



**CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE**



Issue 76
October 2012

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the Oxford Drinker

Wantage Pubs Celebrate Awards
Royal Oak

National Cider Pub of the Year 2012
Shoulder of Mutton

Regional Pub of the Year 2012

Page 20



Shoulder of Mutton Landlord, Peter Fowler
Royal Oak Landlord, Paul Hexter
White Horse CAMRA branch chairman, Neil Crook

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

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

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

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Welcome to the October 2012 issue of the Oxford Drinker.

The Oxford Branch has just had their yearly AGM and a few new people have joined the committee. See page15. Not everybody wants to be on committees and be active in the Branch, but there are still things normal members can do. Pubs are struggling with extra taxes imposed on them by a government that promised to help pubs!

What you all can do is to support your local by going out. You can let the Drinker editors know about your favourite pub, their activities, beer festivals or just if the beer is good by sending us an email to editor@oxfordcamra.org.uk. The Oxford Drinker also needs people to deliver them to pubs; this can be a nice way of getting to know your local publican.

There is good news of pubs reopening led by brave and enterprising people, but the fact remains: pubs will only survive if we let them - they are an unique institution of British heritage - people from all over the world come here to get a little taste of this old tradition. If we forsake the pubs they will die out and before we know it, this old tradition will be something we can only read about.

Go and have a pint to the British spirit; all is not lost - yet!

— **Steven & JoHanne**

Pub News



Bletchington & Islip

Dermot Dobson reports: I see that The Blacks Head in Bletchington now has a 'local business opportunity to let' sign on it, the Crown and Thistle on Old Road finally has a 'for sale' sign on it and the Swan in Islip, which has been for sale for a long time now has a 'coming soon' sign up for a bar, restaurant and takeaway - looks to be Chinese or perhaps Thai

St Aldates Tavern Reopened

The St Aldates Tavern reopened on Saturday 8th September. There are six handpumps on the bar. At the opening there were four beers on: Scholar from Shotover, Oxfordshire Ales, Pride of Oxford; Adnams Broadside; and Old Hooky. White Horse Bitter is planned to be available as well.

The pub has had a £130000 refurbishment which includes a new kitchen, better toilets and more seating. The atmosphere is now new and fresh and the beers are served in excellent condition. The general manager, Lucas Van Rensburg, says that they aim to serve local ales as well as good food.

Kidlington

The Red Lion, Oxford Road, Kidlington is reopening in the first week of October after a month's closure. It is to become part of Orchid Pubs' Pizza Kitchen Bar chain. It will feature fresh-dough pizza and cocktails along with Sky Sport in 3D and HD, but will still be serving real ale. David Hill

Witney

The Plough Inn in Witney has suddenly closed after the landlord, Robert O'Connell was declared bankrupt and had to leave. The owner, Punch Tavern, is looking for a new landlord to take the thriving pub on. They are hoping to be able to reopen the pub in October or November.

The Robin Hood also appears to be closed at the moment.



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Lamb & Flag celebrates 1/3 million pints from Palmer's Brewery



The Lamb and Flag in Oxford is celebrating selling one third of a million pints of fine ale from Palmers Brewery in Dorset over the last 12 years. Pub profits have gone towards scholarships for students at St John's College, owner of the historic tavern.

The pub and brewery are marking this milestone with a special Meet the Brewer event at 7pm on 25 October in the Lamb and Flag back room. Head Brewer Darren Batten will be conducting a tasting of all five Palmers' ales and explained the finer points of brewing each one using traditional methods.

Even better, for those attending the tasting, the price of Palmers' Best will be held to year 2000 levels for the evening, that's £2.20 a pint. And landlord Martin Siggery is planning a tasty sausage and mash supper as part of the festivities.

Martin said: 'Palmers beers are always very popular in Oxford and our customers enjoy a really well-kept pint. We're looking forward to tasting the full range and hearing more about how they are made.'

St John's College opened the Lamb and Flag Tavern beside the college in St Giles in 1695. Named after the two symbols associated with St John the Baptist,

the pub has served generations of students and professors, as well as writers and celebrities including JRR Tolkien, CS Lewis, Graham Greene and Bill Clinton. Former Prime Minister Tony Blair was a regular visitor during his student days at St John's in the 1970s.

In 1999, the college took over the running of the pub and put Palmers' cask ales among others on the bar. Since that time, all of the profits from every drink sold are put towards supporting student scholarships at St John's. The Lamb and Flag Scholarships are awarded to graduate students who are of outstanding academic excellence but have no other source of funding to pursue their doctorate degrees.

Since the scheme started, Lamb and Flag scholarships have enabled 37 gifted students to further their studies at St John's. That's definitely worth raising a glass to!

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&
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The Nag's Head

The Nag's Head on the Bridge in Abingdon-on-Thames has been under refurbishment and will re-open early October. Dushan Salwathura, landlord from the Broad Face in Abingdon, has taken over this iconic pub. He has already rebranded the beer garden as The Bridge and opened it up for customers; fittingly serving Abingdon Bridge from the local brewery Loose Cannon!

The division of the beer garden and pub is a clever one and is sure to serve Dushan well in the future. There is a little serving house by the beer garden which is independent of the pub; here both food and drink can be served without having to rely on the pub's kitchen and bar.

When the pub opens Dushan will use the winning formula he developed at the Broad Face; great music, lovely food and well kept beer. CAMRA members will have 30p off real ale too. There will be six hand pumps on the bar in the pub, and as it is a free house, he can pick and choose which beers to put on. Abingdon Bridge is going to be the house beer, but other local beers are planned as well as guest beers from further afield.

The Brewery Tap

The Brewery Tap in Abingdon is well known for its interesting range of well kept beers. For those who haven't been to a 'Tapfest' yet, they are held in a huge marquee next to the pub which creates a real festival atmosphere. This year, there will be new product launches from Loose Cannon, XT, West Berks, ELB and Butts together with several of 2012's GBBF Gold and Silver medal winners. Plus lots and lots of sausages to try. Free entry. Serving in the marquee each night until midnight. For details and tasting notes please visit thebrewerytap.net

The Punchbowl

The Punchbowl in Abingdon-on-Thames has been given a beautiful overhaul with a new pub sign and the outside newly painted. The pub now looks fresh and clean alongside the refurbished County Hall.

The Broad Face

The Broad Face is now being run by landlords, Dan and Jamie from the Old Anchor Inn in Abingdon, so we know that the pub is in good hands.



The Brewery Tap

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Brewery News



Vale Brewery

This summer has been a rather busy time at Vale Brewery in Brill so David and Simon in the Brewery and the delivery team have been flat out.

Wetherspoons are running Vale Special from September through to November, so that will be available nationally. Then Ember Inns selected VPA for a festival winners beer festival. Vale Pale Ale was selected after receiving a Bronze at the Great British Beer Festival. The continuing the winners theme, Greene King selected Gravititas the SIBA (Brewers Association) Gold medal winning beer to feature as one of just four guest ales in September.

By late September they will be back in stock of their bottle-conditioned ales. These are available at the Brewery Shop in Brill or from the Aylesbury Brewhouse shop behind the Hop Pole in Aylesbury.

The monthly special brews continue with Reilly's Red in October. The pump badge is pictured and those more familiar with Vale staff may recognize a passing resemblance to a certain character. This ale is a Ruby Red coloured Irish style ale. Certainly this will be one to look out for as the nights get darker.

