



**CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE**

issue 46
June - July 2007



the Oxford Drinker

Smoke free zone !

The Government introduces the smoking ban in enclosed public spaces in England from 1st July 2007. This follows on from similar legislation already introduced in Ireland, Scotland and Wales. So what effect are we likely to see on the pub trade in the months to come?

As one of the few remaining smokers in the local CAMRA branch, this will affect me more than most. Or will it? Already I cannot smoke in my office at work, at home (rented property, - it's a condition of the lease), I rarely smoke in my car (it's rather dangerous to make roll-ups whilst driving), so I've got used to popping out for a smoke. It's fast becoming a feature of the habit.

Many pubs that have the space have already prepared for the ban by creating covered, heated patio areas for smokers. Take your average town centre of a weekend. The majority of the clientele probably consists of the young people out to enjoy themselves. A few pints in the pub followed by a club is often the order of the night, and I

doubt whether this will change. What about the so-called estate pubs? Again, the usual regulars are probably not going to be deterred from popping out for a pint just because they cannot enjoy a cigarette with it. They'll simply nip out for a fag when the mood takes them.

Already I've witnessed this in Ireland and Scotland. You'll find a group of people stood by the front entrance having a smoke. I first saw this effect in Dublin, where a bunch of blokes out on the street can appear intimidating as you approach the pub. Then you realise they are only enjoying a cigarette, and all is well with the world.

Most commentators point to the benefits to the atmosphere in a pub. No longer will you go home with your clothes reeking of someone else's smoke, and no longer will you become a passive smoker for the night. But will this be enough to attract new customers, those folk who don't enjoy the smoky atmosphere? Are you really going to attract them away from their TV sets and cheap supermarket booze?

Research by CAMRA suggests that an extra 7 million people will visit pubs more often as a result of the ban. But only 840,000 of those were people who currently do not visit pubs. So in the main, it is just more of the usual then.

A quick search on Google indicates the Government takes about £10 billion a year on tobacco related taxes, and £5.5 billion on alcohol related taxes. Health problems related to smoking are widely publicised, yet society seems relatively tolerant of alcohol abuse. What of the associated effects on society of drunken behaviour, violence, damage to property and lives? Surely the answer is moderation in all things?

Country pubs are often cited as the most at risk. However, it is drinking and driving, and the lack of public transport that reduces the custom to rural pubs. A smoking ban won't affect this. A decent, well run, welcoming pub, with good beer and good food will continue to pull in the punters, wherever it is situated.

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the free newsletter of the
Oxford City Branch of CAMRA
www.oxfordcamra.org.uk

spring beer festival at the old bookbinders



David Hill

The second bi-annual beer festival at the Old Bookbinders Ale House in Jericho at the end of April was as successful as the first, held in October, with all the non-Greene King beer gone by the end of the Saturday, the second day.

In part due to the success of the last festival, the pub is allowed an ever-changing guest beer that is not from GK or its standard guest list.

For the festival they were allowed six non GK beers to supplement the seven GK supplied ones (most of which would have been on anyway but the XX mild was a nice addition) and they also had one real cider.

The beers were served from the pub's six handpumps with the remaining being taken direct from the cellar and were all in good condition, drawing many favourable comments.

A good selection of real ales will often bring in a crowd, especially if they are sourced locally as these were. This certainly happened at the Bookbinders and Friday night was packed out as I've never seen it before, with most people drinking the festival beers.

The Lodden Bamboozle was particularly popular, running out by 10 o' clock. The selection was unfortunately diminished by two of the beers

not having cleared sufficiently to serve but the situation was mitigated by an extra beer being on, the non-GK guest, Caledonian XPA. Of the two beers which hadn't cleared on Friday, Burford Best was ready on Saturday and gave some variety to the evening after the other popular beers had run out. The other beer, Ridgeway Bitter held on to the middle of the next week until it was ready to serve.

