast and real ale. Seven of our number met at the **Whip Inn** in Lacey Green where the good food was washed down with a selection of ales from the pub's five handpumps, which are predominantly sourced from microbreweries.

Suitably sated, we strolled down the road to the **Black Horse** and enjoyed an impromptu Aunt Sally match in the back garden. A couple of intrepid drinkers then headed out into the woods and over the fields to trek to the **Pink and Lily** for further refreshment. It was a fairly remarkable achievement to get lost only once and then to get from the **Pink and Lily** to catch the 300 bus back home.

Speaking of Aunt Sally, we headed out over the branch boundary to the **Carrier's Arms** in Watlington for our traditional July practice session. We mustered two teams and knocked off enough dollies to build up our hopes for the regional Aunt Sally competition in September in Oxford. The **Carrier's Arms** has a good range of beers, including the local *Butler's Oxfordshire Bitter*.

The **Great British Beer Festival** dominates the real ale calendar at the start of August – and several of our number, including familiar faces from the past, met up in the world's biggest pub at Earl's Court.

In mid-August we visited Waddesdon and Quainton. In Waddesdon we had **Fuller's London Pride** at the **Lion** while the **Bell** offered two *Vale* beers – including *Wychert Ale*. The **George and Dragon** in Quainton is a traditional, two-bar village pub that is a hub of the community and normally features an impressive four well-kept real ales.

If one week a social is in a picturesque village, the next week it might be somewhere more cosmopolitan, such as urban High Wycombe. About three-quarters of a mile from the town centre, the **Half Moon** on Dashwood Avenue proved to be something of a revelation. A cursory look at a street map might imply that it may be a back street boozer but it is nothing of the sort. Instead it is smartly decorated and furnished in a modern, comfortable style and features a number of screens for sporting events and also serves two real ales – *Timothy Taylor Landlord* and *Shepherd Neame Spitfire* on our visit.

### THE RED LION WHITELEAF

Nr PRINCES RISBOROUGH

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**CHRISTMAS MENU NOW AVAILABLE!**



## MORE SOCIALS

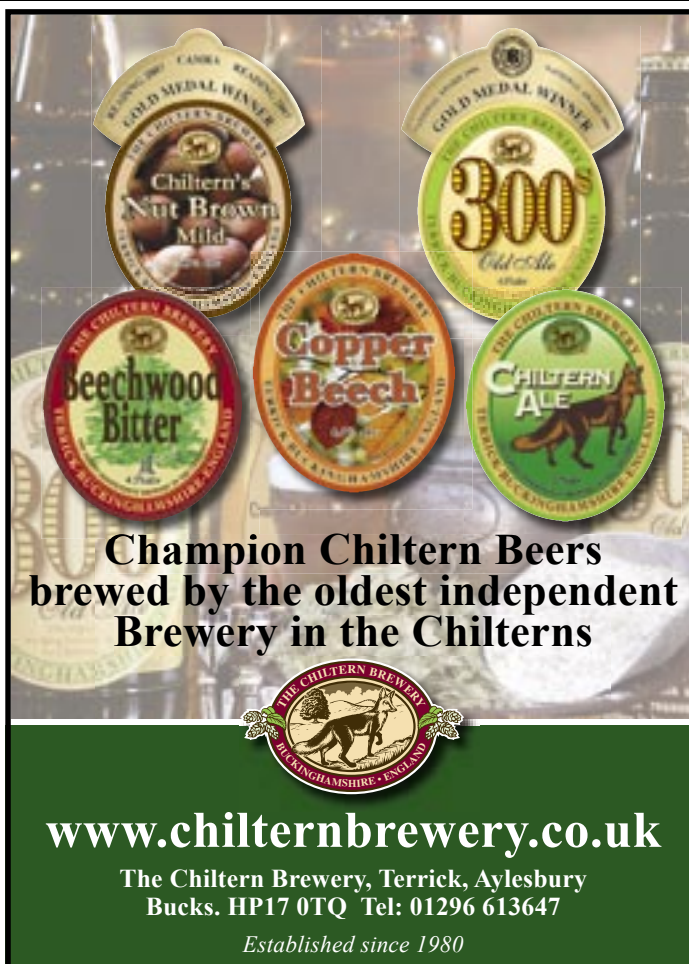
We went on to visit the **Rose and Crown**, which is now virtually surrounded by the new Eden shopping centre. The pub has been recently refurbished with a particular eye on the needs of smokers following last year's ban and now features a noteworthy outdoor drinking area. The current manager has been keen on building up the real ale offering – with **Courage Best** and **Fuller's London Pride** available on our visit.

Like buses, several pub beer festivals always seem to turn up at once. A glance through the last **Swan Supping** would have shown that several were held over the August Bank Holiday weekend. Our official social was at the estimable **Shepherd's Crook** at Crowell. However, with a bit of careful planning using bus timetables, one of our number, who just happens to be the editor, managed to visit an incredible four beer festivals on the same day. Starting at the **Shepherd's Crook** (pictured on the previous page), the itinerary then took in the festivals at the **George and Dragon** in West Wycombe and the **Bird in Hand** at Princes Risborough. It then ended up at the 'Wobble on the Cobbles' festival at the **Kings Head** in Aylesbury. The man should have a medal.

