

Issue 106  
June - July 2018

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# the Oxford Drinker



Inside: Oxford Beer Week reviewed; Two departures in Witney;  
Black Country Minibus Trip; Church Hanbrewery;  
plus all the regular features, pub and brewery news

The free newsletter of the  
**Oxford** and **White Horse** Branches of CAMRA

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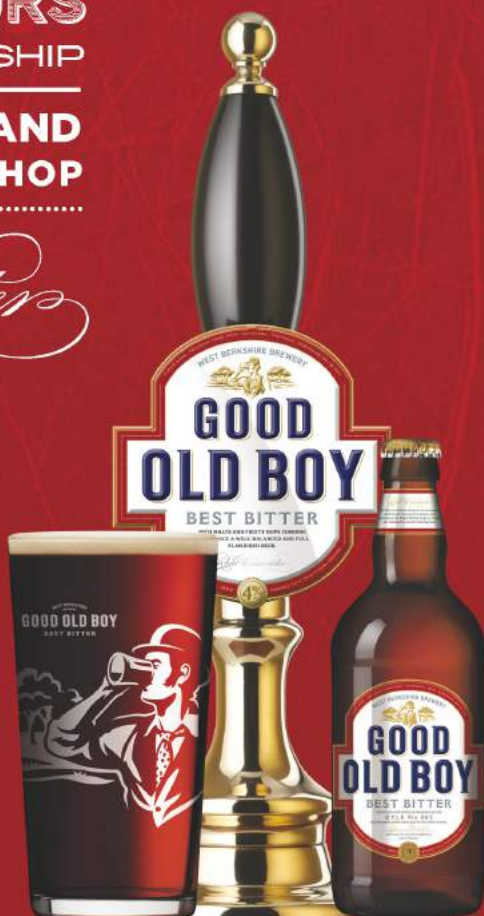
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**FRONT COVER PICTURE :** The Plough in Wolvercote, as visited by Pete Flynn. Read about it on page 14.

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

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# Welcome

...to a not-so-different CAMRA, and why we all need CHAPS

**SO THE BIG** CAMRA vote has come and gone, bringing some necessary changes to our constitution but failing, by a small margin, to establish our organisation as the champion of all pub goers, whatever they might drink.

The national papers greeted this news with headlines such as "Trouble Brewing", predicting that modernisers might cut up their membership cards as we're not going to embrace quality beers however they might be served, including keg. But frankly, as you will read shortly, I'm more concerned about CHAPS.

A 75% majority of those who voted – and there were 18,000 of us – was needed to achieve this change, but only 72% voted in favour meaning the proposal was narrowly lost. Although it was agreed that CAMRA festivals can serve non-real ale including keg if they so wish, that won't be happening at our Oxford festival in November.

Personally I backed the change, as although I don't drink much keg beer myself, I recognise that nearly all breweries are now making quality keg ale and lager and we should respond to that trend. Who would have thought that Hook Norton would ever brew a lager, but it is as you can read in this edition. Although cask ale sales overall are falling, as with all beer sales, you have only to look around at the huge choice of real ale everywhere to know that it is safe.

On to CHAPS then – not male persons of any persuasion, but Care Home Avoidance Plans. Now I'm getting back on my

hobby horse to decry the anti-alcohol lobby, which has become relentless that it has got some landlords seriously worried. When our publican columnist Paul Silcock talks in this edition about opening a fruit smoothie bar, I'm not sure he's joking!

The most ridiculous thing I've seen so far from dear old Nanny State is from that inferior outfit Cambridge University. One David Spiegelhalter, Winton professor for the public understanding of risk (who funds these people – surely not taxpayers?), has published a paper in *The Lancet* arguing that over the age of 40, every drink you have above the very low "safe drinking" limit cuts your life expectancy by 30 minutes.

I've never been any good at maths, but I reckon that as I turned 40 some years ago, then if that was true I should have been dead long ago. So my life expectancy could be reduced – bring it on, if that means not ending up in a care home. With care home providers going bust and Brexit threatening their already perilous supply of staff, that would suit me just fine.

The problem with this sort of thing is that while there might be a serious message in there, it only encourages most people to disregard it. My own CHAP includes continuing to drink beer, as you might have guessed.

As ever, your news, views and contributions to the *Oxford Drinker* are welcome – just drop me a line.

**DAVE RICHARDSON**



# Back to Black

**Dave Richardson** joins a branch minibus tour to the renowned Black Country in the West Midlands



**BELOW:** The Beacon Hotel (upper) and the Britannia (lower)

**RIGHT:** The Beacon itself (built 1846) on the pub sign, and inside Fixed Wheel Brewery

*Photographs by Michael Sibbald*

**MY ONLY PREVIOUS** “drinking” visit to the Black Country was in 2014, so I welcomed the opportunity of a return match. It’s not unusual to come across another CAMRA group as you go around, such is the Black Country’s popularity.

First stop was a pub that I must have passed hundreds of times on the train, but never knew existed as it sits right by the viaduct on which the former Wolverhampton High Level station was built. Since 1972 this has been the town’s only railway station, but part of the listed Low Level station has now been adapted as a meetings venue. The railway which operated Low Level gave the pub its name – the **Great Western**.

Railway memorabilia – some of it probably valuable – covers the walls, but it is even more popular with beer drinkers than rail enthusiasts. This former National Pub of the Year is owned by local brewery Holden’s, but in addition to a full range of Holden’s beers it also serves several guests. Today’s choice included Black Country Bitter and Black Country Mild (I had a half of each, a great way



to start the day), Golden Glow and Black Country Special from Holden's, plus Bathams Best Bitter, Enville's Ginger (both local); and Kelham Island Pale Rider and Cask Lager, from Sheffield.

You can really soak up the atmosphere in this historic pub, and try the pearls of Black Country cuisine such as Faggots, Chips and Mushy Peas (I didn't). The Great Western dates from 1830 when converted from two cottages, when it was open 18 hours a day, seven hours a week except "during divine service". Apparently there were 170 pubs in Wolverhampton by 1851, and the beers sold hereabouts were the second strongest in England "to resist infection".

With three distinct bar areas plus a conservatory for food, the **Great Western** is a handy stopping off point if travelling by train through Wolverhampton. With a Premier Inn next door, I plan to make a night of it one day.

Our second stop, just 15 minutes away, was the wonderful **Beacon Hotel** at Sedgley, home of the historic



Sarah Hughes tower brewery which was re-activated in 1987 having been closed for 30 years. This is home to the eyeball-rattling Dark Ruby Mild which, at 6%, is not a beer to get stuck into so early in the day. Most of our group ignored this advice – but at least I sampled a half of its Pale Amber (4%) before succumbing to Ruby's charms. Sedgley Surprise (5%) is also brewed on site; while guests included an unfinned beer by Fixed Wheel called Lady in a Hat, Shiny brewery's unfinned Belgian IPA Code Breaker (6.7%!), and Hop and Stagger's Triple Hop (5%).

The **Beacon** is named after a local hilltop landmark, and it is said many visitors start gibbering because of the altitude – I suspect another reason! This was one of three pubs we visited in the CAMRA book *Britain's Best Real Heritage Pubs*, by Geoff Brandwood, as it has a layout long since swept away by many hostelleries of similar vintage. It has a small snug, a larger Smoke Room, small Tap Room and more modern extension, with beer served from a hatch rather than at the bar. Other quirky features are a

conservatory with palms, and the practice of all beers being served in jugs rather than glasses.

It was hard to tear yourself away from here but the whip was duly cracked after 45 minutes and we moved on to another pub in this book, the **Britannia** at Upper Gornal. This lovely old pub is owned by Bathams brewery whom I greatly admire for not embracing "trendy" names for the beers which are called, simply, Best Bitter (a great pint) and Mild. Here we caught up with former Oxford CAMRA member Dave Hill who now lives in the West Midlands, settling down in the rear room which has a rare surviving example of hand pumps not situated at a bar or counter, and still used occasionally.

The Perry family ran the **Britannia** from 1864 until 1991, with the rear bar being called Sallies' after the lady who ran it from 1942. It really is a lovely old place, and my eye was caught by a press cutting on display from 1967 which painted a picture of a long-gone industrial age, with regulars engaged in pastimes such as

homing pigeons. What a gem, and with large baps costing only £1.50 there was something to soak up the beer with.

We then moved on to what for me was the only disappointment of the day, the **Black Bear** at nearby Lower Gornal. Why this pub is in the *Good Beer Guide* when others we visited such as the **Olde Swan** are not is beyond me, although the Salopian Lemon Dream and Hereford Pale Ale (Wye Valley) were totally acceptable. The house ale is by Kinver and cost only £3.10 a pint for a 5.8% beer, low prices for us stretched Oxford folk being remarked on all day. Greene King's Abbot and Abbot Reserve (6.5% -- £3.75) were avoided by most of the party.