A great success and if you can't wait until the autumn for the next festival, the Old Bookbinders is a good real ale pub throughout the year.

beer festival diary



Saturday 2nd June
Chadlington Beer Festival
Memorial Hall, Spelsbury
Road, Chadlington
12 noon – 11pm
www.chadlingtonbeerfestival.com

Friday 8 – Sunday 10 June
1st Oxford City Football Club Beer Festival
Court Place Farm Stadium,
Marsh Lane, Marston
www.oxfordcityfc.co.uk

Friday 15 – Sunday 17 June
Kings Arms Beer Festival
Kings Arms, The Moors,
Kidlington 01865 373004

Tuesday 19 – Saturday 23
June
**Far from the Madding Crowd
Summer Beer Festival**
Friars Entry, Oxford
01865 240900
www.maddingcrowd.co.uk

Friday 22 - Sunday 24 June
Chester Arms Beer Festival
Chester Street, Oxford.
Including 2 Old Bog Brewery
beers.

Saturday 30 June
**Chipping Norton Rugby Club
Beer Festival**
Greystones, Burford Road
www.cnrufc.co.uk

Saturday 30 June
**4th Haddenham Real Ale
Festival**
Youth & Community Centre,
Woodaways, Haddenham
01844 290269
www.haddenham-beer-festival.co.uk

Friday 6 - Saturday 7 July
**Merton Summer Beer
Festival**
Merton Village Hall, Merton
Friday 6-11pm, Saturday 12
noon-11pm with fete at 2pm
25-30 beers plus cider & perry
www.swansupping.org.uk

continued across page

beer festival

diary *continued*

Saturday 14th July
Charlbury Beer Festival
 Memorial Hall, Browns Lane,
 Charlbury
 35+ beers ciders and perrys
 12 noon – 11pm
www.charlburybeerfestival.org

Friday 20 – Sunday 22 July
Dun Cow Beer Festival
 Dun Cow, West End, Hornton,
 Nr Banbury
 Friday 6-11pm, Saturday &
 Sunday 12 noon-11pm
 01295 670524

Saturday 21st July
Hook Norton Beer Festival
 Pear Tree Inn, Hook Norton
 Approx 90 beers
 12 noon – 10pm
 01608 737482
www.hookybeerfest.co.uk

Friday 27 – Saturday 28 July
Falkland Arms Beer Festival
 Falkland Arms, Great Tew
 01608 683653

Tuesday 7 - Saturday 11
 August
Great British Beer Festival
 Earls Court, London
 450 real ales
www.camra.org.uk

Details and updates

are available

on our FESTIVALS

webpage at

www.oxfordcamra.org.uk

credits....

The *Oxford Drinker* is the newsletter of Oxford CAMRA, The Campaign for Real Ale. It is published bi-monthly in February, April, June, August, October & December. 2000 copies of each one are distributed free of charge to pubs and other drinking establishments across the city and its surrounding area.

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 contributors and not necessarily those of the branch or CAMRA limited.

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beer styles - part 5

Richard Queralt



LIGHT & BROWN ALES

This short series of articles looks at the different styles of beer native to Britain. Part 5 covers light and brown ales. The illustrations - with the exception of the one below - are of beer bottle labels from defunct Oxfordshire breweries.

Firstly, the words 'ale' and 'beer' today are taken to mean the same thing, whereas originally they described two different styles.

Up to the 15th century beer in Britain was brewed without hops and was known as ale. The word is derived from the Scandinavian 'øl' (pronounced similar to 'earl') and was probably imported along with ale brewing methods during the Viking invasions. This øl, below, is from the Faxe Brewery in Denmark, now part of the giant Inbev consortium.



At the time, Scandinavian beer was brewed using locally available herbs and other plants as flavourings rather than the hops native to the countries further south.

Ale was a dark-coloured, sweet, strong, brew and it wasn't until the early 15th century that the brighter, lighter, hop-flavoured drink

known as 'bier' first came to England. The Dutch merchants and Flemish weavers working in the thriving wool trade in east Kent, besides bringing with them their native drink, also brought first hand experience of hop cultivation which they passed on to local farmers, and the growing of hops for beer began in Britain.

