



**CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE**



ISSUE 69
Aug-Sep 2011

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the Oxford Drinker

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**Travelling
Drinker
...In Amsterdam**

**Wantage
Pub Crawl**

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The Oxford Drinker is the newsletter of Oxford and White Horse branches of CAMRA, The Campaign for Real Ale.

5000 copies are distributed free of charge to pubs across the branch area; including Oxford, Abingdon, Witney, Faringdon, Eynsham, Kidlington, Bampton and Wantage.

This newsletter is also available electronically in PDF format at www.oxfordcamra.org.uk/drinker

Valuable contributions to this edition have been made by Matt Bullock, Neil Hoggarth, Richard Queralt, Robert Mitchell, Tony Goulding, Lawrence Harman and others.

The next publication will be issued in **October 2011**.

Deadline for the next issue is **16th September 2011**

To advertise, contact Johanne Green on 07766-663215 or send an email to advertising@oxfordcamra.org.uk

Send news, information and articles to Steven and Johanne Green; editor@oxfordcamra.org.uk

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Oxford Drinker, 13 Cheyney Walk, Abingdon, OX14 1HN

We will send you as many issues as you send envelopes.

Welcome to the August - September edition of the Oxford Drinker.

Our Branch AGM is coming up on 14th September, all positions on the committee are going to be voted on and here is your chance to influence our branch or to become more active. See page 17.

The editors currently spend a large amount of voluntary time creating the Oxford Drinker. It typically takes us over 40 hours of our free time to put all the finished articles together, not including writing, getting adverts or chasing people up. This is something we can not keep up; if nothing else our children need us to be around at weekends. We would also like to be able to get out at weekends to visit more of the beer festivals we are editing articles about!

Other positions on the CAMRA committee also require a lot of voluntary time and If more of the 800 plus members in our branch became more involved in the branch's activities, then some of this workload could be shared around. The branch could then be more effective in doing things such as campaigning to prevent more pubs closing and encouraging existing pubs to serve more varied ranges of ale.

The Annual General Meeting in September is the time when people can step up to volunteer for roles on the committee and if there is more than one volunteer for a role, to vote on the position.

We hope a solution can be found to keep the Oxford Drinker running, if not we would like to thank everybody who have contributed to our two years in the editorial chair.

- Steven & JoHanne

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Pub News



We are happy to report that **The Catherine Wheel in Sandford** is open and welcomes anyone who wants to visit. There are no plans to turn it into flats. We apologise for reporting anything to the contrary in the last issue.

A new licensee, Andy Moore has taken over **The Six Bells, Headington**. The pub had been allowed to fall into a state of disrepair by the previous tenant, but Andy has cleaned the place up - a lot of hard graft, from how it was described - and will have 3 real ales on offer, all Greene King at present; only one was available on the first visit, **Abbot**, which was in good condition. The other two beers had been drunk dry as demand for real ale from the pub's customers has rocketed now the lines are clean and the beer drinkable! Andy is a chef (who previously ran the Marlborough Hotel in Witney), and will reintroduce food.

An Indian restaurant has opened in **The Chequers, Headington**. Landlord Steve Jenkins continues to run the pub and bar area, but the lounge will become restaurant seating. Work is being done to the kitchens and to extend the bar area slightly. 4 hand pumps usually dispense 3 real ales, from **Wychwood / Marstons** and also a guest, which has included **Vale** and **Shotover** amongst others.

The Broad Face in Abingdon and **The Three Horseshoes, Garsington**, have become members of the Greene King Head Brewer's Club. The 'Shoes' always serves three real ales, **Greene King IPA**, **Old Speckled Hen** and a guest ale which changes regularly.

Pubs closed include the **Chilli Pepper at Broadwell** (for some time, apparently) and the **Waggon & Horses at Culham**.

The Red Lion in Old Marston has reopened after a refurbishment. As previously reported in the Oxford Drinker, the pub was supported by local investment. The refurbishment retains the two bar set up, although part of the lounge bar has been converted to a seating area. The toilets are very much improved, with quality floor and wall tiles. A well attended "black tie" opening event was held, with four real beers from the Greene King range, and all in good condition.

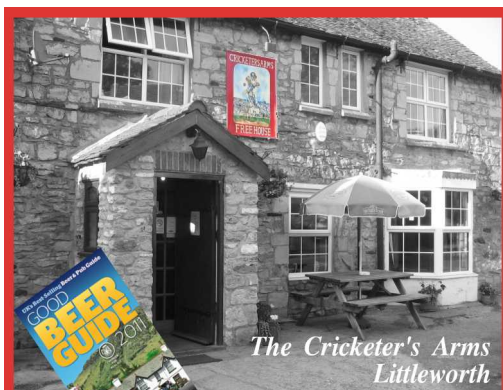
The James Street Tavern off the Cowley Road has re-opened after a couple of months of being boarded up. The pub is now being run by

the same team as **The Half Moon** in St Clement's. At the moment the JST is only open in the evenings and retains its previous layout and decor. The previous tenants were not selling any real ales before the pub closed, whereas the new management have brought back **Greene King IPA** and **Abbot Ale** on hand-pumps. There are plans to fully refurbish the pub in the near future, including putting in more hand-pumps and offering a range of guest beers, refurbishing the kitchen, restarting a "pub grub" food service, and re-opening the beer garden.

Also in Cowley Road, **The Library Pub** has opened serving a good pint of **Loose Cannon's Abingdon Bridge**, and The Hobgoblin is going through some changes.

The Bookbinders in Jericho has reopened.

The Brewery Tap, Abingdon, now has 5 ciders on the bar; 4 served through beer fountains at 4°C and the other from a hand pump at 9°C. Bar snacks to complement the real ales and ciders are served all day and evening, includes proper Scots eggs, pork pies and other British classics.



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Brewery News



The **West Berkshire Brewery** is hoping to start test brewing at its new 50-barrel brewery in Frilsham later this summer.

Alongside the regular beers they offer a new beer each month, which during 2011 are named after old agricultural implements. The August beer being **Strickle and Horn** (4.3%), followed in September by **Whimble** (4.3%).

Goldstar, a popular beer brewed in the late 1990's, is being brought back into production and will be available from early August in bottles. The recipe calls for honey and now that Helen Maggs (co-founder of WBB with husband Dave) keeps her own bees they have a plentiful supply of honey with zero food miles!



Wychwood Brewery's seasonal beers are **Scarecrow** (4.2%) in August and **Bountiful** (4.0%) for September.