What let this pub down for me is it has absolutely no atmosphere, while the overgrown garden is an eyesore and the fusty carpets and décor not appealing. Not reasons to exclude it from the GBG, I agree, but there seemed to me to be more worthy contenders..... such as the **Olde Swan** (Ma Pardoe's) in Netherton. This is a brewpub producing Olde Swan ales, and it has been brewing them since 1863 apart from a break between 1988 and 2001. Unusually there is no branding on the pumps but a list on the wall, and I sampled a half of Original and a half of the excellent Dark Swan. Also available, all from its own range, were NPA (Netherton Pale Ale) and Bumble Hole, made with honey.

The beers are just part of the attraction, as the **Olde Swan** (also called Ma Pardoe's after a long-serving incumbent) is also

in the Heritage Pubs book. It is little altered since Victorian times with an odd enamel ceiling, and a rambling layout including a Smoke Room, "Ladies Room" and snug, plus a larger bar after the pub took over the shop next door. The clock that goes backwards is an appropriate touch, and so is the organ with songbook open at "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling" -- I wonder if anyone plays it now?

We next went "off-piste" to **Fixed Wheel** brewery, one of whose beers was available at the **Beacon**. It reminded me a bit of Oxford's Tap Social as it's located in a grey and faceless industrial estate in Blackheath, near Halesowen, although it is considerably smaller. The owners are apparently cycling enthusiasts and a fixed wheel bike was indeed on display, these being two interests that often go together.

Six hand pumps and many more taps were dispensing a range of quality beers and ciders, but as all the cask ales were light or golden (a regrettable trend in my opinion), I chose the keg Blackheath Stout at 5% which was cold but not gassy. You really feel you're

in a working brewery here with stacks of hops and malt, and the mash tun and hot liquor tank in the room where you drink. The stout has won a Regional Beer of Britain award, but however good the beers I miss the pub atmosphere in such a place. Pretty, it ain't.

Our final stop was at the **Waggon and Horses** in Halesowen, run by Black Country Ales and with no fewer than 15 hand pumps serving three of its own beers plus many guests. What a way to finish but sadly I didn't, as I was lured away to a very good fish and chip shop up the road and didn't manage even one drink before it was time to go. Reports were good, although some commented that it had been "gentrified" after a recent refurbishment. I wonder.

We made our way homewards after a splendid day out, and some truly memorable beers and pubs. These were just some of the renowned hostelries of the Black Country, so if you can find a minibus driver like our own, ever willing Tony Goulding (thanks Tony!) then go for it. We might see you on our way around.



The Waggon & Horses in Halesowen



# 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.

◆ ◆

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# Farewell to brew for Jeff Drew....

**Dave Richardson** meets Wychwood's outgoing head brewer and his successor, Jon Tillson



**ABOVE:** Jeff Drew (right) and Jon Tillson

**JEFF DREW BRINGS** down the curtain on a brewing career spanning nearly four decades in July. A youthful 60 in September, he intends to go travelling as he reflects on all the changes that have transformed the industry during his time.

The job of head brewer is in safe hands as it goes to Jon Tillson, a Witney man through and through, who started at Wychwood doing work experience in 1992 and has been second brewer since 2006.

Jeff started with Whitbread, once a major brewer and pub owner but now a hotel and restaurant company. He got all his qualifications here before moving on to Morland in 1995, producing Old Speckled Hen in Abingdon. After the Greene

King take-over in 2000 he moved on to Brakspear in Henley, and in 2002 joined Ringwood – each brewery joined being smaller than the last.

He was head brewer when Marston's took over Ringwood in 2007, staying on because of Marston's policy to keep its acquisitions local. When Marston's bought Wychwood in 2008 he moved to Witney, becoming head brewer there in October of that year when Jeremy Moss retired.

"The first really big change was the Monopolies and Mergers Commission beer orders of 1989, which led to a major sell-off of pubs and allowed pubs to bring in guest ales," he says. "This created opportunities for regional brewers to get a foothold in pubs run by the big

six, such as Whitbread and Allied.

"Breweries such as Ringwood and Wychwood saw a meteoric rise, and then under a Labour government we saw the duty escalator which allowed start-up breweries to pay considerably less duty. There has been a huge growth in small breweries and a development of beer styles that became mainstream, such as hoppy golden beers."

Wychwood's core brand is of course Hobgoblin, and the evil looking but rather humorous hobgoblin himself pre-dates the Marston take-over. His sneering face challenging lager drinkers to try the tasty ruby alternative has fronted a highly successful campaign, although the new-ish Hobgoblin Gold, launched in 2014, was introduced in response to consumer trends. Wychwood even produces a hoppy Hobgoblin IPA, in bottle and soon on keg.

"Wychwood is still fundamentally a Hobgoblin and Brakspear brewery, but we have to consider what next?" says Jeff. "Wychwood is by far the smallest brewery in the Marston's group by physical size, but the third largest in production."

Other members of the group include Jennings (Cumbria), Ringwood (Hampshire) and the Eagle Brewery, formally Charles Wells (Bedford), its most recent acquisition. Marston's "own" beers are produced in Burton-

on-Trent, where there is also the DE14 micro-brewery, and in Wolverhampton (Banks's).

Some real ale drinkers have questioned Wychwood's right to be considered a local independent brewery since the Marston's take-over, especially as although Hobgoblin is brewed in Witney, it is bottled and casked by Marston's in Burton. Following closure of Brakspear in Henley, the original historic equipment was moved to Witney where Brakspear Bitter and Oxford Gold continue to be brewed.

But this criticism is wide of the mark, as despite its ownership Wychwood remains a local brewery in the true sense – as the 200 people who take brewery tours each week would agree.

Jon Tillson explains: "Our team here has over 100 years of brewing experience, and we still produce beers in the same style and tradition as always. We're still a 150-barrel brewery, and none of the materials we use has changed. Marston's is wise enough to realise they need to keep us as a local brewery."

Hobgoblin has outgrown Witney, however, and some of it is brewed in Burton to Witney's recipe and neither Jeff nor Jon can tell the difference. Marston's brings Hobgoblin great marketing clout, and you can now find it at many music festivals and other events nationwide.

Lots of seasonal and one-off beers are also produced at Wychwood, current seasonals including Hooray Henley. The

bottled range is extensive, including King Goblin (6.6%), Black Wych porter (5%) and Imperial Red (4.7%).

Jon Tillson took a business degree and worked in accountancy before returning to Wychwood, and is relishing the challenge of becoming head brewer after 12 years as Jeff's deputy.

"I've enjoyed a wealth of experience through Wychwood and Marston's, as you can soak up so much knowledge," he says. "It's a very sociable business to work in, and through the Oxford Brewers Alliance we can learn from each other. The key thing is to carry on the Wychwood tradition of quality and consistency, but we can never sit still."

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# ... and farewell to Martin at the New Inn

**MARTIN CORNISH**, landlord of the New Inn for nearly 15 years, retired in June from one of Witney's best real ale pubs.

The former Punch Taverns property is now owned by Heineken's Star brand, which had acquired many Punch pubs. A rarity in that it doesn't serve food, the New Inn could be in for changes but Martin said he did not know who might take over.

Real ale has expanded greatly on Martin's watch, from the two Tetley pumps when he arrived to six today. On the bar during a visit shortly before his retirement were regulars Side Pocket for a Toad (Tring Brewery); Sharp's Doom Bar; Brakspear Bitter, brewed around the corner at Wychwood; and St Austell's Proper Job.

"Punch had a good range of guest ales, but I was finding it hard to sell stronger beers," he added. "Most of our customers are older and want to stay all evening, so weaker beers have made a come-back.

"A publican's life has become massively less rewarding since I've been here, and unless you have a big food pub you are squeezed. The pressure to keep prices low is huge, as every supermarket has pallets of beer that they sell for less than we can buy for.

"You can't survive just on weekend business, and on weekdays you can struggle. But



we've had a good time and met some great people, and I will miss the live music."

There have been few closures in Witney – among them the House of Windsor, Robin Hood and Butcher's – and new micro-pubs may be opening. Martin said the opening of Wetherspoon's Company of Weavers had not affected business, as it attracted a different clientele.

"I leave with some regrets," he added. "The sense of community is missing nowadays, and you can't find people for a carnival float, or darts and Aunt Sally teams. Anyone coming into the business now should beware of the costs and of their own expectations. I'd like to thank everyone who has supported real ale, and not just CAMRA."