In November there is Northern Lights. At 4.2% this beer named after the colourful light display also known as the aurora borealis.

Vale Brewery are on Facebook & follow them on Twitter @ValeBrewery

XT Brewery

XT-Four can now be found in bottles, available from the brewery shop. XT beers will also be available at the Oxford Beer festival. An excellent XT beer festival showcasing the entire range of XT beers from 1-9, excluding 7 but including green hopped 1 was held at the Lamb & Flag in September.

Shotover Brewery

There is currently a rare special in the fermenter - a 5% dark porter planned as winter special. The last time they did a special was Trinity as a summer ale in April and it rained for three months. Now they are expecting a very mild winter! The porter should be ready for release by the third week in October.



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Loose Cannon Brewery

The Brewery has created a new autumn seasonal beer called Bandwagon.

Aylesbury Brewhouse

ABC are happy to announce that brewery tours are now available for individuals and groups. Visit their newly launched website at aylesburybrewhouse.co.uk for details.



They have passed the milestone of twenty-five different limited edition beers, since opening in December last year. So onward and upward with the latest releases being Duck End IPA 5.0% English IPA, Bob the Elder 4.4% a bitter with a hint of elderflower and Boggling Fettle 3.8% a mild based on a 1953 northern recipe.

Follow them on Twitter @AylesburyBrewCo



Enjoy 1 or 2 or 3 or 4...

in the pub or from the brewery shop.

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XT Brewery, Notley Farm, Long Crendon, Bucks. HP18 9ER

01844 208 310

www.xtbrewing.com

Bellinger Brewery

The Brewery has been very busy. Demand has been overwhelming at times. They have got a Bellingers Cricket team and now an Aunt Sally team too. Both great fun.

A Christmas special is due for release mid November called "Sleigh fuel" at 5% an almost ruby red ,well hopped with Cascade and Fuggles.

Also due for release is a range of Bellingers Ale Gift box sets, which consists of two bottles of Bellingers, a Bellingers fridge magnet bottle opener, Bellinger's Glass and to complete the experience, four Bellingers Beer Mats.



HOPS!

Russ Taylor – XT Brewing Co

Hops are one of the main ingredients in beer. There are a huge number of varieties of hop giving all sorts of different flavours and aromas. Hops are mainly grown in Northern Europe, North America and Down Under. Hops are the female flower of a rambling plant a bit like a grape vine. In fact hops grow in similar - if cooler - conditions to grapes. September is harvest time for hops in England and the hop bines are stripped of their lovely little green flowers for us brewers to add to our beers.

Hop flowers are really rather delicate and the hop farmers want to try and preserve as much flavour as possible. Generally this is done by very quickly drying and compressing the hops just hours after they are harvested. Much like the way peas are quickly frozen, hops must be dried and vacuum packed to preserve their elusive qualities such that brewers can use the hops through the year until the next harvest.

But... what if you harvest the hops and use them straight away in a brew and don't dry them?

To find out, we went along to a hop harvest in Herefordshire in early September to see the harvest taking place and collect enough hops for a brew. As the hops very quickly start to dry out and lose their flavours we stuffed the van to the roof with bine fresh hops and raced back to the brewery.

When hops are dried and vacuum packed they reduce in weight considerably as the water is driven



out. Therefore when you use fresh hops you need about eight times the usual recipe weight. Normally at XT we use quite a lot of hops to get that hoppy taste in our beers, so we had to multiply that up, and gosh, it's a lot of fresh hops! It actually took quite a long time to add all the fresh hops to the brew, simply because there were just so many of the emerald gems.

We add hops at various different stages of our brewing process. Depending on when and how the hops are added affects how their flavours and aromas come through in the beer. As usual, we added portions of the fresh hops throughout the brew. Once we finished making the beer, it was transferred to our storage vessels to mature and soak up all those delicious flavours for about ten days.

This is a once a year opportunity to brew with fresh hops. It's also a bit of a gamble; the hops haven't been tested in a lab or sampled for taste so the big brewers won't dare make a fresh hop beer. We decided to take the risk and made a one off brew for 2012. The beer uses the recipe for our XT-ONE as a basis and therefore we decided to call it 'Fresh Hop-ONE' and will sell it alongside the regular beer. It will also be interesting to see how they differ. The XT-ONE in both normal and fresh hop version will be sold through pubs in Bucks, Oxon and Herts - look out for them and see if you can taste the difference.



Wychwood Brewery News



Wychwood Seasonal Beers

October – it’s all about Hobgoblin, the unofficial beer of Halloween!



November - Dog's Bollock's 5.2% ABV – Pale golden, well-rounded flavours warm the palate and come together with a hint of nuts.



Grand Lighting of the Pumpkins

Wychwood brewery's "Grand Lighting of the Pumpkins" event will take place on Halloween evening.

From 6.00pm until 9.00pm on 31st October the brewery gates will be thrown open to welcome local families and friends along to its annual spookfest. Entry is free and with a hog roast and BBQ, Hobgoblin beer for the adults, face painting, disco, live band all added to the mayhem of the fancy dress and pumpkin carving competitions its sure to be a great night.

This year's chosen beneficiary will be Special Effect, a charity based in Charlbury dedicated to helping young people with disabilities enjoy computer games and communication aids. For more information about the event please call the brewery on 01993 890800.



Brakspear Sponsors Oxford Beer Festival

As sponsors of the Oxford Beer Festival logo competition, Brakspear Brewing Company would like to congratulate Keith Ringley on scooping the winning prize on 10 cases of beer with his wonderful entry. Congratulations also go to the two runners up Alan Studholme and Stuart Smith; both entries were worthy of the cases of beer up for grabs.

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Old Hooky, Hooky Mild & Flagship are at the Oxford Beer Festival, 12-13 Oct, at the Town Hall



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Compass moves west - and celebrates with two new beers



The last few months at Compass have been filled with work out at their new premises in Carterton with new fermenters, a bigger cold store (with a clever efficient Swedish cooling installation- naturally) and an automatic bottling line. Draught sales were halted while the cold store was being moved, but this year Compass racked much more Symposium into cask. This summer wheat beer (also available bottle- conditioned) is continuing to gain a steady following.

Beer drinkers in the branch area will also see new labels and pump clips. The design emphasises the 'contrast, complement and cut' which Compass looks for when matching beer with food.

As well as pouring concrete and installing equipment, Mattias Sjöberg has created two new beers for the autumn, about which he says "while they sit at two ends of a spectrum in ABV and inspiration, both are brewed for flavour. West could be described as a straightforward 'bitter', but it is packed with baked malt flavour and a pair of

interesting, relatively new hops. We'll only do this in cask initially. It's named for our move to Carterton. Torp, on the other hand, was inspired by Belgian and Northern French farmhouse beers and, at a time when a lot of attention is focused on hops, shows just what a difference the right yeast makes".



West (3.5%) Copper- coloured with Maris Otter, British Munich and Carared. English and Polish hops. Nose: Tropical Fruit. Taste: Plenty of baked malt through to the finish underpinning a good bitterness.



Torp (7.0%) Four malts, balanced with French and Polish hops. Funky Belgian yeast. The colour of four-month copper. Nose: Spicy, herbal, earthy, some dried fruit. Taste: Dry, slightly tart, nutty with complex esters.