Recipe for a New Brewery

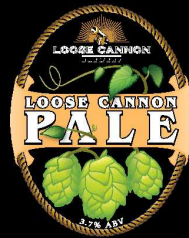
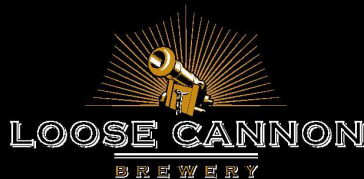
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More details next edition and you can follow our progress on Facebook at www.facebook.com/XTBrewing
The XT Brewing Company,
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Branch Town and Village Pub of the Year Competition.



It is time to vote for the Town & Country Pub of the Year Award again. All CAMRA members are entitled to vote and we hope that as many as possible will want to help support our pubs this way. A voting form has been posted to all CAMRA members in the Oxford branch. Members must visit each of the six pubs, which were chosen at the July branch meeting, to have their forms stamped, and then rank the pubs in order of preference. The votes will be counted at the October branch meeting.

The six nominated pubs are:

The Brewery Tap, Abingdon

40-42 Ock Street, Abingdon, OX14 5BZ

Phone 01235 521655

Open: Mon-Thur 11am-11:30pm

Fri-Sat 11am-1am

Sun 12-11pm

The King's Arms, Kidlington

4 The Moors, Kidlington, OX5 2AJ

Phone 01865 373004.

Open: Mon-Thu 11am-3pm, 5:30pm-11:30pm

Fri-Sat 11am-midnight

Sun noon-11:30pm

The Cricketer's Ams, Littleworth

Littleworth, OX33 1TR

Phone: 01865 872738

Open: Mon-Tue 12-3pm, 6pm-11pm

Wed-Thu 6pm-11pm, Fri 12-11pm

Sat 12-3pm, 6pm-11pm

Sun 12-3pm, 7pm-10:30pm

The Morris Clown, Bampton

High Street,, Bampton OX18 2JW

Phone 01993 850217

Open: Mon-Fri 5pm-11pm

Sat 1pm-11pm

Sun 12-10:30pm

The Eagle Tavern, Witney

22 Corn Street, Witney, OX28 6BL

Phone: 01993 700121

Open: Mon-Thurs 11am-3pm, 5-midnight

Fri 11am-3pm, 5pm-2am

Sat 11am-2am, Sun 12-midnight

The New Inn, Witney

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Phone 01993 703807

Open: Mon-Fri 5pm-midnight

Sat 12-1am

Sun 12-midnight†

Keeping In Touch

Want to know all the latest news and events?

Share information about what's happening in your area?

Sign up to our email list at
www.oxfordcamra.org.uk/mailling-lists



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THE BEAR INN

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Orange and Lemons...

In the pubs of St. Clements

'Somewhere different' was suggested for our normal mid-week drink so arrangements were made for a swift evening's tour of the St Clements area of Oxford.

It had been many years since we had frequented the 'watering holes' of this area, which has a big student population, and we were interested to see what was on offer.

After a very pleasant walk down 'the High' in the evening sun you can quite easily see why people visit our city in such numbers but perhaps not stray out into the suburbs. Arrival in St Clements brought us to the '**Angel & Greyhound**' and once we'd decided which door to use and then tripped over the step with its large 'MIND THE STEP'(!) sign, we were in! It's pretty much what you would expect from a 'major chain' house. This being Youngs owned we all opted for the **Youngs Bitter** (3.7) and pretty good it was too, a real session beer! Other beers from the Youngs range were on offer as well as **Bath Gem Ale**. They'd even gone to the trouble of taking the hassle out of deciding what to eat – on each hand pump there was a hand tied label suggesting what item(s) to have from the menu! Not sure if it works, but points were allocated for trying! The pub was busy but we couldn't fail to notice the large black & white wall print of the pub in Ind Coope days as the '**Oranges and Lemons**'. Out into the garden with our drinks we went, not much to mow out there but a pleasant enough stepped patio with plenty of shrubs and a canopy to keep the 'coughers' dry!

On we pressed to the '**Port Mahon**' where one of our group was very impressed (although equally surprised!) to be asked if he had ID! Thankfully a sly wink from the barman meant he was let off, although he thought he did have an old ration book on him somewhere! **Otter Ale** from the Otter Brewery, Honiton was the selection of all; 4.5% and dark in appearance - very tasty. Local bands were performing at an open mic session upstairs which meant a steady procession of punters filing through. Assorted board games filled the window sills

and the pub had a good welcoming feel to it, backed up by bar staff with a sense of humour!

Time was pressing, so leaving and turning into Rectory Road, we made our way up towards the Cowley Road calling in at '**The Star**'. Obviously, a favourite with the local student community, it was very busy which is always good to see; of course how much they were actually drinking we don't know! Only **Greene King IPA** was available so we ordered up and made for the garden. Being mid-June it was of course chilly but there were many out there braving the weather. The garden is fairly large and well tended with an area apparently used for BBQ's etc. I can't say the IPA was 'top quality' but in fairness it's not one of our favourite beers... Despite the lack of real ale choice the pub was clean and tidy with attentive staff and we would certainly give 'The Star' another look sometime.

Our last venue turned out to be a bit of a disappointment. Thankfully, pubs officer Tony Goulding was not with us as '**The Cricketers**' used to be a favourite haunt of his (probably due a blue plaque in his name!) and I think it bears little resemblance to the pub he knew. Unfortunately, it is currently (late June) ring-fenced by the ongoing road works on the Iffley Road but still accessible. 'The Cricketers' had the lowest attendance of the night but as they were clearly geared up for 'Jazz & Blues' nights perhaps mid-week is not their forte. Glitter balls and an assortment of lighting was aimed more at a music venue than a boozier but a friendly welcome soon had us settled at the bar. As various lights played across us we selected **Ruddles Bitter** but all was not well. In fairness the barman apologised and exchanged it for **Abbot ale**.

We didn't linger as we still had the return walk to the city to face and then onward buses, but we'd enjoyed our 'assortment', and vowed to return and seek some alternatives. Why don't you? There are still plenty of pubs out there looking for your business – they may not be there much longer given the economic climate, so change your drinking habits once in while and give them a chance!



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Travelling Drinker - Amsterdam



Matt Bullock, Chris Hunter, Sam French & Dave Cogdell.

Early May found us in Amsterdam having breakfast in a cafe on the Damrak. We had caught the early flight but during the course of the day met with others whom had travelled on alternative flights and one who had arrived by ferry. Following breakfast we located our hotel and as it was a tad early for booking in, decided to head off and sample the delights of the city starting at the **Rembrandt Corner** bar for a well earned beer and a spot of people watching next to the canal. The bar had 4 beers on tap which ranged from light (Amstel) to bock style (Duvel).

We decided to have a look around other establishments in the Nieuwmarkt and surrounding areas. Next port of call was lovely café bar the **Café 't Gasthuys** tucked away in one of the back streets. As with the Rembrandt Corner this bar offered a wide selection of beers including several specialty ones as well as a good selection of local food served by friendly staff, we also seemed to be centre of attraction for the house cat.

