

FREE

Swan Supping



Issue 126

June/July 2018



**Another pub in
High Wycombe
closes!**

See Local News



**CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE**

Newsletter of the Aylesbury Vale & Wycombe Branch of CAMRA

avw.camra.org.uk

Circulation 6000

27-29th JULY 2018

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NEWS FROM THE EDITOR



Our branch is in crisis!

We are sadly losing active members, either with them moving away from the area, or, as can be seen by the number of obituaries we have had to feature recently, passing on!

When last checked, we have 820 members in the **Aylesbury Vale and Wycombe Branch** area. That is more than enough to cover two branches if even a small percentage became even slightly active!

In fact, in my many years with the branch, we have often discussed splitting the branch in two, simply due to its size, but this idea has always been discarded purely down to

the lack of volunteers.

On page 4, our Chairman, Simon Isted, makes a plea for someone to step forward as our secretary, a position that is mandatory for a branch to exist. This position was briefly filled by Derek Plater following our AGM, but he has had to reluctantly step down for various reasons. The job is not too arduous, but requires a computer and some computer knowledge. Please can someone answer the call!

Also, if you can help with deliveries, please get in touch with me (contact details on page 18). We now need someone to deliver to the Tring area as well as the Quainton and Marsh Gibbon parts of the branch. We have already lost advertising due to patchy distribution in the latter area and in the fight to keep **Swan Supping** going (we are losing money on this issue), advertising is our life-blood.

Record numbers of members voted to elect **CAMRA's** National Executive - the volunteer leadership of the organisation - at its Annual General Meeting in Coventry on the 21st April.

A record ten candidates stood for four places on the National Executive, with more than 16,000 people casting votes in the contest. Nik Antona was the only one returned as a member of the National Executive. Alexander Wright, a previous Branch Chairman, was also seeking re-election to the NE after three years of sterling work for the Campaign, especially on the **CAMRA** Books committee, but narrowly failed to make the top four. We hope to see more of him now that he has more time for branch socials etc.

Our Regional Director, Carl Griffin, made an appearance on BBC's South Today at the end of April. Although his time was very brief, his interview, along with the landlady of an **Enterprise Inns** pub at the **Barley Mow** in Cox Green, about the Great British Pub Company scandal, got across some very important points.

We, once again, have very sad news about someone associated with **Swan Supping**. Toby Davidson (pictured top right), who delivered issues for us to **Tring Brewery** and the pubs in the Long Marston and Tring area, died on 4th April, just short of his 56th birthday on the 26th April. His nickname was Jugster and his passion, besides beer, was cricket.

He was involved in so very much in Long Marston where he lived, and he had just been awarded the Tom Chapman award for outstanding contribution to the village. He helped with the Village Hall, the school, the pub, the cricket club, he used to walk everyone's dogs and all the dogs loved him. His funeral took place on the 13th of April at St. Peter and St. Paul's Church, Tring, and many people raised a glass to his memory at the **Queens Head** in Long Marston, a pub whose survival he had long fought for.

He will be sadly missed!

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.

David Roe, Swan Supping Editor

Please note that the editor has a new email address: editor@avw.camra.org.uk



NATIONAL CAMRA NEWS



New National Chairman for CAMRA

CAMRA welcomed a new National Chairman at the recent AGM in Coventry, when Colin Valentine handed over the mantle to Jackie Parker (pictured above). After eight years in the role, Colin announced that he would not be standing for re-election to the National Executive and Jackie was elected by her colleagues at a National Executive meeting.

Jackie has been an active member of **CAMRA** for 18 years and has been a member of the National Executive for seven years, and is well-known to our branch having previously served as the Regional Director for our own Central Southern region for three years. She has been **CAMRA's** National Vice-Chairman and National Director with specific responsibility for Communications. We all wish her every success!

Beer Day Britain

Beer Day Britain will be taking place on Friday, 15th June.

The idea is simple – for people to drink beer, ideally in a pub. The focus of the day is the National Cheers to Beer at 7pm, which entails raising a glass of beer, saying 'Cheers to Beer' and posting a social media message tagged #CheersToBeer.

The event is organised by beer sommelier Jane Peyton and supported by a coalition of brewers, pubs, retailers and beer drinkers. The aim is to encourage people to drink beer, raise its profile and celebrate Britain's brewing scene..

15th of June was chosen for the event because it is also the date that Magna Carta was sealed in 1215. The document mentioned ale by saying 'Let there be throughout our kingdom a single measure for wine and a single measure for ale and a single measure for corn, namely the London quarter.'

This year the celebration will extend over the weekend to Father's Day on 17 June, making it a perfect time to visit local pubs and breweries.

Please check our website for further details and send any photos of you saying 'Cheers to Beer' to the editor.



BRANCH NEWS

A plea to all local **CAMRA** branch members,

Hello All,

Our recently elected Branch Secretary, Derek Plater, has unfortunately had to stand down due to personal reasons I hope to see him in the pub soon.



As a result we are in need of a new secretary. A description of the role can be found on the **CAMRA** website at (you may need to log in to view the page).

<https://members.camra.org.uk/group/branch-secretary/role-information>

If anyone would like to apply for this position, please can you let me know ASAP. We hold business meetings six times a year plus the branch Annual General Meeting, which is the most you'd be expected to attend. However, I do realise it may not be possible to attend every single meeting.

If we fail to find a volunteer, the branch constitution mandates that we will need to consider winding the branch up and merging with surrounding branches.

Simon Isted

Chairman of Aylesbury Vale and Wycombe Branch
Many thanks in advance.

Simon Isted,
Aylesbury Vale & Wycombe Branch Chairman.
istedsj@hotmail.co.uk

Pub and Club of the Year Presentations

We announced our **Pub of the Year** (Royal Standard, Wooburn Common) and the **Club of the Year** (Royal British Legion, Marlow) last issue, although the presentations had not yet been made.

Pictured below is the presentation of the **Club of the Year** certificate to Alan Sheppard at the **Royal British Legion** by our Branch Chairman, Simon Isted, and above right is a picture of Mark Lloyd, landlord of the **Royal Standard**, with the two certificates the pub received, **Pub of the Year** and **Cider Pub of the Year Runner-Up**.

Well done to them both!



Black Country Trip

The Black Country trip will go ahead on Saturday 30th of June, despite recent news reports of flash flooding in the area and pictures of a driver, so anxious to get to the **Old Swan** at Netherton that they drove in through the front window! And it was only 7 o'clock in the morning and the pub wasn't even open. Try looking on the internet if you don't know what we are referring to!

Bookings are still being taken for what will be our 28th trip and the cost will be £33 per person. Members and non-members are all welcome to join us on the best day of the year.

The coach will pick up and set down in Aylesbury, Princes Risborough, High Wycombe and Stokenchurch. and after our usual stop for food and wonderful beer at the Coach and Horses, Weatheroak, we will be off to the Black country to visit lots of old favourites, such as the **Bull & Bladder** in Brierley Hill, the **Beacon Hotel** in Sedgley, and the **Old Swan** in Netherton (already mentioned) amongst others.

This year, we will be going to at least one new pub that brews its own beer! Details of the route hadn't been finalised as we went to press, so get in touch if you require more details.

Pickups start in Aylesbury at 9.45am outside the Broad Leys in Aylesbury and then Stewart Hall in Kimble, Princes Risborough, the **Bird in Hand**, High Wycombe, and the **Mowchak** in Stokenchurch.

