

FREE

Swan Supping



Issue 125

Apr/May 2018



**Whats brewing
with the Cross Keys
and Oak Taverns?**

See Page 4



**CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE**

Newsletter of the Aylesbury Vale & Wycombe Branch of CAMRA

avw.camra.org.uk

Circulation 6000

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NEWS FROM THE EDITOR



April will be an important time, as after 45 years of campaigning, the future of **CAMRA** will be decided at the Members' Weekend, AGM and Conference. To ensure that we go on for another 45 years we need to appeal to a younger demographic, especially as some of us are getting a bit long in the tooth! I've spent over 40 years in **CAMRA** and had a ball for the vast majority of the time, not just from the lovely beer I've enjoyed, but mainly the lifelong friends I've made!

On the last day of February we held our AGM at the **Kings Head**, Aylesbury, in the oak-panelled Dining Room, which the pub

is using more and more especially with the recent launch of roast dinners every Sunday. A magnificent spread was prepared on for us plus a pin of *Bodgers Barley Wine* which was very much appreciated by the members attending. We welcomed Derek Plater back to the committee as our Secretary but were disappointed with the lack of volunteers to help spread the load and allow the committee to do more campaigning.

I was also totally surprised and pleased by being presented with a certificate honouring my 21 years editing *Swan Supping*. The presentation by our Chairman, Simon Isted, is pictured top right.

Congratulations to the **Royal Standard**, Wooburn Common, for winning our **Pub of the Year** competition again and also to the **Cross Keys**, Thame, for winning our **Cider Pub of the Year** award for the third year running. Unfortunately we had to postpone the presentations, so further details and pictures will appear in our next issue.

The Black Country trip is planned for Saturday 30th of June. This day has been chosen to avoid local beer festivals but does clash with two games in the World Cup (most people who know me understand how much of a sacrifice this will be for me), but England will not be involved in either game, even if they qualify from their group (never a sure bet). However the trip is the best day of the year and places on the bus will be limited, so please book early (the cost is expected to be £33 per person - see the Branch Diary on page 14).

The **Gravediggers** got to its half-century last issue and Charlie Mackle

feels that it may be time to call it a day. However, Charlie has been trying to get the 50 parts edited together into another book and he's gone through and identified all the beers mentioned and is currently writing tasting notes against them (modelled on the *Good Beer Guide* breweries section). A sampler of these beers appears on page 13, but the only way to see them all will be to buy the upcoming book (details will appear in a future edition of *Swan Supping*). Charlie may not have retired completely from fiction - he's thinking of writing about the goings-on at a trendy Craft Beer Bar (tentatively titled 'The Caskiteers') which might press similar beer humour buttons but the subject matter will be very different.

A special mention also goes to the last **London Drinker Beer Festival** (pictured below). After 34 years, it will be sadly missed!

Also sadly missed are long-time **CAMRA** member, Graham Wheeler, who will be remembered for the **CAMRA** guides he wrote, and Nigel Mabbett, landlord of the **Bull**, Stoke Mandeville, who both passed away earlier this year. Our sympathies to their families and friends.

My thanks to all who have contributed to this issue of *Swan Supping*, especially Colin Stanford for the cartoon and those who deliver the finished magazine to the pubs, breweries and festivals etc. If you can help with deliveries, please get in touch with me (contact details on page 14).

David Roe, Swan Supping Editor



NATIONAL CAMRA NEWS

CAMRA is set to widen its remit to represent drinkers of quality beers, ciders and perries of all types, as well as moving its focus beyond traditional pubs, if members vote to approve recommended changes.

Changes to **CAMRA's** Articles of Association will be put to members at the organisation's AGM in April. If approved, the changes will allow the development of new strategies to allow **CAMRA** to appeal to a wider range of drinkers who enjoy all quality beers, ciders and perries - while continuing to advocate that real ale is the pinnacle of the brewers' craft.

The aim to provide an enhanced education and information experience to help them appreciate and learn about all types and styles of beer, cider and perry - and through this information gain a better ability to make informed decisions about 'quality' for themselves. The National Executive has made recommendations based on the Revitalisation Report, which followed the largest consultation of **CAMRA** members in the organisation's history.

The recommendations also propose that as a result of widening its scope of interest **CAMRA** will be able to represent and engage with all beer drinkers and with all pubgoers, irrespective of what they choose to drink, increasing its ability to campaign in the interests of a much larger constituency.

This broadening of consumer representation will also see **CAMRA** demonstrate an interest in and lobby a much wider range of on-trade outlets. While the organisation will continue to campaign for the preservation of the traditional British pub, it will also encourage on-trade outlets of all kinds to serve quality beer, cider and perry. **CAMRA** will continue to advocate drinking in public social venues, rather than the increasing practice of consumers buying their drinks from supermarkets for home consumption.

All members should vote on these changes, by post, online or at the AGM!

CAMRA warns storm brewing for pubs unless Government acts soon

CAMRA is calling for a new deal for pubs in response to fresh data which reveals 18 pubs are being lost each week. Urgent action is needed to cut the tax burden placed on pubs. Pubs are being hit hard by a triple whammy of one of the highest rates of beer duty across Europe, rapidly rising business rates and VAT. A third of the cost of a pub pint is now made up of various taxes. While temporary business rate relief and a beer duty freeze have been welcome, **CAMRA** is calling on the Government to implement a fundamental review of the tax system. Britain's departure from the European Union provides new opportunities to support pubs, such as the potential for lower rates of tax for draught beer sold in pubs.

Colin Valentine, **CAMRA's** National Chairman says: 'Pubs are now facing a crippling tax burden, exacerbated by the perfect storm of the last business rates revaluation and a high level of beer duty. From these new pub closure figures, it is clear that a fundamental change is needed if the British pub is to survive for future generations.'