**Paul Silcock**, landlord of the Gardeners Arms in Plantation Road, North Oxford, continues his regular column



# Gardeners' World

**I'M BACK**, did you miss me? Probably not, which is actually better than a friend who came into the pub waving a copy of the last issue of the *Oxford Drinker*. "You're not in it!" he beamed. "Have they fired you?" I proceeded to serve him, which is almost as amazing as the fact that I began that anecdote by calling him "a friend". (You know who you are). But there you go.

The Cannes film festival banned the selfie this year, and it's a little odd for a festival that is essentially the celebration of images to go and ban the creation of more images, particularly as the images are of people they already have the images of. Maybe they didn't want duplicates? Whatever their reasoning I wholeheartedly support their idea for whatever reason they imposed it. The selfie may well be the single largest threat pubs currently have to face.

Hang on, don't stop reading, let me explain. The role of social media can be used very effectively by pubs to promote themselves. Facebook pages are free, Instagram accounts are free, even quizmasters are capable of setting up fan sites for dedicated quizzers. With only a little time and effort it's possible to keep anyone willing to follow you (on the aforementioned social media accounts, not follow you down the street in stalker-esque fashion) informed about what is going on at the pub right now or in the future.

Got a really exciting beer? Slap a photo on the Instagram account of the pump clip. Got a quiz night? Put the date on Facebook and let people know. Got Morris Men dancing outside your pub? Warn everyone with a post on Facebook (only joking, Morris Men, your skill at drinking is always welcomed.)

So what have I got against the selfie, then? Why am I agreeing with Cannes and wanting it banned? Because the purpose of a selfie is self-promotion. And if you want to promote yourself, you're going to want to look good. This is where the problem with selfies comes in.

One of the fastest diminishing groups of drinkers is the 18-21 age group, who aren't drinking

like they used to because they have all become far more aware of appearance than we ever were. It's simply because in their world it is now so easy to share images of yourself.

When I was that age, the last thing that would have crossed my mind would have been to show the world a picture of myself. I didn't, and still don't, believe anyone would have much interest in a wild haired heavy metal fan in an Iron Maiden T-shirt, and acne that looked like it would need most of the Clearasil in Boots to deal with, waving a pint of Wards around (anyone remember that wonderful Sheffield brewery?)

So the kids these days have so much pressure to look good they're not going to risk looking out of shape or unhealthy for that selfie. They'll happily take a selfie standing at the bar, but just get a glass of water to go with their food.

At this point I should have a solution to suggest for this, well, let's call it an epidemic just to create panic, but I don't. How can you turn a generation away from the social pressure of looking good? Short of any better idea I'm gonna start stocking more non-alcoholic beer and open a fruit smoothie bar on the other side of the pub. And somewhere in the middle I'll start selling alcoholic fruit smoothies. All the benefits of fruit and all the fun of booze.

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# Success for Oxford Beer Week

**THE SECOND ANNUAL** Oxford Beer Week from 5-13 May built on last year's inaugural campaign by getting more pubs selling local beer. Organised by the Oxford Brewers Alliance, a collaboration brew called Oxford Special Bitter (OSB) was produced with input from all members and brewed at Shotover, and this was sold by 15 pubs.

It was also available at the Witney and Banbury beer festivals, and all the money made from Oxford Special Bitter goes to charity Helen & Douglas House.

Oxford Beer Week started on 5 May with the eighth annual Witney Beer Festival at St. Mary's Church, where all 70+ beers were sponsored by local businesses and profits went for

church repairs. On the Bank holiday weekend the Perch in Binsey held its annual festival with its own beer brewed by Hook Norton, called Hoplar.

Bank Holiday Monday belonged to Tap Social and its monthly comedy night, and six local brews raised money for charity. On the Tuesday BrewDog had a showcase with a few local brewers and their keg products.

On the Wednesday at the Rose and Crown you had a chance to sample OSB and meet local brewers, and a generous gesture by landlord Andrew Hall donated a firkin of OSB which raised £197. On the Thursday White Rabbit had a tap takeover with Loose Cannon Brewery where you could try Double IPA as well as the range of cask and craft beer.



The Banbury, Kidlington (King's Arms) and Castle Oxford festivals started on the Friday, with Hook Norton holding a mini-festival on the Sunday to conclude a memorable week.

**DITA KOLOMEYEVOVA**

**LEFT:** Aaron Baldwin of Oxbrew, George Clarke of Hook Norton and Andrew Hall of the Rose and Crown, North Parade

**ABOVE:** Dita Kolomeyeva of Loose Cannon



# Pete's Pubs

Branch chairman **Pete Flynn** goes wandering in Wolvercote

**"GERIATRICS AND JUVENILES"** were the two classes of people who used buses, I used to say when I was a young man. Times have moved on and I'm happy to use the bus especially if I'm going out for a pint or two, as I was on this occasion as I boarded the Number 6 bus in Magdalen Street.

The last stop, and my destination on this perfect sunny morning, was the small village of Wolvercote which lies to the north-west of Oxford. It features the Thames path and some interesting pubs, as well as the timeless attractions of Port Meadow and the ruined buildings of Godstow Nunnery.

A 15-minute walk took me to 12th century **Trout Inn**, built of stone with polished flagstone flooring, originally established

as a hospice to serve the aforementioned Nunnery. I chatted to Heather Payne, who told me it is a Mitchell and Butlers pub and part of its Premium Country Pub portfolio.

The pub focuses mostly on food serving the needs of hungry tourists, and would never be classified as a "local". The beers available were Brakspear's Oxford Gold, Sharp's Doom Bar, Fuller's London Pride and Wainwright Golden Beer. I chose the latter, which was perfectly acceptable but not particularly interesting. One resident of the pub and the last of his contemporaries is "Krug", a rather handsome and colourful peacock named after a champagne variety.

Retracing my steps, I arrived at my next venue – **The Plough** at

Wolvercote Green. Run by landlord Tim Bowring for the past 22 years, this is a popular local and family friendly Greene King pub where Tim operates under an old Morrells Brewery arrangement so is tied to the GK range of beers, but free of lease.

Three real ales were available – Bobby's Golden Ale (in memory of the late England football captain, Bobby Moore, and a reminder that it's World Cup year), Olde Trip, and Hardy and Hanson's Bitter. Being able to rotate from a list of beers, Tim is able to alternate guest ales each week which adds to diversity with real ciders also available. Daughter Katy helps to run the pub whilst Tim Caitlin is on hand to look after the well-kept cask beer.

I tried the Golden ale which was very refreshing on such a hot day. The pub successfully operates on an even split between food and wet-led sales, and really caters for the locals and all kinds of clubs as well as a quiz night, occasional music and even theatre. **The Plough** has always been either first or second in the quiz league of Oxford, Tim is proud to tell me, with one contestant a past Mastermind winner.

Each year Tim helps to organise a charity/fun day which proves very popular with around 2,000 visitors enjoying music from three live bands and sponsorship provided by local businesses, all for a good



**ABOVE:** Tim Catlin and Tim Bowring at the Plough  
**OPPOSITE:** Amanda Jones from the White Hart; the Trout

cause. This year the event is being held on Saturday 22 July so why not turn up and enjoy real ale, local fun, and the Oxfordshire countryside in a most picturesque setting?

My next stop, just over the railway bridge and returning to the village square, was **Jacobs Inn** which is one of five Jacobs and Field pubs. This is a small family-run business from Headington, Oxford which started life as a delicatessen prior to expanding to include restaurant-style pubs amongst its portfolio.

The emphasis is very much on quality food as evidenced by the name of Aubrey Allen as supplier of meat, and an Alastair Sawday sign in the window indicating inclusion in this popular guide to food pubs. The beer is provided by Marston's, which owns the freehold, and obviously provides very favourable terms undercutting any potential third party offering.

Four real ales were available including Wychwood Hobgoblin, Banks's Sunbeam Bitter, Brakspear bitter and Wainwright Golden Ale. I chose Hobgoblin as it's a particular favourite of mine and brewed in Witney possibly by one of my favourite brewers, Dave Carter. If you ever get a chance to meet Dave, usually on a tour of the plant, you will find his charm and passion for all things beer both fascinating and infectious.

My final stop, almost adjacent, was **The White Hart**, one of eight pubs in Oxfordshire owned by the community. It's a superb pub offering three constantly changing real ales an all-day breakfast on Sunday to coincide with the weekly farmers' market held in the pub itself with stallholders including fruit and veg, a Polish Delicatessen, and Farnability (eggs).

I introduced myself to manager, Amanda Jones, with whom I sat down to talk about what makes **The White Hart** such an attractive venue for the locals. I have to say that Amanda is vivacious, hard-working and popular with locals and staff alike; a real credit to shareholders who are fortunate to have someone with such passion running the business.