The word bier, of course, became 'beer' in English and also exists in various forms in other European languages: 'bière' in French and 'birra' in Italian, for example. The Scandinavians stick with øl, although most of their beer is now brewed using hops.



This Brown Ale, above, was sold in Hall's Oxford & West Brewery pubs but was neither brewed nor bottled in Oxford. The brewery had closed decades before the issue of this label, which states 'Bottled by Wadsworths', a Wiltshire brewery. The beer could have been brewed anywhere under contract.

Brown beer is the oldest type of beer still brewed in Britain

today. Originally brewed as ales, i.e. without hops, current versions are lightly hopped but still retain the 'ale' tag, though there have been exceptions like the one below from the long-gone Garne & Sons brewery of Burford.



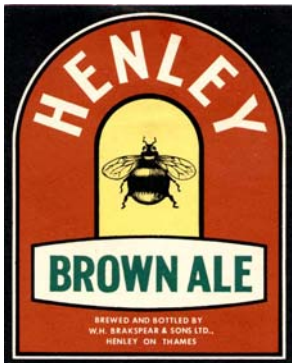
The old-style brown beers mostly died out in the 18th century when porters and stouts became popular.



A Brown Ale from Clinch & Co of Witney

One of the drawbacks of porter brewing was that the beer had to be matured for several

months, which could at times result in thousands of gallons in storage but none ready for drinking. Improvements in brewing techniques in the 19th century resulted in beer that could be sold without first going through the lengthy maturation period, and, originally as a stop-gap when demand outstripped supply, breweries began to send out an immature version of porter, which became known as 'mild ale'.



Brakspear & Sons of Henley

This new style of beer was to become very popular among all classes of beer drinker, eventually taking the place of the porters which had been Britain's favourite tipple for over 150 years.

And it's here in the bottled milds of the early 20th century that today's brown ales have their roots, rather than a thousand years ago in Scandinavia.

As brown beer is the oldest type of beer still brewed in Britain it is fitting that a brown is also the country's oldest continuously-brewed beer brand. Mann's Original Brown Ale has been around for just

over a century and is still widely sold in pubs and supermarkets. Presently brewed in Cheshire but originating from London, the brand name now belongs to Refresh UK and accounts for an 85% share of the sweet brown ale market.

But if you haven't come across Mann's before you'll almost certainly have heard of Newcastle Brown Ale. First brewed in 1927, Newcastle Brown has become a national brand with something of a cult following. Found almost anywhere beer is sold in Britain, it also has a healthy export market in America and several other countries.



Morland & Co, Abingdon

If brown ale is mild in a bottle then light ale is bitter in bottle.

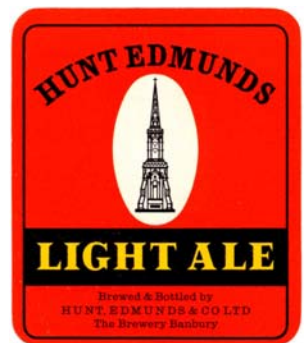
Bitter, getting its name from the taste given to the beer by the hops added during the brewing process, is our most common style of beer brewed today, with every brewery having at least one bitter in its portfolio. Some brew nothing but bitter.

These light-coloured bitter beers were first brewed in Britain in the 15th century,

when the importing and cultivation of hops began. The bottled versions tend to be of lower alcohol content than their draught cousins.

As with brown ales, there are few lights available today. Mann's Light Ale is still available but it's unusual to find it on sale. Some of the bigger brewers still offer a light, usually to be found on sale only in their tied houses. Young's Light Ale can often be found in supermarkets as well as pubs but, as always, avoid the tinned versions.

Both brown and light ales were usually sold in pint bottles as well halves, with the halves mainly being mixed with a half of bitter.



Hunt Edmunds, Banbury

With the keg revolution of the late 1950s and 1960s, which saw brewers all over Britain abandoning traditionally-brewed, cask-conditioned beer in favour of bland pasteurised versions, these pints of brown or light and bitter became more popular. Sales of bottled light and brown ales increased, with many a half pint of bland, gassy keg bitter livened up by the beers on these pages.