On the way back to book into our hotel we decided to stop off at the ubiquitous **Rock Planet** bar, which to be fair, although offering some good music, failed to offer anything other than Amstel draught which was rather flat and non-descript, alternatively bottled Duvel which was deemed a better choice for most.

Once safely booked in we headed off into the main shopping area for a general look around then onto the **In de Wildeman** in Kolksteeg 3. Having visited this bar in previous trips to Amsterdam, it is must for the real ale fan, there are up to 17 draught beers on tap plus a vast selection of bottled beers, along with the standard lagers. On this occasion the landlord had a couple of wheat beers at 6.5% proof, and 3 or 4 dark bock type beers ranging from 5.5% up to 8%.



Hotel Old Nickel Microbrewery

Moving on from this bar we headed up to the **De Ooievaar** bar in Sint Olofspoor which had a nice selection of ales. This bar is a particular favourite with the locals. To round off the afternoon before heading back to the hotel for a wash and brush up and then getting something to eat we stopped off in the **Hotel Old Nickel** in Nieuwebrugsteeg 11 which actually brews its own beers, primarily the light variety. After eating, the remainder of the evening was spent in a couple of lovely bars, the **De Bekeerde Suster** in Kloveniersburgwal 6, which served a couple of real ales the best being Duvel on draught. This bar tended to cater for food, however the beer was first class. The last bar visited was the **Café de Sluyswacht**, just up

from Nieuwmarkt, by the side of the canal. This is a great place to visit, it serves several draught beers including a couple of good dark bock type. The pub actually looks like it is likely to sink into the canal and a good time was had by all.

The next day found us on a train travelling up to Alkmaar to contact friends and see the famous cheese market. We set off from Amsterdam Centraal station and arrived some 30 minutes later in glorious sunshine. After a leisurely stroll up to the city centre we managed to find the cheese market along with several hundred other tourists, the spectacle of the porters going about their business is well worth the visit. We managed to find a wonderful local bar the **Café Biljart** in Voordam just away from the market square and



Alkmaar Cheese Market

Continued on Page 12

Amsterdam continued

crowds. There were only 4 beers on tap, however they proved to be very good; in particular a dark chocolate bock beer at nearly 8% proof. The centre of Alkmaar is very picturesque and worth taking the time to soak up the sights. Before leaving this beautiful city we stopped off at **Het Gulden Vlies** bar in Koorstraat which is beautifully presented & the food looked good, however no ale on tap.

Once back in Amsterdam it was onto the no.22 bus to the **Brouwerij 't IJ**, a brewery set in a windmill, for a brewery tour, we arrived slightly early so we adjourned to the **Cafe Dorst**, just across the road, to enjoy the sunshine and a thirst quencher. The brewery trip was quite interesting although the highlight was trying out a few of the brewery's recent offerings, which included a lovely bock beer at 6.5%.



Brouwerij 't IJ

After enjoying an evening meal it was out on the town to meet up with our friends from Alkmaar who had decided to join us. We went in search of the world renowned "**Gollems**" - it was shut apparently problems with the tax man. So we started out at the **Cafe Hoppe** in Spui 18 – 20 which was located just off the Damrak. The entrance was extremely high and a painting on the wall showed that in the past horse riders rode straight into the bar to quaff a pint or two. The bar was full of locals and several tourists enjoying a wide selection of draught and bottled beers. We then headed off to Dam Square, to find a little gem, the **Cafe Belgique** and we whiled a way an hour or so prior to moving on to our last port of call for the evening, the **Cafe De Dam**, commonly known as **Louis Bar**, which reputedly is the smallest bar in Amsterdam. There were 3 or 4 draught beers on offer with a selection of bottled beers, one of the best being the Duvel bock.



Fiddlers Bar in Den Haag

After the previous night's exertions and a good breakfast we decided to head down to Den Haag (The Hague) and the local coastal resort of Scheveningen. The day was cloudless and hot and after strolling around the centre we headed off to the beach in search of some food and refreshments which we found in a beach side cafe bar. We spent a very enjoyable hour, unfortunately drinking euro-fizz, watching the locals at rest and play on the beach. We eventually headed back to Den Haag in search of a local Irish run bar **Fiddlers**, which had been highly recommended by our friends. The Fiddlers was a brew pub and proved to be an

excellent choice, having a selection of 6 regular draught beers, 16 bottled beers, of which the Dikke Matilde was particularly good and a selection of ciders. Although the bar was empty this afternoon, our entertainment included getting involved with some local girls out on a hen party and consoling a lady who was just about to be arrested for pinching a mobile phone.

Back in Amsterdam the evening was spent winding down in the **In de Wildeman** and Louis bar until late into the evening.

Amsterdam and the surrounding cities still have a lot to offer the discerning traveller, however the prices seemed to have risen since our last visit, but that aside the selection of cafes, bars and superb beers on offer make the trip worthwhile.

If you have tried beers or visited breweries in foreign climes please write it up and send to the editor.

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Pub Walk 6: Forest Hill, Stanton St John, and Beckley



Neil Hoggarth

The Oxford Green Belt Way (OGBW) is a 80km/50mile circular walking route through the green belt countryside around Oxford. The route was created in 2007 by the Oxfordshire branch of the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE Oxfordshire), to mark their 75th anniversary and 50 years since the creation of the Oxford green belt.

This walk uses a section of the OGBW, going from Thornhill Park-and-Ride through Forest Hill, to Stanton St John and then finishing at Beckley. The walk is around 8km/5miles. The start point at Thornhill Park-and-Ride is easily accessible by public transport, but return from Beckley will involve either calling for a taxi or significantly lengthening the distance and walking back to Oxford.

Oxford CAMRA undertook this walk as a social event on Sunday 5th June 2011. The event was organised at relatively short notice, and had less advanced publicity than is normal, so I wasn't expecting a large turn-out. In the event one other branch member, Dermot Dobson, came along. We waited a few minutes to see if any stragglers would arrive, then set out together.

It was a good walking day - dry but not too bright or hot, and we made good progress through Sandhills and along the bridleway to Forest Hill. After the prolonged dry spell that we had throughout the spring the field-paths and normally muddy places around gates were easy to cross, though some artificial irrigation had obviously been taking place, because where the path into Forest Hill crosses a field of crops the earth had a decent amount of "give" in it, without being too gloopy!

On entering Forest Hill we took some forlorn photographs of **The King's Arms** - closed some years ago and converted into a private house, though still sporting a pub sign, and a Hall's Brewery tile plaque by the door. Having stopped briefly to pay our respects outside the ex-pub, we turned our attention to the village's sole remaining live pub, **The White Horse**.