Amanda, who grew up in a pub environment, told me that the 15-strong shareholder community is more interested in how the pub is run, rather than the usual financial metrics which govern a business undertaking. Listening to what Amanda told me I could see that there is real community involvement with a sea shanty evening, jazz kitchen, Irish music and a bike clinic all held monthly.

Locals keep the pub going and the quality of the beer was excellent as I downed a pint of Ossett Brewery's Big Red, which had a lovely malty flavour balanced out against a

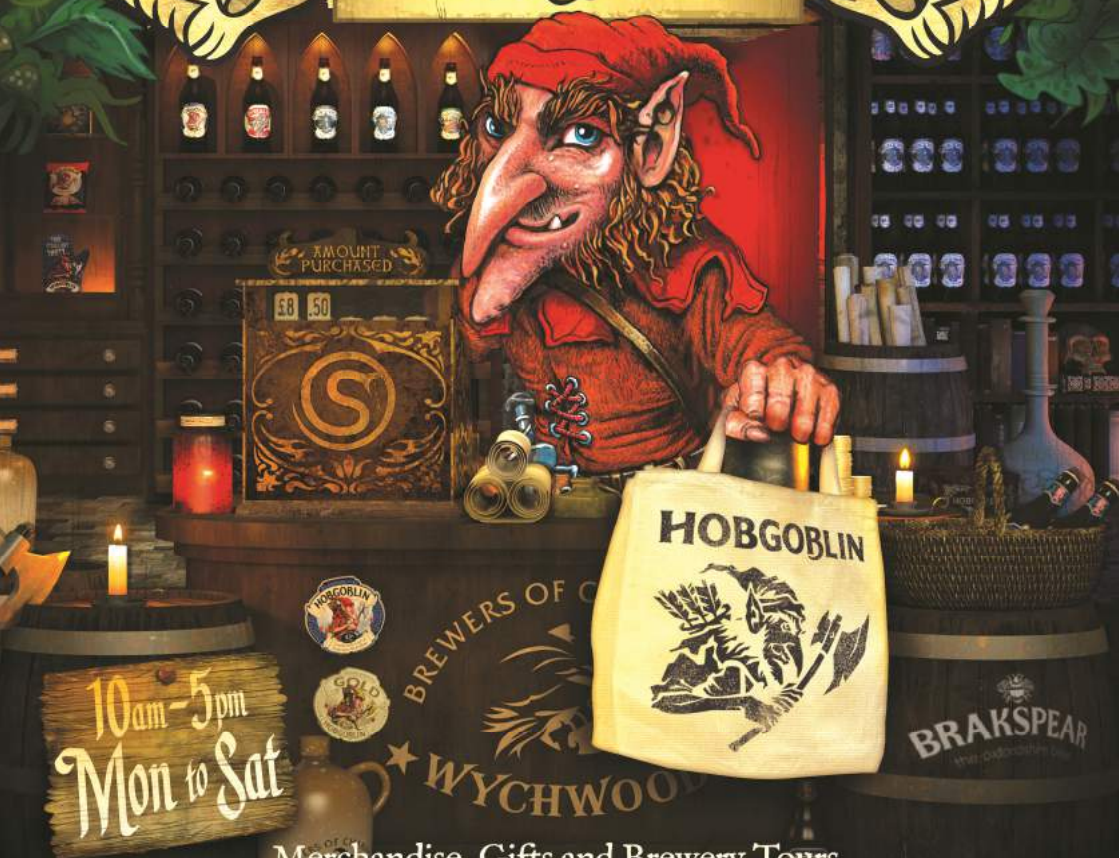
strawberry liquorice finish. The other beers available were Hook Norton 169, a strong and spicy beer with an ABV of (you guessed it) 6.9%, and Harviestoun's Bitter and Twisted, which I have covered before in a previous Pete's Pubs article.

I thanked Amanda for her time and wished her every success as I headed for the bus stop. The weather, the people I had met and the beer had all made it a glorious day.



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# Another round of DD!

**Dick Bosley** continues his pub walk along the Darcy Dalton Way

**THE SECOND STRETCH** of this long-distance footpath saw us having to walk away from Hook Norton – however strange that felt – to get to the A40 near Burford.

As before we walked through some lovely countryside of hedged fields and rolling hills, but sadly we got to The Unicorn in Great Rollright too late (by about five years) and **The Black Horse** in Salford too early (by about 5 minutes) for drinks.

However we did manage to find three open pubs for our refreshments. **The Chequers** in Churchill has a pub sign declaring this to be a “village pub”, but I must say that anywhere that takes three lines to describe a cheese and ham toastie is a bit on the posh side for me. However there were six beers available – Timothy Taylor’s Landlord, Hooky, Sharp’s Doom Bar and Atlantic, Butcombe Bitter, plus HPA from Wye Valley Brewery, that was excellent. It was so good we tried it twice.

From the pub courtyard there is a good view of the church – with a tower based on Magdalen College, and the interior on New College and Christ Church.

Getting near the end of the trek, **The Fox** at Barrington has the atmosphere and character of a traditional village local. It was once a coaching inn and has a garden overlooking the River Windrush. All the beers were



from Donnington – admittedly not my favourite. Donnington Brewery was started by Richard Arkell in 1865 and has been run by the family ever since. However, returning to more important things, its Gold was in very good condition and we were sorely tempted to stay longer.

But the final half mile of walking just proved to be irresistible, so we moved on to **The Inn For All Seasons** on the A40. The end at last! A choice of Butcombe Gold and St Austell’s Tribute, together with friendly service and the temptation of a very good fish specials menu, revived our spirits.

## Branch Diary

### Saturday 23 June Beer Festival Social

12 noon  
Social at the Cricketers Arms Beer Festival, Littleworth. Short walk from the bus at Wheatley.

### Saturday 30 June Beer Festival Social

12 noon  
Social at Charlbury Beer Festival (next to railway station).

### Monday 2 July Branch Meeting

7.30pm  
At the Fir Tree, Iffley Road.  
Meet beforehand for a chat at the Chester Arms (6.30pm) and the Magdalen Arms (7.00pm).

# Pub News

From the Oxford and White Horse regions

## Appleton

### Plough

A planning application has been submitted to build two residential properties in the garden. An Asset of Community Value order is in place and locals are objecting as the character of the pub will be lost. It is regarded as a possible community purchase.

## Childrey

### Hatchet

This pub has been closed for over a year, and Vale of White Horse District Council has advised the owners that they are in breach of planning law by not applying for a change of use or not opening as a pub. The village has a local action group in place called "Don't Hatchet the Hatchet", and it is listed as an Asset of Community Value.

## Coleshill

### Radnor Arms

The pub closed in May and its future is unknown, although it is owned by the National Trust. The Old Forge brewery at the pub has also stopped production.

## Eynsham

### Red Lion

The pub – often previously regarded as the roughest in town – has had a major make-over and is now run by the tenants of the Jolly Postboys in Oxford who have done a good job over the last two years in turning this failed pub around.

Drew Brammer and George Harwood-Dallyn have made a

joint investment with Hawthorn Leisure to restore the former Greene King pub with an emphasis on local ales and fresh, locally sourced food. George said that the intention was to move on from a failed pub with only a few regulars and give the pub back to the wider community.

The re-fit includes church pews or German-style benches, with full table service. The beer garden has re-opened and is a major feature.

The bar has 10 hand pumps or taps with a rotating selection of real and craft beer from breweries all over the UK, including local suppliers such as Little Ox Brewery in nearby Freeland. À La Carte or sharing boards are offered, as at the Jolly Post Boys, plus Sunday roasts.

## Gozzards Ford

### Black Horse

Former landlady Dawn Neil has received a suspended prison

sentence after admitting fraud by false representation, after faking a gas certificate for the pub's boilers. The new leaseholders had to spend heavily to replace the unsafe boilers, which has caused them to plead for community help to keep the pub open. She was given a 16-month jail term suspended for two years and ordered to pay compensation and costs.

## Kennington

### Tandem

The Greene King Hungry Horse pub had a major refurbishment costing six figures in May, and now has a wider range of real ales including Doom Bar.

## Milton

### Plum Pudding

The pub (opposite, top) has been named South Oxfordshire CAMRA's Cider Pub of the Year.





## Oxford

### Royal Blenheim

An £85,000 revamp has smartened up this real ale pub which is owned Everards but managed by Titanic, a shareholder in White Horse Brewery which previously ran the pub. A wide range of Titanic beers is now available including the renowned Plum Porter, but White Horse and other independent breweries are well represented. Previous tenants Mike and Jane Binyon have moved on, and the pub is now managed by Steve Hay.