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around the county

David Hill

St. Georges Day and six of us set off to slay the dragons in the area around Otmoor. At the first call, the **White Horse** at Forest Hill, just off the A40, we were joined by Sam, the editor, to take our number up to seven which is probably not a record but is a good number for one of these expeditions.



Last year when we visited this pub we found some decent beer but it was a bit run down and up for sale or lease. Was it going the same way as the **Kings Arms**, the village's other pub, closed 15 years previously? We found it has indeed been sold but to pub company Oak Taverns whose commitment to the pub includes a major refurbishment probably in June. There were not many customers but it was quite early and the two beers both from Goldfinch were not at all bad; Tom Brown's a 4.0% mid-brown bitter and Midnight Sun at 4.5% a paler, sweeter beer.

We then moved on to Stanton St. John and the **Star Inn**. This Wadworth's pub was once a Good Beer Guide regular and stickers in the window still proclaim it as having been in all the issues from 1988 to 1995. An old rambling pub, the trade is based on attracting diners but it still keeps its beer well.



The beers on were Wadworth's standard Henry's IPA and 6X and an interesting seasonal, a dark brown malty bitter called "Mann's St George and the Dragon" which was the one most of us had.

Next, also in Stanton St John, was **The Talk House**. Called the Swan, when we visited last year it was owned by top chef Marco Pierre White. It has now been acquired by Fuller's (reputedly for £1.9million) but is still a restaurant with a bar rather than a pub. It looked promising beerwise as the clips on the three handpumps were three of the brewery's beers - London Pride, ESB and Discovery - but in reality there was only Discovery on, supplemented however by a number of Fuller's bottled beers, including London Porter and the 6.3%, bottled conditioned 1845.



So we sat at one of the candle-lit dining tables and enjoyed a drink and some food in the form of two flavours of Pipers crisps which our pub snack expert, Alastair, proclaimed to be as good as Tyrells.

The **Abingdon Arms** at Beckley is known for its garden with a spectacular view over Otmoor but by the time we got there it was getting a bit cold and dark to appreciate this. Run by the Brakspear pub company it serves Brakspear's beers from separately owned Refresh at Witney.



There was only the Bitter on, although on previous visits there have often been two beers available. It displays a number of company awards including Brakspear Marketing Pub of the Year, 2006. As we drank our beer we gazed at some strange looking fish swimming around in their little glass prisons.

We then headed to Horton cum Studley to have a look at **The Lodge**. A few years ago it had real ale but the last two visits have been unfruitful and so was this one, although it seemed to have quite a good pub atmosphere.

We then continued on the road around Otmoor to Murcott and **The Nut Tree Inn** which we were disappointed to find closed. It was a Monday but it was also St George's Day. So, never mind we said, **The Crown** at Charlton on Otmoor is a good pub, but it too was closed. St George's day appears not to be observed on Otmoor!

Further around we found Islip and a pub which was open and quite lively - **The Swan**. This was everyone's first visit here since its refurbishment last October. The place is a bit smarter now and although

opened out a bit it hasn't been spoilt and still retains its higgledy-piggledy assortment of spaces.



The three Greene King beers, however, were not in the best of condition.

The other pub in Islip is the **Red Lion**, owned by Punch, which is often better beerwise

and proved to be that night. Although they only had Wadworth's 6X, and they can have two or three beers on, it was in top condition. It was not, however, nearly as busy as The Swan there being, besides us, only two other customers.



See p17 for further details...

ascot races beer festival

Tony Perry

This year saw the first beer festival and race meeting combined, at Ascot race-course. This was the brainchild of the late Colin Lanham, to whose memory the festival was dedicated, and after whom the first race on the card was named.

A number of the Oxford City branch made the journey to Ascot by train. However, not all of us bought the upgraded premier tickets which allowed access to the main grandstand. This turned out to be a fiver well spent, as the area where the beer festival was sited was exposed to the elements, and a cold and damp day it was.

Not so in the comfort of the grandstand though, where you could enjoy your pint in the warmth, then simply nip outside when a race was about

to start, and cheer your nag on. The only thing was that the stewards would not let you take your glass on the down escalators. So you could go up on them, but had to walk down the stairs.