The White Horse trades principally as a Thai restaurant these days. However it still has a traditional pub bar, welcomes drinkers, and serves two real ales. When I last visited in 2010 they were serving beers from Dorset, but on the occasion of this visit both beers were from Vale Brewery (from Brill, just over the county border into Buckinghamshire) - we each had a pint of **Vale Grumpling**, and found it to be in good condition. The day that we were visiting happened to be the Sunday of the 2011 Big Lunch, an Eden Project inspired event that encourages people all around the country to have a community organised lunch together - the pub had a bunch of tables set up outside for the event, rather than offering its normal Sunday lunchtime service indoors.

On leaving the White Horse we set off down the lane behind the pub (dodging an unfeasibly large tanker that was attempting to manoeuvre in the space!), and then across the fields towards Breach Farm, encountering horses, cows, red kites and poppies along the way, before making our way into Stanton St John.

The first of the two pubs in Stanton St John, **The Star** is a Wadworth house, with a good range of that brewery's usual beers and seasonal brews. The pub was busy, both with people having Sunday lunch and with Sunday afternoon drinkers. I enjoyed a good pint of the **Henry's IPA**.



The White Horse, Forest Hill

Our other stop in Stanton St John, the **Talkhouse** is another establishment that trades more as a restaurant than a pub. It serves a decent range of Fuller's beers, but there is very little provision for the drinker who does not wish to dine - what little seating there is away from the restaurant tables has more of the feeling of a "waiting for your table" area than somewhere that you would just pop in to for a quiet beer and a chat. I had the **London Pride** and thought that it was okay but nothing special.

Next we retraced our steps down the road, passed the Star, and headed off across a couple of fields to refind the Green Belt Way at the point where it finishes skirting Stanton Great Wood, set our sights on the Beckley TV mast, and walked along the bridleway past Woodperry House.

Joining the Woodperry Road there is then a 10 or 15 minute walk into Beckley, where we reached our last pub of the (official) walk, the **Abingdon Arms**. As with all of the pubs on this crawl, the food offering at the Abingdon Arms is an important part of their formula. It is quite possible to just pop in for a drink though, and

the pub has a very nice terraced garden at the rear with excellent views out over Otmoor. The beers on offer were **Brakspear Bitter**, **Brakspear Oxford Gold**, and **Marston's Pedigree**. I had a good pint of the Gold.

Originally the walk was intended to end here, but since my only companion was a tall, long-legged, and capable walker who was more than capable of some extra distance we then walked back to Headington, making for an 8 or 9 mile day out that ended in the **White Hart** in St Andrew's Road. I have vague recollections of enjoying a couple of pints of a very nice Everard's seasonal beer. But I forgot to make a note of which one ...

My thanks to Dermot for coming along and keeping me company, and my apologies to anyone who might have liked to come but wasn't able to because of the hasty fashion in which I arranged the walk. Our next pub walk outing is on Saturday 20th August and starts at the **Vine Inn** in Cumnor at 12-noon (for 12.30 departure), and will take in the pubs of Cumnor, Bessels Leigh, Appleton and Eaton in a 5 mile circular stroll - hope to see some of you then!

The Kings Head & Bell
Abingdon

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August Bank Holiday weekend Saturday 27th - Monday 29th




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-  Live Music Every day

Hope you can join us!

Beer Festival Diary



Tuesday 2 - Saturday 6 August

Great British Beer Festival
 Earl's Court, London
 450+ beers plus ciders,
 perries & foreign beers
www.gbbf.org.uk

Friday 5 - Saturday 6 August

Bristol Summer Cider Festival
 Brunel Passenger Shed, Temple
 Meads, Bristol
 100+ ciders & perries
 Advance ticket purchase
 recommended
 01225 330304
www.clstickets.co.uk

Friday 5 - Sunday 7 August

**The Three Horseshoes 2nd
 annual Beer Festival**
 16 The Green, Garsington, Oxford
 OX44 9DF
 Ales and Ciders, live music
 01491 838242

Friday 5 - Sunday 7 August

Chester Arms Beer Festival
 Chester Street, Oxford
 01865 243203

Friday 5 - Sunday 7 August

The Chequers Beer Festival
 131 High Street, Oxford
 16 Real ales and ciders, food and
 music
 01865 727 463

Saturday 6 August

**Bicester Round Table Beer
 Festival**
 at the Jazz in the Park evening,
 Garth Park, Launton Road,
 Bicester
www.bicesterroundtable.org.uk

Monday 8 August

Real Ale & Hog Roast Festival
 Royal Windsor Racecourse,
 Maidenhead Road, Windsor
 01753 498400
www.windsor-racecourse.co.uk

Thursday 11 - Sat 13 August

**12th Worcester Beer, Cider
 & Perry Festival**
 Worcester Racecourse
 200 beers plus 100 ciders &
 perries
www.worcesterbeerfest.org.uk

Friday 12 - Sunday 14 August

Black Horse Beer Festival
 Black Horse, Main Street, East
 Hanney, nr Wantage
 01235 868212
www.theblackhorseineasthanney.co.uk

Friday 26 - Saturday 27 August

Highwayman Beer Festival
 The Highwayman Hotel, Banbury
 Road, Kidlington
 01865 377388
www.thehighwaymanhotel.co.uk

Friday 26 - Monday 29 August (bank holiday weekend)

Woodman Inn Beer Festival
 New Yatt Road, North Leigh, nr
 Witney
 01993 881790

Friday 26 - Monday 29 August (bank holiday weekend)

Summer Beer Festival
 Crown Inn (home of the Halfpenny
 Brewery)
 High Street, Lechlade
 30 beer & ciders
 01367 252198
www.crownlechlade.co.uk

Saturday 27 - Monday 29 August (bank holiday weekend)

**Kings Head & Bell Summer Beer
 Festival**
 East St Helens Street, Abingdon
 01235 525362
www.kingsheadandbell-abingdon.co.uk

Saturday 27 August (2-7pm)

Chinnor Summer Beer Festival
 Playing Fields, Chinnor, nr Thame
www.chinnorbeerfest.org.uk

Saturday 27 - Sunday 28 August (bank holiday weekend)

8th Brill Beer Festival
 Brill Sports & Social Club, Church
 Street, Brill, nr Thame
www.brillbeerfestival.co.uk

This page lists local beer festivals which we are aware of in the coming months. The branch is always happy to help publicise events which promote real ales and/or real ciders; note that these festivals are not run or officially endorsed by CAMRA, unless stated in the description.