The next couple of months look busy for Compass with more new beers planned with interesting local ingredients, sending bottles further afield, and other exciting projects with food matching planned before the end of the year. www.compassbrewery.com

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New Members Witney Pub Crawl



As the seconds ticked past the designated 3pm meeting time, I shuffled nervously in my seat and tried not to make eye contact with the bar staff. The staff at the **Company of Weavers** had reserved three prominent tables for the CAMRA new members social. At this point there were three of us.

The **Wetherspoons** pub (having opened in February) invited the Oxford CAMRA branch to visit and see this latest addition to the pub scene in Witney. The refurbishment of the former Palace nightclub has been first class, managing to get much needed natural light into the building. A good mixture of seating provides comfy sofas for relaxing with friends, tables for dining and taller tables for sitting or standing near the bar.

Being a sizable pub with a long bar, they have taken full advantage by serving a large selection of beers on tap. Those available when we visited included: **WarfeBank Brewery Golden Pursuit, Youngs Special, Ruddles Best, Abbot Ale, Sharp's Doom Bar, Tring Side Pocket for a Toad, Koroibos** (a Wetherspoons exclusive), **Elgoods Greyhound** and **Moor House White Mist**.

At last, around twenty past three, the trickle of arrivals become a flood as the Abingdon contingent arrived. It was definitely a surprise to see so many people! There were about thirty of us in total, with the regulars mingling with the new faces (hopefully that didn't put them off!).

As the X15 bus from Abingdon had arrived before two o'clock, the party had already visited the two Witney pubs entered in the Town and Village Pub of the Year competition, **The New Inn** and **The Eagle Tavern**.

We realised that all of us arriving at the next pub in one go would result in a rather long wait at the bar so a phased approach was used. The first ten of us headed across the street to **the Angel**, with the remainder planning on following 10 minutes later. Available ales were **Ringwood Boondoggle, Angel Inn Ale, Brakspear Oxford Gold** and **Mansfield Cask**. The Angel is good locals pub, with a pool table and usually some sport showing on TV.

Unfortunately a significant number of the Abingdon crowd had to catch the bus home after the Angel so we bid them farewell and headed off to the next pub.

With the town and village candidate pubs visited by half the group, we opted for the **Royal Oak**. The Oak is very pleasant pub to visit with well kept **Wadworth Ales**. However it is one of the pricier pubs in Witney. It is a well known fact that beer stimulates the appetite, so some of us took the opportunity to sample the cakes and scones available at the Oak. I know the purists amongst you will be up in arms for deviating from the 'approved'

pub crawl staples of crisps and peanuts. So it's probably best that I don't tell you that we had a cup of tea there too.

The final pub on the itinerary was **the Plough**. Part of the pub is laid out for diners as there is a strong emphasis on food, but we were able to sit in the section just for drinking. By this point my notes are unintelligible so I am not sure which beers they were serving. However, I know they usually have **Tim Taylor Landlord, Ringwood Bitter** and two other beers.

From an initial panic that no one was going to turn up to struggling to keep track of such a large crowd, it was a fantastic day out. I hope everyone else enjoyed it as much as I did and that we will see those new members again. If you have newly joined CAMRA or just moved into the branch area, please come along to one of our meetings or socials. We're a friendly bunch and always enjoy meeting anyone who enjoys a great beer or cider.

The New Inn Witney

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Quite friendly generally.

The New Inn, 111 Corn Street, Witney, Oxfordshire
OX28 6AU 01993 703807
Facebook: New Inn Witney

Branch City Pub of the Year Competition



It is time to vote for the City 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. Six pubs were short-listed at the September branch meeting. Voting forms may be collected from any of the nominated pubs. Members must visit each pub to have their forms stamped, and then rank the pubs in order of preference. The votes will be counted at the December branch meeting. More information on judging criteria and how to return the forms is included on the forms.

Judging Criteria

Quality of Beer:

Pub should consistently serve excellent real ale.

Atmosphere, Style and Decor:

The "feel" of the pub. Are you going to want to revisit regularly.

Service and Welcome:

Is the service prompt and friendly.

Clientele Mix:

A good pub should make anyone feel welcome.

Sympathy with CAMRA Aims:

Does the pub promote our values?

Good Value:

Not just the price of ale, but was the whole experience good value.

The Six Nominated Pubs (in alphabetical order)

Chequers

131 High Street, Oxford, OX1 4DH

Phone: 01865 727463

Open: 11am-11pm; noon-11pm Sun.

Masons Arms

2 Quarry School Place, Headington Quarry,
Oxford, OX3 8LH

Phone: 01865 764579

Open: 7pm-11pm Mon; 5pm-11pm Tue-Fri; 11am-11pm Sat; noon-4pm, 7pm-10.30pm Sun.

Far From the Madding Crowd

10-12 Friar's Entry, Oxford, OX1 2BY

Phone: 01865 240900

Open: 11.30am-11pm (midnight Thur-Sat); noon-10.30pm Sun.

Rose & Crown

14 North Parade Avenue, Oxford, OX2 6LX

Phone: 01865 510551

Open: 10am-midnight; noon-11pm Sun.

Lamb & Flag

12 St Giles, Oxford, OX1 3JS

Phone: 01865 515787

Open: noon-11pm; noon-10.30 Sun.

Royal Blenheim

13 St Ebbe's Street, Oxford, OX1 1PT

Phone: 01865 242355

Open: 11am-11pm; 11am-midnight Fri & Sat; 11am-10.30pm Sun.

Oxford 2012 BEER FESTIVAL



The 2012 Oxford Beer Festival takes place from **Thursday 11th October** to **Saturday 13th October**, at Oxford Town Hall, celebrating our fifteenth annual event at that venue.

Featuring 160 Real Ales with 40 duplicate casks for Saturday; Real Cider and Perry

Admission is £2 (£1 for CAMRA members), payable on the door - there are no advanced ticket sales. There is a £2 glass deposit; this is returned in full if you hand in your undamaged glass when leaving the festival (alternatively you are very welcome to keep the glass as a souvenir). Beer is paid for at the bar using beer tokens. We recommend that you buy a £6 token sheet on entry (you can buy more sheets later if needed). Unused tokens will be refunded in full as you leave the festival, or can be donated to the festival charity (Sobell House Hospice). In order to streamline the entry process and avoid a build up of the queue, please have ready £10-per-head (£9-per-head for CAMRA members), in cash, when queueing for entrance.

CAMRA volunteers are needed to help staff the festival, set-up on Wednesday 10th and take-down on the morning of Sunday 14th. Contact the Staffing Officer, Steve Lawrence (staffing@oxfordcamra.org.uk, 01235 525436). The staffing form is available to download, if you would like to print one yourself from our website www.oxfordcamra.org.uk/festival2012.php

Please help promote the Festival if you can; the poster (PDF, 140Kbytes) is available to download.

We are proud to have Brakspear to sponsor our staff t-shirts.

The Pasty-Man is back at our Festival and he will be serving food throughout the festival opening times. He has new recipes that include both real ale pasties and cider pasties.

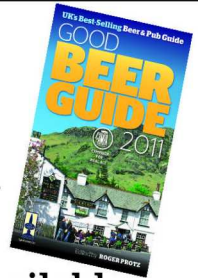
We are showcasing local breweries and a tasting panel will choose the Local Beer of the Festival. It will happen at a blind tasting session where our local breweries have been asked to choose one of their beers to enter the competition. They might send more than one beer to the Festival itself. Breweries in a radius of 30 miles from Oxford Town Hall can enter.

