

FREE



Swan Supping



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

Issue 66

JUNE/JULY 2008



WANT TO SAVE YOUR LOCAL? BUY IT!



The **Crown Inn** is a 16th century traditional farming village public house, situated in the beautiful quiet hamlet of Sydenham, nestling beneath the rolling Chiltern Hills.

The village itself consists of the pub, St Mary's Church, a few farms, houses and cottages.

The pub was put up for sale by **Admiral Taverns** (having been sold to them by **Greene King** some 18 months ago) and the freehold of the property has been bought by a small syndicate of villagers who were determined that the pub stay open - both as an asset for the village as well as serving the neighbouring area. They feel very strongly that the pub is at the heart of the village.



It's in the process of being refurbished, but keeping the atmosphere of a village pub.

They are currently looking for a tenant who will develop this free house into a thriving business and plan to have it back open for trade in a couple of months' time.

The pressure on country pubs these days is immense especially with pub groups who look at a potential windfall with a conversion to a private house.

We will follow the progress of the pub in the pages of **Swan Supping** and organise a social there after it opens. It will also feature in our upcoming Line 40 bus guide.

HWRUFC BEER FESTIVAL



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A newsletter with a print run of 5000 for the discerning drinkers of Aylesbury Vale and Wycombe

Local News

ASTON CLINTON

Beefeater public house the **Crow's Nest** offers two mainstream cask ales. **Greene King IPA** (3.6) and **Fuller's London Pride** (4.1) being the hand pumped beers.

Fuller's pub the **Oak** serves three of their brewery beers, **Chiswick** (3.5), **London Pride** (4.1) and **ESB** (5.5), alongside a guest ale, which was **Highgate Special** (3.8) when visited in May. They will be holding another beer festival in September – see the next issue for details.

The **Rothschild Arms** was closed when we visited in May and had been for a while. However, we understand that a temporary manager is now in charge of this **Punch** owned pub and that it has reopened.

AYLESBURY

The **Bell** reopened on the 2nd of May and looks like it is returning to its former glory. It has been refurbished throughout with new carpets, furniture and upholstery, and is looking very smart. The plan is to offer eight real ales between the two bars including **Greene King IPA**, **Old Speckled Hen** and **Abbot**, **Wadworth 6X**, **Black**

Sheep Bitter and **Shepherd Neame Spitfire** plus regular guest ales. The pub is serving breakfast from 7am and a full menu from 11.30am to 10pm Monday to Saturday, with a carvery on Sunday. Twenty rooms, all ensuite, will soon be available, marking the return of a hotel to the centre of the town.

Dayla have taken over **Taylor & Co.**, a family owned drinks wholesaler in Staines. They will now supply over 350 new customers in Surrey, Berkshire and London which will represent a significant increase in turnover. They didn't do much real ale in the past so this take-over is seen as a great opportunity.

A study has shown that a lot of **Dayla's** business is on the Aston Clinton side of Aylesbury and many of their staff live that side as well. However, there is currently no plans to move to Aston Clinton and no such decision will be made until planning permission is sorted out for their present site, having already lost two planning applications plus an appeal.

The **Farmers Bar** at the **Kings Head** held a very successful beer festival to celebrate St. George's Day. They will be holding another festival over

the weekend of Friday 27th June to Sunday 29th, at which there will be ten ales and four ciders available in the courtyard as well as the usual favourites inside. There will be a further beer festival towards the end of August as part of the 'Hobble on the Cobbles 2008' festival.

Adrian Garman is the new manager at the **Hobgoblin**. The pub is hoping to be back to three real ales soon with **Hobgoblin** as a regular beer and two others from either **Archers** or **Vale** breweries.

The **Horse & Jockey** on the Buckingham Road, part of the **Orchid Group**, featured an English Ale Festival throughout May.

The **Lantern** is currently surrounded by scaffolding as a major refurbishment is taking place. However, the rumour mill seems to think that the changes taking place will make it even less like a traditional pub dating back to the Civil War than it is now!

The **Square @ Aylesbury** will be reverting to one of its previous, more traditional, names! The pub will

become the **Green Man** as soon as the new signage is ready (probably in July). Lets hope that the pub keeps the new (old) name for a very long time! The **Greene King IPA** and the **Shepherd Neame Spitfire** are proving to be very popular.

BLDLOW

Country gem the **Lions**, continues to source local brewery ales at this sole village outlet. **Tring Jenny's Yarn** (4.2) was among the five brews on parade, which included **Slater's Queen Bee** (4.2) and **Archers Swindon Strong Bitter** (5.0), showcasing last month. **Archers Porter** has also been available of late.

BRYANTS BOTTOM

Greene King tied pub the **Gate**, provides **GK IPA** (3.6) and **Abbot Ale** (5.0) which were in good nick when visited in April. Worth an attendance, if in the area.

FRIETH

Brakspear Bitter (3.4) and **Hobgoblin** (4.5) are available at the **Prince Albert**. This is a classic example of a true Chiltern Valley pub.

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LOCAL BREWERY NEWS

OLD LUXTERS



The sale of the *Old Luxters* brewery and the Chiltern Valley winery has finally exchanged contracts with a deal hopefully to be completed in the next month or so. The new owners are to be *Allied Domecq*.

Mr. David Ealand, proprietor and owner of this local brewery and vineyard, will remain at the brewery for the interim in a consulting capacity, to oversee the immediate running and takeover of this full-mash craft brewery.

What transpires in the next year or so is unclear and down to the new owners *Allied Domecq*, but both cask and bottle-conditioned (RAIB) ales are hoped to be maintained and possibly expanded. *Old Luxters* brewery is the only micro-brewery in the British Isles to have been accredited with the coveted Royal Warrant of appointment to Her Majesty the Queen for their bespoke bottle-conditioned real ales brewed for sale at the Royal Household shops at Old Windsor, Balmoral and Sandringham.

A barrel of *Old Luxters Barn Ale Special* (4.5) is to make a rare cameo appearance at the *Duke of Cambridge* Summer Solstice mini-festival in June.

Alan Sheppard (Old Luxters BLO)



VALE

Vale Brewery have changed their artwork for pub clips to reflect their new home.

The new range of pump clips now feature the famous Brill windmill.

In addition to selling own own hand crafted bottle conditioned *Vale* beers, the Brill brewery shop is also starting to sell beer from other breweries. Whilst the priority remains *Vale*, interesting additions can be found by calling or visiting.

A recent hit is *Hopshackle Restoration Ale*. This is a 9% ale aged for six months before bottling. It is described as a Belgium Triple in style and is a rich smooth drinking dark ale that is proving really popular. Some *Dark Star* brews including *Espresso Stout* will be available early June.

It is advisable to call before travelling to check stock, but also to get directions!

Vale Brewery's pub in South Hinksey, Oxfordshire, the *General Elliot*, will be holding a beer festival over the weekend of 27th /29th of June.