'As Britain prepares to leave the European Union, the Government has a unique opportunity to update the tax system to better support pubs, which are a bastion of British culture and at the heart of communities across the country. We can now look further afield for a new tax deal for the sector. This could include implementing the Australian model of having a lower rate of duty for beer sold in pubs, radically changing the business rates system, or charging a lower rate of VAT for pubs or, even better, all three! Millions of dedicated pub-goers are looking to the Government to act now to secure the future of the great British pub. We're now challenging the Government to be the most pro-pub in history by seizing this opportunity.'

OAK TAVERNS



Oak Taverns is a small family pub group based in Thame and they are about to open their fifth brewery!

The group was started in 1991 by Ian Collinson (who remains with **Oak Taverns** as a non-executive Chairman) after having worked for **Whitbread** for 25 years, and is currently run by his son, Simon. Alongside Simon is his brother, David, who is the Financial Director and his sister, Emma Stevenson, who is the Creative Director.

In our branch area, **Oak Taverns** run the **Rising Sun** in Haddenham and the **Cross Keys** in Thame. Our front cover shows (from left to right) Peter Lambert of the **Cross Keys**, Simon Collinson and Nick Zivkovic, both from **Oak Taverns**. Long-time readers of *Swan Supping* will remember that we featured a similar scene when we had our first full colour picture on the cover in issue 75 (December 2009/January 2010).

Nick has been brought in to assist with the brewing side of the pubs. The

four existing ones are the **Barnet Brewery**, based at the **Black Horse** in Barnet, the **Swan** at Farringdon, the **Angel** in Bicester and, of course, the **Thame Brewery** at the **Cross Keys**. Based at the **Barnet Brewery**, Nick, who used to work at the **3 Brewers** brewery in Hatfield, supplied three beers to the last ever **London Drinker Beer Festival**. These were an ESB plus two beers brewed to recipes from the **Dead Brewers Society**, a mild and a double stout.

Nick is planning to brew the original **Halls Bitter** from an old recipe and we should soon get a new brew of the popular **Mr Splodge's Mild** (although the chances of getting a pint are always low as the barrels rarely last past the first evening it is on offer).

The fifth brewery will be based at the **Kings Arms** in Wantage, the freehold of which has been bought from **Greene King** by **Oak Taverns** and the sale was completed at the end of March. They also hope to expand, by acquiring new pubs, especially small ones in the Chiltern and Cotswold areas.

The pub will be closed for five or six weeks for a major refurbishment and is due to reopen in May. All the fruit machines and the pool tables (pictured below) will be removed and the three handpumps, which have been unused for ages, will be brought back into service. Beers will be supplied by **XT Brewery**, both from their own range (including **Animal**) and from their range of beers supplied from brewery swaps etc. The plan is also to install tank beer offering unfiltered and unpasteurised **XT Eisbar**.

The large garden at the back (pictured right) should prove popular if we ever have a decent summer again.

Once the pub is up and running, the plan is to add a brewery similar to the one-barrel plant that is **Thame Brewery**. To get the **Kings Arms** started in the right way, Peter and Trudi from the **Cross Keys** will run the pub while, as it has proved impossible to clone the two of them, allowing the couple (yet to be recruited, so there is a good business opportunity available) to get on the job training at their pub to see what is expected at the **Kings Arms**.

Peter and Trudi have set a very high standard which **Oak Taverns** are determined to follow. Going against the usual perceived wisdom that pubs can only survive by offering food, they concentrated on serving great real ale, then moved on to doing great traditional cider (the **Cross Keys** is, once again, the **Branch Cider Pub of the Year**) and are now offering a large selection of gins. Looks like a winning formula to me!

David Roe





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NATIONAL PUB AND CLUB OF THE YEAR



The **Cricketers Arms** (pictured above) in St Helens, Merseyside, has won **CAMRA's National Pub of the Year** title just five years after it was boarded up for closure.

When owners Andy and Denise Evans took over the running of the pub in 2013, it was boarded up and hadn't served cask ale since the 1980s. The **Cricketers Arms** is now a well-established local community pub with an excellent selection of 13 locally-sourced cask ales and up to 20 ciders in the summer. Alongside an impressive ale and cider range, plans are in the making for a microbrewery to open in the next few months and customers will be tasked with naming the pub's beers. Visitors can also take part in a number of social nights including regular beer festivals, dominoes, jam nights, pub quizzes, karaoke and pool teams, as well as enjoy a new whiskey and gin bar.

Runners-up in the competition include the **Wigan Central** in Wigan, the **Stanford Arms** in Lowestoft and the **Weavers Real Ale House** in Kidderminster. Pubs in the competition are selected by **CAMRA** volunteers and judged on their atmosphere, decor, welcome, service, community focus and most importantly – quality of beer.

The **Flixton Conservative Club** (pictured below) in Manchester has won the **National Club of the Year** award after a recent transformation has seen an even wider range of real ales and ciders brought in.

On top of a friendly atmosphere and good beer selection, the well-maintained club runs a number of social events for the local community including brewery nights, quiz events and sports teams including snooker. There is even a walking group and a popular chess club that meets once a week in the club's function room. Regular entertainment takes place over the weekend with music, bingo and Open the Box with the chance to win up to £1,000.

Runners-up in the competition include two Royal Air Force Association (RAFA) clubs - the **Albatross Club** in Bexhill-on-Sea and the **Real Ale Farm** in Bargoed, Wales - as well as the **Appleton Thorn Village Hall** in Warrington, which all boast a wide range of well-kept, fantastic real ales.









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LOCAL NEWS

AYLESBURY

The **Aristocrat** is due to become a fully fledged Craft Beer House in early April. It will be one of a handful of pubs in the country which have had the **Fullers** branding removed and will offer 42 craft ales and lagers (the vast majority in bottles and cans) including **Fullers London Pride** which will be available on both keg and handpump. Following the opening of their 'Mustard Kitchen', hot and cold sandwiches are available and in April they will expand the food range to offer breakfasts and Sunday roasts.