Entering the dog days of summer, in September we took the opportunity to visit a few more country pubs. One such was the **Gate** at Bryant's Bottom – which is nothing to do with unusual private activity but a lovely, unspoilt country pub in a deep Chiltern valley. The pub is friendly and welcoming and offered some very enticing **Greene King IPA** and **Abbot Ale**.

The **Harrow** in the Hughenden Valley is a couple of miles down the road from the **Gate** and has recently changed management. Only one real ale, **Courage Best**, was available on our social but its quality was rather good – so much so that the decision about whether to have a second pint was a foregone conclusion.

See the social diary on page 22 for planned events – all are welcome.



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## WORTH MISSING A FEW PLANES FOR!

Tickers will need to take their toothbrushes and pack their suitcases to try out one of the latest brews from **Loddon Brewery**. Their *Crown Rivers Ale* is brewed exclusively for a **Wetherspoon** pub of the same name – which is located in the airside departures lounge of Heathrow's infamous Terminal Five.

The beer is 3.9% abv with a copper colour, seemingly less hoppy and with more pronounced malt character than many other **Loddon** beers. *Crown Rivers Ale* is further evidence of how **Loddon's** beers can be often be found in local **J.D. Wetherspoon** pubs – with excellent brews such as *Ferryman's Gold* regularly on sale in the **Falcon** in High Wycombe.

As the **Crown Rivers** pub is beyond security control, the special beer is only available to passengers on departing flights. It is located at the north end of the enormous terminal, right next to gates A6 and A7. This means some unlucky passengers may need to walk miles through vast shopping malls to get from pub to gate but, happily, my flight's departure gate was right outside the pub. This allowed me to sample the two other real ales available – **Marston's Pedigree** and **Greene King Abbot Ale** – before boarding the real-ale-free British Airways flight – **Carlsberg** and **Heineken** comprised their beer offering – at least in economy class.

Surprisingly, the **Crown Rivers** charges normal **Wetherspoon** prices – the beers were between £1.90 and £2.00 a pint. This is a pleasant change from the prices at the **Windmill** in Stansted airport which, on my last visit, charged far higher prices than the normal **Wetherspoon** tariff.

According to **Wetherspoon's** News, the new Terminal Five pub has been a great success, in contrast to the disastrous opening of the terminal



itself. It offers a taste of traditional British real ale to passengers from all over the world, many of whom might only be transferring through the terminal. Now its exclusive beer might convince a few tickers to trust BA with their luggage next time they take a trip on a plane.

Apart from **Wetherspoons**, it is difficult to seek out real ale in and around Heathrow Airport. Most bars are aimed at serving up expensive wine and cocktails to jet-setting business types. In the rare event of finding handpumps, the selection of ale tends to be unimaginative and the quality of the beer is variable. I had probably the worst pint of real ale ever in a bar in Terminal One – a glass of virtual vinegar that was served by gravity from an uncooled cask that appeared to have been left opened for weeks in a hot environment.

Fortunately, for anyone who has enough time to venture just beyond the airport perimeter there are a couple of local pubs that can be relied upon to serve good real ale.

Just north of Heathrow, in the village of Harlington, is the **Pheasant**. The pub is located a couple of hundred yards from the row of anonymous corporate hotels that lines the A4 Bath Road – in fact the best way of finding the pub is to turn left behind the Heathrow Marriott.

The pub itself is a traditional local with a large island bar but its restaurant extension is a bizarre architectural curiosity. It appears to be designed to look like a pheasant, with a roof resembling sloping wings and a bird-like head perched on the top.

Local airport workers make the pub very busy on weekday lunchtimes as it serves good value food in large portions. It also offers at least three different real ales – with **Fuller's London Pride** in good condition on my last visit.

The pub is less than a five minute drive from the tunnels that lead to the airport central area and a far more pleasant venue to eat and drink than overpriced terminal bars or bland chain hotels. Ironically, the pub and its surrounding village would be razed flat to the ground to accommodate a third Heathrow runway – so enjoy it while you can.

At the south-east corner of the airport, in the small village of Hatton, is what must be the best pub in the country for plane-spotters – the **Green Man**. It can be reached by a five minute stroll from Hatton Cross tube station – which is a five or ten minute ride from any of the Heathrow terminals. The pub is several hundred years old and has rumoured associations with Dick Turpin the highwayman, who used to ambush coach traffic when the Heathrow vicinity was a much more remote and



## PLANE-SPOTTERS' PUB

lawless area on routes between London and the south-west.

A glimpse of the area's relatively recent rural past is offered by the farm between the busy A30 Great South West road and the pub – a collection of ramshackle buildings with a few cows, ducks and geese.

This sits incongruously next to the huge hangars of the BA maintenance base and countless warehouses. Coincidentally, a large proportion of this country's airfreighted vegetables, such as Thai babycorn or Kenyan beans, are imported through a dedicated warehouse nearby.

Despite the vegetable interest, attention is unavoidably grabbed by the tremendous roar of airliners passing only a couple of hundred feet overhead. Under normal air traffic operations, planes pass almost directly over the **Green Man** slightly less frequently than once a minute for half the day (the landing and departing runways usually switch over at 3pm to give local residents some respite).

The pub has a large beer garden and extensive seating outside so drinkers (at least those who don't mind having conversation drowned out at frequent intervals) can watch the endless procession of aircraft arriving from all over the world.