ROYAL BLENHEIM

13 Ebbes St. Oxford



- 10 hand pumps.
- We are in the 2011 Good Beer Guide.
- 1/3 pints always available.
- Homemade food using fresh & local produce. Vegetarian, vegan & coeliac friendly.
- Quiz Night Wednesday 9pm.



Only pub in Oxford run by an Oxford brewery.
Nominated for CAMRA Oxford Pub of the Year 2010.
10% off food/drink for CAMRA members 3pm-7pm.

www.royalblenheim.co.uk

Oxford CAMRA Branch Diary



Sat 6th October, 2pm onwards Social at Turf Tavern Beer Festival

Also meet up with the Rutland branch of CAMRA who are visiting Oxford.

Sun 7th October, 1pm-5pm
Social at Abingdon Brewery Tap Octoberfest
Brewery Tap, Ock Street, Abingdon
50+ Real ales and ciders. See advert on page 6.

Thu 11th October to Sat 13th October Oxford Beer Festival

Oxford Town Hall
Thursday 5pm-11pm,
Friday 11am-11pm
Saturday 11am-8pm
Volunteers needed for set up on Wed 10th and Take down Sun 14th.



Fri 26th October, 7pm-11pm Social at Oxford's West End Octoberfest

Location: Dukes Cut, Oxford
Meet at Duke's cut and also visit the other participating pubs: The Jam Factory and The Oxford Retreat.

Tue 6th November, 7:30pm-9:30pm

Branch Meeting
Port Mahon, St. Clements, Oxford
Oxford CAMRA branch meeting. All CAMRA members welcome.



Mon 12th November Oxford Drinker Deadline

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

Sat 17th November, 11am-7pm
Rural Minibus Trip
Visiting pubs to the North of the city including Yarnton and Cassington.

Pickup Abingdon (Stratton Way): 11am, Oxford (Lamb & Flag): 11:30am
For details of seats [the first 15 will travel] contact Tony G at anthony4177@btinternet.com and 01865461196 . Mob 07588181313 .

Wed 5th December, 7:30pm-9:30pm

Branch Meeting
Venue to be confirmed, check website or What's Brewing.

Oxford CAMRA Branch Meeting. Counting up votes and Announcement of the winner of Oxford City Pub of the Year.

Sat 15th December, 11am-7pm
Rural Minibus Trip and Presentation of Town & Village Pub of the Year

Pickup Abingdon (Stratton Way): 11am, Oxford (Lamb & Flag): 11:30am
For details of seats [the first 15 will travel] contact Tony G at anthony4177@btinternet.com and 01865461196 . Mob 07588181313 .

Oxford Branch AGM

The branch AGM took place 17th September at the Folly Bridge Inn in Abingdon Road, Oxford. A new venue for us but with a nice big meeting room upstairs which was easier to move around in than the front room at the King's Arms. The turn-out was a little disappointing, perhaps reflecting the reluctance of the Oxford members to travel south of the river. There was a good choice of Wadworth's beers on as well. Bishop's Tipple, 6x, Henry's Original, and Boundary which I thought particularly tasty.

In reports from the outgoing officers we heard about the successes of the last year; the 2011 Beer Festival, Oxford Pub Guide, the Drinker, and the healthy state of the branch finances. Neil felt that we could have done better on developing the branch 'strategy' and improving the web site.

For personal reasons both the Chair, Neil Hoggarth, and Treasurer, Dave Cogdell, had decided to stand down. There was a vote of thanks from the floor for their work for the branch. Elections took place for the new committee:

New Committee

Chair:

Matt Bullock

Vice Chair:

Dennis Brown as currently

Secretary:

Steve Lawrence as currently

Treasurer:

Provisionally Tony Goulding

Membership Secretary:

Christopher Chris-moore as currently

Pubs Officer:

Steven Green

Editors Oxford Drinker:

JoHanne and Steven Green as currently

Younger Members contact:

Caroline Wingate as currently

Press and Publicity:

Tony Goulding as currently

Public affairs officer:

Will Reed as currently

The panel of 5 auditors was confirmed as currently.

Beer Festivals and Events



Thu 4th October to Sun 7th October

Turf Tavern Autumn Real Ale Festival

Turf Tavern, Bath Place, Oxford

01865 243235

www.theturftavern.co.uk

Fri 5th October to Sat 6th October

6th Ascot Racecourse CAMRA Beer Festival

Ascot Racecourses

Over 200 real ales, cider and perries, including a highlands & islands of Scotland regional bar

Tickets from £18 per person, half price entry for CAMRA members quoting BEER12

Fine dining available

0844 346 3000 ascot.co.uk

Fri 5th October to Sat 6th October

Solihull Beer Festival

The Royal British Legion, Union Road, Solihull

35+ beers plus cider

www.solihullcamra.org.uk

Fri 5th October to Sun 7th October

Abingdon - The 'Tap' Octoberfest

Brewery Tap, Ock Street, Abingdon

50+ Cask Ales and Craft Ciders. Several new beers never seen before including new Loose Cannon beer, XT Green Hopped #1, and CAMRA and SIBA award winning beers.

A huge selection of sausages, plus pulled pork brisket and other festival specials.

Live music throughout the weekend.

See advert on page 6.

Thu 11th October to Sat 13th October

Oxford Beer Festival

Town Hall, St Aldates, Oxford

www.oxfordcamra.org.uk

Wed 17th October to Sat 20th October

Concrete Pint Beer Festival

Buszy, opp. Milton Keynes Central rail station, Elder Gate, Central Milton Keynes

90 beers, ciders & perries

www.mkcamra.org.uk

Thu 18th October, 7pm-10pm

Meet the Brewer - Mordue Brewery

University Club, 11 Mansfield Road, Oxford,

OX1 3SZ

Tickets can be purchased from the Club reception in the mornings and from the bar in the evenings. This is a popular event. If you can't make it before the day of the event to buy the tickets CAMRA members can email Kabi: kabilan.puliyadi@club.ox.ac.uk to reserve tickets for you.

Fri 19th October to Sat 20th October

Bath Beer Festival

The Pavilion, North Parade Road, Bath

80 beers plus 30 ciders

www.bathpavilion.org

Fri 19th October to Sun 21st October

Steventon Cherry Tree Beer Festival

Cherry Tree, Steventon

Cherry tree beer fest. 20 ales & some ciders over the weekend 19th - 21st October.

Wed 24th October to Sun 28th October

West End October Beer Festival

Duke's Cut, Jam Factory The Oxford Retreat

5 days, 3 venues, 1 wristband

Oxford's only collaborative beer festival. raising money for Sobell House.

Purchase a wristband for only £5 from any of our venues to receive great discounts on a range of ciders, real ales and continental craft beers. See advert on page 4.