### Somerset

Efforts to save the long-closed Marston Road pub continue despite the apparent reluctance of the property's owners to re-open it as a pub. The SOS (Save Our Somerset) campaign held another hugely successful pop-up pub on Sunday 22 April, when it ran out of beer as over 300 people come through the doors of the Scout Hall. It has raised a large sum of money from donations from local people and also profits from the pop-up pub, and continues to liaise with planning consultant, Dale Ingram, a nationally recognised expert on pub planning law.

SOS spokesperson, Susannah Wilson, said: "Progress does seem frustratingly slow at the moment. We are looking into the various different options in terms of next steps: setting up a Community Benefit Society with a view to acquiring the pub as a community asset; and making contact with potential purchasers in order to try to open up negotiations with the current owner. We are also putting pressure on the council to enforce planning regulations. We have on-the-record evidence that more than one pub company has made a competitive offer for the pub lease, which has been advertised with Chancellors for the past few months. It seems the current owner is not serious about leasing the premises as a public house."

### Victoria Arms

The Wadworth pub, with an enviable location beside the River Cherwell on the edge of the city, has many special events planned this summer. On 23 June it hosts Marston Family Fun Day, while live music includes Georgia Gardener on 1 July and Shakedown Prophets on 7 July. The Riverside Music Festival is held on 21 July, and from 29

July and then every Sunday afternoon throughout the summer, it offers Sunday Afternoon Chill sessions from 3pm with live music with various performers.

## South Moreton

### Crown

Villagers' attempts to buy the Crown as the ninth community-owned pub in Oxfordshire have still not been resolved despite raising £230,000 from over 100 shareholders. The former Wadworth pub closed in 2015, when acquired by a property company which wants to develop housing on the site of the last pub in the village.

## Wantage

### Kings Arms

The pub is due to re-open at the end of June with six hand pulls and tanked beer/lager from XT. It has been purchased by Oak Taverns. Peter and Trudi Lambert, of renowned real ale and cider pub the Cross Keys in Thame, will be the landlord and landlady and plan to install a micro-brewery later in the year.

## Two micro-pubs for Witney?

**Oxbrew** has confirmed plans to open a micro-pub in Witney this summer, close to Market Square by the Waitrose car park – a development that comes less than two years after the brewery opened in Church Enstone.

A second micro-pub might also open as the owners of the **Siege of Orleans** in Carterton have also shown interest.

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# Fancy a pint?

**Graham Shelton**, who led the community buy-out of the Red Lion at Northmoor, continues his regular column

Of course you do! On a sunny day and sharing with happy friends, there can be few greater pleasures than quaffing cellar-cool drinks at your local. Or can there? How about supping your own specially-brewed Community Ale in your very own pub?

For some, this is just an alcohol-fuelled dream. But not for the shareholders of Oxfordshire's eight community-owned pubs, who jointly own or lease the bricks and mortar of their locals and in some cases serve the beer as well.

You might remember that in previous columns I expressed the hope of bringing all eight Oxfordshire community-owned pubs together. We had a most successful CAMRA tour of them last year, and now I'm thrilled to say we have all met face-to-face to map out how we can be stronger together and better able to serve the needs of our local communities.

The Oxfordshire Community Pubs Network was born on 16 April 2018 at 7pm: a bouncing baby and a very lively little fellow. As far as we know, we are the first of our kind in the country. We held our inaugural meeting at the Abingdon Arms in Beckley and were able to sample their excellent local brews, skilfully kept and served by Aimée Bronock and her

team. I can recommend their freshly home-made pork pies too.

Some 30 of us gathered with our good friends from CAMRA to share our knowledge and experience, and hopefully to inspire others to embark on the same journey. It may not be the magic solution for every single one of the pubs forced to close every week through lack of profitable business, but the numbers of community pubs are growing fast, and they are beginning to look like a modern trend.

What we discovered in Oxfordshire was the huge variety of offerings, some drinks only, some both drinks and food, and all catering for their own unique local clientele. And can I say what an enthusiastic bunch community-owned pub people and landlords are? They are all strongly driven to make their pubs successful by doing whatever it takes, whether it's events, marketing, food, real ale and, dare I say, other drinks as well.

The truth, of course, is that it needs all of those things in fulsome measure. Some love their pubs so much that you can sleep there too, with increasing numbers offering overnight accommodation for those evenings when it is best not to drive home.

We also discovered that almost every week new groups of ordinary people are clubbing together to test out the feasibility of doing it themselves: raising the money, negotiating to buy the premises, finding tenants, dealing with all the rules and regulations, maintaining an old building and countless other unpaid and frankly quite onerous tasks. As for the tenants, these are the benighted souls who have to put in the 100-hour weeks of toil, and still come up smiling as we walk through the door. They deserve our special thanks and support.

I'd be remiss if I didn't mention all our pubs by name: my very own favourite Red Lion in Northmoor, the Abingdon Arms in Beckley, the White Hart in Wolvercote, the Seven Stars in Marsh Baldon, the Ampleforth Arms in Risinghurst, the Bull in Great Milton, the Plough in Great Haseley and the Plough in West Hanney. Do, please, visit them often. They can't survive if you don't.

And so, what about having "your own specially brewed Community Ale"? Our friends at Oxbrew are on the case, courtesy of Matt Todd at the White Hart in Wolvercote, and I hope to have more on that next time.

# Tony's Travels

Tony Goulding ranges near and far

There were plenty of beer festivals during May with the Saturday all-day fest in St Mary's church, Witney proving very popular with all 70 beers and ciders consumed in great summer weather. I would think they need to double the size of the church! I can't wait till next year when this super atmosphere is again created along with the more modest, cosy fest in nearby Church Hanborough.

The Perch in Binsey is well known for high quality food, but once a year a large marquee is erected in the idyllic Thames-side garden to serve 40-odd beers and ciders. The Banbury festival was as always superb, with 80 beers and ciders. I managed to sample all the non-flavoured ciders and perries – looking forward to next time.

A superb community pub, the Plum Pudding in Milton, near Didcot, served 20 beers, mainly from the North country, plus ciders in a very relaxed summer garden ambience. The programme read, no Watney's Red Barrel or craft keg beer. The White Hart in Headington, our current City Pub of the Year, never disappoints you, and with 45 beers and ciders served in the wonderful back garden, this was a great social event.

My super local, the King's Arms in Kidlington, served 12 beers and four very tasty ciders to locals and a few visitors at its festival, with funds raised for prostate cancer research. The Castle, Hook Norton's city centre pub, had a fine selection of Oxfordshire ales to taste. Oxford Beer Week also

provided many other venues.

The festival season often starts in cold and uninviting weather, but never miss the village hall festival at Merton, near Bicester, in late February. Some rare and one-off brews are served here.

As part of our hobby of observing model and real railway operations, a trip to Southampton was planned with editor Dave Richardson. Already a good drinking city, the lure of potentially six micro-pubs was a no-contest.

Opposite our first model shop in Shirley Road appeared Clockwork, which you might think was a former clock repair or jewellery shop, but you'd be wrong – it was previously a Chinese takeaway. Only opened last July, this smart micro is owned and run by Steve Pitt, a veteran of many jobs. One of three micros and many other good pubs around the "Bermuda Triangle" of Shirley Road, this is in a very diverse suburb of the city very much like our own Cowley Road.

What a great start, as Clockwork has a very smart café-bar style of drinking ambience. The five hand-pulls served Upham's Tipster, a 3.6% golden ale; and a stop-your-messing-around 4.2% New World hoppy ale from Fallen





Acorn brewery. Another local brewery, Dancing Cows, provided the beautiful Chocolate Orange Porter; then from Broken Bridge, yet another local brewery, came Tessellate, a 4% pale ale. Finally, the only beer I recognised – Roaring Meg, a 5.5% IPA from Springhead, which has been brewing for over 20 years.

Clockwork also serves seven keg beers, three keg ciders and three boxed ciders, along with some interesting spirits. Drinks are served over a rather splendid bar top salvaged from a long-gone building in the old Quay area. This micro is a do-not-pass experience.

The two other micros along Shirley Road weren't open at lunchtime, but a short distance away is the totally different Wellington Arms, a true 1860s-built back street community boozer. Renamed from the Swan back in 1975, this Heineken-owned house is managed by a very enthusiastic, passionate Martin Godwin, with many years' experience behind the bar.

Some good old-fashioned names appeared on the 12 hand-pulls including Woodforde's, with Wherry; Wickwar, with BOB; and Harvey's, with Sussex Bitter and Pale Ale. Four ciders were very welcome along with some very tasty basic pub food,

served all day, plus Sunday roasts. If you want community spirit, then the Welly is a must.