The **Green Man** serves good real ale to lubricate the plane spotting – *Shepherd Neame Spitfire*, *Courage Directors* and *Greene King Abbot Ale* were available on a recent visit.



The planes are so low that they produce powerful air vortexes capable of violently shaking street light columns.

The BA 777 that crash-landed just short of the runway in January must have almost skimmed the treetops above the pub. Anyone witnessing that would have been grateful for a few pints to calm the nerves.

*Mike Clarke*



**The Red Lion**  
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*We are in the Good Pub Guide and  
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*They offer a good selection of real ales, draught lagers and cider complemented by a wide choice of wines.*

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## LOCAL BREWERY NEWS

### Loddon Ferryman's Gold takes Silver at the Great British Beer Festival

Recently, the **Loddon Brewery** celebrated five years of brewing. Now, they are celebrating once again as their flagship ale *Ferryman's Gold* won a Silver Medal in the Golden Ale Category at the **Great British Beer Festival**. The results were announced during the Trade Session at Earl's Court in London in August. **Loddon Ferryman's Gold** is no stranger to winning awards but this is by far its biggest to date; making it officially the second best golden ale in Britain for 2008/09.

Owners Chris and Vanessa Hearn said that they were delighted and proud at winning the award.

It was one of their objectives to win an award at the **Great British Beer Festival** within five years of brewing; and to achieve it really is a dream come true. They paid tribute to everybody at the brewery who have worked extremely hard since they began and this award comes as a result of a real team effort.



*Ferryman's Gold*, a continental style golden beer at 4.4%, is available nationally in both draught and bottle format.

The awards ceremony will be held at Lords Cricket Ground on the 11<sup>th</sup> October.



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## MORE BREWERY NEWS

### Vale Brewery

Vale Brewery are now producing **Hadda's Autumn Ale** at 4.5%. This copper coloured premium ale is going down exceptionally well and locally is available at the **Royal Oak** in Oakley and the **Hop Pole** in Aylesbury.

They have also just completed their first bottling of **Gravitas**. This is a bottle conditioned version of the 4.8% cask beer that won the **SIBA** National Gold award for Premium ales this year. This is now available in their brewery shop at the Tramway Business park in Brill.

The last run of the citrus hoppy **Vale Pale Ale (VPA)** 4.2% which they bottled sold out really quickly, but **Grumpling** 4.6% and **Wychert** 3.9% are currently available with **Edgars** and **Black Beauty Porter** coming soon.

Vale also stock a range of guest bottled beers, including bottle conditioned beers from **Dark Star**, **Warwickshire**, **Belvoir** and **Castle Rock** breweries. These are all available at £1.99 a bottle, or you can buy a mixed case of guest beers for £22.

### Chiltern Brewery

Chiltern Brewery recently produced an **Oyster Stout** which appeared briefly at the **Kings Head** in Aylesbury. They are planning to do an **Oatmeal Stout** later in the year and we hope to have details in our next issue.



## The Harrow

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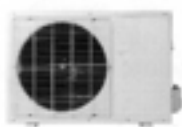
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## RAIL ALE GUIDE

Chiltern Railways, in conjunction with several **CAMRA** branches, have produced a free 'Rail Ale Trail'.

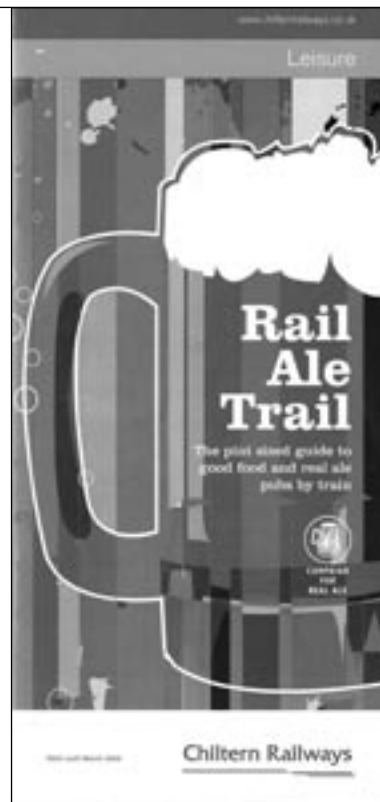
The guide lists **CAMRA** recommended pubs within easy reach of stations along the Chiltern route from London Marylebone and Kidderminster.

Using an Off-Peak return ticket, it is possible to break your journey at stations along the way so you can visit loads of places on the one ticket.

The booklet is available at most stations on the Chiltern Line.

**CAMRA** always tries to promote use of public transport to cut down on the irresponsible practice of drinking and driving. Our branch has been responsible for creating a guide for the

Line 300 bus route and are currently compiling a guide to the Line 40 bus route between Thame and High Wycombe.



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# SNAKES AND LADDERS!



The business environment for pubs over the last year or so brings to mind the immortal words of Captain Sensible and his profound 1982 hit – ‘There Are More Snakes Than Ladders’. So what better way to illustrate the hardships being inflicted on the licensed trade than to plot them on a version of the board game itself?

To play, find the dice and make a few counters. Matchsticks might suffice for each player – or perhaps not – given the smoking ban. Maybe a few peanuts but the government would no doubt insist on a health and safety audit first. Even the biggest simpleton knows the rules to snakes and ladders – if you don’t maybe consider a career in the treasury instead.