This is genuinely the best day of the year, so make sure you don't miss out. Get in touch with the editor (contact details on page 18) to ensure your place on the bus as space is limited and seats are going fast!

Local Bus services slashed

The last two Monday-Saturday services in both directions on the 300 route have been removed from the timetable. These were 2205 and 2305 from Aylesbury and 2255 and 2355 from High Wycombe.

The last bus from High Wycombe is now 2200. From Aylesbury the last through service to High Wycombe is even earlier at 2105. There's a 2205 but it only goes as far as Princes Risborough.

This will have major implications on branch meetings and socials in either Aylesbury or Wycombe. It will make it virtually impossible for anyone from Wycombe to visit Aylesbury for a branch meeting by bus. Also, the route serves many pubs that we often visit as it goes via Naphill, Lacey Green, Princes Risborough and Stoke Mandeville. The 300 route is a vital artery for the branch and we promoted the route with a booklet that we produced a few years ago. Rail services run hourly until past midnight going north from Wycombe to Aylesbury but the southward service is very infrequent (one at 2124 and one at 2316). However, unlike the bus, the train doesn't stop next to any pubs!

As well as being a huge inconvenience, this will have effects on rural pub viability and increase the risk of drunk driving. It's no good campaigning for pubs if transport to them is slashed.

LITERATURE FOR THE SUMMER



Good Beer Guide Belgium

The 8th edition of **CAMRA's Good Beer Guide Belgium** is an indispensable companion for anyone visiting or living in Belgium.

This complete guide to the world of Belgian beer is packed with information on breweries, beers, and bars from around the country. It also features comprehensive advice on getting there, what to eat, where to stay and how to bring the best of Belgium's beer offering back home with you.

Compiled by Tim Webb and Joe Stange, this 384 page paperback guide, which was published in April, contains full-colour province-by-

province maps and detailed city maps with bar locations and includes details of over 800 bars, cafés, and beer shops.

It is fully illustrated in colour throughout, with hundreds of photographs

About the authors:-

Tim Webb has written the seven previous editions of the **Good Beer Guide Belgium** and is one of the world's best-known beer writers. His **World Atlas of Beer** and **Pocket Beer Book**, co-authored with Stephen Beaumont has appeared in more than a dozen editions worldwide.

Joe Stange is a freelance journalist whose writing has appeared in the New York Times and All About Beer magazine, among others. He co-wrote the last edition of the **Good Beer Guide Belgium** with Tim Webb. A former resident of Belgium, he now lives in Germany.

This edition has been sponsored by Beer Merchants: <https://www.beermerchants.com/>

[beermerchants.com/](https://www.beermerchants.com/)

ISBN: 978-1-85249-341-7

RRP: £14.99 (Discounts available for **CAMRA** members)

The Gravediggers' Arms Around the Slops Tray in 80 Beers

Fans of the **Gravediggers' Arms** stories were so upset that the series had come to an end that the author, Charlie Mackle, has decided to head to Transylvania to seek sanctuary!

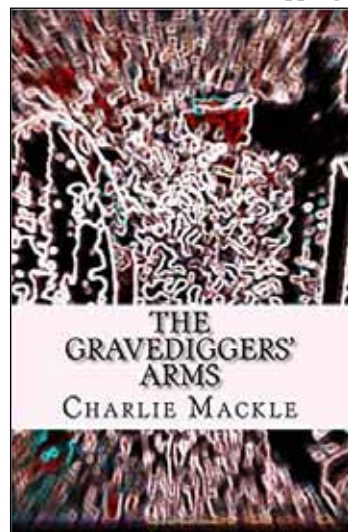
However, the fans need not despair as an updated edition of '**The Gravediggers' Arms**' by Charlie Mackle collecting the fifty pint-sized instalments of life in the **Gravediggers' Arms**, plus tasting notes on 80 revolting beers - is now available on Amazon for a bargain £8.99.

First appearing in the October/November 2009 issue of *Swan Supping*,

it offered a humorous take on what's undoubtedly the country's finest institution - the Great British Pub. However, the **Gravediggers' Arms** is probably the worst pub in England and its microbrewery produces brews that are even more foul than the tempers of its unhygienic regulars.

Just search for Charlie Mackle. He will make a contribution to branch funds for every copy sold (unfortunately not much as the cost of printing the book to order takes up most of the price - around the equivalent of a half).

It is hoped that Charlie Mackle will return (if the vampires don't get him).



Hidden Treasure Le De Spencers Arms



The 'Le De' is a little flint pub, nestling in the woods at the back of Downley Common surrounded by acres of beautiful AONB land with miles of trails. Making it the ideal refreshment stop after hiking or biking. Outside is a large attractive garden with a patio, prettily planted arbour and a safe children's play area.

Be sure not to miss our annual Beer and Cheese Festival, from Friday 29th June until Sunday 1st July. When you can savour the great combination of carefully selected great British ales and farmhouse cheeses.

Visit our website and Facebook page for details.



01494 535317 www.ledespencersarms.co.uk
The Common, Downley, High Wycombe HP13 5YL



ASHENDON

The **Hundred of Ashendon** is celebrating a two-page article in the Telegraph Magazine under the heading, 'It is a cosy, family-run country inn that prides itself on its peaceful atmosphere'. The article concentrates mainly on the great quality of the food: Michelin awarded it a Bib Gourmand. The only criticism: not enough clutter! A pity then that they didn't make much mention of the beer which is always well-kept and local with an ever-changing choice from *Chiltern*, *Rebellion*, *Tring*, *Vale* and, *XT*. In May the pub hosted the Gatchangers' Dinner and the prestigious Gate trophy, which has been awarded every year since 1962 to a man who has given outstanding service to the village, was awarded to the pub landlord and chef, Matt Gill, a well-deserved recipient. Without his efforts it seems possible that a village so small could have lost its pub. Well done Matt!

ASTON CLINTON

Aston Clinton Beer Festival is back for its seventh year with eighty plus cask ales, twenty ciders and six keg beers as well as British lagers, wine, Prosecco and Pimm's on tap. The usual line up of great music acts and artisan food is supplemented for the first time this year by a craft gin bar courtesy of **Craft Yard** from Tring. Proceeds raised from the event go to support local charities. This year's chosen beneficiaries are Animal Antiks, Bucks Mind, Young Carers Bucks, Helen & Douglas House and Chilterns MS. Entry is £6 on the door or £5 in advance if booked online. Discounts of up to 33% on festival glassware and beer tokens are also available online from <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/aston-clinton-beer-festival>

AYLESBURY

Amongst other ales the **Bricklayer's Arms** always has *Fuller's ESB* (5.5%) on and always in top condition, surely one of the really great beers.

The **Feathers** is getting geared up for the World Cup as it is bedecked with flags of the competing nations. Customers will be able to cheer on England to their ultimate victory enjoying a selection of four beers which



were *Marston's Pedigree*, *Sharp's Doom Bar*, *Woodfordes Wherry* and *Adnams Broadside* when visited.

The freehold of the **Green Man** (pictured above) has been sold. It remains closed and there is no news yet about its future, especially as it will require a lot of work before it could reopen.

The **King's Head** has opened their brand new Courtyard Bar (pictured below) which will initially be open at weekends when the weather permits and during the week if required. When visited the bar was offering *Chiltern Cobblestones* and *Beechwood Bitter* using an EcoFass version of the KeyKeg system which utilises a replaceable plastic inner bag containing the beer which is then compressed using external CO₂ to force the beer to the pump.