We travelled a short distance by train to that railway and plane spotters' haven, Eastleigh, close to Southampton airport. The Wagon Works, a typical 'Spoons, provided a bargain lunch along with a tasty Great Newsome brewery Holderness Dark Mild. Over the railway bridge, another very interesting pub and brewery appears on the corner. Steamtown Brew Co only opened last November, and sounds and looks like an American diner.

Food is served in a big way but does not detract you from a choice of up to 14 kegs, two keg ciders, two hand pulled ciders and five real ales, including two from the on-site brewery, Barton Bitter and Pacific.

Manager David Mackie advised us that the kegs had become very popular and Fuller's had helped with the cellaring, hence London Pride was served along with two very tasty Cornish Orchards ciders. We sat in comfortable first class seats salvaged from a 1970s train carriage. Do visit the Gents to see an alternative use for beer kegs – the contents may remind you of certain smooth-flow bitters!

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# Brewery Focus: Church Hanbrewery

**WHEN A BIG** crowd of over 200 people descended on an industrial estate near Witney on a sunny Friday evening in May, it marked the first open day and another success for Church Hanbrewery.

Everything about this brewery is unusual, from its name to the range of beers produced, and the background of its owners. Brazilian-born couple Luciana and Christian Gyuricza (Christian being of Hungarian descent) started brewing at home in Church Hanborough in 2015, but in October 2016 moved to the New Yatt Business Centre. The open day was organised with a hog roast, Brazilian delicacies and live bands.

Christian has a full-time job as a management consultant in civil engineering, whereas Luciana is a lawyer by profession. They came to the UK in 2003 and have three children aged 9, 15 and 16, and set up the brewery with an eye on future employment as well as making some money out of their passion.

"In two years we have doubled production, and we sell everything we produce," says Luciana, who does most of the brewing. "It is still hard for a small brewery such as us to get into pubs as the competition is so intense, and some competing beers are priced so low that it's hard to match their prices.

"So we are interested in attending all sorts of events,

including the Blenheim and Abingdon food festivals and Cowley Road Carnival this summer. It's nice to meet our customers and talk to them directly."

All Church Hanbrewery beers are produced in bottles and some are produced in cask or keg. The most popular are Ale X, a 4.5% IPA, followed by Honey and Oatmeal Porter (5.5%). Witty Bea is a 4.5% wheat beer while Ze Braun is a 5.5% dark wheat concoction.

Even more eclectic are a Smoked English Beer called Rauk at 5%; the Indian Black Ale called Matt Black at 5.5%; Red Beetter, an English red ale with beetroot at 5.5%; and 1 4 Keeps, a French-style Bier de Garde at 6%. Less commonly available are raspberry and wild berry beers.

Church Hanbrewery now has a mobile bar, Teardrop Bar, for

events. It has developed two special beers for this, Teardrop Pure Citra (a single hop pale ale at 4.2%), and Teardrop Bitter, a session Irish bitter at 3.8%. During Oxford Beer Week its keg beers were featured by Pint Shop, BrewDog, the Castle Oxford and other pubs.

Its motto is "cloudiness is purity", and all ingredients are natural and sustainable. It wanted to sell beer in reusable bottles but can't find strong enough bottles to re-use safely, but all its labels are made from recycled newspaper and attached without glue.

Church Hanbrewery is a good example of a very modern trend – a small brewery using original ideas with a focus on taste and sustainability, and selling through non-traditional outlets. Whatever it does next, you can be sure it's worth looking out for.

**DAVE RICHARDSON**



**ABOVE:** Jean Glendinning with Luciana and Christian Gyuricza

# Brewery News

## Hook Norton

"The rumours are true," it admits, as Hooky is breaking with tradition by brewing its first lager, Trial #1 (4%). Brewed in the pilot plant using a special lager yeast, this first trial batch delivers a crisp clean continental style, not over hoppy – but very drinkable.

Managing Director James Clarke says: "I would never have thought we would have been brewing a lager, a real departure for us. But when I joined Hook Norton Brewery we didn't have mobile telephones or the Internet, brewed three different beers, records were handwritten, and 90% of beer drunk in the UK was drunk in pubs. Times and tastes change and we like to think down here at Hooky we can do the same.

"What would our forebears say? I think they would chuckle, and acknowledge that we are in a different world today and when it comes down to it, it's usually the occasion more than the drink you'll remember."

## Vale

April saw the grand opening of the new tap room and shop. The tap room is open on Fridays from 12-6pm and on Saturdays from 12-5pm. Brewery tours will again be offered this summer and an open day will be held in July – check website for details.

Vale is producing its first craft keg beers. Kölner Dom is a pale golden Kölsch-style ale, crisp and refreshing with delicate floral hop aromas from both German and American hops.

The west coast American IPA Big Sur is a deep golden beer, brewed with Maris Otter and Crystal malts to provide a solid backbone for massive additions of American hops.

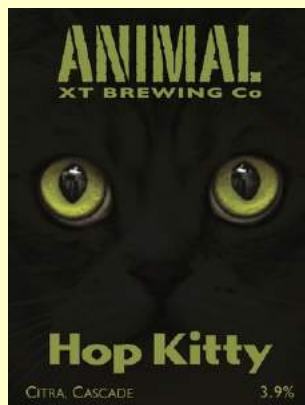
Specials include Red Card (4%), a ruby red ale with subtle spicy hop flavours celebrating the festival of sport happening over the summer; and Under the Boat (4.5%), a deep golden session IPA with juicy citrus monster hops.



## XT

XT will be back at the Great British Beer Festival in August with its own brewery bar, to showcase the core range of XT and Animal beers plus special one-off beers brewed just for the event. Having seen the success of the foreign bars at last year's show, XT is keen to prove that British brewers can easily match the competition from overseas and produce something for visitors to get excited about.

The hugely popular HopCat – which is now one of the best-selling beers from XT in just a few months – will need a name change. Following a long legal battle with a bar company in Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA which claims worldwide ownership of the name, XT will instead be calling the 3.9% hyper hoppy beer HopKitty.



The beer will stay exactly the same and hopefully the new name will prove just as popular. To mark the name change XT will also brew two stronger limited edition versions, the street fighting alley cat, Bad Kitty at 5.9%; and the utterly feral Evil Kitty which will be as strong as it can get it!

The latest Animal beers from Notley Farm are Giraffe, an amber beer at 4.6% using a satisfying pairing of grapefruit and chocolate; and Wolf Pale Ale at 4.6%, brewed with the new Styrian Wolf Hop developed by the Slovenian Institute for Hop Research and Brewing, and used for the very first time at XT.

# The Science of Beer

**Dick Bosley** gets a little technical on a visit to Tap Social Movement in West Oxford



**BACK IN FEBRUARY** Science Oxford, a charity promoting science and enterprise, collaborated with Tap Social to host an evening of beery based science and a brewery tour.

Tap Social is a social enterprise company formed in 2016 and works with day-release and recently released prisoners to help them find employment. It produces a range of mainly craft beers and has transformed an industrial unit into a brewery and very welcoming tap room and café.

We started with an entertaining talk by Terence Eden about the possibilities of brewing beer in space. This may seem an unusual aim but as he pointed out, space is very boring while beer is not. Also as brewing is a fairly simple process, you can look at the ingredients in turn to see how possible it is.

**Water:** The main component of beer but sadly very hard to get in space. It costs about £15,000 for each litre taken up in a rocket and so the only practicable solution includes the use of filters following a process pioneered in Belgium under the title "from sewer to brewer". Enough said.

**Malt:** Amongst the many and varied items taken to space on Elon Musk's SpaceX rocket were some barley seeds and a camera supplied by Anheuser-Busch. It wants to check on things like germination etc, and

I see it as a little bit less Bud beer on earth.

**Yeast:** Apparently this is quite often taken into space because of its genetic similarity to humans. Sadly it does get harmed by the radiation levels in space but it can be repaired using human genes. The good news is that zero gravity seems to be very good for fermentation, creating beers about three times as strong. The bad news is that because "the bubbles of CO<sub>2</sub> aren't buoyant", the beer is very foamy. Very, very foamy.

So in essence, if you like very alcoholic, slightly cannibalistic bubbles with a hint of wee you could, no should, consider a career as an astronaut.

We then carried out a couple of simple experiments such as

shaking a can of beer and then tapping the top so it didn't froth everywhere when opened, pouring shaken bottles of beer through filter paper with the same result and, my favourite, putting sultanas in beer and watching them float up and down. It wasn't that exciting but it did improve the flavour of the sultanas.