Wed 24th October to Sun 11th November

Wetherspoon Real Ale and Cider Festival

Wetherspoons Nationally

All JD Wetherspoon & Lloyd's No.1 Bars

www.jdwrealale.co.uk

Thu 25th October to Sat 27th October

Swindon Beer Festival

STEAM Museum, Kemble Drive, Swindon

100+ beers plus cider & perry

www.swindoncamra.org.uk

Thu 25th October to Sat 27th October

Birmingham Beer Festival

Second City Suite, Sherlock Street,

Birmingham

220+ beers, 60+ ciders & perries

www.birminghambeerfestival.org.uk

To add a festival to the diary, please email details to festivals@oxfordcamra.org.uk

Fri 26th October to Sat 27th October**Aylesbury Vale Beer Festival**

Bucks County Council Sports & Social Club,
Lower Road, Stoke Mandeville
www.swansupping.org.uk

Fri 9th November to Sat 10th November**Wantage Beer Festival**

Wantage Civic Hall, Portway, Wantage, OX12
9BY

Opening times: Friday 11am-11pm, Saturday
11am-11pm.

23 Real Ales. See advert on page 23.

www.whitehorsecamra.org.uk/

Enquiries:

beerfestival12@whitehorsecamra.org.uk

Sat 10th November, 7:30pm-11pm**KennFest**

Kennington Scout Hut, OX1 5QL

Local Oxfordshire ales, and Cider. £5 a ticket.

Tickets limited to 100 and purchased in

advance. All profits to 40th Oxford Kennington
Scout Group

www.facebook.com/events/355116677897490/

Thu 22nd November to Sat 24th November**Dudley Winter Ales Fayre**

Dudley Town Hall, St James's Road, Dudley

70+ beers plus cider & perry

www.dudleycamra.org.uk

Tue 4th December to Sat 8th December**Pig's Ear Beer & Cider Festival**

Round Chapel, Powerscroft Road, Hackney,
London

www.pigsear.org.uk

Sat 8th December**Haddenham Winterfest**

Village Hall Complex, Banks Road,

Haddenham

www.haddenham-beer-festival.co.uk

Tue 11th December to Sat 15th December**Far from the Madding Crowd Winter Beer Festival**

Far from the Madding Crowd, Friars Entry,
Oxford

01865 240900

www.maddingcrowd.co.uk



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



Oxford 2012 BEER FESTIVAL

Oxford Town Hall

St Aldates, Oxford OX1 1BX

Thursday 11th October 5pm-11pm

Friday 12th October 11am-11pm

Saturday 13th October 11am-8pm

Featuring 160 beers (plus 40 duplicate casks for Saturday)

Real Cider and Perry

Hot and Cold Food at all sessions

Admission £2.00

(FREE for card-carrying CAMRA, BRAS and OURAS members)

www.oxfordcamra.org.uk



Beer Festival Equipment

*Hire of Barrel stillage,
cooling, taps, bars etc*

*Barrel (9gl) Stillages/ Racking,
traditional wooden 2 x 9gl, 12 x 9gl*

*Taps, Chiller Saddles
& Insulation Jackets*

Chillers Remote

*Bar units - 2 metre long and flooring
Hand pumps*

*Photos and a very competitive price list
are available on the website*

Web: www.beerfestivalequipment.co.uk

Email: john@beerfestivalequipment.co.uk

Tel 07770 938300

Based near Bicester



THE BEAR INN

The Bear Inn is the oldest pub in Oxford and is a hidden gem, just off the hustle and bustle of the busy High Street.

◆ ◆ ◆
 The pub is popular with students, locals and tourists alike, who enjoy a warm welcome, a range of real ales and bottled conditioned beers and traditional, home-cooked food by the fire.

◆ ◆ ◆
 The pub is most famous for its collection of ties - dating back to the early 1900's and representing clubs in the Oxford area and, more recently, around the globe.

◆ ◆ ◆
 A great place to unwind, take off your own tie, and enjoy looking at everyone else's!



6 Alfred Street, Oxford, Oxfordshire OX1 4EH
 Telephone: 01865 728164
 Email: bearinn@fullers.co.uk

Brickside Brewery, Keweenaw County, Michigan



Dermot Dobson

For quite a few years now, Perdy and I have taken a fortnights holiday in the remote area of Keweenaw County, in Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

When I first visited the USA, close on 30 years ago, finding any domestic beer that was not a mass-produced fizzy concoction was a challenge. Latterly, the proliferation of micro-breweries has made hunting good beer both enjoyable and productive.

While there are a couple of micros a few miles down-state in Calumet (Red Jacket Brewing Co.) and Houghton (Keweenaw Brewing Co.), there hasn't been a brewery in Keweenaw County for 100+ years or in the town of Copper Harbor(u)r at all.

Enter the enterprising Jason Robinson who used the internet funding site Kickstarter (<http://tiny.cc/oqanjw>) to raise startup funding of \$20K (in fact, he was oversubscribed and hit almost \$22K) to build a brewery.

Like many others, we threw some cash into the pot (and received a growler, glass and tshirt) when the appeal launched in May 2011 and he hit target and closed on kickstarter on July 9th 2011.

After some trials and tribulations, Brickside Brewery and bar opened earlier this year and we went to sample the fruits of our 'investment' in early August.

Jason acquired a building that used to house a roadside deli/restaurant on US41, the main road through Copper Harbor.

My friend Todd (from FermiLab, near Chicago) and I had intended to work our way through the five beers on sale, but having started on the IPA, found it such



The new bar - as the name implies, Copper Harbor is in the 'Copper Country' which was the source for a substantial fraction of the world's supply of copper for many decades - hence the copper-covered counter.

an ideal drink for a blazing hot afternoon, that we stuck with that for the session.

And finally, a few words from Jason on setting up a brewery:

"Hmmm. Its hard work, just because it's mostly me at this point. Its a job where you must love cleaning, because that is the biggest and most important part. Yes the ingredients are important as well, but you're going to be spending most of your time getting intimate with stainless surfaces and various powerful cleaners.

A sense of humor and humility is not required but should be. As Steve Parks¹ told us, "Never stop being amazed that someone is paying you for your beer".

On our next trip there, I'll ensure I have a camera with me on *all* the microbrewery trips in the area, for there are some of architectural and historic interest.

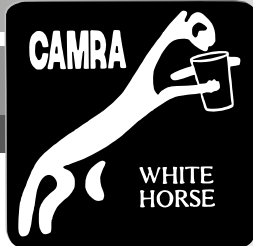
¹ of American Brewing Guild
- <http://www.abgbrew.com/>



Outside of the old deli, just as work started.

White Horse Branch of CAMRA

www.whitehorsecamra.org.uk



The Royal Oak is National Cider Pub of the Year for 2012.

Yet another award has been bestowed on Paul Hexter at the Royal Oak, Wantage. As well as a past winner of Regional POTY and a National POTY finalist, The Royal Oak is now the National Cider and Perry Pub of the Year for 2012.

The presentation took place at the Royal Oak on Monday 1st October 2012, to kick off the start of CAMRA's National Cider & Perry month.

On hearing of his success, Paul Hexter, Royal Oak licensee, said:

'We're always extending our cider and perry range as we enjoy supporting and learning more about local cider producers and sharing that information with customers. We are thrilled to be in the position of receiving such an award, especially at a time when the real cider industry is growing, with some producers expanding out of all proportion.'

The Royal Oak beat 3 other National finalists to the accolade. These pubs are-

- Arkwright Arms, Sutton cum Duckmanton, Derbyshire
- Graduate College Bar, Lancaster University, Lancaster
- Horns Lodge, South Chailey, East Sussex

The Royal Oak stocks a formidable 15 ciders and perries at any one time, the majority of which are sourced from the local area. Aside from the pub's excellent range, judges praised the owners for their support of local producers and dedication to promoting the real cider industry to customers.