Saturday 27 - Monday 29 August (bank holiday weekend)

**Trigger Pond Beer & Music
 Festival**
 Trigger Pond, Bicester Road,
 Bucknell, nr Bicester
 20 beers plus 10 ciders
 01869 252817
www.triggerpondbeerfestival.com

Saturday 27 - Mon 29 August (bank holiday weekend)

White Hart Beer Festival
 Main Road, Fyfield, nr Abingdon
 13 beers
 01865 390585
www.whitehart-fyfield.com

Friday 2 - Saturday 3 September

21st Harbury Beer Festival
 Village Hall, South Parade,
 Harbury, nr Leamington Spa
 60+ beers, ciders & perries
www.camrahaw.org.uk

Friday 2 - Sunday 4 September

10th Headington Beer Festival
 Masons Arms, Quarry School
 Place, Headington, Oxford
 45 beers plus 10 ciders & perries
 01865 764579

Friday 2 - Sunday 4 September

**Wallingford Bunkfest (10th
 Anniversary)**
 "music, dance, steam & beer..."
 07743 330494
www.bunkfest.co.uk

Friday 16 - Sun 18 September

**Autumn Beer & Sausage
 Festival**
 Cricketers Arms, Littleworth, nr
 Wheatley
 01865 872738
www.cricketers-arms.co.uk

Tuesday 20 - Sat 24 September

Autumn Beer Festival
 Far From the Madding Crowd
 Friars Entry, Oxford
 01865 240900
www.maddingcrowd.co.uk

Friday 23 - Sat 24 September

**4th North Cotswold Beer
 Festival**
 Moreton-in-Marsh Cricket
 Club, Batsford Road, Moreton-in-
 Marsh
www.northcotswoldcamra.org.uk

Oxford CAMRA Branch Diary



Tue 2nd August, 7:30-10pm
Branch Meeting

Chequers, 131 High Street, Oxford, OX1 4DH

Tue 9th August, 7:30pm-10pm
Young Members Social

Meet at Far From the Madding Crowd

The plan is to meet at 7.30 in the Far From the Madding Crowd (www.maddingcrowd.co.uk), then head up to Jericho to visit a few of the pubs up there.

For more information email bymc@oxfordcamra.org.uk

Sat 20th August, 12pm-6pm
Pub Walk - Cumnor / Bessels Leigh / Appleton / Eaton

Vine Inn, 11 Abingdon Road, Cumnor, OX2 9QN

Pub Walk, 5mile/8km circular starting at Cumnor, visiting the Greyhound at Bessells Leigh, the Plough at Appleton, and the Eight Bells at Eaton. Meet at the Vine Inn for a beer from 12-noon, with the intention of starting the walk at about 12.30pm.

Wed 14th September, 7:30pm-9:30pm
Branch AGM

Kings Arms, 40 Holywell Street, Oxford, OX1 3SP

All CAMRA members from the Oxford branch area are encouraged to attend the branch AGM.

Some of the items on the agenda include:

- Appointment of branch committee members. This is your chance to influence how the branch operates or take a more active role. If you wish to be on the committee or nominate someone else then please email contact@oxfordcamra.org.uk
- Presentation of draft accounts from the branch treasurer
- Reports from chairman, membership secretary and other key committee members.

Fri 16th September
Oxford Drinker editorial
Deadline for October issue.

Please send any news, articles, photos or other information to editor@oxfordcamra.org.uk before this date.

1st - 9th October
National Cask Ale Week

CAMRA is encouraging all licensees to get involved in Cask Ale Week by hosting events at the beginning of October. Successful events held in the past include head brewer tastings to champion good beer and recruit new interest in Britain's National Drink.

25th - 30th October
Volunteer to help at Oxford Beer Festival

Volunteers are needed to help run the beer festival. This includes setting up on the days beforehand and taking down on the Sunday, as well as serving beer and other activities while the festival is open.

You must be a CAMRA member to volunteer to work at the festival. Whilst it is voluntary, you will be provided with a T-shirt and food and beer vouchers.

For more information, email staffing@oxfordcamra.org.uk



CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE



For more details about social events please check the web site at www.oxfordcamra.org.uk/diary, email social@oxfordcamra.org.uk or join our mailing list at www.oxfordcamra.org.uk/mailling-lists

For branch meeting details contact Steve Lawrence at contact@oxfordcamra.org.uk

Beer Festival Diary Continued



Friday 30 Sep - Sat 1 October

Solihull Beer Festival
The Royal British Legion, Union Road, Solihull
35+ beers plus cider & perry
www.solihullcamra.org.uk



Friday 30 Sep - Saturday 1 October
Ascot Racecourse Beer Festival

200 beers, ciders & perries. Live music Saturday with Adrian Edmondson & the Bad Shepherds. Half price entry to CAMRA members.
www.seberkscamra.org.uk

Wednesday 12 - Sat 15 October

Concrete Pint Beer Festival
Buszy, opp. Milton Keynes Central rail station, Central Milton Keynes
www.mkcamra.org.uk

Thursday 27 - Sat 29 October

Oxford Beer Festival
Town Hall, St Aldates, Oxford



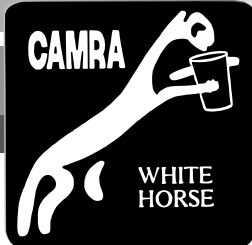
www.oxfordcamra.org.uk



Latest information about beer festivals can be found on the Oxford CAMRA web site at www.oxfordcamra.org.uk/festivals

White Horse Branch Diary

www.whitehorsecamra.org.uk



Tue 2nd August, 5:30, 6:30, 7:30

Social at Great British Beer Festival.
Young and Upcoming Brewery bar,
Earl's Court, London

Tue 16th August, 7:45pm

Branch Meeting
Bear Hotel, Wantage

Sat 20th August, All day

Visit to Prescott Brewery, Cheltenham.
Transport at cost (£10). Meet at
Shrivenham 10:30.

10th September, All day

Visit to West Somerset Railway Beer
Festival, Minehead
Transport at cost (£15). Pickup from
Wantage (7:30) and Faringdon (8:00)

Tue 20th September, 7:45pm

Branch Meeting
Cherry Tree, Steventon

Tue 11th October, 7:45pm

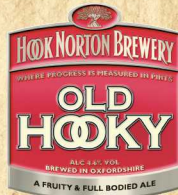
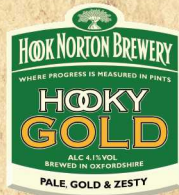
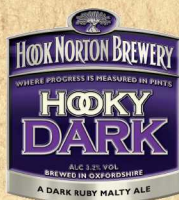
Branch Meeting
Flowing Well, Sunningwell

Branch Contacts

For more information please contact:

- Neil Crook: Chairman
contact@whitehorsecamra.org.uk
- Peter Fowler: Membership Secretary
membership@whitehorsecamra.org.uk
- Ian Winfield: Social Secretary
social@whitehorsecamra.org.uk

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LocAle in the White Horse Area



CAMRA LocAle is an initiative that promotes pubs which endeavour always to stock at least one locally-brewed real ale. The scheme launched by Nottingham branch builds on a growing consumer demand for quality, local produce and an increased awareness of 'green' issues such as fewer 'beer miles' resulting in less road congestion and pollution.