We then had a tour of the brewery led by American head brewer, Jason Bolger. All of the beers made are suitable for vegetarians as no finings are used. It always aims to have a gluten-free beer available as well as a "session" beer of about 3.5%. New World hops are used in all the beers and the relatively small volumes give Jason the chance to try some newer flavours. He also wants to experiment with some sour beers using natural wild yeasts.



# Quick Halves...

## Home Brewers

I know some of this might raise the eyebrows – and possibly blood pressure – of some CAMRA members, but I have to say that the beers I tried (Hop of the Press and the award winning Goodsize Eh?) were both excellent and not as cold or gassy as other craft beers I have tried. Also all the beers produced are available as bottled conditioned.



Tap Social is well worth finding with the café open from 9.30am-4pm on weekdays and 12-6pm on Sundays, and the Tap Room open 4-11pm on Thursday, Friday and Saturday and 12-6pm Sundays. The venue is also used for a variety of social events such as music, comedy and food.

**PHOTO LEFT:** The Tap team (from left to right): James Bolger, Matt Elliott, and co-founders Tess Taylor, Paul Humpherson and Amy Taylor.

The Oxford Brewers Group is your local home brewing club, offering activities and meeting opportunities for home brewers and craft beer enthusiasts alike. Monthly meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month at the Chequers on High Street, Oxford, to discuss techniques and ingredients, and to sample the beers of your peers. At the last meeting, home brewers brought a variety of brews including two stouts, a RyePA, an amber lager and an English bitter.

It has also organised recently a visit to The Oxford Artisan Distillery (TOAD) and a termly home brewing competition. Each competition focuses on a specific style, most recently a Trappist Single. Five home brewers took part in that round, piling by comparison with the 11 of the previous contest, and all the attendees judged the beers for compliance with the style's guidelines. The winner of that edition was John Snelson, with his Flying Buttress featuring Belgian pilsner malt and traditional noble hops. The next competition will take place on 18 July, focusing on German Weißbier.

To get involved, simply head to the website and subscribe to the mailing list.

[www.oxfordbrewers.com](http://www.oxfordbrewers.com)

**MICHAEL CADILHAC**

## Cotswold Beer Festival

The 42nd CBF will be held from 20-22 July at Postlip Hall, Winchcombe, Cheltenham,

Gloucestershire GL54 5AQ (near the Gloucestershire and Warwickshire Railway).

This is a festival of real ale, real food, and real friends and family. For 42 years it has been celebrating award winning ales and ciders at a unique venue, Postlip Hall Barn and gardens, which is as authentic as the beer.

The festival comes with live jazz sessions and a BBQ sizzle. You can soak up the atmosphere of the barn with a pint, or picnic in the gardens and share a brew with friends and family.

[www.postlip.camra.org.uk](http://www.postlip.camra.org.uk)

## Maidenhead Beer Festival

The Maidenhead Beer & Cider Festival returns to Desborough College, Shoppenhangers Road, Maidenhead SL6 2QB on Thursday 26-Saturday 28 July. Chris Brown, Borough Town Crier, will open the festival on the Thursday at 12 noon, and a programme of entertainment and good quality food is now being organised.

[www.maidenheadbeerfest.camra.org.uk/](http://www.maidenheadbeerfest.camra.org.uk/)

**GREAT BRITISH  
BEER  
FESTIVAL 2018  
7-11 AUGUST  
OLYMPIA LONDON**

**20-22 July '18**  
**COTSWOLD**  
 The 42nd Annual **BEER**  
**FESTIVAL**  
 at Postlip Hall  
 CHELTENHAM

🐦 + 📷 @cbf\_beerfest

📺 /cotswoldbeerfest  
[www.postlip.camra.org.uk](http://www.postlip.camra.org.uk)



**26-28 July**

**6th Maidenhead**



*Beer and Cider*  
**Festival 2018**



Desborough College, Shoppenhangers Road,  
 Maidenhead SL6 2QB

Open: Thu 12noon - 10pm, Fri/Sat 12noon - 10.30pm.

Admission: £5, £4 with RBWM Advantage Card,  
 £3 CAMRA, all to include Souvenir Glass



[www.mbf.camra.org.uk](http://www.mbf.camra.org.uk)

**LOOSE CANNON**

**BREWERY • ABINGDON**



[WWW.LCBEERS.CO.UK](http://WWW.LCBEERS.CO.UK)

01235 531141

# Festival Diary

Compiled by Richard Queralt

Further details can be found on our website [www.oxford.camra.org.uk](http://www.oxford.camra.org.uk)

**Friday 15 - Saturday 16 June**

## **Salisbury Beerex**

Salisbury Arts Centre,  
Bedwin Street, Salisbury  
48 beers plus 10 ciders  
Entry by ticket only  
[www.salisburyartscentre.co.uk](http://www.salisburyartscentre.co.uk)

**Friday 22 - Saturday 23 June**

## **Nor Lye Music, Real Ale & Cider Festival**

North Leigh Football Club,  
Eynsham Park, North Leigh  
[www.norlyefestival.com](http://www.norlyefestival.com)

**Saturday 23 June**

## **Cricketers Arms Summer Beer Festival**

Cricketers Arms, Littleworth, nr  
Wheatley  
01865 872738  
[www.cricketers-arms.co.uk](http://www.cricketers-arms.co.uk)

**Saturday 23 June**

## **Tingewick Village Fete & Beer Festival**

Recreation Ground, Water  
Stratford Road, Tingewick, nr  
Bicester (open 1pm-11om)  
[www.tingewickfete.co.uk](http://www.tingewickfete.co.uk)

**Saturday 23 - Sunday 24 June**

## **Tackley Beer Festival**

Gardiner Arms, Medcroft Road,  
Tackley  
01869 331266  
[www.gardinerarmstackley.co.uk](http://www.gardinerarmstackley.co.uk)

**Saturday 30 June**

## **Charlbury Beer Festival**

Charlbury Cricket Club, Dyers Hill,  
Charlbury  
Incorporating 'The World Aunt  
Sally Open Singles  
Championship'  
50+ beers, ciders & perries  
[www.charlburybeerfestival.org](http://www.charlburybeerfestival.org)

**Saturday 30 June**

## **Fringford Beer & Cider Festival**

Cricket Green, Main Street,  
Fringford (open noon-11pm)  
[www.fringford.info](http://www.fringford.info)

**Friday 6 - Saturday 7 July**

## **Stratford-upon-Avon Beer & Cider Festival**

Stratford-upon-Avon Racecourse,  
Luddington Road, Stratford-upon-Avon  
75+ beers plus 30+ ciders & perries  
[www.stratfordbeerfestival.org.uk](http://www.stratfordbeerfestival.org.uk)

**Friday 6 - Sunday 8 July**

## **Beer on the Wye**

Hereford Beer & Cider Festival  
Hereford Rowing Club, Greyfriars  
Avenue, Hereford  
135+ beers plus 130+ ciders & perries  
[www.herefordcamra.org.uk](http://www.herefordcamra.org.uk)

**Saturday 7 July**

## **Haddenham Summerfest**

Haddenham Community Junior  
School, Woodways, Haddenham  
(open noon-8pm)  
[www.haddenham-beer-festival.co.uk](http://www.haddenham-beer-festival.co.uk)

**Friday 13 - Saturday 14 July**

## **Buckingham Beer & Music Festival**

Buckingham Rugby Union Club,  
Floyd Field, Maids Moreton, nr  
Buckingham  
40 beers plus 10 ciders & perries  
[www.buckinghambeerfestival.co.uk](http://www.buckinghambeerfestival.co.uk)

**Friday 13 - Sunday 15 July**

## **Bastille Day Beer Festival**

Horse & Groom, Lower Heyford  
Road, Caulcott, nr Bicester  
18 beers plus 6 ciders  
[www.horseandgroomcaulcott.co.uk](http://www.horseandgroomcaulcott.co.uk)

**Saturday 14 - Sunday 15 July**

## **Woodcote Festival of Ale**

(with Woodcote Steam Rally)  
Tidmore Lane, Woodcote, off

A4074 Wallingford to Reading  
Road  
[www.woodcoterally.org.uk/festivalofale.html](http://www.woodcoterally.org.uk/festivalofale.html)

**Friday 20 - Sunday 22 July**

## **Cotswold Beer Festival**

Postlip Tithe Barn, nr  
Winchcombe, Cheltenham  
60 beers plus 20 ciders & perries  
Admission by ticket only – see  
website for details  
[www.gloucestershire.camra.org.uk](http://www.gloucestershire.camra.org.uk)