The snakes show how adversity has hit pubs from all directions. The price of raw ingredients for beer has shot up and brewers are passing costs on to the customer in the pub. Yet supermarkets, angling to pull customers into their stores during the credit crunch, are discounting heavily on multibuy of cheap canned beer.

At the same time, energy costs and other bills have soared – both for pubs and their customers – who have less to spend.

Then the abysmal summer weather was compounded by no British team making Euro 2008.

The few ladders show things that pubs might try to boost their fortunes – guest beers, beer festivals, interesting menus and hoping for decent weather.

With times so hard for the licensed industry the government, having steadily briefed for weeks beforehand on the sinfulness of alcohol, whacked on an unbelievable 5p extra duty per pint.

Darling and company are the biggest snakes of all.

*Charlie Mackle*

## INVESTMENT CLUB AGM

The 2008 AGM of the *CAMRA Members' Investment Club* (formerly known as the *CAMRA Investment Club*) took place on 21 June, once again at the **Victoria Hotel**, Dovecote Lane, Beeston, Nottingham (adjacent to the railway station). The meeting was ably chaired by Chris Bruton who gave full credit to the work of the Committee team, all of whom were present; Dr Bruton also encouraged members to ask questions or make observations which offer was taken up by several, making for a constructive and lively meeting.

The guest speaker was Julian Grocock, Chief Executive of **SIBA**, the Society of Independent Brewers. His talk was extremely entertaining, peppered as it was with jokes and yarns, and a good few irreverent asides; it contained, however, a strong and serious message in support of independent brewers and quality real ale. That message chimed well with a recommendation in principle from the Investment Club Committee, supported strongly by the many members present, that the Club should devote a small proportion of its funds to capital projects in the significant growth sector of microbreweries.

The buffet lunch provided by the **Victoria Hotel**, was absolutely superb as always. There were some sixteen real ales available in tip-top condition including many local ones including *Castle Rock Harvest Pale*, *Elsie Mo* and *Preservation*, plus two ciders and five continental beers on draught. The **Victoria Hotel** is a **GBG** pub well worth a visit at any time as it is renowned for its cask ales presented to the highest standard, with usually at least twelve available.

For details of the *CAMRA Members' Investment Club*, see their website [www.CMIC.uk.com](http://www.CMIC.uk.com).

*Giles du Boulay*



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*CAMRA Good Beer Guide 2009*

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## PANGBOURNE/WHITCHURCH AND

These are picturesque towns that straddle the Thames river in Oxfordshire - the river 'Pang' is a tributary of the Thames. Pangbourne is connected to Whitchurch, the village on the other side of the Thames by a bridge and also by the weir of the Whitchurch Lock. Both sets of towns can be reached on the Oxford-Paddington train line, Goring is 25 minutes from Oxford and Pangbourne is 30 minutes - the latter is 10 minutes from Reading. So transport was sorted. My friend and I started off at Pangbourne, Me from Aylesbury via the 280 bus service to Oxford and he from Reading by train.

Our first stop about 400 metres from the train station was the **Cross Keys**, found on the main road and looking quite homely inside. There were three beers on offer of which *Everards* and *Titanic* were the most interesting. The beer garden out the back was bordered on what I assume is the river Pang - complete with the odd discarded bottle of 'bud' - shame. The garden was dominated by an enormous smoking shelter, one of the biggest I have ever seen, the pub clearly trying to minimise the impact of the smoking ban. Almost opposite this pub was the rather regal **Elephant Hotel**, reception was straight in front so a sharp bank to the right was required to locate the bar. At 12:45 we were the only ones present apart from the bar owner, and in contrast to him and our surroundings we looked terribly shabby! The beers were a delight and consisted of two from the *West Berkshire* brewery and one from the *Butcombe* brewery. We'd briefly considered food at the previous pub and thought this would be a better bet but at a minimum of £10-£12 per head maybe not.

Two more pubs to do but we thought we'd get the two Whitchurch pubs out of the way because they were out of the way (although less than half a mile as it turned out). This was a picturesque crossing of the Thames river and we noted that this is a toll road - a good place to put one with the limited crossings up and down stream, i.e. making money out of people. A couple of hundred metres beyond that point on the right was the **Ferryboat Inn**, an unassuming pub composed of one bar, one dining



area and a small concrete beer garden which seemed to have some staff members of far eastern origin. The 'beer list' was *Black Sheep Bitter*, *Hop Back Summer Lightning* and *Taylor's Landlord* with the former beer being on the turn, it's taste and appearance were probably better for drowning slugs. We should have taken it back but we didn't. The ploughman's was ok at £6 and I used it to smother the taste of the beer (the shame of a *CAMRA* member).

Another 200 metres or so further up was the **Greyhound**, trying very hard to impress passers-by/customers with it's basket floral displays, so presumably there's an annual 'best Whitchurch floral display' competition out there somewhere. This was a lot busier place, capturing a bit more of the market trade than the previous pub, perhaps the wives of elderly folk driving by are lured by the flowers and are forced to buy sherry. The beers on offer were *Wells Bombardier*, *Youngs Bitter* and one other. The lady went down to cellar - ah, is this a gravity-fed beer? It was! Unfortunately it was also very warm - room temperature. Just as well we had a half each. We'll visit it next when it's snowing.