The **Broad Leys** had **Sharps Doom Bar**, **Vale Golden Gate** and **Loddon Hoppit** (shortly to be replaced by **Rebellion Relativity**) when visited.

The freehold of the **Green Man** is up for sale! Until the sale goes through the pub will be under the management of Kyle Michael from the **White Swan** and will open from Tuesday to Sunday each week. No real ale will be on offer, but it does have an interesting new pub sign.

The **Harrow** had a minor refurbishment in January and at the end of March was offering **Black Sheep Bitter**, **Sharps Doom Bar** and **Wells Bombardier Glorious English** alongside **Westons Old Rosie** cider.

The **Hop Pole**, besides offering nine handpumps serving an ever-changing range of beer and cider, is proving very popular for Sunday roasts and their monthly music events.

Weavers reopened on Friday 23rd of March after a major refurbishment which included new wooden floors and carpets, a new bar and brand new toilets. It is now a freehouse being run by Cleveland Bailey who ran the **Emperor's Lounge** for many years. Work is still continuing on the kitchen, so food will not be available until later in April. The handpumps have not yet been replaced yet but real ale is expected back soon. Further details next issue.

The **White Swan** was offering **Adnams Fat Sprat** (3.8%) when visited.

BEACONSFIELD

The **Loch Fyne** restaurant has been acquired by pub group **Brunning and Price**. They plan to reopen it in the summer, reverting to its old name as the **White Horse**. Hopefully the change of name indicates it'll be more pub than restaurant!

BISHOPSTONE

The 3rd annual **Bishopstone Mini Beer Festival** will once again go ahead on Saturday 5th May from 12:00 midday at the Bishopstone Village Hall, Moreton Lane (HP17 8SQ). There should be around twenty different ales, plus some ciders and wine. The Mini Beer Festival will consist of Mini Pins of approximately 18 pints each and when they are gone, they are gone (last year, they ran out of beer at 8pm!). Mini pins keep the cost of sponsorship low, to just £60 per sponsor (for further details, please email Mark Bale at markb@crash-2000.com). All proceeds to Bishopstone Village Hall.

BLEDLOW

An eclectic mix of ales is available at the

Lions at Bledlow, which is a popular walkers' pub. **Beermats Soulmate**, **Wadworth 6X**, **Oakham Slovenian Wolf** and **Blackpit Goshawk** (a fifth clip with a **Vale** ale was reversed) were seen on a recent visit. This charming 16th Century country inn was doing a roaring lunchtime food trade and there were plenty of muddy boots left outside the entrance!

BOOKER

The owners of the **Squirrel** have sought planning permission to build a three-bedroom house on land surrounding the pub but it has been refused.

CHINNOR

The **Chinnor Community Pavilion** has been open for almost two years now (it was officially opened by local celebrity, Spandau Ballet singer Tony Hadley) and replaced the former 1960s-build Chinnor Sports & Social Club. The bar here is now open to non-members and is run by the husband and wife team of Mark and Laura Willis. They have two pumps in action with the local **XT 4** as the regular session bitter and a further guest (supplied by **XT** as part of their brewery exchange) - **Stockport Brewing Co. Crown Best Bitter** on this visit. The function room out back is available for hire and has been in great demand for sporting club and private functions since opening.

A recent visit to the **Crown** saw national beers on the handpumps: **Greene King IPA**, **Sharp's Doom Bar** and **Fuller's London Pride**. The Seniors' Lunch offer (two courses for £6.95) and generously-portioned Sunday roasts continue to be popular. Twice-weekly karaoke on Thursday and Sunday evenings continue and also remain popular events in the village.

Landlord Roger celebrated nine years at the helm of the **Wheatsheaf** towards the end of last year and as a testament to his drive for continual improvement, the new toilets including disabled and baby-changing facilities were completed before Christmas. A fortnightly Quiz continues every other Thursday at 8pm, along with special offers on food - Rib Special Tuesday (a rack of ribs for £12 - normally £18), Pizza Special Wednesday (a two topping pizza for £6) and Burger Special Thursday (a burger for £6). Sunday Roasts with homemade Yorkshire Puddings and homemade gravy are available £12.95. Just two ales on on this visit - **Greene King IPA** and **Wheatsheaf Ale** (rebadged **Hardy & Hanson's Bitter**) with a third pump unclipped.

CROWELL

The **Shepherd's Crook** was closed for refurbishment in February, but reopened in early March under the same ownership.

EMMINGTON

David and Sharon have now been in charge of the Inn at Emmington, a popular pub with accommodation, for a year now. Three real ales are always on offer - a recent visit saw **Rebellion IPA** (which remains as the session bitter), **Loose Cannon Detonator** and **Animal Panda**. **Lilley's Crazy Goat** scrumpy cider was also available, and at 6.8% was for serious cider drinkers only! The popular Builder's Buffet continues



every Friday from 4pm to 6.30pm with free food and nibbles available on the bar every week and Thursday night is steak night.

GREAT KIMBLE

The **Swan** is turning into the de facto brewery tap on occasion for **Hillfire** with two of their beers on recently (**California Gold** and **Scrum Down**).

HIGH WYCOMBE

London Road watering hole the **Rifle Butts** had a well-kept **Charles Wells Bombardier** (4.3%) on their sole hand-pump on a recent visit. Other ales have that have featured have been **Rebellion IPA** (3.7%) and **Sharp's Atlantic** (4.2%). Town centre pub the **Three Tuns** continues to delight the local real ale fraternity with some weird and wonderful beery delights at affordable prices. Recent visitations at the hand-pumps have been **Black Sheep Monty Python's Holy Grail** (4.0%), **The Rat White Rat** (4.0%) and **Lancaster Red** (4.8%).

LACEY GREEN

A new licensee, Shirley Abbott, has taken over at the **Pink and Lily** in March. She's local and doesn't seem to plan to change much. An **Animal** beer was available when visited. The **Whip** is holding its next beer festival over the second weekend in May (11th and 12th).