**Friday 20 - Sunday 22 July**

## **Tree Hotel Beer & Cider Festival**

Church Way, Iffley, Oxford  
01865 775974  
[www.treehotel.co.uk](http://www.treehotel.co.uk)

**Saturday 21 July**

## **Hook Norton Festival of Fine Ales**

Held in a field off Clay Bank, Hook  
Norton  
[www.hookybeerfest.co.uk](http://www.hookybeerfest.co.uk)

**Thursday 26 - Saturday 28 July**

## **Maidenhead Beer & Cider Festival**

Desborough College,  
Shoppenhangers Road,  
Maidenhead  
100 beers plus 20 ciders  
[www.mbcf.camra.org.uk](http://www.mbcf.camra.org.uk)

**Thursday 26 - Sunday 29 July**

## **North Moreton Beer & Cricket Festival**

Bear at Home Inn, High Street,  
North Moreton, nr Didcot  
[www.bear-at-home.co.uk](http://www.bear-at-home.co.uk)

**Friday 27 - Sunday 29 July**

## **Cogges Beer and Cider Festival**

Cogges Manor Farm, Church  
Lane, Witney  
30+ beers & ciders  
[www.cogges.org.uk](http://www.cogges.org.uk)

# Join up, join in, join the campaign



**CAMPAIGN  
FOR  
REAL ALE**

**You are just moments away from a year in beer heaven!**

From as little as £25\* today, be part of the CAMRA community and enjoy discounted entry to around 200 beer festivals, exclusive member offers and more. Discover all the ins and outs of brewing and beer with fantastic magazines and newsletters, but even more importantly support various causes and campaigns to save pubs, cut beer tax and more.

## Join CAMRA today

Enter your details and complete the Direct Debit form below to get 15 months for the price of 12 for the first year and save £2 on your membership fee.

Alternatively you can send a cheque payable to CAMRA Ltd with your completed form, visit [www.camra.org.uk/joinup](http://www.camra.org.uk/joinup) or call 01727 798440. All forms should be addressed to Membership Department, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, AL1 4LW.

### Your details:

	Direct Debit	Non DD
Title ..... Surname .....	Single Membership £25 <input type="checkbox"/>	£27 <input type="checkbox"/>
Forename(s) .....	(UK & EU)	
Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy) .....	Joint Membership £30.50 <input type="checkbox"/>	£32.50 <input type="checkbox"/>
Address .....	(Partner at the same address)	
..... Postcode .....		
Email address .....	*For information on Young Member and other concessionary rates please visit <a href="http://www.camra.org.uk/membership-rates">www.camra.org.uk/membership-rates</a> or call 01727 798440.	
Tel No(s) .....	I/we wish to join the Campaign for Real Ale, and agree to abide by the Memorandum and Articles of Association these are available at <a href="http://camra.org.uk/memorandum">camra.org.uk/memorandum</a> <input type="checkbox"/>	

### Partner's Details (if Joint Membership)

Title ..... Surname .....	
Forename(s) .....	
Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy) .....	Signed .....
Joint member's Email .....	Date .....
Joint member's Tel No .....	Applications will be processed within 21 days of receipt of this form. 04/17

### Instruction to your Bank or Building Society to pay by Direct Debit

Please fill in the whole form using a ball point pen and send to:  
Campaign for Real Ale Ltd, 230 Hatfield Road St. Albans, Herts AL1 4LW

#### Name and full postal address of your Bank or Building Society

To the Manager Bank or Building Society

Address

Postcode

#### Names(s) of Account Holder

#### Bank or Building Society Account Number

#### Branch Sort Code

#### Reference

#### Service User Number

9 2 6 1 2 9

#### FOR CAMRA OFFICIAL USE ONLY

This is not part of the instruction to your Bank or Building Society

Membership Number

Name

Postcode

#### Instructions to your Bank or Building Society

Please pay Campaign For Real Ale Limited Direct Debits from the account detailed on this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with Campaign For Real Ale Limited and, if so will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.

Signature(s)

Date



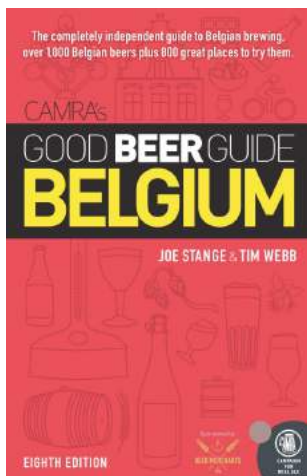
This Guarantee should be detached and retained by the payer.

### The Direct Debit Guarantee

- This Guarantee is offered by all banks and building societies that accept instructions to pay by Direct Debits.
- If there are any changes to the amount, date or frequency of your Direct Debit The Campaign for Real Ale Ltd will notify you 10 working days in advance of your account being debited or as otherwise agreed. If you request The Campaign for Real Ale Ltd to collect a payment, confirmation of the amount and date will be given to you at the time of the request.
- If an error is made in the payment of your Direct Debit by The Campaign for Real Ale Ltd or your bank or building society, you are entitled to a full and immediate refund of the amount paid from your bank or building society.
- If you receive a refund you are not entitled to, you must pay it back when The Campaign Real Ale Ltd asks you to.
- You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by simply contacting your bank or building society. Written confirmation may be required. Please also notify us.

Banks and Building Societies may not accept Direct Debit Instructions for some types of account.

New Direct Debit members will receive a 12 month supply of vouchers in their first 15 months of membership



**JUST HOW BELGIAN** are the Belgian beers of today? That is the question posed by the latest edition of CAMRA's *Good Beer Guide Belgium* (£14.99).

In 2016, UNESCO granted Belgium's beer culture the

status of "intangible cultural heritage", marking it as something to protect. Co-author of the book Joe Stange argues that the Belgian style has since become "interchangeable" and lacking context.

Brewers from around the world currently produce a huge range of "Belgian" beers, while their Belgian counterparts make familiar IPAs with Americana. Thanks to modern ingredient sharing and technology, brewers are able to build their brews to match any profile from any place.

"The beer world is full of credible imitations these days, but nobody yet has been able to clone Belgian panache," said Joe. "Whether it's in the deep wood-and-patina brownness of an old estaminet, or in the sparkle and resilient foam of a strong, bottle-conditioned ale,

we find that these things are best experienced in their home context. We're delighted to show you where."

The *Good Beer Guide Belgium* includes information on breweries, beers and bars, explaining different styles including Flemish Reds, saisons, lambics and gueuze. It also features the history of Belgian beer and its many quirks, as well as comprehensive advice on getting there, what to eat, where to stay and where to go.

Full-colour province-by-province maps and detailed city maps highlight over 800 bars, cafés and beer shops. It features hundreds of beers from over 240 Belgian breweries, and has been completely revised and updated. You can buy direct from the CAMRA online shop.

## The Pub History Society

**THE PUB HISTORY SOCIETY** (PHS) was formed in 2001 to "promote the heritage of British pubs and the people associated with them". I joined last year and, on a whim, decided to attend the AGM in May, which was held at the Royal Oak in Tabard Street, London.

Before I reached there I called into the George in Borough High Street – an old coaching inn on what was, at the time, a principal route into London. With connections with Dickens and Shakespeare, the George is now owned by the National Trust. There is a good range of changing – if pricey – beers, and drinkers are encouraged to wander through the various bars, rooms and balcony.

The Royal Oak is a lovely

Harvey's pub with the feel of a village local, even though it is only half a mile from London Bridge. I was amused to realise that it is a pub I used when, many years ago, I was walking the Thames Path.

The relatively small size of the PHS meant that the AGM itself had the feel – and humour – of a CAMRA branch AGM. Everyone there shared a love of the institution that is the British pub, and there is no need for dictats from Head Office etc. The annual subscription was held at £14 per annum, for which you get a knowledgeable and interesting quarterly magazine and access to all of the society's archives. Should you prefer to receive the magazine on-line the subscription is reduced to £7.

Simple eh?

Amongst the social events being organised is a tour of Oxford's historic pubs, that should be worth the subscription in itself. For more info go to

[www.pubhistorysociety.co.uk](http://www.pubhistorysociety.co.uk)

**DICK BOSLEY**



# 6TH BRITISH REAL BEER AND CIDER FESTIVAL

The Tree Hotel  
63 Church Way, Iffley, Oxford OX4 4EY  
Tel: 01865 775 974

## 20-22 July 2018

Indian & English BBQ • Live Music • Beer Garden  
15 Beers & Ciders to Taste

**Fri 20th**  
**3-10pm BBQ**  
**LIVE MUSIC**

**Sat 21st**  
**12-10pm BBQ**  
**LIVE MUSIC**

**Sun 22nd**  
**12-8pm Buffet**  
**LIVE MUSIC**