Such is the throughput and interest in real ale at the **Old Millwrights Arms** that Tom and Liz are able to offer week-in and week-out a superb line-up of real ales all in top condition. For example on the 10th of May all of the following were available: *Rebellion Amber* (4.3%), *Titanic Captain Smith's Case* (5.2%), *Wantsum Grim Reaper* (5.5%), *Pot Belly Red Wing* (4.8%), *Timothy Taylor Landlord* (4.3%), *Pot Belly Luke Styporker* (4.0%), *Slater's Original Pale Ale* (4.0%), *Greene King IPA* (3.6%) and *Rebellion Smuggler* (4.2%). Cider drinkers are not forgotten as *Gwent y Ddraig Autumn Magic* and *Farmer Jim's Rootin Tootin Cider* were spotted there on a later visit.

Following the refurbishment that we reported last issue at **Weavers**,

handpumps have made a reappearance and they were offering the ever-popular *Sharp's Doom Bar* and, as a guest beer, *Fullers London Pride*.

BLEDLOW

The **Lions at Bledlow** was doing a roaring lunchtime trade on a recent Saturday visit despite the rainy weather outside. Ales on included *Wadworth 6X*, *Hook Norton Hooky Bitter*, *Loddon's* limited edition St George's Day-themed *Gorgeous George* and *Goff's White Knight* with a fifth clip (*Loose Cannon Abingdon Bridge*) reversed.

BROUGHTON

Trade at the **Dog House Inn** is gradually beginning to pick up as residents move in to the new Kingsbrook estate. The pub has had a very difficult time of it with constant disruption from the building works and from closures of Broughton Lane due to problems with damage to the bridge over the canal, which probably could have been avoided if traffic lights had been installed there in recognition of the significant increase of traffic. The pub has three handpumps and on a recent visit both *Fuller's London Pride* (4.1%) and *Harvey's Sussex Best Bitter* (4.0%) were on and in good nick, served without sparklers, with a *Rebellion* beer ready for the next day. This pub deserves support from further afield.

CHINNOR

A 'For Sale' sign is now up at the derelict **Kings Head**. Not sure at the moment whether it's available for sale as a licensed premises.

The **Red Lion** will host its 8th annual Rebel Lion music and beer festival on Sunday 19th August. Likely to be between over six locAles from *Rebellion Brewery* in Marlow along with real ciders. The event begins at midday and showcases local musicians. *Exmoor Stag* and *Rebellion Roasted Nuts* and seasonal *Legend* (with Pele on the clip) were on the stumps on a recent visit.

The **Wheatsheaf**, a popular pub in the Oakley end of the village (Oakley was a separate hamlet until the late 70s), held its annual Man vs Food on the Spring Bank Holiday and continues to offer variety with various food and drink events. The quiz is currently on its summer hiatus until the autumn. Ales spotted were *Greene King IPA* and the house ale *Wheatsheaf Ale* (rebadged *Hardy & Hanson Bitter*).

CROWELL

The refurbishment at the **Shepherd's Crook** was completed in March and landlady Gosia celebrated her second year at the helm on 19th May with a hog roast on the green out front. Now the winter is over, the opening hours are relaxing and the pub will be open all day every day - come the summer, food will be available all day too. The plan is to have a BBQ every second weekend during the summer months and have a Fathers' Days special of a pot of Polish sausages and a pint for all Fathers and live reggae music on 23rd June. *Sharp's Doom Bar*, *Rebellion IPA* and *Timothy Taylor Landlord* were the three ales

available on a recent drop-in, with a fourth clip (*Rebellion Impressionist*) reversed.

CUDDINGTON

When Stuart Thurston of the **Cross Keys** in Great Missenden was asked to take on the **Crown for Fullers** it was always on the basis to get the pub back to its former glory days of a village local serving good food and drinks for the village and surrounding area. Also in conjunction with *Fullers* to evaluate the business and come up with the best options to keep this the village local successful and part of the community.

After nearly a year he has come to the decision the pub needs a couple to become part of the village living in the local community which he is sure Mike and Laura Collumbell are the perfect fit. So it is the best decision for his company to pass the **Crown** to Mike and Laura from the end of June. Thanks go to Andy for the fabulous job he has done in launching the **Crown** after years where the pub had seen many ups and downs. It is also hoped the village welcomes Mike and Laura into the village and will continue to support them and the village local for many years to come.

DOWNLEY

The **Le De Spencers Arms** will be holding their annual Beer and Cheese festival from Friday 29th of June to Sunday 1st of July.

EMMINGTON

A Saturday lunchtime visit to the **Inn at Emmington** found three locAles in the form of *Rebellion IPA*, *Chiltern Beechwood Bitter* and seasonal *Vale St George's V' Ale* with *Animal Ostrich* waiting in the wings, racked and ready to roll. Landlord David sources locAles only (*Loose Cannon* beers in particular are popular here) and the *Rebellion IPA* remains on constantly as the session bitter. The annual Sydenham Fayre takes place this year on Saturday 2nd June with one of the highlights being the traditional Tug o' War contest between the **Inn** and neighbours the **Crown**, with the **Inn** hoping to retain the trophy they won back last year. Continuing the 'sporting' theme, the **Inn** also now has an Aunt Sally team and will be competing in the Friday night Oxfordshire Aunt Sally League after a few years' absence - they also happen to be in the same league as the **Crown**!

FRIETH

A visit to the recently reopened **Yew Tree** saw four locAles in the form of *Chiltern Beechwood Bitter*, *Loddon Hoppit*, *Rebellion IPA* and *Roasted Nuts* on offer.

GREAT KIMBLE

Grovers Cider, a local craft cider maker who grow, pick, crush, press, ferment and bottle on their farm, are still selling last year's bumper crop,

HADDENHAM

This year's **Haddenham Summerfest** will take place on 7th July at the usual venue of Haddenham Junior School, HP17 8DS.

Summerfest originally started as a beer festival and, although it's morphed into





probably the biggest one-day festival in the country, the main emphasis is still on the Beer Bar which will again be full of superb Real Ales from near and far. Last year over 130 casks were emptied by thirsty drinkers enjoying some of the best ales Britain has to offer and at least the same number will be on offer again.

For those who prefer fermented apples they will also have a beautiful selection of around 30 real ciders from sweet to dry and everything in between.

There will also be a great selection of Wines, Gins, Lagers and Pimms plus soft drinks and some amazing food stalls for when you get the nibbles.



As those who have been before know, Summerfest is a Family Friendly Festival and your children can be entertained with

Bouncy Castles and Face Painting while you enjoy music from some of the best local bands and musicians. Summerfest runs from midday to 8pm and tickets, which include a Festival glass, are on sale now at local outlets and at www.haddenham-beer-festival.co.uk where discounts are available for early purchases. Under 18's have free admission.

Please remember this is an open air festival so come dressed for the weather. Seating is limited but you are welcome to bring your own folding chair. Only assistance dogs are permitted. There is easy access to the grounds and the 280 Aylesbury-Oxford bus stops at the entrance.

HENTON

Plenty of diners in the restaurant at the **Peacock** on a rainy Saturday lunchtime visit. **Sharp's Doom Bar** and **Tring Side Pocket** for a Toad the two ales on, with a third stump unclipped.