The Wheel

A Traditional English Pub
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ONE DAY BEER FESTIVAL SATURDAY 21ST JUNE 2008

15 Ales + Cider and Perry

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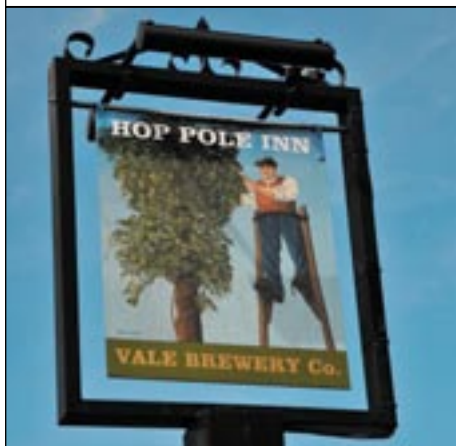
Pig Roast from mr-porky.co.uk 7-til its gone

No need to drive we are on the 300 bus route between Aylesbury and High Wycombe

We are in The Good Beer guide 2008

A guaranteed warm welcome from Mark, Claire and all the staff

BRANCH PUB OF THE YEAR!



The **Hop Pole** on the Bicester Road in Aylesbury has been chosen as the *Aylesbury Vale and Wycombe Branch Pub of the Year!*

The **Hop Pole** was a run down pub with no real ale when **Vale Brewery** purchased it in 2005. After an eleven month refurbishment and an investment of over £250,000, August 2006 saw the opening of a brewery tap that **Vale** are justifiably proud of.

A large front bar was created, the kitchen refitted, a back function room laid out with its own bar and five letting rooms added.

The front bar features two **Vale** real ales at all times, and eight guest beers that are always

changing. These are not your big Pub Co. guest beers, but specially selected ales spread across the entire UK. The beers on sale and in the cellar are maintained by landlord Stuart on his web-site (www.hop-pole.co.uk).

The food offering is simple, but superb, with Pizzas made by a native Italian!

The function room is well used and features Real Ale festivals at least twice a year.

Phil Stevens, Partner at **Vale Brewery** said 'Winning the local **CAMRA** pub of the year award is a fantastic achievement and recognition for the hard work put in by Stuart, Monia and staff who run the pub so well, with the support of the **Vale Brewery** team.'

The **Pub of the Year** certificate was presented to Stuart and Monia on May 1st by local branch chairman.

This presentation featured in local newspapers and on Aylesbury's local radio station. Mix 96 led its 6pm bulletin with an item about the future of local pubs, featured the presentation, had an interview of about a minute each with Stuart, and then our editor, David Roe. Many of our campaigning causes were mentioned, such as the attraction of real ale, better public transport and promotion of our autumn beer festival.

The **Hop Pole** now enters the competition to become the **Central Southern Regional Pub of the Year**. It must initially compete with the **Robin Hood** in Tring and the **Lamb** in Stoke Goldington for a place in the final round of voting. If, after all this it wins the regional competition, it will be entered for the **National Pub of the Year**.





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A WALK THROUGH LONDON'S VICTORIANA



The Argyll Arms - exterior

London pubs are home to many wonderful architectural gems and Victorian splendour is represented within several pub interiors. This walk, inspired by an English Heritage magazine article, takes you to eight such pubs within a few miles.

Start at Oxford Circus tube station leaving by the Argyle St exit. As you leave the portico you will see the **Argyll Arms** opposite. Built in the 1860s this contains splendid glass screens with a front bar and two snugs. Unfortunately on our visit it was closed due to flooding but a

visit earlier in the year proved a very pleasant way to start a pub crawl.

Turn left to walk along Oxford Street and on the opposite side near to Charing Cross Road is the **Tottenham**. This is the last remaining pub on Oxford Street. It has occupied the same site since 1826 and used to be called the **Flying Horse**.

It has beautiful mirrors in mahogany surrounds with acanthus decorated tiles, a brightly coloured skylight and three curvaceous bosomy ladies painted on panels. A row of six hand pumps provides good choice and on our visit the **Taylor's Landlord** and **Hop Back Spring Zing** were both very satisfying as a mid morning drink.

Walk down Charing Cross road, cutting down St Martin's Court onto St Martin's Lane. The **Salisbury** is a 'sports free' pub with a range of hand pumps, including **Taylor's Landlord**, **Wadworth 6X** and **Bombardier** with **Leffe** and **Hoegaarden** on tap.

This is a popular venue for food (especially its pies) but it was quiet at 11.10 when we visited. It was built in the 1890s and has some fabulous mirrors, a magnificent mahogany bar and bronze lamps in the form of nymphs.

(Continued on page 6)

Tony, Ian & Lynne welcome you to

The Black Horse, Lacey Green

Tel: 01844 345195



Brakspear's Bitter, Shepherd Neame Spitfire, Theakston Old Peculier

Lunches 12 – 2.30 Tuesday – Sunday

Evening Meals: 6.30 - 9.30 Tuesday to Saturday

Pub open all day Friday, Saturday & Sunday

Please note: The pub is closed Monday until 5pm

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FURTHER VICTORIANA



The interior of the Tottenham and the ornate glass skylight

(Continued from page 5)

Continue down St Martin's Lane to William IV Street and then onto the Strand. Cross the road and near the Savoy Hotel is the **Coal Hole**, formerly known as the **Strand Wine Lodge**. This was a favourite haunt of the city's 'coal heavers' who delivered coal to households in London. It occupies a corner of the Savoy Building and was formerly the coal cellar for the Savoy Hotel.

It was a popular venue for Gilbert and Sullivan who regularly used to write and perform here. The interior features include tapestries, elaborate friezes in the Arts and Crafts style and a large stone built fireplace. Beers included **Hartley's Suffolk**, **Taylor's Landlord** and **Young's Bitter** amongst others. The **Spring Zing** from the **Hop Back** brewery was a very soft and flavoursome pint.



The interior of the Salisbury



The decorated frieze at the Coal Hole

Continue along the Strand and turn left up Aldwych and then left up Kingsway. Turn left into High Holborn (through the road works). The **Princess Louise** is a short distance on the left. This has recently been refurbished by **Sam Smith's** and is a magnificent example of Victorian snugs and glass screens.

It serves **Sam Smith's Bitter** on hand pump (£1.86 per pint) and the **Sam Smith's** range is available as bottled beers. There are several examples of Victorian tile work with fruit and flower motifs. The long central bar ensures ease of service and creates an intimate feeling in the small rooms created by the decorated glass screens (no food and no music – a haven of peace on a weekday lunchtime).

Retrace your steps along High Holborn and continue on this road navigating the road works until you reach the **Cittie of York** on the right. Now owned by **Sam Smith's**, a pub has stood here since 1430. The present interior is a high vaulted example of a Victorian Gothic Great Hall with private booths at the side.

The triangular fire in the middle of the floor is dated from the year of Waterloo and smoke escapes through a chimney under the floor. The wooden floor and cavernous bar area is a grand contrast to the intimate atmosphere of the glass screens of the **Princess Louise**. However, the beer, **Sam Smith's**, was equally as tasty and equally good value.