White Horse Branch launched its LocAle campaign in May 2011. Our definition of 'local' is that a beer should be brewed within 30 miles of the pub and only one of the ales at any one time need be 'local' in order to qualify. Currently 25% of all the pubs in the branch have been certified as qualifying for LocAle accreditation.

Within these pubs you will see displayed a certificate, a window sticker, posters and LocAle pump clip crowners on the handpumps that are serving locally brewed real ales

The current list, at time of going to press, is below, given in order of town or village, but it is growing all the time and we will continue to publish updates in these pages.



If your local is not already part of the scheme ask your landlord why not. If he or she is interested please get in touch with us (contact@whitehorsecamra.org.uk) and we will take it from there.

Accredited LocAle Pubs in White Horse Branch area of Oxfordshire:



The Crown, Shrivenham



Shoulder of Mutton, Wantage

- Ardington, Boar's Head,
- Ashbury, Rose & Crown
- Bishopstone, Royal Oak
- Besselsleigh, Greyhound
- Buckland, Lamb
- Colehill, Radnor Arms
- Eaton, Eight Bells
- Faringdon, Folly
- Faringdon, Portwell Cellar Bar
- Faringdon, Swan
- Fyfield, White Hart
- Longcot, King & Queen
- Longworth, Blue Boar
- Shippon, Prince of Wales
- Shrivenham, Crown
- Steventon, North Star
- Uffington, Fox & Hounds
- Wantage, Royal Oak
- Wantage, Shoulder of Mutton
- West Hanney, Plough
- Woolstone, White Horse



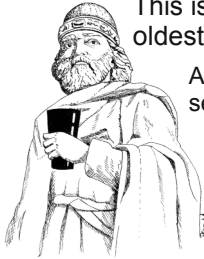
North Star, Steventon



King & Queen, Longcot

Vale Ale Trail: Wantage Pub Crawl 2

Dick Bosley



This is the second pub crawl around Wantage and includes many of the oldest and most historic pubs in the town.

Approaching Wantage from the north, and opposite the bus stop for the 30 bus service from Oxford and 31 from Abingdon is the **Abingdon Arms**.

A friendly town pub that takes advantage of Greene King's more enlightened guest beer policy by providing a locale (**Barbus Barbus** from Butts), a guest (**Fuggle Dee Dee** from Goddard's) as well as **Morland Original**. The pub is open all day and provides a garden, pub games and bar snacks as well as being the home of the Icknield Way Morris Men... well someone has to.

Turning right as you leave the 'Abi' and after 200 yards bear right into the pedestrian entry of Grove Street and you pass the site of the closed Rockwell Brewery as you go down to the Market Place. Go past the Bell (don't sulk – I'll bring you back this way) and cross the roads to the **Bear Hotel**. This is an old coaching inn now owned by **Arkells**, and has a good range of their beers. The pub has a large bar that is open all day, with several comfortable seating areas and offers an extensive menu. The Bear was issuing its own trading tokens in the 1650's that can be seen at the town museum.



The Swan

Leaving the Bear walk down to the bus stop, turn left towards the Church of St Peter & St Paul's and you will see **the Swan** on your left. This is a free house with 4 real ales, normally **Ringwood Boondogle**, **Brakspear Gold** and two guests. The pub opens at 2pm every day, has a courtyard garden and, I was told, "an eclectic mix of customers served by eccentric staff". Or was it vice versa ?

As you retrace your steps towards the Market Place turn right by the Oxfam shop and you will find the **King Alfred's Head**. This pub is owned by

Punch taverns but the manager is a CAMRA member who is using the SIBA scheme to get a changing range of ales – from local breweries when possible. As well as good food the 'Fred's Head' also provides free sun tan lotion for drinkers using their large garden.



King Alfred's Head.



The Bell Inn

Returning to the Market Place and turning left will get you back to **the Bell** (see I told you so!). This is a traditional Greene King town pub with **Morlands Original** and a guest ale available.

Outside the pub you can see the only example of a 3 dimensional pub sign in town. Up to the mid 19th century the churchwardens paid a third of the rent on this pub – a practice the current management would be happy to see return.

Turn left down Mill Street as you leave the Bell, past the almshouses to **the Shears**. This was once the site of a blacksmiths but at the time of this survey the pub was for sale and no real ale was available.

Continuing down Mill Street, past Clarks Mill – take care as there are gaps in the pavement – you will reach **the Lamb**. This is the only thatched building in central Wantage - thatching having been forbidden under the 1828 Town Improvement Act. **Morlands Original** and **London Pride** are the regular ales and the pub also has a large garden and provides food all day.

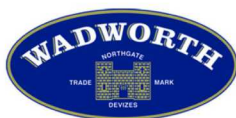
So no excuses – jump on a bus and come and do a local history tour with a difference

Oxfordshire Pub Of The Year



On 8th July groups from The White Horse, West Berkshire and Oxford branches of CAMRA met at the **Radnor Arms** in Coleshill near Faringdon. We had been invited to take part in a three sided inter branch Aunt Sally match. Unfortunately on the night it was raining, but our brave CAMRA members trooped out of the cosy pub to take up the challenge. The West Berkshire Branch won the match, congratulations to them.

Safely inside, Gemma Court, the landlady was presented with the CAMRA Oxfordshire County Pub of The Year certificate by Neil Crook, chairman of the White Horse Branch of CAMRA. We toasted her success with the excellent beer from the Old Forge Brewery, the pub's own onsite brewery. A very good night was had by all - we can warmly recommend a visit to the Radnor Arms.



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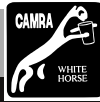
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Please contact 001 Taxis, New Inn Yard, 108 St. Aldates, Oxford

The day we went to Salisbury...

Claire Hodkinson



Claire Hodkinson reports on White Horse Branch's trip for Wantage beer festival staff

On a glorious hot flaming June day (okay, so it poured down, all day) we set off from Steventon, Wantage, Faringdon and Shrivenham to Salisbury, with our first stop at the **Hop Back Brewery**. This was quite a special treat, as they rarely open the brewery or offer tours.

On arrival we were met by John Gilbert, founder of the multi-award winning brewery, and owner of a growing portfolio of Hop Back pubs. The first port of call, to refresh us after our journey, was the sampling area, where five Hop Back beers were available. **GFB, Crop Circle, Entire Stout, Taiphooon** and **Summer Lightning**. While the slower members of the group were still choosing, the first half, drinks in hand, started the tour.