And so, with Whitchurch done, it was back across the river to Pangbourne and our final pub - the **Swan**. Not the **Star** inn, as we hadn't the time and the reviews on the internet suggested it was a somewhat of a 'lads' pub - Sky TV, pool table, 'lager rules ok' and all that. The **Swan** was the closest pub to the station and a good waterside location by the Thames. Despite the views - the tables by the river were all taken, this isn't a pub I liked much, very much a gastropub with rushed staff and the beer selection of *Greene King IPA* and *Old Speckled Hen*, a nightmare for beer snobs!

So it was back to the train station, some five minutes walk away for the Paddington-Oxford train, which took us to **Goring** and **Streatley**, a ride of a few minutes. These towns lie adjacent to each other, split in two by the Thames. Goring is the larger of the two and has all the pubs bar one - the **Bull** in **Streatley**. We didn't know the order we should do them in so on leaving the station we walked in a straight line, the road was Station road and after a few yards we came across the **Catherine Wheel**, easily spotted by the people outside in the 'garden'. This pub had the best beer selection of the whole day - *Hook Norton Hooky Dark*, *Wychwood* and the other FOUR were from the *Brakspear* range. The toilet was behind a nondescript door covered by a poster - it was not even labelled as such. I'm sure this is entirely deliberate - I did find it amusing even though I couldn't find it and had to ask!



## GORING/STREATLEY WALKABOUT

Further down the road on the right was the **John Barleycorn**, rather a quiet but pleasant pub with a small but grass beer garden. The beer selection was a bit of a come down, just *Brakspear's Bitter* on tap, but only a few pubs are beer festivals. We carried on in the same direction and eventually ended up on the high street, and hence over the Thames to **Streatley**.

At the t-junction and traffic lights which lie at the foot of a large hill was the **Bull**. I thought this was the most 'impressive' pub out of both towns; a nice, plush carpeted interior with plenty of pub 'tack' and framed prints. And was probably the reason I fell asleep for a few minutes (nothing to do with the alcohol you understand). Beer range was just *Greene King*, enough said. As this was the only pub in **Streatley** we crossed back over the river for the last two pubs and then home.

The **Miller of Mansfield** was a bit of a 'quirky' pub, it had this very upmarket feel, the furniture was quite ornate and the restaurant at the back looked a bit special. Perhaps the food was expensive but the beer wasn't and my shorts and t-shirt didn't have us booted out.

The beers on offer were represented by the *West* and *White Horse* breweries, in which case the pub is on my 'recommended' list. Shame we only had time for a pint.

The last pub, the **Queens Head**, was next to the train station and it was all downhill - to the station and our states of intoxication. In fact you could probably hear your train come in - a pub for drinking your beer and checking your watch every two minutes. This is a locals' pub complete with pool table and pub banter. No great shakes on the beer front, *Greene King* again (ok, I'm not really against *GK* but it rather 'everywhere' these days, and I do like to 'diversify').



So that was ten pubs, none of them are in the *Good Beer Guide*, but the beer in general is pretty good and the pubs themselves come in all shapes and sizes. All these places are linked conveniently by a 30 minute train service, and sandwiched conveniently between two great beer drinking places - Reading and Oxford. Worth a trip.

Lemon Snail

# REBELLION

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## BEER FESTIVALS

### FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE HOSPICE CHARITY

Halloween will again be celebrated at the *Aylesbury Vale Beer Festival* which is run in conjunction with the **Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity** who raise money for the Aylesbury Hospice.

The aim of the Hospice is to provide a first class specialist palliative care service which is accessible and free of charge to those with a life-limiting illness. Hospice care is all about the person being more than a patient and finding ways to improve quality of life through symptom control, pain relief, emotional and spiritual support. Families and close friends are also involved as they are often central to the well-being of those in their care.

The festival will be held at the Eskdale Road Community Centre, Stoke Mandeville, over the weekend of Friday October 31st and Saturday 1st of November.

There will be around 30 real ales plus traditional ciders and perries. The festival will be open from 6:00pm-11:00pm on the Friday and 11:00am - 11:00pm on Saturday. Hot and cold food will be available both days.

This is our 15th festival that we have raised money for the Hospice and the beer tends to taste better when you know that the money you have paid is going to a worthwhile cause.

All profits will go to the charity and if you wish to sponsor a barrel, please contact the editor (details on page 22) or Andrea Maggs on 01296 429975.



The 2008 *Oxford Beer Festival* will take place from Thursday 16th October to Saturday 18th October, at Oxford Town Hall, celebrating their eleventh annual event at that venue. They intend to offer around 130 different

beers, and will have duplicate casks for about 30 of the beers which are expected to be most popular (the festival has a capacity of 160 firkins overall). The duplicates will not go on sale until Saturday morning; they are intended to ensure some variety in the beer list for those

who travel to the festival on Saturday, if sales are strong in the first couple of days.

**CAMRA** volunteers are needed to help staff the festival, setup on Wednesday 15th and takedown on the morning of Sunday 19th. Contact the Staffing Officer, Tony Perry (tony\_perry3000@hotmail.co.uk) or ring 07799 588972.

The *Haddenham Real Ale Winterfest* will take place at the Manor Farm Barn, Church End, Haddenham on Saturday 29th of November from 12 noon to 5 p.m.