HIGH WYCOMBE

Pictures of the **Beaconsfield Arms** feature both on our cover and above. The sad news is that despite efforts from locals, the pub is now closed

KINGSTON BLOUNT

The team at the nearby **Shepherd's**

Crook have purchased the **Cherry Tree**. The former **Brakspear** pub closed a couple of years ago and planning permission has been sought to convert it into a B&B, with the possibility of part of it functioning as a café. One hopes it will continue to serve real ale like similar ventures at the **Sun** at Wheatley and the **Red Lion** at Bradenham.

LACEY GREEN

It's good to see the **Pink and Lily** continuing to support local breweries. On a recent visit **Chiltern Cobblestones** (3.5%), **Malt Summer Daze** (4.0%) and **Haresfoot Dragon's Bane** (4.5%) were all available and in good nick and very welcoming too after a pleasant walk on a sunny day along the ridge with great views from the bus stop by the windmill, particularly if one also calls in to the **Whip** along the way (both ways!).

LOUDWATER

The 12th Fag 'n Firkin Beer Festival will be held at the **Derehams Inn** from Friday 6th to Sunday 8th of July. There will be 20 real ales and six ciders plus plenty of food and entertainment.

MARLOW

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**.

STONE

The second **Stone Village Sausage and Beer Festival** will take place on Saturday 4th of August at the Recreation Ground on Oxford Road.

SYDENHAM

The **Crown Inn** featured **Rebellion's IPA** and **Zebedee** as well as **Loddon's N.O.T.U.S** on the three stumps recently and the ales remain firmly local. At this village pub which is going from strength to strength under Will and Pippa. The Sydenham Village Fayre and Beer Fest is fast approaching on Saturday 2nd June and the **Crown** will be in the thick of it, providing a pop-up bar on the village green as well as hosting a Beer Fest back at the pub's

garden, with 12-plus local ales and ciders. The Fayre closes at 4pm, but the Beer Fest will continue until late.

THAME

The **Birdcage** is still giving 10% discount for **CAMRA** members, which was just as well as the **Timothy Taylor Landlord** was £4.30 for a pint before discount. The only other ale on was **Sharps Doom Bar** at £3.80. They run a cask ale club on weekdays up to 5pm when all ales are £2.75 a pint.

Meanwhile, at the **Cross Keys** a miracle has happened. Greeting customers was **Mr Splodge Mild - R.I.P.** The R.I.P. being because poor Mr Splodge passed onto the big cattery in the sky last year. This is, hopefully, the first of many different brews being produced following the appointment of Nick the brewer (who we featured in our last issue).

At the **Falcon**, Paula and Chris have been running the place for an incredible twelve years. There was a bit of a shock on the visit, the beer had gone up 25p a pint to £3.20 for any of the **Hooky** beers, which were **Old Hooky**, **Hooky Gold** and one of their special brews, **Sundial Golden**. With all the new houses being built at the East end of town, the **Falcon** is the nearest pub for many more people.

The **Rising Sun** continues to sell **Wychwood Hobgoblin Gold** as well as **Brakspear Bitter** and one guest ale also from **Brakspear**.

The **Six Bells** has **London Pride** at £4.25, with **Oliver's Island**, **Southern Star** and, unusually, **Adnams Ghost Ship**.

On Friday 13th of July between 7pm

and 11pm and on Saturday 14th July between noon and 11pm, there is the **Thame Town Music Festival** in the town centre at various existing venues in Thame. There will be roughly 58 acts at nine venues and a stage in the High Street. The best bits are that some events are in pubs and most events are FREE. What could be better: free entertainment and beer. For further details contact thametownfestival.org.

TOWERSEY

Rebellion IPA and **Fuller's London Pride** were the two ales available on at the **Three Horseshoes** during a recent visit there.

WATLINGTON

Just outside our branch area, the **Carriers Arms** is holding a charity 'Guess the Beer' competition on the evening of Friday 1st June. An unnamed beer will be on tap at £2 per pint with an additional 50p for those wishing to guess what it is. All profits from the event will go to support the Sobell House Cancer Charity in Oxford. A small prize will be given to the person guessing the beer correctly.

WENDOVER

Work has commenced on the demolition of the **End of the World** at World's End, Wendover at the end of May. In a few days time it will be no more! We can only assume that, at last, the owner has permission to build something on the site after many years of submitting planning applications for houses. It had got into a very poor state since its closure in 2002.

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-day.

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ESCAPE FROM THE AGM

It was a scene of hard-worn conflict. Yes, this was the Saturday morning session at the **CAMRA** AGM and Conference, held in April at Warwick University. The National Executive, arrayed on the stage, endured a protracted campaign of insurgency from the floor, a rearguard action waged against the forces of Revitalisation.

As was reported even on the BBC News, in this conflict the NE had the benefit of overwhelming numbers. But the partisans in the hall fought a battle of attrition. The conflict became bogged down in a no man's land – the overthrow of the company articles was almost but not quite achieved.

By lunchtime we troops on the margins of the battlefield were feeling weary. We decided to make our great escape from the AGM. We engaged in manoeuvres that enabled us to slip out of the conference hall and then to commandeer the upper deck of the number 12 bus in our mission to finally break out and win the ultimate prize – beer!

Consulting our maps, we realised the nearest escape route was into the city of Coventry rather than Warwick – it perhaps has the distinction of being the only university that's named after a place that it isn't located in?

Before the Second World War, the centre of Coventry, as history buffs will know, was chock-full of ancient structures that were then subject to a sudden and brutal assault from alien, modern machinery – 'just like the goings on at the AGM,' some members were rumoured to have complained.

Maybe Coventry city centre's architecture is like **CAMRA** in the future, with a majority of the modern interspersed with a few, almost random, relics of the past?



Donkey Box, Town Wall Tavern

Box – a snug at the front of the pub that's apparently only large enough to accommodate a donkey. Despite sipping pints of **Timothy Taylor's Cook Lane** and **Theakston's Old Peculiar** I still couldn't work out how to get into the Donkey Box – maybe it's one of those questions you shouldn't ask?

The **Golden Cross** is a stunning old pub – of the magnificent half-timbered sort you'd expect to see twenty miles down the road in Shakespeare's Stratford-Upon-Avon. And it's nearly as old as the Bard too. The building dates from 1583. A pint of **Stout Coffin** from **Church End** (a stablemate of their *Gravediggers' Ale*) slipped down rather well.

The **Golden Cross** is close to the city's two Anglican cathedrals. Nearest is the famous shell of old St. Michael's cathedral – left symbolically bombed-out and roofless – with its modern replacement built next door. These two contrasting buildings sum up Coventry's response to the ravages of war – not to rebuild the past but to embrace modernity.

Our next few pubs typified postwar Coventry. **Drapers** is a modern café-bar that serves ale to a younger clientele. The **Phoenix** is an edge-of-city-centre boozier that serves some interesting real ale (**Cameron's Whakanui** in



The Phoenix

my case). The **Castle Grounds** is a busy, multi-level pub that begged one question over my **Wye Valley HPA** – 'If these are the grounds then where's the bl**dy castle, then?'

By some phenomenally bad planning we next headed off back to the side of the city where we'd started – and what's closest in Coventry to an old town.