The brewery is fairly large for an independent, with a capacity of 120 brewer's barrels, and is located across two specially adapted business units in Downton, just outside Salisbury. They actually now brew less beer than a few years ago, as a direct result of taxation increases. Hop Back has had tremendous success, the number of beer festival awards alone runs into the hundreds. The most impressive of late is the Champion Winter Beer of Britain, awarded to Entire Stout, in Manchester in January. Entire Stout now goes forward to the Great British Beer Festival for Champion Beer of Britain judging in August.

After an hour with the Hop Back beer and John, who was very informative and hospitable, the coach departed for Salisbury. The rain on arrival in the city was torrential, but despite this the group split up and went off to visit a variety of the pubs on offer. We met up again in the **Wyndham Arms** - the birth place of Hop Back, where John brewed his first beers. The pub had six Hop Back beers on offer, including the new **Flint Knapper Ale**, which was sampled and enjoyed by all.

Next stop after we left Salisbury was the superb **Crown Inn at Pewsey**. This pub has a tiny one barrel brewery, which, compact and bijoux, is tucked away behind the kitchen. It produces beers for the pub and local festivals under the name of World's End. Three in-house beers were on offer, all in very good condition. The Crown also had a superb choice of beers from Devon and Cornwall, our visit coinciding with its mid-summer beer festival. Such festivals are held at the pub twice a year, with the next one around 21st December 2011. The owner and brewer, Vaughan Roberts, showed us around the brewery in small numbers, while others continued to sample beers, from **Penzance Potion Number 9, Hogswood Stoked, South Hams Wild Blonde** and **Red Rock Red Rock**, to name a few.

A certain lady member's day was made by being served at the bar by adorable brewery dog, Lauren, who assures one and all of a warm welcome.



The Hop Back Brewery



Vaughan Roberts, brewer at the Crown Inn



Lauren, the brewery dog at the Crown Inn

Revisiting Oxford Pubs



Ron Elder — Edinburgh & SE Scotland Branch

The Past...

I first visited Oxford as a teenager in 1963. In these days, we stayed with a policeman friend in Friars Wharf. A brand new maisonette, then.

Then, most of the pubs visited were back street, working class, boozers in terraced rows, probably in the St Ebbes area. Unfortunately, I can't remember their names, and I suspect that most have now been demolished. They were where I was introduced to the game of Aunt Sally for the first time. I remember playing the game in the long back alleys to the rear of these pubs. I don't think that the beer (probably Morrels) was all that great (only mild & bitter were available, very little spirits sold, & wine unheard of), as many people drunk their ale "half & half", or mixed a half with a bottle of stout or brown ale.

Sometimes, we would go up town and visit the city centre pubs. My favourites were the old back court former coaching inns - probably places like the "**Crown**" or "**Turf Tavern**" (although, I wouldn't like to drive a coach & four into the "Turf Tavern"!).

What I do remember was driving out to the "**Perch**" at Binsey, and the "**Trout**" at Godstow on summer evenings. They were quite magical places; unlike anything in Edinburgh. There was a much more relaxed attitude towards drinking & driving in these days!

We visited Oxford regularly until 1968, but by then our friends had moved to Cowley and our trips into the city centre were less frequent. My final visit to Oxford was in 1976 but, by then, we were on the river & canals with young children, and didn't have much chance to visit the pubs!

The Present...

I was well impressed with the quality of your city pubs (it is some 35 years since I was last in Oxford, so have forgotten how good the Oxford pubs are).

On the first day, I visited the "**White Horse**", "**King's Arms**", "**Turf Tavern**", "**Bear**", "**Royal Blenheim**", and the 'Spoon's "**Four Candles**". Unusually for 'Spoons, the beer quality in the "**Four Candles**" was not great, but it may have just been my choice of ale! I found the best quality of beer to be in the "**White Horse**" & "**Bear**".

On the second day, I managed to tick-off the remaining Oxford city centre GBG '11 listed pubs, and a few non-listed.

All of the beer quality was good, even the 'Spoons "**Swan & Castle**"!

As you are aware, there is a new landlord in the "**Harcourt Arms**", and I had the opportunity to have a chat with him. He is very keen on his real ale, and was interested in my opinion on the quality of what I was drinking. The pub has had a makeover, and was very clean & tidy.

The pastel paint job was not to my personal taste, but this seems to be the modern trend. The "new" beer garden area to the rear of the pub looks good, and seemed to be getting the approval of the regulars. A lot of food appeared to be sold.

As I was in the area, I popped into the "**Rickety Press**" for a pint. This was larger than the "**Harcourt Arms**", but was almost a clone, as it seemed to have enjoyed the services of the same interior decorator!

I got a shock at the prices in the next pub, "**Rose & Crown**"; £3.70 for a pint of 4% **Vale Endeavour** - I thought that I was back home in Edinburgh!!! Seriously, it seemed a lot for a back street boozier, especially when compared to the £2.70 charged for a pint of 4% Skinners "**Betty Stogs Bitter**" in the "**Lamb & Flag**".

Although the beer quality was fine, I was a little disappointed with the "**Duke's Cut**". It is obviously aimed at the younger market, but I don't think that the staff should condone customers lying on the settees sleeping. Maybe I'm just getting old!!

The Gloucester Arms

Oxfords NO.1 Rock Pub

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"The Crown" and "Eagle and Child" are lovely old pubs, and the beer quality was good, but, as Nicholson's branded outlets, they suffer from a staff lack of interest in their customers. Personally, I think of them as "Olde Worlde" versions of 'Spoons!

All in all, I had a very enjoyable 2 days visiting your city centre pubs - your Branch should be proud of the quality of pubs and real ale on offer. I'll try to make it a bit less than 35 years until my next visit!!

If I was pressed to state my favourite city centre pubs, then they would have to be the "White Horse" and "Turf Tavern".

Now for the outlying country town & village pubs...

Ron Elder

Edinburgh & SE Scotland Branch

Next Issue, Ron Elder visits the outlying town & village pubs along the Thames from Thrupp to Goring.

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As I write this editions article I do so with a pint of water to my right, a cup of tea to my left and a bass drum constantly beating inside my head. But as I recall yesterday's ride I do so with the sound knowledge that I'll gladly do it all again.

Yesterday we decided to venture to some known pubs and also explore some of the pubs in the surrounding countryside that we hadn't been to before, having taken a gamble I'm very pleased to be able to write about some of the real beauties we found.

The route is approximately 25 miles

Essential Equipment to take includes; Map, puncture repair kit, spare inner tubes, pump, water, Allen key and spanner set, a decent lock and lights.

This route is all on road and I took my Dawes Audax road bike.