Landlord Paul Hexter and his wife Frankie took over the pub in 1983, turning it into a multi award winning street corner pub famed for its extensive drinks selection, and also renowned for being an active supporter of local charities, holding regular fundraising events.

White Horse Branch Social Diary

Sunday 30th September

Regional POTY presentation

Shoulder of Mutton
3.00pm

Monday 1st October

Regional Cider POTY presentation

Royal Oak
12.30pm

Saturday 6th October

Social to Ascot BF

Ascot racecourse
Pick up time TBC

Thursday 18th October

Branch Meeting

The Eight Bells, Eaton
7.45pm

Fri/Sat 9th/10th November

5th Wantage Beer Festival

Civic Hall, Portway, Wantage
11.00am to 11.00pm

Friday 14th December

Christmas Social at Regional POTY winners

Royal Oak and Shoulder of Mutton, Wantage
7.00pm start

LocAle

The branch continues to survey and assess pubs in the area and certifies those that meet the criteria for LocAle status. This is where the pub always makes available at least one beer brewed within a 30 mile radius of the pub. Since the turn of the year there have been 3 new additions to the list:

- **The Greyhound**, Letcombe Regis;
- **The Swan**, Wantage
- **The Bear Hotel**, Wantage.

This makes a total of 27 pubs, almost a third of the pubs in the branch, supporting local producers of beer. A full list of the pubs can be found on the White Horse CAMRA website. www.whitehorsecamra.org.uk

New entries in 2013 Good Beer Guide

There have been three new entries in the 2013 Good Beer Guide published on 13th September, within the White Horse Branch area. These are:

- The Eight Bells, Eaton;
- The Swan, Faringdon;
- The Prince of Wales, Shippon.

Neil Crook, branch chairman, said 'With only a total of 8 entries allowed from the branch's 80+ pubs, it is always very difficult making the selections. The new entries this year have shown considerable effort in achieving and maintaining a high level of beer quality and varied choice and fully deserve their place in the Guide.'

Shoulder of Mutton is Central Southern Regional Pub of the Year (POTY) for 2012.

On the launch of the 2013 Good Beer Guide, it was announced that the Shoulder of Mutton has been voted as CAMRA's 2012 Central Southern Regional Pub of the Year (POTY) by its members.

The pub and its landlord Peter Fowler were up against 10 other branch POTY winners from the region and came out the best. Comments by the judges following their visits include: A great pub, now near perfect, Beer range excellent, Fantastic, Ale top notch, A pub everyone likes to visit.

Since taking over a dying pub back in late 2010, Peter Fowler has transformed it into a thriving establishment with 10 ever-changing beers available and a selection of ciders. It also has its own vegetarian-only restaurant.

Peter said: 'I am proud and honoured at winning such a prestigious award, especially as it came from such a discerning group of real ale aficionados.' He pledged to do his utmost to maintain a very high level of beer quality and provide an ever-changing range of beers for his clientele.



The presentation for Regional POTY winner took place at the Shoulder of Mutton on Sunday 30th September.

The pub will now fight it out with 15 other regional winners for the prize of being CAMRA's National Pub of the Year which will be announced in February 2013.



We sell polypins and bottles direct from the brewery, Mon-Fri.

For any enquiries please call:

01367 718700

or email

fiona@whitehorsebrewery.com

WHITE HORSE BREWERY

3 Ware Road, White Horse Business Park,
Stanford in the Vale, Oxfordshire, SN7 8NY



www.whitehorsebrewery.com

Historic Brewery Tour of Oxford

Dick Bosley



This month sees a change of pace for the Steventon strollers – rather than our usual yomp up hill and down dale we went by bus to the Oxford Preservation Trust's tour of historic brewery sites – part of their Open Doors event.

Owing to the vagaries of Oxford's traffic system we chose to walk in from the Abingdon Road, getting to the Castle just in time for the next guided walk – in fact leaving us three minutes to sample the excellent **Compass Brewery** ales in the castle courtyard before setting off. Historically this was an interesting place to start as the castle had a brewery of its own with records showing that the brewhouse had collapsed in 1255, being rebuilt in 1267. Until 1784 the prison governor made his money selling beer to inmates – this right was relinquished in return for a salary of £50 per year.

Leaving the Castle by the backdoor – I can't help thinking this is a design fault in a castle – we emerged into Tidmarsh Lane where the 18th century **Fox's Malthouse** can be seen with its distinctive window arrangement. Around the corner are the decorated gates to the **Morrells Lion Brewery** site, made at the Lucy's foundry. Circuiting around the site brought us to where the chimney erected in 1901 for the steam engine used to power the brewery still stands. Crossing the Castle Mill Stream the waterwheel previously used is still visible although dilapidated – a description many people have used about me! There are records of a brewery on this site going back to 1597, with Morrells being formed here in 1743 by Richard Tawney, with the Morrell family taking over in 1782 until the brewery closed in 1998. They also had farms at Headington, to supply malt, and at South Parks where cattle were raised, partly to give meat to the staff each Christmas.

Across another stream are the last remains of the **Swan Brewery**, the malthouse, purchased by William Hall in 1896. The brewery itself was demolished in the 1960's ending a history of malting here that dated back more than 300 years.

Passing Brewer Street - where there are records of a 12th or 13th century brewery - we continued up St Ebbes Street where the arched gateway to the Museum of Modern Art can be seen. At one time this was the main gate to **Hanleys City Brewery**. There were four wells supplying the brewery and the MoMA is housed in the old fermentation rooms with a plaque in the toilets commemorating the buildings brewing heritage. The brewery site extended up to Queen Street, where the offices were on the upper floors of what is now the BHS shop. Hanleys were taken over by **Halls** in 1898.

Our tour came to an end here and it must be said that our delightful guide Keri was very informative on the



history of the buildings. However we felt that it would be best to continue the history lesson by sampling some of the local pubs as well. We returned to the **Jolly Farmers** having earlier passed the sign advertising local real ales. The only beer available was **Doom Bar** from Cornwall which we felt was stretching the definition of local a bit too much and so we passed on to the **Royal Blenheim** in St Ebbes.

John chose the **Everards Sunchaser** (4.1%) and I had the 3.8% **Rock Bitter** from Nottingham. Neither beer was what could be called inspiring so we decided to move on **the Bear**.

Before reaching our destination an impromptu detour saw us enter **the Chequers**. At 5.9% **Thornbridge Jaipur** was stronger than we had planned but far far too good to refuse. Perhaps the strength accounted for the next wrong turn and our arriving at the **White Horse**. Sitting outside in the sunshine, watching the world go by and sampling **Shotover Prospect** and **White Horse Bitter** (both 3.9%) we planned our next move. Unsurprisingly we chose a short one moving on to the **Kings Arms**, John having a ridiculously expensive **London Meantime Pale Ale** (4.5%) – well it was my round – while I chose the more reasonable **Pride of Oxford** (4.3%). I had the last laugh though as the LMPA was served at about freezing point.

Thus fortified we finally reached **the Bear**, both choosing to try the 4.5% **Wild River**, a little too citrus for our taste but a very refreshing pint all the same. We then returned to St Ebbes with time to call into the newly refurbished **St Aldates Tavern** before our bus was due. Another **W H Bitter** and a **Shotover Scholar** (4.5%) were shared and facilities used before our return home and the now traditional final pint of **Horizon** in **the Cherry Tree**

As this is the 'summer of sport' we decided to give the gold medal to the Jaipur.