Cross High Holborn and turn right down Chancery Lane. Once on Fleet street continue to the **Punch Tavern** near Ludgate Circus. This was



Part of the decorated ceiling in the Punch Tavern

ENDING AT THE BLACK FRIAR

probably the most disappointing pub on the route. The range of beers was limited on our visit – a rather insipid *Theakston's Best* – and the extravagant mirrors were covered up with advertising for the extensive range of food. There were comfortable seats and cosy cushions but the interior needed a sympathetic hand with decorating and the marble bar was spoilt by the lighting tubes used as decoration.

At Ludgate Circus turn left down New Bridge Street to the **Black Friar**. This is an Art Nouveau grade II listed building built on the site of a former Dominican friary.

Built in 1873, it is on a triangular site opposite Blackfriars' station. It was remodelled in 1902 by H Fuller-Clark and Henry Poole. Both were committed to the Arts and Crafts movement. The curved bar is constructed of marble and timber and to the rear is an arched room with three openings, lined in marble and alabaster.

Fat jolly friars appear everywhere with mottos such as 'Finery is foolery' and 'Don't advertise it, tell a gossip'. It was due for demolition in the sixties but a public outcry, led by Sir John Betjeman among others, saved the building. A fabulous example of English Decorative Art and the beer was also good (so good that we forgot to write down what it was!).

David and Helen Brooke and Joyce McAndrew

<We hold regular pub crawls in London and if anyone wants to follow this historic crawl later on this year, please contact the Editor (contact details are given on page 22).

You don't have to be a CAMRA member to come along, but if you feel the need to join, a membership form can always be found in Swan Supping - Ed.>



Black Friar exterior



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BRANCH NEWS

As we were going to press, we heard the sad news that Richard Lancaster, a former committee member of the branch in the eighties, had passed away on the 19th of May after a long illness.

Our thoughts and best wishes go to his wife Melinda and the rest of his family.

Over the last couple of months we have continued to get out and about across the branch area.

At the end of March we took advantage of an occasional perk of **CAMRA** membership – very cheap beer. The **J.D. Wetherspoon** chain distributed a considerable number of vouchers for £1.19 pints to every local **CAMRA** branch to promote its beer festival at the end of March. By good fortune we already had a social organised at this time at the **Falcon** in High Wycombe, our only **Wetherspoons** pub.

The tokens were democratically distributed and put to good use – especially by the chairman as it was also his birthday. The **Falcon** had some excellent real ales from regional and micro-breweries on offer, including **Robinsons' Top Tipple**, **J.W. Lees Brewers Dark** and **Hydes Trojan Horse**.

Our April branch meeting was held in the restaurant of the **Queen's Head** in Aylesbury. In beer terms, the pub has had a few ups and downs in the last couple of years but the current management has made a consistent and successful effort to promote real ale over the past few months. **Greene King IPA** and **Charles Wells Bombardier** were two of the beers on offer.

These two town-centre events produced a healthy turnout of active members – no doubt because of their accessibility by public transport. We promote responsible drinking and ensure that a significant proportion of our branch events are readily accessible by train or bus routes.

Nevertheless, the branch area includes large rural swathes of the Chilterns and Aylesbury Vale and there are some wonderful country pubs that are, unfortunately, only accessible by car. One example is towards our northern boundary – the **Bell** in the village of North Marston, which we visited in early April. It is a cosy, beamed pub with a large amount of character and a line in oriental food.

We appreciated that the landlord had bought in a special guest beer, **Brains** Dylan Thomas inspired 'Milkwood', apparently in honour of our visit. We noticed that the pub was advertising Nintendo Wii nights. This is surely a commendable innovation to get customers out of their living rooms to have a bit of communal fun.

Later that evening we visited the **Black Boy** in Oving. This pub has built a reputation for its food but we bona-fide drinkers were given a warm welcome and enjoyed their real ales, which included **Brakspears Bitter** and **Black Sheep Bitter**.

Unfortunately it was dark when we arrived, which meant we were unable to enjoy the pub's reported stunning views across the Vale of Aylesbury – perhaps the best pub views in Buckinghamshire.

Returning to Aylesbury we passed through Whitchurch and stopped at the **White Swan**, which is now regrettably the village's only remaining pub. It is now managed by a team from Poland and an impressive collection of certificates from the chef's homeland attests to his culinary prowess. The pub itself is unchanged and serves drinkers a range of **Fuller's** real ales.

To promote public transport, we arranged a social to two village pubs that are readily accessible from the line 280 Aylesbury to Oxford bus route. We first visited the **Seven Stars** at Dinton, which was refurbished a year or two ago. This is a very old, multi-roomed pub which dates back to the 17th century and has connections with the English Civil War.

The pub organises so many events for the local community, such as quiz nights, that it produces a newsletter to list them.

Like Whitchurch, Stone is a large village which now only possesses one pub – the **Rose and Crown**. It is a sports orientated pub with a number of televisions, one with a huge screen, and a pool table. One real ale was available on our visit – **Courage Best**.

We ventured deep into the Chiltern countryside in mid-May with an expedition to Radnage and its close neighbour, Bennett End. The **Crown** in Radnage, on the incongruously named City Road, is an unspoilt rural gem with an amazing collection of jugs attached to the ceiling. Ale is pulled from barrels behind the bar and we had the **Archer's Best Bitter**.

Not far from the **Crown** but reached via a circuitous maze of country lanes is the **Three Horseshoes** at Bennett End. The pub is nearing the end of some major refurbishment work and the bar area was temporarily much reduced in size.

Run by top chef, Simon Crawshaw, who relocated from London, the pub concentrates on upmarket food and accommodation but still offers real ale to non-dining drinkers. During the refurbishment, the bathroom of one of the guest bedrooms stood in for the normal WCs and proved to be the most luxurious pub toilet I have ever used. Located at the head of a deep Chiltern valley, the **Three Horseshoes** commands fine views on a clear day and is also said to have the best pub views in Buckinghamshire (there might be a competition in this!).

We then sped down the valley into West Wycombe for a final drink at the **George and Dragon** – some of **Timothy Taylor's** legendary **Landlord**.

If we get to hear about pub beer festivals far enough in advance, we try to include these in the social calendar. The **Whip Inn** at Lacey Green's beer festivals in May and October are now permanent fixtures. The **Whip** was runner-up in our **Pub of the Year** competition and does an excellent job promoting real ale from regional and micro breweries. In addition to rotating beers on the five handpumps inside, there were 30 barrels of real ale in a marquee in the garden. These impressively all sold out by Sunday. I kept rabbiting on about the quality of the amazingly complex but strangely named **Bunny's Delight** from **Oakleaf Brewery**.

We held May's branch meeting in a stalwart of recent **Good Beer Guides** – the archetypal country inn, the **Lions of Bledlow**. The pub can always be relied on to source some interesting real ales and, among others, we enjoyed the **Brakspear's Bitter** and **Archer's** unusual but splendid **Dark Mild** at 5%.

We try to visit a varied range of pubs, including those not notably aligned with **CAMRA**, such as the **Beefeater** chain. One of these, the **Crow's Nest** on Tring Hill is just inside our branch area and we were pleased to find two well-kept, if rather cool, real ales on our visit although the range of **Greene King IPA** and **London Pride** wasn't much of a surprise.