I played the usual accountant's rule of risk avoidance, putting my money on the favourite for a place in each race. As a strategy this worked, although I don't think I'll be making my fortune this way. I ended up £4 up on the day. Excluding beer, obviously. My big win came with *Shouldhavehadthat*. I think it was the third race. With a name like that, you just had to, and I won £13!

The beer range was mainly from local breweries, with pretty much all of the breweries in Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire being represented, plus others from

neighbouring counties. No Brakspear though. There were a number of stouts and porters represented, which were just the ticket for the wet and windy weather. Indeed these seemed to be the ones selling out fastest. I just missed out on Grand Union Honey Porter, as I watched the last one going to the person in front of me. Mind you, Fullers had their own stand, and brought along London Porter, which was most enjoyable, and at 5.4% warmed the cockles.

This was my first time at a horse race and I really enjoyed the day out. The idea of having a flutter as you sup your real ale and watch the goings-on of the other race goers was superb. Let's hope the event becomes a regular in the calendar.

“WHAT’S THE MATTER
LAGERBOY,
AFRAID YOU MIGHT
TASTE SOMETHING?”



LOGO DESIGN COMPETITION

This year Oxford is celebrating its 1000th anniversary and more importantly, some would say, **Oxford City CAMRA** will be holding its **10th Beer Festival**.

To celebrate the event, we welcome submissions from the community for this year's beer festival logo incorporating this theme.

The design needs to be one colour, use limited shading (if any) and be quite 'compact' as it is printed in black on our glasses, as well as used for the programme and T-shirts.

Forward entries to Sam by 30th June at the very latest

If you want any more details or wish to see previous logo designs, please contact Sam (editor@oxfordcamra.org.uk) and check website.

West Witney Sports & Social Club

Burford Road, Witney Oxon OX29 0NB

Beer Festival 2007

Saturday 23rd June & Sunday 24th June 2007

Opening Times

Saturday noon to 11.00pm

Sunday noon to 10.30pm

Over a dozen Real Ales and Ciders including :

Black Sheep Riggwelter

St Austell Tribute

Jennings Cumberland

Old Speckled Hen

Timothy Taylor Landlord

Westons Old Rosie

Youngs Bitter

Taming of the Brew

Hopback Summer Lightning

Brakespear Organic

Wadsworth Summer Sauce

Summer Solstice

Thatchers Heritage

merton beer festival



Neil Hoggarth

Belated congratulations to Fin and Loz of North Oxfordshire branch for organising another very successful community beer festival in Merton Village Hall earlier this year.



I was disappointed to realise that this year's Winter Ales Festival clashed with the Oxford Beer Festival helpers outing on Saturday 17th February. Fortunately, myself and a few other members of the branch managed to get out to the Friday evening session (outward leg by Charlton-on-Otmoor bus, return by taxi to Bicester and then bus to Oxford).

There several real ciders and perries, along with 15 different real ales from a variety of independent brewers. The beers included some favourites of mine (Crouch Vale "Amarillo" golden ale; Dark Star

"Hophead" bitter; Potbelly "Beijing Black" mild) and some interesting novelties - new beers from Mighty Oak ("Pussy Galore") and Abbeydale ("Chocolate Stout"). The Abbeydale had some competition in the form of Rother Valley "Cocoa Hops", which was even more chocolaty! The list also included several beers suitable for keeping out the cold on a crisp winter evening: Nobbys "Towd Navigation" strong ale at 6.1% ABV, and Burton Bridge "Thomas Sykes" barley wine at 10% ABV.

Keeping up their tradition of imaginative glassware, this year's festival glass was a rather nice continental-style stemmed goblet.

Once again, those of us that made the trip out to Merton really enjoyed ourselves (in fact, a couple of members who shall remain nameless enjoyed themselves so much that it affected their ability to join the Oxford BF Helper's coach trip the following day!).

If you missed out in February why not pop along to the Merton summer festival, Saturday 7th July.