Apparently the theme for next year's Open Doors event, again organised by the Oxford Preservation Trust, is food and drink so hopefully some local CAMRA members can be volunteered to guide a walk around some of Oxford's historic pubs.



5th WANTAGE BEER FESTIVAL



CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE

WANTAGE CIVIC HALL

Portway, Wantage OX12 9BY

Fri 9th & Sat 10th November 2012

Opening Times: Friday 11.00am - 11.00pm

Saturday 11.00am - 11.00pm

28 Real Ales

Beers from throughout the country

Cider & Perry

Glass hire £2.00

Festival glasses available

Food and soft drinks served

Admission prices:

Friday 11am - 6pm: CAMRA members Free, Others £2.00

Friday 6pm - 11pm: CAMRA members £1.00, Others £3.00

Saturday 11am - 11pm: CAMRA members Free, Others £2.00

(Under 21's need ID)

Parking at Venue

Further details: <http://www.whitehorsecamra.org.uk>

Enquiries: beerfestival12@whitehorsecamra.org.uk

A Trip to Brussels and Bruges



Chris Dicks – August 2012

“They’re drinking alcohol in the day!” exclaimed the large American tourist in a southern drawl. And it’s true, we were. And on a Sunday too. But then it was just after midday, and she can’t have been in Belgium for long. It was the last day of our beer voyage, and it seemed the perfect way to relax before lunch, with a quirky shaped glass of *Kwak*.

It all started on a Friday afternoon at St Pancras Station, where I met my old friend Matthew Hendrick at the **Betjeman Arms**. Once again we were on our way to Brussels, carrying the essential **CAMRA Good Beer Guide Belgium**, by Tim Webb. On arrival we made straight for a few favourite locals off Grasmarkt (just north of the Grand Place) – namely **Au Vieux Bon Temps** (one for the anglophiles, with an old English pub feel, and quite a few ex-pats in there); **A La Bécasse** (long wooden benches and famed for its draught lambic beer); and **A L’image de Nostres Dames** (dark and atmospheric, and where the more eccentric locals like to go!). Beers included the **Trappist Westmalle**; **Duvel**; **Triple Kastele**; **Corsendonk** and **Bush** – all of which I’d heartily recommend! We also found **Westvleteren**, which can prove elusive, but at €10 a bottle maybe they’ve heeded the Guide’s suggestion to put prices up! It’s a first class beer, with a full taste, slight oatiness, and even a bit smoky. Essential drinking for any true Belgian beer fan. For some reason none of these places appear in the latest Guide, but very worth seeking out I think.

On Saturday it was straight off to Bruges, around an hour from Brussels on a fast regular train service. Time didn’t permit to visit the famous **Church of Our Lady** (it looks great in the books....); instead we had lunch at the amazing **Den Dyer restaurant** – fine dining matched with a different beer to each course. Not cheap at €35 each (including the beers) – but the food is excellent and they have a real passion for beer. A beer aperitif was served in champagne glasses with appetizers; cured salmon



Essential reading for the trip

was matched with **Quinto from Vicaris** (citrusy and light, almost a wheat beer taste), followed by steamed dill trout to go with the full bodied nutty **St Bernardus Tripel** – an incredible combination you would never think to pair. If you have one splash out meal go here, if only to see beer treated with the same reverence normally reserved for fine wine.

Bruges has some very serious places for the Belgian beer lover, the following were all listed in the Guide (so I won’t bother with addresses!) and none disappointed. First after lunch was **de Garre Cafe**, tall with a rickety staircase. I went for the **Hanssens Gueuze Oude** (sour and tangy a lambic as they come). On to **Cambrinus**, which wouldn’t look out of place as a central Oxford pub – excellent **Mac Chouffe** for me (dark and malty, close to a good stout), Matthew couldn’t resist another **Westvleteren!** Next to **Café de Kuppe**, (**Gulden Draak** – bitter sweet and hoppy dark beer, derided for its white bottle in the Guide! And the hoppy IPA-like **Hommelbier**). The final stop in Bruges was the legendary **Brugs Beertje** - worth the trip in its own right, a bar packed with bottles and glassware, cheery locals and a few fellow beer travellers. Sampled **Shark Pants** (very well hopped, much like an American micro-brew IPA), and the classic **Boon Gueuze Mariage Parfait**. Enjoyed with a plate of salami, cheese and pickled cornichon – the classic Belgian beer snack.



The famous Brugs Beertje

Back to Brussels, we tracked down the **Moeder Lambic bar** on Fontainas, a trendy place with a real emphasis on interesting lesser known beers (**Monk’s Stout** – dry with a nice bitter finish, very



The bar at Brugs Beertje, one for the serious beer tourist



Chris considering the next beer to order, always difficult in Belgium

different to the earlier stout; **Hop Ruiter** an amber; and **Bink** which Matthew described as moreish!). Then for complete contrast on to the **Fluer en Papier Doré** (Rue des Alexiens) – recently reopened and one of the most atmospheric authentic small bars we went to – a time worn feel with old pictures, a stag's head on the wall, light bulbs framed by antlers and a string of dried sausages over the bar. Classic Trappists seemed appropriate, with **Orval** and **Rocheport 10** both going down well. A real gem and worth seeking out.

Sunday saw our American tourist encounter, and then excellent lunches of steak-frites and moules-frites at the famous **Chez Leon brasserie**. Quick stops at the well known **Morte Subite** (high ceilings with a 1920s feel, but on every tourist itinerary); and the **Greenwich** with an equally ornate room. Just time for some shopping at the very well stocked Beer Temple shop on Grasmarkt, before staggering laden with bottles back to the Eurostar terminal. Another great trip, we'll be back soon!

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Regional Aunt Sally Match



Neil Hoggarth

It is by now a long established tradition that CAMRA members from across the Central Southern region (Oxon, Bucks and Berks) gather at the Mason's Arms in Headington Quarry on the Saturday of that pub's annual beer festival, to compete at the traditional Oxfordshire pub game of Aunt Sally. For the benefit of anyone unfamiliar with Aunt Sally, it is an outdoor game which involves throwing wooden batons at small skittle, known as a "dolly", perched on top of a pole. So it was that we spent a very pleasant afternoon on Saturday 8th September.

This year saw a healthy turn-out from the local branch, and a slightly reduced participation from some of the other branches. The event was perhaps not as well publicised as in previous years, and also clashed with a beer festival at Runnymede, which I think drew away members from South Bucks and East Berks who were volunteering at the festival (or supporting it as customers!). We organised those present into an Oxford branch team and a "rest of the region" team.

Oxford won the toss, and as captain I elected to go first. We started strongly, with many on the team managing to score at least a "1" with their six sticks, 3s from both Dave Cogdell and Nigel Crooke, and an overall score for the first leg of 12. The visitors were slower to get their eye in, with a number of them scoring the dreaded "blob" - zero points from six sticks. Overall the visitors scored 8, giving a clear win in the first leg to Oxford.

The second leg also went Oxford's way, though by a narrower margin - 12 to 10. Since the match is decided on a best of three legs basis, we had won, and got to retain the trophy!