Spon Street has Coventry's biggest concentration of old half-timbered buildings, some relocated after the war from elsewhere in the city. None is finer than the amazing **Old Windmill**. And what else can improve a stunning, traditional pub more than the beer festival we happened to discover there?

The **Old Windmill** is a marvellously wonky old building – its construction obviously predated the spirit level. A corridor runs from front to back – with rooms opening off on either side. The place was heaving with tradition-loving **CAMRA** members and it was standing room only out the front to enjoy a stunning **Great Heck Black Jesus**, washed down with **Thornbridge's Jessamine**.

Apart from the **CAMRA** AGM, another great battle happened on that Saturday – the semi-final clash of Manchester United and some team from North London. We decamped to the **Gatehouse**, a pub with multiple television screens showing sport. Following Manchester United's great victory, the editor of **Swan Supping** must have been happy to toast José Mourinho and players with a pint of **Church End's Mike's Meteor**. Or maybe he wished he was back at the AGM?

Mike Clarke



Town Wall Tavern



The Old Windmill

BEST CIDER AND PERRY



Following more than a year of local tasting panels and regional heats, *Harry's Scrummage* has been named the best cider in the country and *Nemphett Piglet's Choice* has won best perry at CAMRA's prestigious *National Cider and Perry Championships*,

which took place at the *Reading Beer and Cider Festival* in May.

Scrummage impressed judges with 'a sharp but easy drinking cider that stretches to a long lingering and pleasant aftertaste', while *Piglet's Choice* took the crown for 'a well-balanced perry with a clean and fruity taste.'

Each cider and perry in the competition is judged on its individual taste, aroma, flavour, after-taste and overall appeal. The top awards were selected by a specially chosen panel of both experienced and novice judges.

Speaking after the win, Harry Fry of *Harry's Cider* said: 'I'm overwhelmed and really excited about this accolade. It's a huge achievement for the whole of the Harry's team. "I hope everyone enjoys the cider as much as we do.'

Keith Balch of *Nemphett Cider Company* added: 'It's fantastic news and just shows what great products you can make from 100-year-old orchards.'

As CAMRA celebrates 30 years of campaigning for real cider, cider-lovers continue to rejoice following a vote by its members at the recent Members weekend and AGM in Coventry, to secure the long-term future of real cider and perry. by making these products firmly part of our campaign, alongside quality real ale.

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To start, it's worth tackling a few misconceptions. Don't confuse Chile with chilli. The cuisine is not at all spicy, and the weather in a large part of the country isn't hot either. Chile is a long and narrow country, 2,600 miles from north to south, and the southernmost third of the country gets distinctly cooler as you go south. In many ways, Chile is probably closer to western Europe than any other Latin American country. Unfortunately, it's not a bargain for British visitors, although the cost of eating out is reasonable.

Chile's craft beer scene has grown up in less than ten years. Chile never had a lot of small brewpubs with a 'tricolore' range of beers - gold, red and black - as is often found in South America. New breweries have drawn on a strong German heritage for a step up to embracing the full Monty of modern craft brewing. They have moved away from industrial lager via proper *Reinheitsgebot*-compliant beers, aided by the German heritage and a respect for this heritage in its food and drink. The two bigger breweries with German heritage have expanded their range from German-style lagers to ales and beyond. The market has embraced craft beers with enthusiasm - even small restaurants will have some in their fridge. But it's quite a new concept - IPA is often pronounced 'eepe'!

The Copa Cervezas de América ('American Beer Cup') began in Chile's capital Santiago in 2011. The Copa is modelled on the annual Great American Beer Festival in Denver, Colorado. A brewers' conference and a brewing supplies Expo also feature at this annual event. *Quercus*, an American strong ale by *Granizo* (who are based outside Santiago) was a winner in 2017, the brewery receiving two golds, a silver and a bronze. The rapid growth of the Copa is remarkable, considering that Chile is a relatively young beer nation, and where a single brewery, the *Heineken* subsidiary *Compania Cervecerias Unidas* (whose *Cristal* brand is widespread), controls virtually the entire beer market.

Chile produces its own malt and even exports it, but speciality malts for the modern range of craft beers usually have to be imported. Many of the new microbreweries use imported ingredients and it was not surprising to find that Weyermann, the Bamberg maltsters are a sponsor of Copa. Hop farming is not so advanced, the difficulty being to find suitable microclimates, but a



Kunstmann, Valdivia

start has been made in Patagonia. As a result, craft beers are not cheap.

Jane and I began our tour of Chile in the port of Valparaíso and were pleased to find the fridge in our hotel room stocked with beers from *Altamira*, a local micro. Valparaíso is a UNESCO World Heritage site and features steep residential streets rising above a magnificent harbour. The colourful streets are renowned for their 'street art' with every building in the older quarters liberally covered, ranging from works of art to artless graffiti! It's often difficult to find your whereabouts because of this love of decoration. *Altamira's* brewpub is centrally situated and has a fascinating mini-museum of Chilean brewing. Nearby is the legendary *Bar Ingles*, founded by English settlers in the 1920s and full of period atmosphere even if English is not spoken much these days. They did find me a bottle of *Altamira* beer. *El Irlandes* is not an Irish pub as such but a very high-quality craft beer bar with a superb selection of Chilean beers, and a good choice of European beers. The *Cervecería del Puerto* brewery is nearby - no tap but take outs. Most of Chile's new breweries are pretty small and many have no tap.

Valdivia is 462 miles south of Santiago and has been described as Chile's capital of beer - it now has at least fifteen breweries. A riverside city of some 147,000 inhabitants, its past fame is that on May 22, 1960, when Chile suffered the most powerful earthquake ever recorded, rating 9.5 on the Richter scale, Valdivia was the most affected city. The earthquake also generated devastating tsunamis. The city was 60% destroyed, but some of the old timber-built houses of the 'colonial' era survived whilst 20th century concrete structures collapsed.

The earthquake brought Valdivia's important brewing history to an end. A brewery had been founded in Isla Teja, Valdivia, in 1851 by Carlos (Karl) Anwandter, (1801-1899) a pharmacist, a year after his arrival in Valdivia aboard the *Herrmann*, leading the first group of German immigrants who began arriving in the country in response to the 'selective immigration policy' developed by the Chilean diplomat Vicente Pérez Rosales. Over 30,000 skilled Germans, many from the state of Hesse, arrived via the port of Valdivia to settle in the Lakes district, in particular the towns around Lake Llanquihue.



The brewery at Bundo, Valdivia



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LI CHILLY?

At this time there were only two significant breweries in the country one of which was founded in Valparaíso by an Irishman, Andrew (Andrés) Blest, in 1825. At that time, most of the beer consumed in the country was imported. **Anwandter's** brewery rapidly developed to supply the German settlers. In 1894 production reached 120,000 hectolitres a year, of which 60% was sold in the national markets; a good percentage of the rest was exported.

In 1912 a major fire destroyed a significant part of the brewery's facilities, and closed it for a long time. It lost ground in the competitive beer market of Chile and in 1916, the Anwandter family decided to sell a majority shareholding to the powerful **Compañía Cervecerías Unidas**, as now the main player in the Chilean market.

After the rebuilt brewery was totally destroyed in the great Valdivia earthquake, the derelict buildings were acquired in 1967 by the Austral University of Chile. The home of Carlos Anwandter - built by him in 1861 - was made a National Monument in 1981, and today houses the Historical and Anthropological Museum. The Contemporary Art museum nearby is housed in an old brewery building.