LITTLE MARLOW

Closed and boarded up Grade II listed country pub the **Kings Head** seems to be still in limbo and fears that the listed building could fall into disrepair since the local council threw out plans last autumn for the pub to become a gastropub. New owner, chef Raymond Blanc, put through these proposals to become one of his latest **White Brasserie Company** establishments, but his plans (quite literally) were scuppered after Wycombe District Council threw out the changes following opposition from the local Little Marlow Parish Council.

MARLOW

At **Baroosh** in the High Street the latest seasonal offering is **Rivertown Brewery Achilles IPA** (4.9%).

The imposing mock-Tudor building **Cross Keys** (Spittal Street) remains closed after the bar manager and premises licence holder transferred the licence back to **Star Pubs & Bars (Heineken)** stating the pub had become non-viable as a business due to the rising high rents, rates and reduced opening hours. The **Keys** remains locked!

The focal point building at the top of Marlow High Street (as was) the **Crown**

(Market Place) which was purchased by **Marston's**. They were due to convert what is now the Steamer Trading Cookshop into a new pub/restaurant, but have decided to sell on the property to a development company for £4.5 million, a deal that they just couldn't refuse! So the **Crown Hotel** bell tolls 'time-up' for real ale at this historic venue.

The third **Marlow Beerfest** will be held on the 1st, 2nd and 3rd of June. There will be over thirty beers and ciders to choose from, live music and hot food available. Entry will be £5 (£3 for **CAMRA** members) which includes a souvenir glass and guide to the beers. The festival will be held at historic **Marlow Football Club**. **CAMRA** volunteers to help run the festival would be appreciated!

Once again the **Marlow RBL Club (GBG 2018)** will be hosting their Springfest 2018 beer festival over the upcoming May Bank Holiday weekend. Alongside the mandatory plethora of rare and seasonal brews, real cider and music, a Gin Festival hosting around 20 different types will be available. Latest ales on at the club have been **Chiltern Pride of Bucks & Berks** (4.2%), **Storm Dexter** (4.2%), **Animal Gribbit** (4.6%) and **Flying Monk Birdman** (4.6%).

The **Old Brewery** (aka the **Slug**, the **Slug & Lettuce**, the **Hogshead**) positioned on the site of the old **Wethereds Brewery** in the High Street, reopened its doors on Tuesday 13th March (the **Slug** closed Sunday 18th February 2018), after a recent £300,000 refit into a new pub format. Amid the nine TV's, big screens and multiple Sky and BT boxes, four handpumps and two craft beer fonts loom up from the centre of the pub bar. On launch night **Rebellion IPA** (3.7%), **Roasted Nuts** (4.6%), **Sharps Doom Bar** (4.0%) and **Fuller's London Pride** (4.1%) were on handpump, a welcome change from the zero real ale available in the last year of the old **Slug-ish**! The pub is pictured above (photo courtesy of the new manager, Indrit Bala). During the renovations an old hidden fireplace was discovered with the inscription 'TW & S' referring back to the original **Thomas Wethered & Sons** brewery and it now forms a feature of the pub.

Tom Kerridge's **Pub in the Park** is set to return to Marlow's Higginson Park between 17-20th May.

MARSH GIBBON

On a recent visit to the village, both the **Greyhound** and the **Plough** each had two ales on that day which rated highly on the beer scores system. In fact, the

Plough has served over 50 *Animal* specials as the young landlord, Adam Robinson, is keen on ales.

READING

Reading & Mid-Berks CAMRA Beer & Cider Festival takes place from Thursday 3rd to Sunday 6th of May 2018, at Christchurch Meadows, Reading, RG4 8BY (a few minutes' walk from Reading Station). Details from www.readingbeerfestival.org.uk, advanced tickets available. **CAMRA** volunteers required, please contact staffing@readingbeerfestival.org.uk.

STOKE MANDEVILLE

Nigel Mabbett, landlord of the **Bull**, passed away on the 22nd of February, a year after being diagnosed with a brain tumour. Over three hundred people attended his funeral at Amersham and our sympathies go out to his wife, Lynn, and all his family and friends. There are various plans to hold special events to raise money for a brain tumour charity. Lynn, who has been at the **Bull** for nearly six years, will continue to run the pub which has featured many times in the *Good Beer Guide* and currently offers *Sharps Doom Bar* and *Harveys Sussex Bitter*.

SYDENHAM

At the **Crown**, the house beer, *Rebellion IPA*, was joined by *Zebedee* and *Windsor & Eton Last Drop* on the latest visit here. Will and Pippa have been here just over a year now and there is still plenty going on with the World's Biggest Pub Quiz in aid of Prostate Cancer having been held on 4th March, all England 6 Nations matches screened in the bar and a Gin Festival (6th to 14th



July), the beer festival, 'SydFest', at the end of September as well as support for the annual Sydenham Fayre in June. Will always looks to support his third handpump with a *LocAle*, and has had beers in from *Chiltern*, *Fisher's*, *Loddon*, *Loose Cannon*, *Vale* and *XT* in the last 12 months. (photo of Will behind the bar above).

THAME

The **Cross Keys** will be running two cider festivals this year. Both will feature about 20 different ciders and coincide with two major musical events happening in the area. The first is on the 13th of July as part of the Thame Town Music Festival. Most venues in Thame will be taken over for music on this day including the **Cross Keys**. They will be concentrating on folk music, with a folk busking session in the afternoon, followed by a soloist/ guitarist in the evening. The second coincides with Towersey Festival on August 25th.

TOWERSEY

The Three Horseshoes is still a popular lunchtime haunt, and was serving *Rebellion IPA* and *Fuller's London Pride* on a recent visit.