There will be a selection of winter ales from independent brewers and a full entertainment programme plus hot and cold seasonal food and stalls selling Christmas goodies. There is lots of car parking, or you can take Chiltern Rail to Haddenham and Thame Parkway, (15 minutes walk), or an Arriva 280 bus to Haddenham Church End. Full details can be found on <http://www.haddenham-beer-festival.co.uk>.



It takes all sorts to campaign for real ale

### Join CAMRA today...

Complete the Direct Debit form below and you will receive three months membership free 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](http://www.camra.org.uk) or call 01727 867201. All forms should be addressed to Membership Secretary, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, AL1 4LW.

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I wish to join the Campaign for Real Ale, and agree to abide by the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

I enclose a cheque for ..... Mem Form 0108

Signed ..... Date .....

#### Instruction to your Bank or Building Society to pay by Direct Debit

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To the Manager ..... Bank or Building Society  
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Name(s) of Account Holder

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Bank or Building Society Account Number

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Branch Sort Code

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Please pay CAMRA Direct Debits from the account detailed on this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with CAMRA and if so will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.

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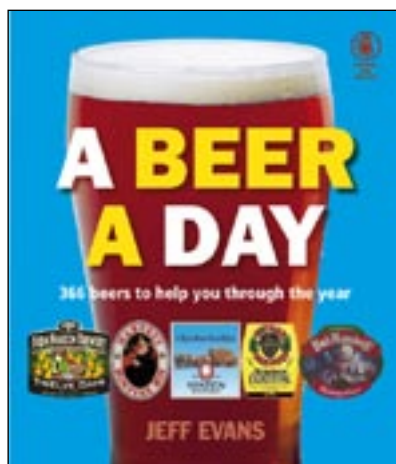
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## BOOK REVIEWS



### *A BEER A DAY*

*A Beer a Day* is a beer book with a difference: 366 great beers from all over the world are featured - one for every day of the year. No ordinary collection of 'must taste' beers, *A Beer a Day* looks to unearth the links between beer and the world we live in - our history, traditions, customs and culture.

Beer production has always been linked to the seasons, with harvest time and religious festivals often inspiring special commemorative beers, while modern brewers produce seasonal ales for such occasions as Valentine's Day and Halloween. Beers are also named in honour of the great and the good from history - patron saints, kings and queens; in fact anyone from Robert the Bruce, Dr Johnson and Nostradamus to Richard the Lionheart, Thomas Telford and Mata Hari.

*A Beer a Day* has a beer for every story and a story for every beer. Members price £14.99. Non-members price £16.99

### *100 Belgian Beers to Try Before You Die!*

*100 Belgian Beers to Try Before You Die!* showcases 100 of the best Belgian beers as chosen by internationally-known beer writers Tim Webb and Joris Pattyn.

Lavishly illustrated throughout with images of the beers, the breweries, Belgian beer bars and some of the characters involved in Belgian brewing, the book encourages both connoisseurs and newcomers to Belgian beers to sample them for themselves, both in Belgium and at home. Each entry details the beer's style and ABV, the available bottle sizes and whether it is served on draught.

UK and US importers are given to help readers find and try the beers for themselves.

Detailed and enthusiastic tasting notes help readers explore the complex and delicious flavours of each beer.

Contact information is given for each brewery along with any opening times and details of brewery taps.

**Price from: £10.99**

*Normally Ships within 10 Working Days,  
Please allow upto 21 Days for Delivery*

*Publisher: CAMRA Books*

*Publish Date: September 2008*

*ISBN: 978-1-85249-248-9*



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Gravitas 4.8% - Pale Premium hoppy bitter  
Black Swan Mild 3.9% - Dark smooth rich mild  
Black Beauty Porter 4.3% - Full bodied dark porter  
Wychert 3.9% - Rich malty auburn bitter  
Edgars Golden Ale 4.3% - English golden best bitter  
Grimpling Old Ale 4.6% - Ruby brown premium ale

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Opening hours. Mon to Fri 9.30am to 5pm, Sat 9.30am to 11.30am.



# Branch Diary

*Everybody welcome to all socials and meetings!*

## OCTOBER

### Wednesday 1st NAPHILL/LACEY GREEN SOCIAL

9:00pm Black Lion, Naphill; 10:00pm Black Horse, Lacey Green.

### Saturday 4th BEER FESTIVAL SOCIAL

Noon Wheel, Naphill, 2:00pm Whip, Lacey Green

### Tuesday 7th BRANCH MEETING

8:30pm George and Dragon, West Wycombe.

### Saturday 11th BEER FESTIVAL SOCIAL

Noon Royal Oak, Oakley

### Tuesday 14th WENDOVER SOCIAL

8.30pm White Swan; 9.15pm Red Lion; 10pm Pack Horse.

### Wednesday 22nd LITTLE MARLOW SOCIAL

8.45pm Queen's Head; 9.30pm King's Head.

### Tuesday 28th PRE-BEER FESTIVAL SOCIAL

9:00pm, Bull, Stoke Mandeville.

### Friday 31st/Saturday 1st Nov 15TH VALE OF

### AYLESBURY BEER FESTIVAL

Eskdale Road Community Centre, Stoke Mandeville

Our annual charity beer festival held in conjunction with the 'Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity'.