We start the day with a hill, which of course means when we finish our day we'll be cruising back downhill, result! From the city centre, head out along the Botley Road and up Cumnor Hill. Very soon we arrive at the first countryside pub of the day, which is a mere 3.7 miles from the hustle and bustle of Oxford city centre; **The Vine Inn**, Cumnor.

For some reason I have never ventured into this pub before, and I roll into the rear garden with a certain amount of apprehension, which I soon learn is dumbfounded. This is a great pub, which in my opinion offers everything a



The Vine Inn in Cumnor

Summary of Cycle Parking Facilities

- **The Vine Inn, Cumnor:** A spacious rear garden with plenty of room
- **The Eight Bells, Eaton:** A large front garden with ample space
- **The Plough, Appleton:** Another large rear garden with plenty of space
- **Rose Revived, Newbridge:** Again a large rear garden with plenty of space
- **Red Lion, Northmoor:** Large front garden with plenty of space
- **The Ferryman, Bablock Hythe:** Plenty of space on the riverside terrace
- **Harcourt Arms, Stanton Harcourt:** large front car park and rear garden offers options
- **Queens Head, Eynsham:** Plenty of space in the rear garden

good pub should (but so frequently now-a-days doesn't). The garden includes ample seating, Aunt Sally, a sheltered smoking den, a children's play area and a pond. Inside the pub is split into two sides with one dedicated restaurant area and the other a bar with a pool table and dart board, there are also plenty of signs about various live entertainment and events (recently they run a whiskey tasting event!). I grab one of the free papers and wait to be served. I choose a pint of 'Radgie Gaggie' from the 3 options and retire to the garden.

It is just after midday and I don't want to find some of the other pubs closed, so reluctantly we leave and head towards Eaton. Our next pub is a short 1.5 miles away. We arrive at **The Eight Bells**, Eaton and park the bikes in the front garden. Grumbling about leaving the Vine now seems ridiculous, we've hit the jackpot! What a cracking pub, we are welcomed by friendly locals and bar staff and choose a pint of '**Abingdon Bridge**' from the 5 on offer and settle into the

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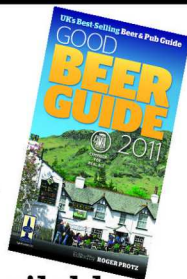
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Bainton Bike Ride continued

garden. It is such a great pub and pint that one just isn't enough and we decide to stop for another.

Jumping on a bike and riding just a short distance to find these pubs, for me is what it's all about. Perfect.

Again reluctantly we move on and ride 1.4 miles to **The Plough**, Appleton. Another beautiful looking pub with a large garden, with Aunt Sally, Bowls, BBQ, Dogs bowl and Children's play area. It would appear inside has recently been renovated and doesn't fit the external aesthetics of the pub. That said everyone is friendly and we choose a pint of '**Olde Trip**' from the 3 on offer and retreat to the garden.

Leaving the pub we head out soon and turn right towards Witney onto the 'Oxfordshire Cycleway' which turns out to be a bloody awful road to ride. It is busy and fast moving, ride with caution.

After 4 miles we arrive at the next destination, **The Maybush**, Newbridge which is sadly closed for the day. (New management has recently taken over). We cross the road and head into **The Rose Revived**, Newbridge. I know this pub and I don't like it. It is a complacent place in a beautiful riverside location, also today it smells of coffee (which is another thing I can't stand). We choose a pint of '**Abbott Ale**', head into the garden and talk about jumping off the bridge before swiftly leaving.

Coming out of the cark park we head right and follow the quiet road for 1.6 miles to **The Red Lion**, Northmoor., who are closed but



The Plough, Appleton

very kindly serve us a pint of 'Morland' from the 3 on offer. we are also advised that they frequently use one of the pumps for small micro brewery beers, but alas not today. We settle into the front garden and spend the time throwing balls for the dog.

We say goodbye and ride 1.4 miles to **The Ferryman Inn**, Bablock Hythe. Sadly the ferry crossing is no longer in operation (if it was we could very quickly get back to the **Eight Bells!**) Not that there is anything wrong with this pub, it seems very local orientated and everyone (including the swans and ducks) appear friendly. We choose a pint of '**6X**' from the 4 options and settle by the riverside and discuss various ways of crossing the river with our bikes. We agree if we had a ramp and a long run up it would be a doddle, it's time to move on...

Riding 1.8 miles we rock up at the **Harcourt Arms**, Stanton Harcourt. It's a nice pub and appears food orientated, which suits me fine, I'm starving. We order a pint of '**Oxford Gold**' from the 4 on offer and I choose gammon, egg and chips.

The food was really good and we become settled.

After a short rest we move out and head through Sutton Village and ride 4.5 miles to our final pub. **The Queens Head**, Eynsham. This is another charming pub with a brilliant atmosphere.

We choose a pint of '**Doom Bar**' from the 3 on offer and enjoy the last pint.

It is now dark, and we opt to slowly ride along



the A40 cycle track back into Oxford.

Many cups of tea and pints of water later I've finished writing, with fond memories of the day and a plan to visit again this weekend. The bass drum in my head is still beating but the noise is quashed by the thought of the weekend and a similar ride

Ernest Hemingway, Sinatra, Churchill or someone once said 'I feel sorry for people who don't drink. When they wake up in the morning that's as good as they're going to feel all day'. I remind myself of this and wonder if they rode.

To view more photos of this ride please visit our website – www.baintonbikes.com

These are regular rides we run and if you are interested in joining then please contact me on kevin@baintonbikes.com

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Planning for a Beer Festival Lechlade Crown Inn



Julie — Landlady, Crown Inn

Time flies by quicker that I realise. Our beer festival at the Crown Inn in Lechlade has been on the same weekend for two years and is going to be on the same weekend in August again for the third time. However I always seem to be running out of time.

First and foremost I have to advertise it all or the effort will be for nothing - so please read on....

Next the Bands, we have live music in the afternoons and evenings, these have to be booked months in advance if you want the good ones, and we have the good ones.

So far I have people to come and something to entertain them, what I really need now is something for everyone to drink! So:- contact all suppliers and find out what they have available in August.

Carefully choose the ales, making sure they are different from last year (apart from our own brews from the Halfpenny and Old Forge

Breweries- always at the festival). A good mix of strengths is needed, weaker ones for the start of the day and a few 5%+ for 'the one for the road', making sure there is enough light, dark and amber mix. Cider and perry's - a few more this year I think is a must!

Drink done, then to the local butcher to pre-order the sausage and burgers for the barbecue, oh and the pig....

Now I have to convince the staff and as many friends as possible that instead of drinking away the last summer bank holiday, they really need to work all weekend.

Once I know what everyone is drinking, eating and listening to - produce a programme so they know what's going on.

Think it's almost all done then...

Oops! festival glasses almost forgot them (again), hope I can get them sorted in time??? We'll have to see...

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