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**A Beer Swillers "Did You Know ...?" by Hop Bine.**

- 1) What is POTOPHOBIA?
 - (a) Fear of water
 - (b) Fear of drinks
 - (c) Fear of pubs
- 2) During the reign of 'Catherine the Great' of Russia, why were Moscow ballrooms filled with women dressed as men?
- 3) What does SCOVILLE scale measure?
 - (a) The retention of foam or head on a beer
 - (b) The 'hotness' of chilli crisps
 - (c) The colour of beer measured by a colourimeter
- 4) Where does the word BOOZER come from?
 - (a) The East End of London
 - (b) Egypt
 - (c) India
- 5) What is the name given to a collector of beer-bottle labels?
 - (a) A labologist
 - (b) A pratologist
 - (c) A labelerian
- 6) The Bottle Inn (Marshwood, Dorset) holds an annual world contest for:
 - (a) Downing a yard of ale
 - (b) Drinking a pint of beer through a straw
 - (c) Eating stinging nettles
- 7) A STRIKER is a:
 - (a) Device for measuring bitterness in beer
 - (b) Good looking bar maid
 - (c) Part-filled cask at the end of racking

Have a go then turn to page 20 to check your answers.

return of a champion



Neil Hoggarth

The branch recently received an email from a CAMRA member who works for Molson Coors (the multi-national who own the brewing bits of what used to be Bass), to let us know that Coors are starting a new promotional drive for **Worthington's White Shield**, a classic IPA-style bottle-conditioned ale.

White Shield is a beer with a venerable history - Worthington's of Burton on Trent started brewing it in the 1820s - as well as excellent recent record - interest in the beer has been stimulated because it won the title "Champion Bottle Conditioned Beer" at the 2006 Great British Beer festival.

Most bottled beers are pasteurised and filtered.

However, a *bottle-conditioned beer* is recognised as a form of real ale. Live yeast is included with the beer when it is bottled, and "secondary fermentation" carries on while the beer is stored and distributed (just as happens with a cask-conditioned real ale, or bottled Champagne).

The "condition" (fizz) in the beer comes from the carbon dioxide that is naturally produced by this fermentation, and the flavour continues to develop as the bottle is stored (young examples will be sweeter, if laid down for a few years and aged the beer becomes drier and sharper). Older CAMRA members may recall White Shield with fondness. During the dark days of the 1970s and 1980s when many pubs had no hand-pumped real ale, a bottle of

White Shield was sometimes the only "real" beer available. I hadn't realised that it had become a rarity in pubs in recent years - I suppose the success of draught real ale through the 1990s undermined much of its market.

The outlet in our area that Coors have chosen to promote White Shield is the Eagle and Child on St Giles, in Oxford. I paid the pub a visit in mid-May, looking forward to renewing my acquaintance with the beer, but was disappointed: the beer and promotional materials had arrived, but were not yet on sale because no price had been set for it! Hopefully, by the time you read this, the difficulties with the computerised tills will have been ironed out and the beer will be on sale.

perch fire



Sam French

Fire tore through the thatched roof of The Perch in Binsey Lane, Oxford. The fire in the 17th century pub started in the afternoon of 9th May and caused serious damage to the

roof and upper accommodation areas.

The pub's current owner, Johnny Mignon, took over in July 2006 and had only recently completed renovation work.



The Perch was gutted by fire 30 years ago as a result of an electrical fault. The cause of the recent fire was found to be accidental, the result of a problem with one of the chimneys.

No-one was injured in the fire - it was relatively empty at the time - but staff and the local village community are said to be devastated.

The pub is surrounded by metal railings, presumably for safety reasons as well as discouraging further damage by 'pests'. We hope that the local support shown will help the owners towards a 'speedy recovery' and look forward to the pub reopening in the near future.

the battle pubs vs housing



The **Thatched Tavern** in Appleton looks to be going the way of a number of our area's pubs in the last few months - sale and change of use to housing. The Brakspear pub near Cumnor went through a number of changes of tenant prior to its sale last year. This follows the conversion of The **Three Horse Shoes** another of village's pubs, to a house. Now only one pub remains open. **The Plough**, a Greene King pub, although not serving food, has a good local trade. We hope the community continue to support this dying breed!