In 1991 the Kunstmann family, themselves descendants of 19th century German settlers, revived the brewing tradition in Valdivia, starting by brewing at home for friends and family. In 1997 they established their brewery and tap a few miles down the road from the old **Anwandter** site. Not only do they make the traditional lager beers of Germany, but they have ventured into other styles including their highly successful **Torobayo pale ale**, and blueberry and honey ales. There is an annual **Bierfest** with a distinct German flavour, and the company is well-known for its charitable works and for its support for local craft brewers. Hop growing has commenced at the brewery and a green hop ale has been produced.

On the Isla Teja, near the site of the old **Anwandter** brewery is the university and a residential neighbourhood with lush vegetation. This is a reminder of the surrounding Valdivian rain forest, a temperate rain forest similar to those found in New Zealand. It is the city's other claim to fame and owes its presence to you've guessed it - rain, which is heavy and persistent in the winter months. Nestling in these quiet streets are the **Growler** and **Bundor** breweries, both serving lively pubs which are both recommended for their beer selection. The **Bunker** brewpub is also nearby and further out of town past **Kunstmann** on the road to the coastal town of Niebla are **Valdor** and **El Duende**. There are several local beer shops with a good selection of local bottled beers, mostly unfiltered and unpasteurised.



Striking frontage at Bundor!

In Patagonia, over 900 miles south of Valdivia in Punta Arenas, **Austral** is the southernmost brewery in the world, and still retains that title despite the emergence of other breweries in the town in recent years. The brewery was founded in 1896 by a German, Jose Fischer, who had initially settled in Valdivia, at a time Patagonia was experiencing prosperity from a growing sheep farming industry. Its **Calafate ale** is made with a local variety of barberry. Other breweries include the **Hernando de Magallanes** brewery founded in 2010, named after the 15th century explorer, and already gaining a reputation. The straits of Magellan flow past this colourful town. 200 miles to the north is one of Chile's famous national parks, Torres del Paine, where we found a healthy selection of **Austral** and **Magallanes** beers in our hotel bar. Another hotel in the park even has its own microbrewery.

Our last few days in Chile were spent in the capital, Santiago, a city nearly as big as London; almost half of Chile's population lives here. So only a limited overview was possible. The Bellavista area is good for craft beer bars - places



Loom, Santiago

such as **Loom**, a spartan bar with seven interesting taps but rather loud and insistent music. Loom also brews but on a small scale. **Krossbar** is a must venue; besides six taps for **Kross** beers, there are experimental beers from **Kross**, other Chilean and USA beers and many European beers, mainly from Belgium. A large comfortable venue with air-conditioned interior, better than average food and souvenirs. The **Kunstmann Kneipe**, which the **Valdivia** brewery recently opened, is also nearby.

If you get an opportunity to visit this fascinating country, don't miss it. But take care to check the climate you are likely to encounter in the parts of the country you want to visit. It could be

chilly ... or chilli!

John Conen



The author in Krossbar

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BAMBERG: AN ADVENTURE IN BREWING, MALT, SMOKE AND BEER!



Bamberg's impressive Town Hall

The air was heavy with the aroma of gently roasting malt as we disembarked from our train. Standing on the platform we were taken with the smell of the Weyermann maltings, its majestic brick façade towering over the beautiful Bavarian town of Bamberg.

We had travelled here to take part in a collaboration brew at the brewery attached to the 140-year-old malting company. Weyermann make some highly specialist malts, many of which we use in our *XT* and *Animal* beers. They have an amazing no-expense-spared, high-tech brewery to test their malts and experiment with a wide variety of beer styles, and we had been

invited here to play on it.

Bamberg must be one of the world's top places for beer and it is well-known for the local smoked Rauchbiers. As with much of Germany the locals are very loyal to their local breweries and the styles particular to the region. Generally I will always search out the local beers in my travels, but to only see local beer and no national or multinational brews at all was a revelation. The Germans see beer as a highly valued part of their culture; it's not just a 'drink' and somehow inferior to wine. The brewing and serving of beer here is a respected career choice.

The old town of Bamberg is beautifully preserved, and it's a pleasure to wander around its old timbered houses, grand churches and cobbled streets. The locals get about on bikes on the many cycle paths and somehow they manage to ride normal looking machines without the need for lycra or



Weyermann Brewery

carbon fibre. Most importantly however, Bamberg is blessed with nine breweries, all of which are within the old town environs. The breweries all have their own traditional bars attached, plus there are numerous pubs to tempt you, it's actually quite hard to find a bad one. Here is a short-list of some of our favourite breweries and bars:

Spezial - A traditional brewery which still smokes its own malts for the house speciality *Rauchbier*. We stayed here during our time in Bamberg, and it is well worth seeking out these characterful places – take a look on www.braugasthofe.de for similar brewery guest houses across Germany.

Zum Sternla – Thanks to our hosts Weyermann, whom are almost the Bamberg royal family, we had the honour of sitting at the 'top table'; this is a bit of tradition where the landlord has his own reserved table and holds his beery court. It's a great way to meet a wide variety of the locals and get to understand the traditions and enjoy the respect that the Germans have for their beer and the well-trained staff that serve it with such reverence. We sampled some very fine Weissbier (wheat beer) here, which has a deep, rich flavour missing in many more commercial versions.

Keesmann – Famous for its *Herren-Pils* and *Helles*, but for me it was most memorable



Enjoying the beer at the Sternla bar

for the huge food portions which actually defeated my companion who is not normally the loser in man vs. food. On investigating the extensive brewery behind the bar I spotted a huge machine which at first I could not identify, after enquiring I learned it was for the cleaning of beer bottles. In Germany the regional breweries use standardised bottles and they regularly collect and refill them. This was eye opening and a radically different way of thinking to our own throw-away culture.

Mahr's Bräu – Opposite **Keesmann**, we really enjoyed the Biergarten here and, after the night closed in, the convivial conversation on long benches in the dark wood-panelled bar inside. The shared tables in the bars are very much part of the drinking culture; everyone sits together and if you arouse their interest, you will inevitably be drawn into the conversation of your neighbours. This bar also introduced us to the delights of 'ungespundet' which literally means 'unbunded'. It's a process for maturing beers with open vented vessels leading to much less gassy beer. The age-old *Reinheitsgebot* or purity law has far-reaching influence over the beers here, interestingly it also forbids the use of extraneous gas in



External view of Weyermann Brewery



Weyermann Brewer

the beer, only gas from the fermentation can be in the beer. So there is a little puzzler for you real-ale purists, is German keg-beer real ale?

Klosterbräu – Attractive riverside brewery here for over 450 years. The oldest in Bamberg.

Schlenkerla – Probably the most famous Rauchbier: *Aecht Schlenkerla*. The extensive bar with several panelled rooms and covered yards serves only one beer: it is black and it is very smoky. Served directly from wooden casks



Gareth and Carina at Weyermann Brewery

behind the bar, it's a very special beer and special bar that encapsulates Bamberg and its deep beer traditions. If heaven forbid you want a different beer, you can buy the bottled helles, and yes that is smoky too!

I would definitely suggest a beer adventure in Bamberg with its great beers and great bars plus the added bonus that it's actually a very attractive town. Bamberg is certainly up there in the top ten beer cities of the world.