Our beers for 2018 are themed around the heroic wartime achievements of the **Bletchley Park** codebreakers and are brewed as part of a fundraising campaign in support of **Bletchley Park** and **The National Museum of Computing**.

CODEBREAKER (4.0 % ABV) January

Plenty of oats. Clean, fresh and light-amber colour. El Dorado hops give a flavour of stone-fruit and an aroma of pears.

LORENZ (4.3% ABV) February

Extra pale. Slower fermentation brings out the distinctive tangerine flavour of Mandarin Bavaria hops.

TUNNY (3.9% ABV) March

Generous portions of wheat in the grist. Cascade hops for a full and fruity aroma.

ABACUS (4.1% ABV) April

Galaxy hops. Passion fruit and peach aromas. Spicy rye malt base.

ENIGMA (3.8% ABV) May

Endeavour and Jester hops with aromatic malt bestow a unique colour and deep flavour.

COLOSSUS (4.2% ABV) June

Citra, Citra and then more Citra. Intense tropical-fruit and grapefruit flavours.

WRENS (4.1% ABV) July

Extra pale malt base with Mosaic, Citra and Simcoe hops. Tropical, and citrus flavours.

HEATH ROBINSON (4.0% ABV) August

Complex biscuity body. Cascade and Chinook impart a lingering and resinous bitterness.

WHIRLWIND (3.8% ABV) September

Amarillo for a sunshine blonde beer with a fruity palate and lingering late hop aroma.

WITCH (4.2% ABV) October

Northern Brewer hops. Notes of pine and grass on the nose and lingering bitterness.

CIPHER (3.9% ABV) November

Rye malt and US hops form the backbone of this copper ale. Pleasantly balanced bitterness.

SECRET SANTA (4.0% ABV) December

A medley of malts and a generous dose of Bramling Cross hops. A perfect all-dayer.

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PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORIES



Eagle eyed readers may be able to identify the pub in these vintage photographs as the **Swan** in Great Kimble. The photos were recently sent to current landlord Mick Caffrey by Melvin Palmer, now a resident of Devon, but whose grandparents ran the pub between the late 1950s and 1968/9.

The photographs cover a period from the 1960s (above left) to the early 1980s (when Mr Palmer visited his family in the area – the vintage cars in the photos were driven by him and predated the photographs considerably). They show that the pub briefly changed from its traditional white to a brick colour at some point over this period.

The pub was originally converted from a row of eighteenth century cottages and the photographs show that it was relatively little changed up until the 1980s (pictured above right). The pub closed for several years in the 1990s and reopened at the end of that decade after a substantial extension and the centre picture was taken in 2012.



Those familiar with the pub nowadays will note that the outbuilding to the left of the pub were replaced by an extension to the main building. The separate entrances to the two bars were also replaced by a single external door. The whole length of the pub was built out at the back to provide additional kitchen space and toilets.



With the closure of the **Prince of Wales** in Marsh last year and the **Bernard Arms** continuing to fall into further dereliction, the Swan now remains the only pub in the parish of Great and Little Kimble cum Marsh. (At the time the photos were taken, the **Crown** in Little Kimble would also still have been trading – before its conversion into an Indian restaurant and recent demolition.)

We should therefore raise a glass to celebrate that nearly 60 years on from these photographs the **Swan** is still a place where you can find a good pint of real ale.

Mike Clarke

The Wheel

Naphill

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LONDON GREED



I made a trip to Liverpool recently to see the exhibition at the World Museum *China's First Emperor and the Terracotta Warriors*, which by the way was simply stunning. It is on to 28th October 2018.

Whilst in Liverpool overnight I took the opportunity to visit a few **GBG**-listed pubs. One of them, the **Ship & Mitre**, has an associated bottle shop, appropriately named the **Ship in a Bottle**, at 45a Whitechapel nearby.

There I was amused to find the bottle-conditioned beer pictured here: *London Greed* (ABV 4.2%) by the **Republic of Liverpool Beer Company**. I haven't tried the beer yet – it might well become a collector's item.

The brewery's website sets out their aim to be 'a little bit political (but only with a small p)' and to bottle 'Liverpool's rebellious spirit'. They go on to proclaim that 'For centuries, London and the South East have bled the rest of the country dry, taking wealth from Scotland and Ireland (when part of our Great Britain!), Wales and the North of England. The North South divide is at a level now of being obscene and unacceptable'.

Well if that's their idea of a 'small p' one can only wonder how much further their next beer name will go in taking the 'p'. One can but admire the brewery's bottle.

Watch this space.

Giles du Boulay

PUB OF THE YEAR



The **Aylesbury Vale & Wycombe CAMRA Pub of the Year** for 2018 is the **Royal Standard** at Wooburn Common. A presentation of the certificate was due to take place at the end of March but this had to be cancelled at the last minute. Check social media for the new date.

Our **Cider Pub of the Year** is the **Cross Keys** in Thame (see page 4).

SOUNDING (OFF) BOARD



Continuing the debate about real ale in cans, Mike Clemence writes:

I agree entirely with Giles' sentiments regarding canned 'real ale'. I realise that the ale may be acceptable but the points he raised are perfectly valid. Of course, if the consumer of the contents of the said can is one of those who just sloshes the beer into the glass or worse still drinks straight from the can as, so often seems to be the case nowadays, not knowing or caring what has been deposited on the can's end I suppose the argument is academic! Mr Boyd says he does not drink with his eyes so obviously he really does not care how turgid is the brew which he consumes!

2018 Beer Festival

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St George fancy dress theme



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LOCAL BREWERY NEWS

ABC Brewery

We announced the following beers last issue ahead of time, so we are sorry to repeat ourselves!



Modern Prometheus (5.1% Black IPA). January marked 200 years since the publishing of Mary Shelly's gothic classic *Frankenstein*; or, *The Modern Prometheus*. Made with a concoction of dark and roasted malts to give a robust body and heavily hopped with big hitting pine and citrus flavours from Simcoe and Chinook hops.