We did get a surprise, of an unpleasant variety, at the second pub on our Aston Clinton social. The **Rothschild Arms** was closed and dark at 9.30pm on a Tuesday. There was no explanatory information at the pub but one of the growing number of 'Pub Business Opportunity' notices was attached to the pub sign. **<It has reopened (see Local News)-Ed.>**

Another surprise was in store at the **Oak** in Aston Clinton – we spotted Elvis. This wasn't our local active member Elvis Evans either but the King of Rock and Roll himself – or was it a tribute act? Customers in the packed pub were certainly not lonesome that night and were definitely all shook up by the entertainment. The volume of the music meant we had a little less conversation than normal but the range of **Fuller's** beers was always on our minds.

All are welcome to join us in our advertised social events. Details of June and July's calendar can be found on page 22 of **Swan Supping**.

“I’M ONLY HERE FOR THE BEER.”



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BLACK COUNTRY TRIP



Our annual coach trip to the Black Country, known to a lot of people as the 'Highlight of the Year', is on Saturday 28th of June.

We will be visiting a lot of old favourites including the **Beacon**, home of the wonderful *Sarah Hughes Dark Ruby Mild*, which is pictured above and we will also try to add a few different stops which have included brewery visits in the past.

The cost is a bargain at £25 per person and the number of tickets will be limited to 35 (we don't want to totally overwhelm the pubs). A limited number of tickets are still available, so book without delay.

Tickets and further information can be obtained from the editor (contact details are shown on page 22) and an itinerary will be posted on the website when it is finalised.



**The Red Lion
public house and restaurant**

**Bradenham Village, Bucks HP14 4HF
01494 562212**

THE RED LION BRADENHAM

A friendly warm welcome waits for you here in this newly refurbished establishment. The management pride themselves on the provision of high quality home cooked lunches and evening meals.

They offer a good selection of real ales, draught lagers and cider complemented by a wide choice of wines.

Sunday lunches are a speciality with food being served until 4.30pm.

**DINNER - JAZZ
on alternate Sundays
Food from 6pm
Music from 7pm
£5 Entrance**

RED LION RETURNS

The **Red Lion Hotel** in Wendover has recently re-opened after a lengthy refurbishment by its pub company owners, **Marstons' Taverns**.



While **Marstons** went to great lengths to preserve the historic fabric of the interior of the 16th century coaching inn, they made a bizarre change to one of the most historic artefacts on the outside of the pub.

The pub company replaced the **Red Lion** on the pub sign, the most traditional image outside English pubs, with a tableau of two tomatoes, a pear and an onion. This weird montage was no doubt some marketing consultant's attempt at reminding very dull-witted customers that food was served inside the pub – or perhaps it advertised some kind of strange Ready Steady Cook style signature dish created from those ingredients.

The residents of Wendover were outraged by this violation of four hundred years of tradition and mounted a campaign through a local website (www.wendover-news.co.uk) to restore sanity and remove this abomination from the high street.

Amazingly for a pubco, **Marstons** heeded the protests and removed the foodie sign at the beginning of May. In its place is a newly designed sign complete with traditional red lion of England that now looks over the historic high street.

Marston's quote this as an example of how they listen to their customers. Lets hope they also listen to the views of real ale drinkers about the future of their many recent brewery acquisitions.



OUR SECOND
**FAG 'N' FIRKIN
BEER FESTIVAL**

DEREHAMS INN

LOUDWATER

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MUSEUM GOING FOR A BURTON



The Bass Museum was opened in 1977 in Burton upon Trent. Its present owners, **Coors**, changed the name to the Museum of Brewing at Coors Visitor Centre, but plan to close the Museum at the end of June this year.

In 2002, following the purchase of the **Bass** name by Belgian brewers **Interbrew** (now part of **Inbev**), **Coors Brewers** of Colorado, USA bought the Burton brewery, and the brands of **Carling** and **Worthington**, when **Inbev** was obliged to sell because of a ruling by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. **Coors** claim the Centre is costing them £1 million a year to keep open. They plan to sell off the Shire horses and distribute the artefacts around other sites (it is not stated whether those 'other sites' will be in the USA or Britain).

The Visitor Centre brochure describes the Museum's archive which contains the surviving records of **Bass**, **Worthington**, **Mitchells & Butlers**, **Charringtons** and other associated companies dating back to the 18th century. Over 7,000 prints, negatives and slides are also stored in the archive. The museum also holds thousands of artefacts, not all of which are on display.

Large reference collections are stored including brewing and malting equipment, brewery transport, brewery trade objects (such as coopering tools), packaging, historic advertising items, pub mugs, glassware, mirrors and framed prints. The magnificent Shire horses are stabled at the Museum. They are frequent prizewinners at shows and events all over the country, travelling in their own specially adapted lorry. The Museum also houses a wonderful collection of brewing-related historic vehicles, including the Bass No.9 Locomotive and The Directors' Coach, steam-powered delivery lorries, and site fire engines.

Coors also state in their brochure that "The Museum of Brewing safeguards the brewing heritage of Burton upon Trent – Britain's brewing capital".

Fine words but all this is about to go. An article in the May issue of **What's Brewing** indicated that a vociferous local campaign is underway to save the Museum.

We in the Aylesbury Vale and High Wycombe can also help in various ways. Why not visit the museum in the next few weeks and show your appreciation?

It's easy to get to by road or rail, and if you take the latter option you could sample the truly superb **Worthington White Shield** in the adjoining **Brewery Tap** brewed at the Museum's microbrewery. Also, whilst in Burton, don't forget to call into the nearby **Burton Bridge Inn** and try some of their own brewery's fine ales.

Go to the **CAMRA** website (www.camra.org) and sign their online petition to save the Museum. Read the blogs on the net and put in your twopenn'orth. Get campaigning!

Giles du Boulay

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MILD FOR THIS TIME OF YEAR

The month of May for most people means 31 days, two Bank Holidays and hopefully some warmer weather, and if you pardon the pun, 'hope springs eternal', being the appropriate words here.

For the discerning imbibor though, May means one poignant thing, Mild. What is Mild? No-one drinks that stuff any more, are two of the usual rantings from the uneducated drinker. Where have you been for the last decade I ask myself? Mild sales are on the increase, so get with the programme!

This beer style was concocted in the 18th and 19th centuries as a weaker strength of ale instead of Stout and Porter, which were of a lot higher ABV. Mild is usually distinguished by its dark ruby or black colour, created from the caramel, roasted barley or well-roasted malts.

Synonymous with flat-capped northern gents in smoke-filled pubs and clubs in the 1950's and 60's, Mild after a decline in the 70's is now having something of a renaissance of late. With the renown epicentre for Mild being the aptly named Black Country, where breweries such as *Banks's*, *Bathem*, *Black Country Ales*, *Highgate*, *Holden's*, *Olde Swan* and, of course, the legendary *Sarah Hughes*, all produce very moreish dark Milds at varying strengths.