Russell Taylor – XT Brewing Co



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LOCAL BREWERY NEWS

ABC Brewery

ABC are continuing to produce interesting single batch limited edition beers in cask with the summers offering using ingredients from across the globe. The beers you can enjoy over this summer will be:

Silver Fern (3.7% NZ Pale Ale). The Silver fern is one of the most iconic symbols of New Zealand. *Silver Fern* is a blonde coloured ale that showcases the best of NZ hops bursting with juicy tropical fruit flavours.

Blood Moon (4.5% American Red Ale). The result of a lunar eclipse as the sun earth and moon align. Everything aligns perfectly in this American Red Ale with caramel and biscuit malt flavours complementing the citrus and resinous flavours of classic American hops.

Wolf (3.7% Golden Ale). *Wolf* is a straw-coloured pale ale that showcases one of the most exciting and recent Slovenian hops on the market, Styrian Wolf. Expect intense flavours of citrus and berries and a smooth bitterness.

Uncertainty (4.8% Session IPA). Heisenberg's uncertainty principle is a cornerstone of quantum physics. This deep golden IPA is bursting with American hop flavours of citrus fruits and pine.

Aylesbury has released its first craft keg beer: *No.1*. An amber, hazy, unfiltered and unfiltered West Coast IPA full of deep resinous pine flavours and heady tropical fruit aromas. Available regularly at the **Hop Pole**, Aylesbury.



Chiltern Brewery

Chiltern Brewery have been very busy recently, particularly with the launch of their brand new seasonal beer - *Session IPA*. Single-hopped with an exciting new UK hop, Olicana, the beer has a wonderful golden colour with a delicious mango flavour.

They have also been busy bolstering their range of 'beer foods' with the

return of the Original Mash Tun Marmalade, a Sevilla orange marmalade that uses malted barley from the brewhouse to add a well-balanced robustness. We've heard that it's delicious with the brewery's beer bread!



Swan Supping readers may recall that in our last issue, **Chiltern Brewery** told us about their charity beer, *Pride of Bucks & Berks*, which was brewed to raise funds for young Sophie Edes who needs specialist equipment to help her communicate with the world. We are delighted to share that the brewery managed to raise an incredible £500 in supporting Sophie's family to achieve their target. You can keep up to date with their fundraising on their JustGiving Page: www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/sophieedes.

Chiltern Gold, which will be available in both July and August, is a refreshing golden ale with subtle citrus notes that make it perfect for enjoying on long, summer's days.

For Father's Day in June, the brewery are releasing their famous Father's Day Flagons, filled with a traditional ruby ale that makes the perfect gift.. Whether it be to a father or for yourself!



Fishers Brewery

Fresh from the hop development program up at Charles Faram's hop farms in Worcester, **Fishers** have a selection of some of their favourites, all sitting in the same 5.4% Pale Ale base beer and named after the hop variety used, *Cascade*, *Jester*, and *Olicana*.

Whichever emerges as the favourite, will be brought into their core beer range and served permanently on cask and keg (perhaps with an extra dry-hop for good measure).

Fishers Brewery's monthly event night is NOT on June 1st which is their scheduled date, but the following Friday (June 8th). Service returns to normal on July 6th.

Rebellion Brewery

The monthly beers for June and July are:



Saint (4.2% Dark & Malty). *Saint* is a dark mahogany bitter with a distinct malty character. A blend of two British hop varieties add notes of spice, molasses and blackcurrant which beautifully complement the malt, creating a smooth and well-balanced classic British bitter.

Unifier (4.2% Tawny and hoppy).



Their ever-popular summer ale, *Blonde*, will also be coming back into season in June.

Rebellion have not brewed a witbeer for many years but 2018 is the year of its comeback. White is their 5% summer seasonal bottled beer. It's a Belgian style Witbier, with 35% wheat malt and special yeast creating the characteristic spicy, clove and banana aroma, and fine white foam. Additions of lemon and orange peel with Lemondrop hops gives a distinctive citrus character.

They've been working on an area of the lower yard, creating a base onto which will stand two 75-barrel tanks. These tanks will be mostly used for their lager and will free up tank space giving them more flexibility. All going to plan, the tanks will be installed in July.

Tring Brewery

Tring's seasonal beer for June is *Colossus* (4.2%). Citra, Citra and then more Citra. Added throughout the boil and then dry hopped post fermentation, this amber ale showcases the intense tropical, fruit and grapefruit flavours of one of the world's favourite hop varieties.

In July the beer is *Wrens* (4.1%). An extra pale malt provides the ideal clean canvas for the spectacular US hitters Mosaic, Citra and Simcoe hops. Expect pungent tropical,



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MORE LOCAL BREWERY NEWS

mango and citrus flavours.

The Seasonal Special for June to August is *Fanny Ebbs Summer Ale* (3.9%). They're not sure if Fanny Ebbs was blonde but this beer is. It is also amazingly crisp with very low bitterness and late citrus aroma from a blend of Saaz and Cascade hop varieties.



Vale Brewery

April saw the grand opening of the long awaited new tap room and shop at **Vale**. This was celebrated with a visit from groups of regulars to the **Vale** pubs for a tour of the brewery and, of course, a sampling session of a range of **Vale** ales.

The tap room is now open and serving on Fridays 12:00 - 18:00 and Saturdays from 12:00 -17:00. The shop opening hours are from 9:00 -17:00 weekdays (18:00 Friday) and 9:30 - 17:00 on Saturdays.

The brewery will be running regular brewery tours again from this summer. The final details are yet to be finalised at time of writing so check out the **Vale** website for more information.

To celebrate the opening of the new tap room and new look shop, **Vale** will be hosting an Open Day on Saturday 28th July. The event will include ten different real ales and two craft keg beers. Along with food and music. Free parking will be available on-site. Further details of the event to be released shortly, and will be updated on the **Vale** website www.valebrewery.co.uk

Vale will continue to produce a selection of new and exciting specials throughout the summer including:



Red Card (4.0%) a ruby red ale with subtle spicy hop flavours celebrating the fest of sport happening over the summer, not any one particular event.

Under the Boat (4.5% Deep golden IPA). Get your jaws around this deep golden smart big beer, crammed with juicy citrus monster hops.

Vale are also producing craft keg beer. The first two offerings are *Kölner Dom* a pale golden Kölsch-style ale, beautifully crisp and refreshing with delicate floral hop aromas from both German and American hops. The second is a big bold west coast American IPA *Big Sur*. A deep golden beer brewed with finest Maris Otter Malt and Crystal malts to provide a solid malt backbone for massive additions of American hops giving lashings of resinous and citrus fruit flavours.

XT Brewery

XT Brewery will be back at the **Great British Beer Festival** this year with their own brewery bar. The bar will be an opportunity to showcase the core range of **XT** and **Animal** beers plus a number of special one-off beers brewed just for the event. Having seen the success of the foreign bars at last year's show, **XT** are keen to prove that British brewers can easily match the competition from overseas and produce something for the visitors to get excited and talk about.

The hugely popular *HopCat*, which is now one of the best selling beers from **XT** in just a few months, will have to have a name change. Following a long legal battle with a bar company in Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA who claim worldwide ownership of the name, **XT** will now have to stop calling their beer *HopCat* and will instead be calling the 3.9% hyper hoppy beer .. *HopKitty*. The beer will stay exactly the same and hopefully the new name will prove just as popular.

To mark the name change **XT** will also brew two stronger limited edition versions, the street fighting alley cat: *Bad Kitty* at 5.9% and the utterly feral: *Evil Kitty* .. which will be as strong as they can get it!