Open 6:00pm-11:00pm Friday, 11:00am - 11:00pm Saturday

## NOVEMBER

### Monday 3rd BRANCH MEETING

8.30pm Unicorn, Cublington

### Saturday 8th BEER FESTIVAL SOCIAL

Noon Hop Pole, Aylesbury

### Wednesday 12th DIBLEY SOCIAL

8.30pm Frog, Skirmett; 9.15pm Bull and Butcher, Turville; 10:00pm Chequers, Fingest.

### Friday 14th BRANCH DINNER

7:00 for 7.30pm, Three Horseshoes, Burroughs Grove (to be confirmed).

### Tuesday 18th HAMPDENS SOCIAL

9:00pm Rising Sun, Little Hampden; 10:00pm Hampden Arms, Great Hampden.

### Saturday 22nd LINE 40 CRAWL

12 noon, Inn at Emington; 12.45pm Crown, Sydenham; 2:00pm Shepherd's Crook, Crowell; 3:00pm Cherry Tree, Kingston Blount.

### Friday 28th HADDENHAM CRAWL

Start 8:00pm Rising Sun, then King's Head, Green Dragon, Rose and Thistle, Red Lion.

### Saturday 29th BEER FESTIVAL SOCIAL

Noon Winterfest, Haddenham

**CATCH UP WITH THE MEMBERS DURING SOCIALS  
WITH THE BRANCH MOBILE PHONE 0792 215 8971**

**FOR THE LATEST ON BRANCH NEWS AND  
ACTIVITIES, CHECK THE BRANCH WEBSITE:**

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

## Swan Supping

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Editorial Address : 16 Jasmine Close, Aylesbury, Bucks HP21 9SH.

Tel : 01296 484551

E-Mail : [editor@swansupping.org.uk](mailto:editor@swansupping.org.uk)

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**Copy deadline** for next issue, to be published 1st December, is 14th November.

**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 75p 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](http://www.swansupping.org.uk)).

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

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# More Local News



(Continued from page 2)

for the fireworks in October which usually gets a good turnout.

## HADDENHAM

The **Green Dragon** reopened a couple of months or so ago, describing themselves as a country pub, with good food. They concentrate on seasonal food with a traditional bias, both lunchtimes and evenings; local produce is used wherever possible. Three beers were on tap when visited: **Loddon Hopbit**, **Brakspear Bitter** and **Sharps Doombar**.

The **Kings Head** are starting Quiz Nights on the second Thursday of each month, starting in October on 9<sup>th</sup>.

## HAMBLEDEN

The **Stag and Huntsman** staged their annual beer festival at the end of August, with all the ales' titles having a farm connection. A baker's dozen of barrels graced the sunny Saturday branch social with members enjoying **Hesket Newmarket Haystacks** (3.7), **Bradfield Farmers Brown Cow** (4.2), **Buffy's Mucky Duck** (4.5) and **Exe Valley Mr. Sheppard's Crook** (4.7), to name but a few.

Landlord Andy Stokes quoted 'that it was his best beer festival to date and he was already looking forward to next year's event', the first weekend after the August Bank Holiday.

## HENTON

The **Peacock** is currently offering **Fullers London Pride** and **Tring Pickled Peacock** (3.8%) which is brewed especially for the pub.

## HIGH WYCOMBE

The **Sausage Tree** is one of four finalists in the Speciality Beer Pub of the Year category of the **Publican 'Food and Drink Awards'**.

## HUGHENDEN VALLEY

Following the departure of Elaine Verrent, the new people in charge at the **Harrow** are David and Shirley who have been in the pub trade for over thirty years. They will be running the pub until the New Year when a decision about its future will be made dependent upon its viability. They are offering **Fullers London Pride**, **Courage Best** and a guest beer. Food is available and they are already taking bookings for Christmas.

## KINGSWOOD

After several months with 'lease for sale' signs, the **Crooked Billet**

is currently closed with an 'under refurbishment' notice outside.

## LACEY GREEN

The annual joint beer festival between the **Whip** and the **Wheel**, Naphill, will take place over the weekend of Friday 3rd to Sunday 5th of October.

## MARLOW

The new tenant at the **Greene King** tied pub the **Carpenters Arms** is Sarah Kipping. Sarah has taken over the reins, after Chris Martin left the pub a couple of months ago. Brewery beers include **IPA** (3.6) and **Abbot Ale** (5.0), at this lively town-centre locals' haunt.

Work has started at the **Crown**, Market Square, as it is to be transformed into a new kitchen shop/showroom. A kitchen nightmare if ever there was!

The **George and Dragon** has reopened as a **Premier Inn**. No news as yet on the real ale front.

Dres Trueman lost her fight with cancer and her funeral was in Hambleden at the end of August. Our deepest sympathies go to John and the rest of the family.

The **Hare and Hounds** (aka, the **Gallery**, on the TV show 'The Restaurant', now being screened on BBC2) has a beer exclusive to this pub/restaurant. As reported in **Swan Supping** No.61 last year, **Hare of the Dog** brewed by the **Sam Trueman** brewery is only available at this outlet. Since the last report though, the beer has increased in strength from 3.5% to 4.3% ABV. The brew was an economical £1.75 a pint when tried last month.

## OAKLEY

The **Royal Oak** is holding a beer festival over the weekend of Saturday 12th and Sunday 13th of October.

## PIDDINGTON

The **Dashwood Arms** is currently closed. More news next issue.