Closer to home in our Central Southern region, local breweries are now following in the footsteps of their Midland pioneers with *Chiltern*



Nut Brown Mild (3.9), *Hook Norton Hooky Dark* (3.2), *Rebellion Mild* (3.5), *Tring Mansion Mild* (3.7) and *Vale Black Swan Mild* (3.9), all available and well worth seeking out, although a bit of detection may be needed from you real ale sleuths.

CAMRA HQ annually launches the various 'May is Mild Month' promotions, with local **CAMRA** branches nationally hosting Mild Trails around numerous pubs serving the black nectar, or socials organised where Mild can be sourced.

My local drinking haunt, the **Duke of Cambridge**, Marlow, featured three different Milds during May

(see picture) with *Archers Strong Dark Mild* (5.0), *Church End Gravediggers* (3.8) and *Scattor Rock Rock Steady* (3.7) being gratefully digested by many of the local real ale enthusiasts. Bravo to landlord John Hudson, at the town's only true real ale bastion and server of the dark delight in May, before and beyond.

One final footnote, *Greene King*, yes every ones favourite 'protagonist', produce a dark Mild, *XX Mild* (3.0), very tricky to locate, even in *GK* tied houses, has just been awarded 'Champion Mild of East Anglia' at the recent **CAMRA** Colchester Winter Ale Festival. It just goes to show that you should 'never judge a book by its cover'. So give your taste buds a treat and indulge them in a pint of the black gold. I am!

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NATIONAL PUB RISK MITIGATION STRATEGY

Following previous reports including the 'Budget Celebrations' last issue and the 'Units of Alcohol' from issue 64, we now have the following item.

Jo King, the government's anti-pub, sorry, health adviser is telling her fellow spin doctors about the relative failure of her recently announced 'responsible alcohol' strategy.

'I can't believe it. People are still going into pubs and drinking after all that publicity about why they shouldn't', complained Jo.

'You can't get better coverage than you've had Jo,' replied Ivor Leech. 'The evils of booze have been on the news day after day.'

'I know. And these people still aren't doing what we tell them is good for them.'

'Perhaps they enjoy it?'

'Enjoying it? We have to stop that.'

'As long as there are pubs, people will want to go in for a drink,' suggested Ivor.

'I know...and that's why we need to shut them down. We've made a start with the smoking ban and getting inflation up so a bit more legislation and red tape about the dangers of just going to the pub might tip a few more over the edge,' said Jo.

'I get it,' said Ivor, 'the dubious health and safety stuff that applies only to extreme cases involving brainless idiots but allows us to bring in utterly pedantic laws and regulation...'

'Exactly...and I've got my researchers to come up with a list of stuff that we can use to, ahem, *raise standards* in these places,' said Jo. 'Do you want a run through?'

Pubs – A National Danger

These are the results of a brainstorm by the government's top advisers on the dangers that normal citizens face every time they visit public houses with some ideas on how we might regulate and legislate against these hazards.

1. **Low Ceilings** – it has come to our attention that many pubs are old buildings that were erected before modern health and safety regulations were in force. Some of these old pubs have unacceptably low doorways and ceilings and there is a serious risk that even moderately inebriated customers could strike their heads upon some hard surface. We have calculated that over a period of twenty years that a tall pub customer may suffer as many as three minor injuries to the cranium per year – increasing the risk of suffering major brain damage by about 0.5%. We have two solutions – ban anyone over 5' 3" from entering all pubs or to pass a regulation that all pubs must offer headroom of at least 2.5 metres to all customers at all times. Listed buildings must not raise the height of the ceiling due to planning restrictions but must lower the floor instead – but still ensure wheelchair access by ramp.
2. **Lead Paint** – many of the pubs in old buildings will have used old fashioned paint on their interior walls over the years. We have calculated that tiny granules of the paint may flake off the walls over time and be ingested by customers, creating a gradual loss of mental faculty of the order of 0.005% per 1,000 visits. This serious public health risk can be mitigated by either: a) legislating that all pubs over 40 years old strip all pigmentation off their walls and then repaint them or b) fitting all customers with a lead detector, to be worn at all times, and restricting each customer to a maximum exposure of 3 minutes per visit to pubs deemed to be in danger.

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PUBS: A NATIONAL DANGER

3. **Pub Food** – we paid management consultants UselessMoneyGrabbers and Partners £500,000 to analyse pub food menus. We were horrified to learn that public houses serve their customers horrifically unhealthy menu choices, such as fried food. Allied with the consumption of alcohol, our consultants (after much extensive research) found that consumption of the unhealthiest option on a pub food menu for 28 consecutive days increased the waistline by a full two inches. This is a grave risk to public health. We also observed the worrying practice of chip sharing – where a particularly irresponsible customer permits others to share a plate of these saturated fat menaces which masquerade as tasty food. We will introduce legislation to outlaw passive chip ‘pushing’, making it an offence to allow others to consume their hand-held carbohydrate snacks loaded with exterior fat. Pubs will also be required to ensure customers eat a green salad every other day and sales of crisps will be outlawed – to be replaced by bowls of muesli or goji berries.

4. **Germ**s – it has come to our attention that pubs are venues where moderately large numbers of people interact socially. This has horrendous implications for public health – bacteria and viruses may easily be spread from person to person in such conditions thus marking out pubs as potential incubators of deadly disease epidemics. We are fairly sure that some of those who caught the Black Death in 1348 had visited a medieval tavern. The government will bring in legislation to prevent unnecessary contact between pub customers. Only one customer will be allowed at the bar at any one time – and must be swabbed with antiseptic wipes before and after the purchase of drinks. Other customers must remain at their allocated tables throughout their visit and not interact with other parties. All pub toilets will be deemed to be sources of mass infection and will be closed.

5. **Physical Injury** – some pubs glorify reckless physical activity which, in a number of cases, results in grievous injury to participants – otherwise known as sport. Many pubs provide televisions for customers to watch events which have known to have caused broken limbs and bleeding. This is surely setting a bad example that may encourage customers to engage in similar risky activities. We were horrified to learn that some pubs even organise activities, such as football and cricket teams, which certainly damage the health of a number of their customers with serious concerns such as sprained ankles. Moreover, we were outraged that pubs are still permitted to allow games on the premises that are played with four foot long wooden weapons and allow insidious barbed flying devices with deadly metal points to be flung across the pub. Such places are death traps. We will introduce the “Non-Competitive Public Houses Sports” bill, which will ban such risky practices with draconian penalties. We may permit occasional games of competitive knitting but only with the appropriate health and safety risk assessment.



‘Well done Jo,’ said Ivor. ‘That package will make life pretty tough for these pub death traps but won’t it be overkill and close the whole lot of them down?’

‘Don’t worry Ivor,’ said Jo. ‘There’s nothing much in there that will make life intolerable for our favourite trendy Islington wine bar.’

Charlie Mackle

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PLOUGHING ON



By the time this *Swan Supping* is published at the start of June, the **Plough** in Cadsden will have completed the finishing touches of its seven-month extension and refurbishment.