The visitors did not go away empty handed, however: as is traditional a "beer leg" was played after the match proper had finished. The team that loses this final leg buys a round of drinks for the team that wins it. With the stakes raised the visiting players upped their game, with several of them scoring their first points of the afternoon, whereas the Oxford team wilted under the pressure - conceding the leg 10 points to 14.

The weather was splendid, the beer festival was excellent (as always!), and I think that a great day was had by all. I'd like to express our thanks to all at the Mason's Arms for their kind hospitality.



Matt's turn at Aunt Sally



Enjoying a beer and a chat after game is over



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Beer tax e-petition reaches landmark 100,000 signatures

Mass Parliamentary Lobby announced for December 12th- over 1,000 people expected to participate

Consumers demand an end to above inflation rises in beer tax- www.saveyourpintlobby.org.uk

CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale, is today delighted to celebrate with other members of the beer and pub industry as the Government e-petition calling on the abandonment of the beer duty escalator has exceeded the 100,000 signatures needed to trigger a Parliamentary debate. The petition is only the 12th Government e-petition - out of over 16,000 submitted - to have ever reached the 100,000 landmark.

The beer duty escalator, introduced by the last Government in 2008, and continued by the coalition, has successively penalised Britain's beer drinkers by automatically increasing duty levels by 2% above inflation every year. As a result, tax on beer has increased by over 40% since 2008, with a third of every pub pint now being swallowed in tax. Over 4,500 pubs have also closed over this same period.

CAMRA has invested significant resources into campaigning against the beer duty escalator, and major breakthroughs in the lead up to the petition securing 100,000 signatures included over 15,000 beer drinkers adding their names to it over the course of the Great British Beer Festival, held at London's Olympia at the beginning of August (7th-11th).

With a Parliamentary debate now in prospect, CAMRA is ramping up the pressure on Government by announcing it is

to hold a Mass Parliamentary Lobby in Westminster on Wednesday December 12th, with over 1,000 people expected to attend from all corners of the UK to voice their discontent at punitive tax increases on Britain's National Drink. Attendees will be asking to speak to their respective local MPs, and seeking their support to protect the nation's historic beer and pub industry.

Colin Valentine, CAMRA National Chairman, said:

'Joining a very small minority of e-petitions to have ever reached the 100,000 landmark is a mammoth achievement, and it's been fantastic to witness the beer and pub industry uniting to fight back against this issue.

'Over the last 6 months, CAMRA has been collecting signatures at beer festivals, organising local campaigning events, as well as supplying pubs with petition material. On CAMRA's part, we have devoted a great amount of resources to this campaign, so we are delighted this has all paid off.

'CAMRA's next step is not to rest on our laurels but to maintain the impetus with our Mass Parliamentary Lobby, which will reinforce to MPs the groundswell of support for this campaign. With all the battering it has taken, the beer and pub sector still manages to contribute over £21 billion a year to the UK's GDP, and supports one million jobs, so it's about time the Government honoured its pledge to be "pub friendly".'

New Policy Will Help Save Pubs

The National Planning Policy Framework – not words likely to get anyone's pulse racing are they? Yet this new document is a powerful weapon in the battle to protect our beleaguered pubs.

Over recent years, we've lost huge numbers of pubs through conversion to housing and other uses needing planning permission. When Councils consider planning applications, they must take into account not only their detailed local policies but also the broader national policies. Until March 2012, those national policies occupied a legion of documents totalling over 1000 pages. Some policies were vaguely helpful to pubs, albeit mainly rural ones.

The new Framework sweeps away this complex set of rules, replacing them with just 52 pages of policy guidance. Thanks to intensive lobbying by CAMRA, this new guidance includes national policies which are potentially very helpful to community facilities like pubs. Most importantly, Councils are told to "guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services" which specifically includes community pubs. What's also crucial is that these rules apply to all pubs, urban and rural.

Councils must have in place, by March 2013, local planning policies consistent with the Framework; in the meantime, Framework policies should generally be applied.

So what does all this mean if your local is threatened by an unwanted planning application? You should object to the

Council, of course, but when doing so, make sure to refer to the relevant policies in the Framework. If you can show that loss of the pub would reduce the local community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs, then the Council should refuse the application. CAMRA has produced an advice note on the best wording to use and this can be found, along with much other information on planning issues, at www.camra.org.uk/nppf or if you would like any of these documents posted to you then please phone CAMRA's Campaigns Officer Claire Cain on 01727 798 454.

The Framework is already making an impact. Councils in Cambridge and the Fylde have used it to refuse planning applications to convert pubs to houses. In those cases, the applicants have appealed against the refusal and, in each case, the Government inspector, considering the appeal, has dismissed it largely because approval would run counter to Framework policies.

Sadly, not every development adversely affecting pubs needs planning consent – conversion to a restaurant or a shop for instance. CAMRA is campaigning hard to get planning law changed in these areas. In the meantime, the new Framework is very much a step in the right direction.

If you have any issues regarding a campaign to save a local pub in your area please contact CAMRA's Local Planning Policy Advisor Paul Ainsworth on paul.ainsworth@camra.org.uk or go to camra.org.uk/nppf



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Oxford Pubcrawler Card Game

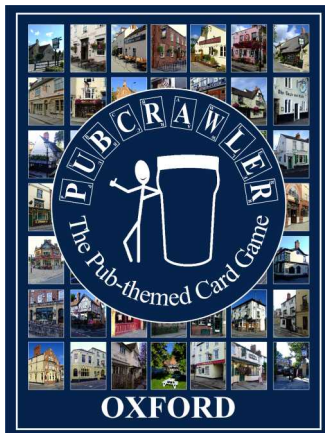


Showcasing forty of Oxford City's excellent pubs, Cardigan games has created a card strategy game themed around an Oxford City pub crawl.

Pubcrawler is a card game in which the basic idea is that each player tries to complete a pub crawl by laying down a pub card, and then placing drinks cards on top of the pub. When you've had enough drinks in that pub, you visit another pub and so on. You keep 5 cards in your hand and each turn pick up a new card and play one. Each pub has a value, that gives you points for each drink in that pub. At the end of the game each player totals up the drinks they've had in each pub to see who wins. However it is not that simple because there are also action cards. These can be good such as getting 'On Your Bike' which lets you place a pub and drinks and gives you an extra turn, or bad such as a 'Dodgy Kebab' which you can play on another player to make them lose their current pub and drinks.

The game features 40 Oxford pubs, each with a colour photograph. A selection of drinks cards (Beer, Wine and cocktails), and action cards. The game's designers are keen visitors of Oxford's pubs and this can be seen in their choice of pubs, and the action cards, which are fun and related to Oxford, for example 'A Punting Mishap' which makes you miss 3 turns. As well as the cards and rules, there is also an Oxford pub map and trivia about some of the pubs.

The rules are simple to get started with, but the action cards and decisions on which cards to play require some strategy, making it challenging and worth playing. The choice of pubs is good, with all of our favourite pubs included. This would be great for tourists to take away a reminder of the excellent pubs we have in Oxford and for new students to get to know the city's pubs.



The game can be bought from several shops and pubs in Oxford. It will also be on sale on the bookstand at the Oxford Beer Festival and if you're not in Oxford, you can buy it online at www.cardigangames.com



Pubcrawler being played in **The Bookbinders**, one of the featured pubs.

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