## PRINCES RISBOROUGH

There was a blackboard outside the **George & Dragon** that said 'Welcome back to the Bistro', so it looks like things are changing at the pub. More news next issue.

## STEWKLEY

The **Swan** is now featuring three real ales following the installation of another handpump. The permanent beer is **Courage Best** with two alternating beers from the **Tring** brewery. As a sign of the hard times

that pubs are going through, the pub is now offering Bed & Breakfast and runs a small local shop from the garage.

## SOULBURY

The **Boot** has a new landlord. He is Stuart Moseley who used to be the chef at the **Cock** in Wing. He took over from Naomi, who has left the pub trade, on the fifth of September. The three beers on offer are **Adnams Bitter**, **Shepherd Neame Spitfire** and **Greene King IPA**.

## THAME

The **Birdcage**, besides its usual two rotating beers, **Brakspear Bitter** and **Charles Wells Bombardier** at the last visit, also sells around 30 different bottled beers from around the world. It has also introduced hot rock cooking where they bring a very hot rock to your table and you cook the meat/fish at your table.

The **Cross Keys**, never known for its real ale because there was none, still seems to be closed after a brief spell of indifferent opening times.

The **Six Bells** welcomes back Dominic and Miranda from a short spell across the border in the **Paper Mill**, Apsley Lock. The **Fullers** beers on offer continue to be **London Pride**, chilled **Discovery** and a very palatable **HSB** as well as a fourth changing beer. Pints will be topped up if asked.

The **Swan Hotel** closed briefly when the previous managers left, but it is now open again under the stewardship of **Arizona Corporation** who are planning a complete refurbishment of the pub from top to bottom. The only beer on offer when visited was **Greene King IPA** - a sad state of affairs from a former **GBG** entry - although **Fullers London Pride** had been on and **Rebellion Smuggler** was due to come on. Having **GK IPA** here makes five pubs in Thame where you can get this brew. By the time this edition comes out, the **Swan** should be fully refurbished and hopefully with four real ales on offer.

Thame's newest 'pub' is the **Thatch**. Known in previous lives as the **Trout** and **Thatchers** and always known as a restaurant. On offer were beers from the **Vale Brewery**. **Wychert** at only £2.50 a pint and **Edgars Golden Ale**. It is the policy of the **Thatch** to source locally produced goods and supplies. The beer was a little on the cold side but is probably the cheapest pint in the town. The pub is open from 10am daily and food is available all day either in the bar, restaurant or the patio area at the rear. Jazz evenings are held once a month on Sundays.

## TURVILLE

It was with great sadness that friends of Nick Abbott announced his death, suddenly, in Stokenham, Devon, in August. Nick, who was the landlord of the **Bull and Butcher** for ten years, where he successfully established one of the most popular pubs in the Chilterns; was a passionate **Brakspear** man, and long rued the move of brewing from his beloved brewery in Henley. Nick was well known and loved, by hundreds of Marlow and Bucks residents who passed through his doors. A memorial service was held at St Mary's Church, just across the green from his old pub, in August

## WENDOVER

The **Marquis of Granby** is being run by Amy from the **Rockwood** in Aylesbury. They are offering **Fullers London Pride**, **Greene King IPA**, **Adnams Bitter** and **Hook Norton Old Hooky**. Food is served between noon and 9pm with a pub menu during the day and à la carte available in the evening.

## WESTON TURVILLE

The **Five Bells**, which is an **M&B Vintage Inn**, has increased from one to three handpumps and now sells **Charles Wells Bombardier**, **Wadworth 6X** and **Fullers London Pride**.

## WOOBURN COMMON

The 'Balls & Beer' 1<sup>st</sup> **Royal Standard** beer festival, hosted over 50 real ales and ciders from circa 25 different breweries from Friday 29<sup>th</sup> - Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> August. Strong brews included **Nethergate SVS** (6.2), **Dark Star Hophead Extra** (5.8), the mandatory **Sarah Hughes Dark Ruby Mild** (6.0) and the moreish **Thomas Sykes Old Ale** (10.0) from the **Burton Bridge** brewery. Cider and perry were represented from **Millwhites** and **Mr. Whitehead's**. Real cider is now available at the **Royal Standard**, see the blackboard in the bar for tasting notes and ABV's.

## WYCOMBE MARSH

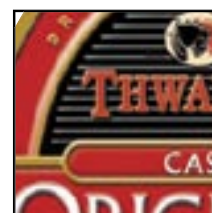
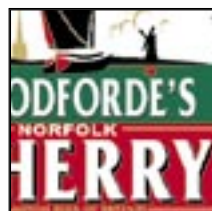
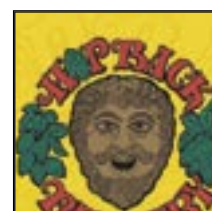
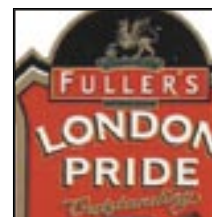
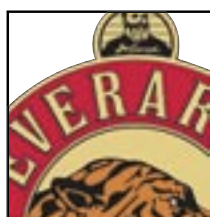
There are new opening hours at the **King George the Fifth**. It's open from 12 to 12 on Friday and Saturday and from Monday to Thursday it's only open in the evenings. On a recent visit the beers were **Fullers London Pride** and **Okells IPA**.







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