We have followed the progress of the project with interest from seeing the architect's plans through visiting during the building work when the pub's previous single-storey extension was demolished. Admirably, the pub continued to trade virtually throughout the period – only closing for two weeks while ceilings work was carried out throughout the pub and a four day interval when the new bar was installed.

The exterior of the building is virtually complete – the new two storey extension has been sympathetically constructed to blend with the remaining older part of the pub using the same weathered red-brick

materials. The only remaining addition is an imaginative orangery, which will be built to the rear of the building, principally as a breakfast area for residents using the five new bedrooms built on the first floor.

The provision of accommodation in the area was one of the reasons why planning permission was given to extending this historic pub in the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty – with support for the scheme coming from the Chiltern Society. The pub is located directly on the route of the Ridgeway national long-distance trail in a secluded hollow.

Inside, the pub has far more space than previously with a large, airy room located to the left of the bar. The decor is in keeping with a rustic country pub, with flagstoned floors – which cunningly conceal modern



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FURTHER WORK

under-floor heating. With the long bar facing customers as they enter, the **Plough** still retains its pub atmosphere. There are three real ales on offer – *Greene King IPA*, *Ruddles County* and *Old Speckled Hen*.

While building work was carried out, the pub's main seating space was in the garden opposite – with a large gazebo provided for shelter. This proved so successful that a more permanent wooden outbuilding has now been constructed opposite the pub's entrance. This is ideal for the user of smokers (it is 50% open to the elements) and rambles with muddy boots. The large garden at the back of the pub is also being upgraded as part of the work.

The extension has been very successful for the trade at the pub with turnover rising substantially in the two months since the new interior was completed. We are planning to visit the **Plough** on a branch social on 25th June (see Branch socials diary on page 22 for details).

Mike Clarke

LOCAL BEER FESTIVAL



The 5th Haddenham Real Ale Festival will be on Saturday 5th July at Haddenham Youth and Community Centre.

There will be at least 50 beers, plus ciders, a wine bar, hot and cold food, and all-day entertainment.

Make a note in your diary and see the details on www.haddenham-beer-festival.co.uk.

Why not join the branch for their social at the festival (see socials diary on page 22).



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MURDERING A PINT!



The Lions of Bledlow

Midsomer Murders has been a hugely successful drama series – both a stalwart in ITV's schedules and as a British cultural export. The show has been sold to over 200 countries and is immensely popular in certain areas, such as Australia, Canada and, curiously, Sweden.

The programme has run for eleven years and filming is set to continue at least until 2009 – at which point nearly 60 two-hour episodes will have been shot. The show employs a consistent formula in which its numerous improbably gruesome murders contrast with the beauty and tranquillity of the deepest English countryside of its Midsomer County location. ITV3 recently featured a documentary entirely devoted to the series' locations.

While John Nettles and a distinguished cast of guest actors are the human stars of the series, the stunningly beautiful rural locations form a huge part of the show's appeal. Many overseas fans have visited England specifically to visit its featured villages and hamlets.

So where exactly is the peaceful and pastoral Midsomer County? The answer is that most of it is here in the Aylesbury Vale and Wycombe branch area. While the name Midsomer evokes the West Country, especially Somerset, the filming locations are concentrated in east Oxfordshire and the Buckinghamshire Chilterns.

With our area's proximity to London and the presence of two large towns, one might be surprised that so many of our rural backwaters are broadcast around the world as the quintessence of the English country idyll. Of course, the programme's editors are able to edit out unwelcome modern intrusions, such as the grotesque stockbroker belt walled mansion architecture that is threatening a creeping suburbanisation of



The Red Lion, Brill

the countryside.

The series' fictional locations are pieced together from different real life towns, villages, grand houses – and pubs! While pubs do not feature as centrally in Midsomer Murders as in Inspector Morse, for example, a substantial number of our locals have been used for filming – gaining worldwide renown.

This article takes a route round some of the pubs used in the series at the northern end of the branch, using Aylesbury as notional starting point. All the pubs listed serve good real ale so if you're dying for a drink you can murder the odd pint or eight on the way around.

It would make an excellent drive – even better if a designated driver allows others some extensive beer sampling at the pubs – or, alternatively, an energetic cycle ride. Rudimentary directions have been provided but use of a road atlas (or sat nav) is advisable – after all, you don't want to have to ask directions from eccentric strangers in this lethal part of the world.

The list is based on Joan Street's excellent Midsomer Murders website and a guide to Buckinghamshire locations produced by the council, which is available for download at www.visitbuckinghamshire.org.

Head from Aylesbury towards Princes Risborough, taking the minor road to Cadsden at the Askett Roundabout.

The **Plough** at Cadsden featured in 'Down Among the Dead Men' in the ninth series. The pub has now subtly changed in appearance as it has been extended over the winter. It is in a beautiful, secluded spot and is



Old Fisherman, Shabbington



Eight Bells, Long Crendon

KILLER PUBS!



The Bell, Chearsley

located directly on the Ridgeway long-distance path.

Head from the Plough, through Askett and take the B4009 to Bledlow where the Lions of Bledlow is signposted from the road.

The interior and exterior of the **Lions** have been used in at least four episodes of Midsomer Murders – from the second to ninth series. The pub has masqueraded as both ‘The Queen’s Arms’ and ‘The Dog and Partridge’.

The village and the pub are much filmed by other productions, including Morse, and the church has featured in many films. The pub is low-beamed with a multi-roomed interior and large bar area and is furnished in a very traditional style.



The Crown, Cuddington

Rejoin the B4009 and head through Longwick towards Thame on the A4129. Take the side road signposted to Haddenham and then turn left past St. Tiggywinkles animal hospital (also much featured on TV) to Church End.

Church End, with its village green with duck pond by the church may have been imprinted on your subliminal consciousness even if you’ve never visited Haddenham before: it has featured on countless films and television programmes, including eight episodes of Midsomer Murders. Three pubs adjoining the green are available to slake the thirst but none appears to have featured directly in Midsomer Murders to date.

Head from Haddenham to the A418 and then on to Thame.

Inspector Barnaby is based in the fictional town of Causton – which,

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MIDSOMER CONTINUES

in real life, is Thame and the town has been used several times as a location. The high street is famous as the widest in the country and is lined with an enviable number of pubs. One of these, the **Swan Hotel**, was featured in 'The Vixen's Run' in the ninth series.

Head towards Oxford on the A418. Take the minor road to the right signposted for Shabbington and on to the Old Fisherman, located at the bridge at the entrance to the village.

The road crosses an area of water meadows crossed by small tributaries of the River Thame that often flood spectacularly. Note the raised walkway opposite the pub. The **Old Fisherman** is a **Greene King** pub in a gorgeous riverside location with a very large garden. The interior and exterior of the pub were used in 'A Talent for Life' in the sixth series.

Head through Shabbington, following the signs to Long Crendon. Turn right on the main B4011 through the village then left into the High Street, which is at the southern end of the village.

The High Street has two pubs – the **Churchill Arms** and the **Eight Bells**. The latter was featured in 'Garden of Death' in the fourth series and is well worth popping into for an interesting selection of real ales. Long Crendon may also induce a sense of déjà vu as it is another village beloved of film-makers – having scores of rose-clad, thatched cottages lining the main Bicester road.