Wilde (4.3% Witbier). Named for the finest wit of them all Wilde is a belgian style witbier. Made with unmalted wheat and pilsner malt. A hazy golden beer spiced with coriander seeds and orange peel. A vibrant and refreshing beer.



Chiltern Brewery

In March, the brewery released their annual charity beer - *Pride Of Bucks & Berks*. The beer was brewed to support Sophie Edes (pictured left), the three-year-old granddaughter of a retired **Chiltern Brewery** team member,



who has been diagnosed with Rett Syndrome. This sadly means she will probably never be able to walk or talk. The **Chiltern Brewery** pledged to donate 5p from every pint of *Pride Of Bucks & Berks* sold to support the Edes family in buying specialist eye-gaze equipment that will allow Sophie to communicate with the world. You can read more about Sophie's story, and donate to the fundraising efforts, on the family's JustGiving Page: www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/sophieedes.

Throughout April and May, **Chiltern Brewery** have a number of exciting seasonal brews to enjoy. *Nut Brown Mild* is released at the start of April, and has been described as 'Luxuriously smooth, dark and subtly sweet

with a beautifully balanced hop aroma.' April also sees the release of the brewery's *Colombian Coffee Porter*, a dark and smooth roasted ale infused with Granja La Esperanza Margaritas coffee from Chartley Coffee.

To celebrate the arrival of (hopefully!) sunny weather, *Cobblestones Summer Ale* will be making its arrival in May. Inspired by the beautiful cobbled courtyard of the **King's Head** in Aylesbury (said to date back to 1455), the golden ale has a wonderful, refreshing blackcurrant flavour.

Fishers Brewery

After all the recent weather 'excitement', **Fishers** think it's time to get on with some drinking of beer in the sunshine. As such, they are going to be making their outside space a bit more user-friendly and encourage you all to come up and have a pint on-site with somewhere to sit, from April 6th onwards.

They'll have a couple of benches set up, will mark out the area in front of the shutter door, spin the bar round to face outwards and serve draught cask and keg beers on the following days: Thursday 12- 6pm, Friday 12-8pm and Saturday 12-7pm. So feel free to come up and have a pint or three.

At their open event on April 6th they have the Magnificent 7's returning with the vinyl, The Spicy Chef makes a comeback with those delicious curries and hopefully they won't need a space heater this time! As usual, all welcome from 6pm and £2.50 pints.

Currently available are five core beers in bottle, plus remaining stocks of the single-hopped cascade. The weekend and event bar will have *Blonde*, *Smoked Porter*, *Red* and *APA* on cask, as well as *APA* and *Saison* on keg with the single-hopped cascade rotating in as well.

Hillfire Brewing Co.

Hillfire are happy to be supporting the **Hop Pole** Easter Beer Festival with a cask of their *Nighthawk Stout* and are looking forward to catching up with friends there (probably on the Saturday) and sampling the beers!

At some point in April and/or May **Hillfire** will be having an open day: come along to the brewery and see what they do, taste their beers as well as some other locals. Look out on social media for details.

Hillfire are continuing to evolve their *APA* recipe, version 1.2 is due for release imminently. Also in the pipeline is a Royal Wedding special.

Rebellion Brewery

The monthly special in April is *Impressionist*, a blonde and citrus 4.2% ale and in May there is *Legend*. This will be a 4.2% pale and fruity beer.

Their new bottled stout called *Black* is now out and proving a big hit. 5.2%, rich and complex this stout uses roasted malts along with Cascade hops and cocoa nibs create the dark chocolate smoothness and coffee-like intensity. This 330ml bottle is available from March to April.

Their summer seasonal bottled beer, *White*, will be another 'new' beer, though it's more of a revival of a bottled beer they used to brew years ago. Exact details of the beer are still under wraps, but it is going to be a wheat beer sold in 330ml bottles, perfect for summer. Should be around May sometime.

Rebellion have also gained SALSA (Safe and Local Supplier Approval) accreditation.

Tring Brewery

The current monthly special from **Tring** is *Bring Me Sunshine* (4.2%) and they say that the sun always shines on the day they release this beer. Cascade hops and light roasted malts are the base for this fruity, hoppy golden brown ale.

The monthly specials are: *Abacus* (4.1%) in April. Galaxy is arguably the boldest of the Australian hop varieties and passion fruit and peach aromas are paired with

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MORE LOCAL BREWERY NEWS

the spicy flavour of a pale rye malt base.

Enigma (3.8%) in May. Aromatic malt bestows a unique colour and deep flavour to this red-amber ale. Combine this with two of the newest English hop varieties, Endeavour and Jester and you arrive at an extremely flavoursome yet balanced beer.

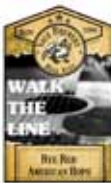
Vale Brewery

Vale's head Brewer, David, is pleased to announce a selection of new recipes to reflect the forthcoming season with an all English bitter and Red Rye ale to add variety.



Mange Tout (4.4%). An Auburn traditional ale for a much loved British comedy. This ale has a bittersweet balance. Full bodied with a malty finish.

Walk the Line (4.2%). 'I walk the line' was Johnny Cash's first number 1 single in 1956. This red rye American beer is brewed in honour of the man in black. Expect flavours to toasted malts and dried fruits with a smooth bitterness.



Stop Messing About (3.8%). 'Oh Matron! Stop messing about!' and try a pint of this pale beer. Soft malt and delicate hop flavours with aromas of fruit and berries. A golden beer for a golden boy of British comedy.



Vale are planning the Launch Open Day of their new Brewtap and Shop on April 21st from 9am to 5pm.