After a very successful collaboration at the German brewery of **Weyermann** in April (see the full article on page 12), the team are now looking to the other side of the world and will work with a New Zealand brewery: **Fortune Favours** from Wellington.

The head brewer from **XT** organised a collaboration brew whilst over there earlier this year. The two brewers despite being poles apart will make the same beer on the same day and will communicate with live video feeds. Look out for the 4.8% beer called *Oyster Catcher* later this year.

Another upcoming collaboration will see the **XT** brew team working with a speciality malting company. The latest project will see the use of trendy new Red-X Malt paired with another leading edge new development – Cryo Hops. Like a crazy Heston Blumenthal science fiction recipe: Cryogenic separation process preserves all the flavour components by freezing the hop cones with liquid nitrogen. The trial beer will be divided with one version using more traditional dry hopping and the second batch using the new Cryo-Hops. This new world beer will be available around July time.

Crazy science has been the theme recently... **XT** have been working with a modern day mad professor of yeast to see if they can separate their very own wild yeast strain from the air in the brewery. If the professor can work his magic then the trials will begin using the yeast strains to brew a number of mini batch brews to test those wild yeasts.



The latest **Animal** beers from Notley Farm are:

Giraffe (Amber 4.6%). With homage to the giraffe's colours this amber beer is the satisfying pairing of grapefruit and chocolate. Pale Chocolate and Wheat malt collide with the high alpha US and UK hops; Chinook, Summit Cascade and Admiral giving it the citrus and Grapefruit kick.



Wolf (Pale Ale 4.6%). Brewed with the new Styrian Wolf Hop developed by the Slovenian Institute for Hop Research and Brewing and used for the first time at **XT**. Expect floral and fruity notes with hints of violet. Paired with European malts, Vienna and Munich, for a classic biscuity base, this European Wolf has bark and bite.



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SOUNDING (OFF) BOARD

PIPED MUSIC IN PUBS



'Sounding (off) Board' is designed to encourage readers to respond with their thoughts and opinions on issues concerning pubs and real ale. Please send your comments to editor@swansupping.org.uk.

Pubs listed in the **CAMRA Good Beer Guide (GBG)** are given short descriptions supplemented by a number of different symbols standing for various features common to many of them. This saves space in the 'Good Book' and makes for quick reference. The symbol 'Q' stands for 'Quiet pub: free from piped music, jukeboxes, electronic games and TVs (at least one room)'. The 2018 edition has entries for over 4,500 of the UK's best pubs, 2,049 of which (counted whilst not imbibing...) sport the 'Q' symbol.

There are undoubtedly arguments for and against background music in pubs. I usually prefer pubs which are free from such intrusion (or 'jangle noise' as a good friend of mine calls it) and when visiting places armed with my **GBG** I actively seek out 'Q' pubs first. As almost half of the pubs listed have the 'Q' symbol it is usually not too difficult to find one. I find piped music irritating, unnecessary and intrusive. To me it inhibits conversation or reading whether it is loud or, I admit this may sound somewhat perverse, even when it is only just about audible. But I do suffer from particular hearing difficulties despite wearing hearing-aids. Sometimes, however, where a pub has a good range of real ale kept immaculately the question of piped music becomes a lesser consideration especially if it is not too loud.

The very fact that getting on for 50% of the pubs listed do have this symbol must surely be an indication that not having piped music is regarded by both their licensees and customers as an important attribute of the pub. Conversely of course more than half of the pubs listed do not have this symbol. The licensees of pubs where piped background and/or live music are played, or where TVs and radios are installed, usually have to pay for both a Phonographic Performance Ltd (PPL) and Performing Rights Society (PRS) licence. The combined cost of these for a pub or club varies according to the audible area in the venue and currently is in the range £138.31 (up to 400 m²) to £345.79 (951-1000 m² – pro rata above that) + VAT per annum (figures from the PPL/PRS website).

That does not seem excessive but licensees face huge financial pressures in the running of their businesses so surely many must accept the annual licence fee as a necessary cost in creating the atmosphere in the pub which they feel is favoured by the majority of their customers. A well-respected and successful

licensee in one of the **GBG**-listed pubs in Aylesbury, which serves consistently top quality real ale through nine handpumps and where piped music is played, explained to me that in his long experience where no music is played then, counter-intuitively, people begin to lower their voices or even stop talking, perhaps through self-consciousness. The licensee went on to demonstrate how he actively monitors the volume of the music adjusting it frequently so that it can always just be heard above the prevailing conversation level; his focus is on providing a congenial atmosphere in his pub as he sees it.

My experience of another **GBG**-listed pub in Aylesbury which does not play piped music is just the opposite in that conversation is certainly not inhibited; nor is it usually loud and intrusive. Some people occasionally offer comments to add to a conversation at a nearby table (!) normally prompting a friendly response thus adding to the pub's welcoming, community atmosphere.

Do please e-mail our editor with your views on piped music in pubs.

Giles du Boulay

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*Price of single membership when paying by Direct Debit. *Calls from landlines charged at local rates, cost may vary from mobile phones. **New Direct Debit members will receive a 12 month supply of vouchers in their first 15 months of membership.

Branch Diary

Everybody welcome to all socials and meetings!

June

Monday 4th INFORMAL MEETING

7.30pm The Wheel, Naphill.

Sunday 10th SUNDAY SOCIAL

12 Noon Garibaldi, Bourne End.

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 £33 per person and more details appear on page 4.

July

Monday 2nd BRANCH FORMAL MEETING

7.30pm The Whip, Lacey Green

Friday 6th BEER FESTIVAL

7.30pm Derehams Inn, Loudwater.

Saturday 7th HADDENHAM SUMMER FESTIVAL

12 Noon Haddenham Summerfest, Haddenham Junior School, HP17 8DS.

The 280 bus from Aylesbury to Oxford stops right outside the venue. Full details on the festival appear in our Local News section on page 6.

Saturday 21st RUGBY TRIP

Starts 12 Noon at the Seven Stars, 40 Albert Street, CV21 2SH.

By popular demand, another trip to the pubs of Rugby.

Please check our website (or contact the editor) for a map and the proposed route, although, from experience, most of it will change on the day!

August

Saturday 4th STONE VILLAGE SAUSAGE AND BEER FESTIVAL

1.00pm Stone Recreation Ground, Oxford Road

Thursday 9th GREAT BRITISH BEER FESTIVAL SOCIAL

Olympia, London. Come and join the branch as we enjoy the festival. As it is so large and so easy to miss people, in the crowds, we suggest meeting up at the XT Brewery stand, on the hour, every hour, from 7.00pm to 10.00pm.

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.

As part of the celebrations marking 25 years will be special beer brewed especially for the festival making the event even more unmissable!

Further details can be found on our website

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

CATCH UP DURING BRANCH SOCIALS:-

PHONE 0792 215 8971



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

Oxfordshire County Council Trading Standards
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t: 0845 0510845 f: 01865 783106
e: trading.standards@oxfordshire.gov.uk

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

Swan Supping is distributed free of charge to pubs in the branch area.

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Edited by David Roe

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

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Copy deadline for next issue (due out 1st August) is 14th July 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 (avw.camra.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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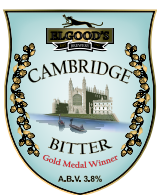
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