Continue towards Bicester on the B4011. Then take the minor road on the right to Brill.

This road runs close to the site of a real life major crime that happened before Inspector Barnaby's time: in 1963 the Great Train Robbery gang holed up in a farm to the south-west of Brill.

The **Red Lion** in the centre of Brill was transformed into 'The John Knox' pub in 'Four Funerals and a Wedding' – from the ninth series.

Greene King gave the pub a major refurbishment a couple of years ago, installing leather sofas, spotlighting and so on. The production company then had to temporarily reverse the modern makeover to make the pub more 'authentic'.

While in Brill, head down Windmill Street, passing the **Pheasant** on the left, then take in the magnificent views over Oxfordshire from the 17th century Brill windmill. This was also featured in an episode of the programme.

Return back towards Long Crendon from Brill but take the minor road towards Chilton just before rejoining the B4011. After going through Chilton follow the sign to the left towards Chearsley, passing under the railway bridge on the way.

The **Bell** at Chearsley, in the middle of the village, is an archetypal thatched village country pub. It featured as 'The Woodman' in 'Country Matters' in series nine. The interior of the pub is traditional and unspoilt and there is a pleasant garden in which to enjoy the **Fuller's** ales.

Head out of Chearsley on the minor road towards Cuddington.

The **Crown** is in the centre of the village of Cuddington and is another picture-postcard, thatched **Fuller's** house. It featured in 'Death in Disguise' in the first series. The front bar has a cosy atmosphere with a restaurant at the rear of the pub. Some interesting artwork has been spotted in the gents in the **Crown**.

If you have managed to escape the homicidal intentions of the inhabitants of Midsomer County and have survived to the end of the tour then follow the main road through Cuddington. This joins the A418 which leads back towards Aylesbury.

We will feature a guide to Midsomer Murders pub locations in the south of the branch in a future **Swan Supping**.

Mike Clarke



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THREE BEER FESTIVALS SPRING TO MIND

The season of Spring, consisting of March, April and May, is always good for plenty of pub beer festivals with Easter, St. George's Day and two Bank Holidays in May occupying these three months. This is my favourite time of year with the lighter nights, changing climate and the odd local beer festival to boot.

April 19th was Marlow RFC's last game of the season. A home fixture against table-topping Chippenham, Gloucestershire, with a beer festival, their second annual event, to cap off their league endeavours. A dozen real ales and a couple of ciders enticed Mr. Tony Gabriel and myself from our homes to sample and deliberate various beers sourced through the local *Rebellion Beer Co.*

Real ales from local breweries were the main order of the day with *Hook Norton, Loddon, Tring, West Berks* and, of course, *Rebellion*, all having their liquid products on offer. Favourite ale of the day went a little further a field, to the *Titanic* brewery and their *Last Porter Call* (4.9), a super beer, but a possibly biased choice by me, a seeker of the dark stuff.

The following weekend produced the annual St. George's Day beer festival at the *Jolly Farmer*, Cookham Dean. Although not in the *AV & W* branch area, it's spitting distance from my and 'Nojer's' abodes in Marlow. Always worth a visitation to this venue with eleven on gravity and another four beers on handpump, this year's theme, ales from the Midlands/Black Country. Brews from *Holdens, Black Country Ales* and a certain *Sarah Hughes Dark Ruby Mild* (6.0), were just a few that were on parade.

Cheers for the lift 'Nojer', a good time had by all, apart from missing a tick at the handpumps. I'll nail that *Burton Bridge* brew next time.

Due to work commitments, I forfeited the wondrous Reading Beer Festival this year, but I did manage to honour a considerably smaller but very worthwhile event at the *Royal Oak* in Oakley, in the west of our *Aylesbury Vale and Wycombe CAMRA* branch. Twelve gravity dispensed ales, a festival special, two ciders, a perry, a free bouncy castle and some rare sunny weather. What more could anyone wish for!

Festival beers were sourced through the pub owners, the *Vale* brewery, with their festival special brew, *Jack FM* (4.2), a charity ale named after the local Oxford Radio Station.

Imbibes of *Grindleton Ribble Rouser* (3.8), *Moor Milly's Mild* (3.9), *Lancaster Blonde* (4.1), *Otley O Garden* (4.8), and my personal favourite ale, *Delapre Dark* (4.6) from the *Great Oakley* brewery in Northamptonshire. A fine old ale made from five different malts. Plaudits to licensees Andy and Ruth, and to the *Vale* brewery for their selection of some great real ales. Roll on the next local pub beerex.

The Marlow Maverick



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Vale Best Bitter 3.7% ABV - Light copper hoppy bitter
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 Black Swan Mild 3.9% - Dark smooth rich mild
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 Grumpling Old Ale 4.6% - Ruby brown premium ale

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Branch Diary

Everybody welcome to all socials and meetings!

JUNE

Wednesday 4th MARSH/BISHOPSTONE SOCIAL

8.45pm Prince of Wales, Marsh; 9.30pm Harrow, Bishopstone

Monday 9th BRANCH MEETING

8.30pm, Prince Albert, Frieth.

Saturday 14th SATURDAY NORTH WEST SOCIAL

12noon, Crown, Twyford; 1pm Sow and Pigs, Poundon; 2pm Greyhound, Marsh Gibbon; 3pm Plough, Marsh Gibbon (*bring the family along to enjoy the children's playground!*).

Wednesday 18th BIERTON SOCIAL

8.30pm Red Lion; 9.15pm Bob's Barn; 10pm Bell.

Saturday 21st PUB BEER FESTIVAL SOCIAL

12.30pm Duke of Cambridge, Marlow (see website for details)

Wednesday 25th RECENTLY EXTENDED PUBS SOCIAL

8.30pm Plough, Cadsden; 9.30pm Red Lion, Whiteleaf

Saturday 28th BLACK COUNTRY TRIP

The legend returns - full details are given below.

Cost £25 per person. Numbers are limited to 35, but some spaces are still available at the time of going to press.

Tickets and further information can be obtained from the editor.

JULY

Wednesday 2nd AYLESBURY TOWN CENTRE SOCIAL

8.00pm Hop Pole; 9.00pm King's Head.

Saturday 5th HADDENHAM BEER FESTIVAL

11am onwards (see www.haddenham-beer-festival.co.uk for details)

Thursday 10th WESTERLEY SOCIAL

8.30pm Fox, Tiddington; 9.30pm Rising Sun, Ickford.

Monday 14th BRANCH MEETING

8.00pm Bull, Stoke Mandeville

Sunday 20th PUBLIC TRANSPORT SUNDAY LUNCH

12.45pm Whip Inn, Lacey Green (advance booking advisable - see website for details)

Wednesday 23rd AUNT SALLY PRACTICE

8.30pm Carrier's Arms, Watlington.

Wednesday 30th LOUDWATER SOCIAL

9.00pm Dereham's Inn; 10.00pm General Havelock.