XT Brewery

XT Brewery have launched their all new look beer branding. The new designs for the pumpclips and bottles across the range give a fresh new look on the bar, while keeping with the colour themes and graphical designs that have become the signature of the *XT* brand. The revitalised brand shows the solid commitment *XT* have to the long term future of cask beer whilst also wanting to promote their beer in keg, bottle and can –



reflecting the brewery's support of *CAMRA's* own proposed future. Our branch website (avw.camra.org.uk) will feature an article from Russ about the Revitalisation plans from *CAMRA* which we didn't have room left in this issue to be able to feature.

XT are working with the Oxford Brewers Alliance to bring you the second Oxford Beer Week. Running from 5th to 12th May, Beer Week is a celebration of locally brewed beers – showcased across the city. Beer festivals, tap-take-over events, tastings and brewery open days will be happening all week – take a look at oxfordbrewers.org/oxbeerwk to find out more. *XT* have launched a Homebrew Competition to run alongside the Beer Week – get creative and you could win the chance to brew your own beer at *XT* in a full sized batch, see your beer on the bar across Oxford and beyond. Take a look at xtbrewing.com for more info on how to enter.

There will be a new semi-permanent summer ale available from *XT* – appropriately named *XT-18* it's a 4.2% golden beer – freshly and generously hopped with mellow English and American greens for that perfect refresher in the longer days.

The *Animal* beers are joined by the latest creation: *Animal Stag* – which is a 4.6% pale ale filled with multi-layered New Zealand hops.



The Spring Open Day at *XT Brewery* will be Saturday 12th May from 10:30am to 4:30pm. Free entry, very reasonably priced beers with music and food. All welcome.



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GRAVEDIGGERS' MICROBREWERY TASTING NOTES



Over the last few years, the **Gravediggers Arms** has served over 80 revolting ales and real ciders, mainly brewed in its own monumentally unhygienic microbrewery. Even worse, it has also served the blandest and most characterless beers from faceless multinational corporations.

Due to popular demand, an expert panel of tasters has sampled all the beers and compiled extensive tasting notes.

The full list of beers with descriptions will be published early in April in an updated edition of a compilation of **Gravediggers'**

stories: *The Gravediggers: Around the Slops Tray in 80 Beers*. A taster of some of the beers appears below. The style of beer follows the name.

Average Filthney's, 70's Keg (OG 1025, 2.5%)

(Guest Keg) Like pond water with added Bisto for colouring

Blandweiser, American Bland Beer (OG 1045, 4.5%)

(Guest Keg) Bubbly like diluted washing-up liquid but tastes worse.

Campylobacter Porter, Porter (OG 1065, 6.5%)

Bacteria and mutant yeast strains give this porter a poisonous mouthfeel and richly toxic finish.

Crusted Armpit, American Hopped Light Ale (OG 1067, 7%)

Festering three-week unwashed gym-kit aroma with a salty tang on the palate.

Deadly Lethal Ammonium Nitrate Head Exploder, Extra Strong Barley Wine (OG 1500, 75%)

Insanely strong ale, catching the aroma alone likely to lead to points on the driving licence. Viscous mouth-feel, like burning petrol, with taste difficult to pinpoint after all the tongue's taste buds have been hit with the gustatory equivalent of a thousand-megaton nuclear warhead. Leads to a three-week hangover.

Extremely Braveheart, Scottish Ale (OG 1040, 4%)

A sweetish brown heavy ale brewed with essence of caber and sporran

Festers, Fizzy Keg Lager

Industrial fizz

Filthney's Best, 70's Keg

(Guest Keg) Like pond water with added mud for colouring

Fit Shaded, Extra Strong Lager (OG 1100, 10%)

No discernible aroma, being brewed from the cheapest possible ingredients, gloopy resinous texture reminiscent of old creosote stored in a shed for several years. Sadly the taste doesn't live up to this promise.

Golden Glyprostate Ale, Golden Ale (OG 1040, 4%)

Yellow-hued with tangs of lingering industrial weed killer on the palate.

Honest Tony's, Bitter (OG 1030, 3.5%)

Looks fresh and enticing but fails to deliver on the initial promise.

Lizard's Gizzards, Porter: Guest From Six Feet Under (OG 1050, 5%)

Ripe, earthy aroma with a meaty taste that's initially difficult to stomach, a bitter aftertaste scales the limits of digestibility.

Mycotoxin Mild, Mild (OG 1030, 3%)

Nose inhibited by thick covering of mould on the surface. Mouthfeel of penicillin and tetracycline hints. Satisfyingly fungal finish.

Numb Yer Trossachs, Scottish Ale (OG 1060, 6.5%)

Traces of deep-fried Mars bar on the nose with a distinct taste of 28-day-matured haggis and Loch Ness monster.

Old Gangrene Stout, Stout (OG 1080, 8%)

Not entirely unpleasant nose of putrefying flesh, yellow-tinted head topping black body. Lingering finish.

Old Knackers' Yard, Red Ale (OG 1070, 7%)

Fruity, gluey and meaty aroma and palate with a deep crimson colour and saltiness to balance the sweet malt flavours.

Old Ratarsed, Rauchbier (OG 1080, 8%)

The aroma holds all the worst that smoke can bring to a beer – cigarette butts, exhaust fumes, bonfires on a sunny day. It develops into rotten cheese and other unspecified offal on the palate.

Old Sludge, Stout (OG 1090, 9%)

The beer has an intense aroma of pungent effluent. A dark, dried and unmentionable texture coats the tongue. The punchy finish foreshadows its later effects on one's intestines.

Old Winter's Tadpole Tail, Winter Ale (OG 1070, 7%)

A tempting aroma of stagnant pond water and a mouthfeel of licked toad. The aggressive finish often leads to a frog in the throat.

Organic Old Mildew, Cider (OG 1100, 10%)

Lively, and initially pungent (almost rotten stilton), this cider – as the fizz starts to dissipate – reveals a rancid maggotty flavour and mouldy mouth-feel. In a word, it's vile.

Parasite Porter, Porter (OG 1060, 6%)

A roasty and smoky bouquet of incinerated pest-control department refuse balanced by a palate of luscious mouse-droppings and a finish like a nest full of wasp stings.