AUGUST

Tuesday 5th - Saturday 9th GREAT BRITISH BEER FESTIVAL

Earls' Court, London.

Thursday 7th BRANCH SOCIAL AT GBBF

5:30pm onwards GBBF, Earls Court

SEPTEMBER

Saturday 6th INTER BRANCH AUNT SALLY MATCH

Noon Masons Arms, Headington, Oxford

OCTOBER

Friday 31st/Saturday 1st Nov AYLESBURY BEER FESTIVAL

Eskdale Road Community Centre, Stoke Mandeville

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

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

Swan Supping

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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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BEER FESTIVAL - 28th/29th JUNE
FROM NOON BOTH DAYS

PIG ROAST FROM 4 P.M. ON 28th

(This festival is to celebrate our 10th anniversary at the pub)



More Local News



(Continued from page 2)

HADDENHAM

The **Green Dragon**, now the **Welsh Wok**, is being used for the second series of BBC's 'The Restaurant'. The current incumbents may be temporary depending on the outcome of the program and the place is now a fully fledged restaurant and bears no resemblance to the pub of old.

It has been decorated mainly white inside and is now quite light and airy. All hand pumps and fonts are gone. There are no real ales on sale – in fact no draft or keg.

Their theme is a fusion of Welsh and Chinese cuisine and, following that theme, they offer bottles of **Tomos Watkins Cwrw Haf** (4.2%), and **Tsingtao Chinese Lager** (4.7%).

The bar billiards table (the only one in the village) is back at the **Red Lion**. They also have a mild on again and it is to be hoped that it will be supported and that they stick with it.

The garden at the **Rose and Thistle** is looking good, with lighting due to be installed soon. A good calendar of events continues, including their ever-popular monthly quiz in aid of charity.

HIGH WYCOMBE

The **Hogshead** has recently closed. It is unclear whether this is permanent or for a refurbishment.

With the Marlow and Aylesbury **Hogsheads** becoming **Slug & Lettuce** pubs, but with the **Slug & Lettuce** chain being, reputedly, in financial trouble, it will be interesting to see what develops in the near future.

Sands sole pub the **Hour Glass** has two ales, **Greene King IPA** (3.6) and **Fuller's London Pride** (4.1) on at present, with a third beer, a guest ale, for the Wasps and Wycombe Wanderers home matches being played at Adams Park.

Town centre the **Royal British Legion** has had **Brains Milkwood** (4.3) on their sole hand pump for the last couple of months.

When the **Sausage Tree**, in Saffron Road, formerly the **Masons Arms**, reopened last year, it did advertise that it sold cask ales outside of the building. However, this was not the case, until recently.

Spotted on an Easter Holiday Monday visit it was found that they had installed two hand-pumps that were both dispensing **Brakspears Bitter**.

The person behind the bar confirmed that it had only started selling real ale in the last few days. They also said that it was their intention to sell a different real ale each week. Indeed, by the end of March, the real ale on sale there was **Caledonian Deuchars IPA**.

LONG CRENDON

The **Chandos Arms**, recently reported closed, has reopened as the **Gurkha Tavern** and advertises cask ales.

LOUDWATER

The second 'Fag and Firkin' beer festival will be held at the **Derehams Inn** over the weekend of Friday 4th to Sunday 6th of July.

MARLOW

Spittal Street **Greene King** pub the **Carpenters Arms** offered **Tanners Jack** (4.4) last month, although this is due to change as we go to press. **GK IPA** (3.6) and **Abbot Ale** (5.0) are the two stalwart brewery beers on permanently.

Brakspear tied house the **Chequers** parade their **Bitter** (3.4) and **Oxford Gold** (4.0) this summer.

A Summer Solstice mini-beer festival will be staged at the **Duke of Cambridge** on June 20th-22nd.

The **George and Dragon** (*Out and Out*) is to become, allegedly, a **Premier Inn**. Renovation work is still being carried out at present. Whether real ale will be available or not, we'll have to wait and see.

A 'Closed' sign has been spotted by the car-park entrance to the **Hare & Hounds** and the signs are gone and replaced by 'The Gallery' signs. Whether John Trueman is now selling pictures instead of beer is at present unclear!

High Street pub chain the **Slug & Lettuce** has changed their regular beer, **Caledonian Deuchars IPA** (3.8) to **Fuller's London Pride** (4.1), then onto **Charles Wells Bombardier** (4.3) in the last few weeks.

NAPHILL

Following the success of their beer festival in April, Mark and Claire are holding a one-day festival at the **Wheel** on Saturday 21st of June.

OAKLEY

Vale brewery owned pub the **Royal Oak** staged a Bank Holiday beer

festival at the start of May.

Among the real ales on offer was a charity beer from the **Vale** brewery titled **Jack FM** (4.2), after the local Oxfordshire Radio Station.

QUAINTON

Swan & Castle still closed – no further information. This is a very large village that used to have four pubs. Will it follow the fate of the **Sportsman** and the **White Hart** and just leave the **George & Dragon**?

WEEDON

New tenants at the **Five Elms** are John and Carol Slee who took over in early April. John is the chef and his menu is wide ranging and everything is homemade.

Meals are available at all sessions except Sunday night. **Vale Best Bitter** is now on sale, as well as **Adnams and Courage Best**.

The beer range may vary, as this independently owned pub has no tie, and Carol says they are looking to obtain a stronger ale shortly.

WHITCHURCH

The **White Horse** remains closed and boarded with a planning notice outside applying to demolish the rear

extension and annexe to make room for three dwellings.

No more is known at present, though the pub itself is rumoured to have been sold.

WING

St George's Day was transformed into a spectacular event at the **Queens Head** with over £400 being raised for the restoration of the village war memorial. Games and other contests were held in the garden for all ages, helped along by the good weather.

The beer range was increased to seven for the event – **Batemans Valliant**, **Tring Colleys Dog** and **Wells Bombardier** were sold on gravity to compliment the regular **Adnams Bitter**, **Fullers London Pride**, **Greene King IPA** and **Hook Norton Old Hookey**.

The Aldbury Morris and local folk musicians ensured that the festivities carried on well into the evening.

WOOBURN MOOR

The **Falcon** is holding its annual beer festival over the weekend of July 5th and 6th.

Besides fifteen real ales there will be traditional ciders and perry.



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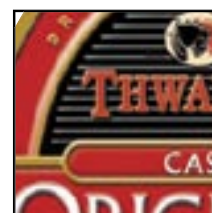
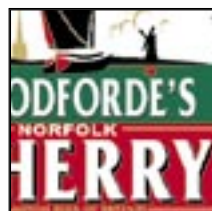
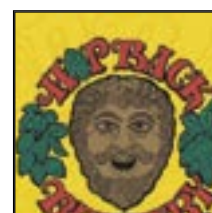
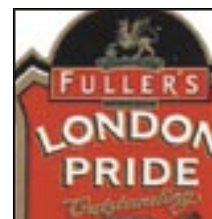
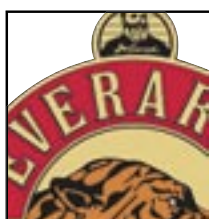
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