Peasants' Gizzard, Porter (OG 1060, 6%)

A complex biome of flavours on the nose, giving way to a rich palate of offal. The finish is quick and brutal.

Peculiar Palaeozoic Pinky, Unhopped Old Ale (OG 1035, 3.5%)

Flavoured with one-celled simple organisms rather than hops, the ale captures the essence of Brontosaurus with a cheeky dash of Tyrannosaurus Rex.

Pickled Newt, Mild (OG 1080, 8%)

Ripe flavours of muddy pondwater with a surprising diversity of insect larvae on the tongue.

Pooper Scooper, Dog Beer (OG 1040, 4%)

After consuming a pint, Fido happily cocked his leg round all the trees in the pub garden before falling over.

Rabid Rat's Arse, Amber Ale (OG 1050, 5%)

Pale gold with a pungent nose. Extremely lively carbonation that leaves the drinker foaming at the mouth.

Right Royal Ale, Weak Session Bitter (OG 1025, 2.5%)

A whiff of Corgi kennel and flavours of interesting old hats.

Ring of Fire, Chilli Beer - Guest From Sozzled Spadesmen (OG 1100, 11%)

Made by adding scotch bonnet chillies to the mash tun, this beer cauterises the mouth, sears the digestive tract and leaves an eternally burning finish.

Septic Fleabite, Well-Hopped Bitter (OG 1055, 5.5%)

Extremely hoppy with a biting aftertaste.

Sphincter Loosener, Mild (OG 1035, 3.5%)

A cloying aroma of indistinct beer styles belies the origin of this ale from the slops bucket. A charming cocktail of the dregs of other barrels and the festering contents of drip trays, this ale can be guaranteed to lubricate the parts other beers tend not to reach.

Thermonuclear Weasel, Extra Strong Ale (OG 1200, 20%)

A midnight black liquid redolent of decomposing small mammals under an apoplectically blasted hedgerow. Texture like sump oil.

Thunderbolt, Wild Yeast Beer (OG 1125, 12.5%)

Typical example of the horse-blanket characteristic of wild yeast beers with a powerful finish that threatens to burn down the stable if a careless match is struck.

Toxic Sludge, Old Ale (OG 1065, 6.5%)

A classic sludge bitter with khaki colouring and sulphurous aromas on the finish.

Turbo Hopped Sierra Steam Packet Crankshaft Rocket Fuel IPA, American IPA (OG 2100, 110%)

110% alcohol – offering the drinker an out-of-this-world experience ending with the sensation of being sucked through a black hole into a parallel universe.

Undescended Gonad, Barley Wine (OG 1090, 9%)

A warm and embracing beer, with a lopsided hop character and a half-nutty palate, expected to mature with time.

Up Your Khyber IPA, IPA (OG 1110, 11%)

Unfined IPA with a spicy bitterness overlaid with essence of Charles Hawtreys undergarments.

Charlie Mackle

Branch Diary

Everybody welcome to all socials and meetings!

March

Saturday 31st DAVE ROE'S PENSION BOOK BASH

12.00 noon, Hop Pole, Aylesbury

April

Wednesday 4th WALKING SOCIAL

7.00pm Stables Bar, Three Crowns, Askett, 8.15pm, Swan, Great Kimble (both pubs accessible by 300 bus route and Chiltern Railways but the route between them may be muddy).

Monday 9th INFORMAL BRANCH MEETING

8.00pm, Belle Vue, High Wycombe

Friday 20th – Sunday 22nd CAMRA National Members' Weekend Warwick University. *CAMRA* decides the future direction of the campaign following the 'Revitalisation Survey'.

May

Tuesday 1st HIGH WYCOMBE SOCIAL

7.00pm Mad Squirrel Emporium and elsewhere

Saturday 5th BEER FESTIVAL SOCIAL

12.00 noon, Royal British Legion, Marlow

Friday 11th WHIP INN BEER FESTIVAL SOCIAL

7.00pm, Whip Inn, Lacey Green

Monday 14th BRANCH MEETING

8.00pm Hop Pole, Aylesbury

Tuesday 22nd SOCIAL

8.30pm Shepherd's Crook, Crowell, 9.30pm Lions of Bledlow

June

Saturday 30th ANNUAL BLACK COUNTRY COACH TRIP

The best day of the year! Pickups from Aylesbury (9.45am), Kimble, Princes Risborough, High Wycombe and Saunderton. Cost of the coach is expected to be £33 per person and full details will appear in the next issue.

October

Friday 26th/Saturday 27th VALE OF AYLESBURY FESTIVAL

For the 25th year we are holding a beer festival to raise money for the Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity. It will be held at the Sir Henry Floyd Grammar School, Oxford Road, Aylesbury HP21 8PE. Further details will appear in *Swan Supping* nearer the date.

Further details can be found on our website

www.avw.camra.org.uk, facebook and meetup.com

CATCH UP DURING BRANCH SOCIALS:-

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DON'T MISS OUT!

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

www.avw.camra.org.uk

Swan Supping

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Tel : 01296 484551 E-Mail : editor@swansupping.org.uk

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

Copy deadline for next issue (due out 31st May) is 14th May 2018.

Subscriptions :- *Swan Supping* is distributed to over 250 pubs and many other locations in our area but if you would prefer to receive your copy by post we can mail it to you immediately it is published. All you have to do is send £1.50 for each edition you wish to receive to the Editor at the address above (please make all cheques payable to *CAMRA AV & W*) and leave the rest to us! This applies to single copies to UK addresses only. We can mail overseas, but the price will vary depending on the country to which it is to be delivered. Remember that all issues of *Swan Supping* can be downloaded from our website (www.swansupping.org.uk).

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

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

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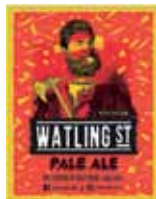
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