Another example of change of use for an old Oxfordshire pub is the **Coach and Horses** in St

Clement's. This 19th century pub is destined for demolition and plans are to replace it with housing and a restaurant. It is situated in a conservation area which saw the closure of the **Plasterer's Arms**, which was cleared for flats, in recent times.

The Vine in Long Wittenham appears to be heading the same way as the two pubs mentioned above. However, the locals are not giving in without a good fight!

The High Street in the village is lined with protest signs. Again, the village has already seen the loss of one pub, the **Machine Man**, and now have

only one pub serving the community, again called **The Plough**.

Plans for the pub include conversion to a five-bedroom house but a possible alternative is for the community to purchase the pub and renting it out for social events etc.

As is often the case, the phrase 'use it or lose it' springs to mind. If communities care about the future of their local hostelries they must support them with their trade, not just their words!

See p22 for further details...

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inn and around oxford



Things are changing for the better in the Stocks Bar in the **Crown and Thistle**, Abingdon.

This is a traditional pub with a strong local following and now offers a selection of beers as well as a simple pub menu. For many years it has had one real ale (Directors) on tap, but of dubious quality. Around a year ago a bar/cellar manager was appointed and he (Kane) set about creating a bar that would be suitable for all age groups and cater for all tastes.

To this end the bar now sports four new handpumps with, at present, three permanent ales - Old Peculiar, Brakspears Bitter and Hobgoblin - all at £2.50 a pint.

Kane has recently been promoting Brakspears' new Organic Blonde beer at £1.50 a pint - this offer was for a limited period and very nice it was too!

The fourth pump for changing guest beers was, at time of writing, serving Fiddlers Elbow - rarely seen in cask and becoming a local favourite.



The beers are kept in good condition but can be a bit cold at the outset due to the shared cellar. The bar also offers a

pool table and darts, three widescreen televisions and two projector screens for all the big sporting occasions, as well as live music every Friday night and a quiz every Sunday night. It surrounds a cobbled courtyard and is a listed, traditional 17th century coaching inn situated in the centre of town.

The landlord of the **Flowing Well** in Sunningwell is leaving mid-June. Well known for his food and his music venue, he will be missed. Unfortunately the new 'owner' appears to be more interested in the food side. Let's hope he keeps real ale on tap.

New owners have taken over the **Prince of Wales** in Shippon. Thankfully they are keeping the real ales that made this traditional pub a favourite in the past. A visit is recommended, if only for the Timothy Taylor and Black Sheep, but several other ales are available.

The **Fir Tree** on Iffley Road, Oxford, has been run by Danny and Carol since 2004. We are sorry to see them forced, to some extent, to move to alternative premises in Dorset. Danny expressed concern about the effect that the forthcoming smoking ban may have on trade, as the pub has limited scope for outdoor drinking. It is a shame to see them go.

The pub has thrived in its role as a community boozier under their management - the beer

quality has been consistently good during their tenancy and they have built up a good crowd of loyal regulars. Like so many in the area, the pub has a Greene King tie, but they have made the most of the GK-approved guest beers and seasonal beers available. Danny tells us that he is looking forward to his new venture where he can order from a list of several thousand different beers!! Best wishes to them.



The date of the hand-over is not fixed yet but the new management are expected to take control some time in June. We understand that the newcomers have a background in the food trade so it will be interesting to see how they decide to develop the pub. Whatever changes they make, we encourage them to follow the example of their predecessors and maintain a well-kept pint as the backbone of the pub's trade.

The Mitre in the High Street, Oxford, closed in April for a major refurbishment. £400 000

was spent on the Beefeater restaurant creating 15 new jobs. The Mitre dates back to 1261 and is a Grade 2 listed building owned by Lincoln College. It was an important coaching inn and as early as 1671 there were coaches running between London and the Mitre on three days a week. In 1967 the ground floor was taken over by Berni Inns and turned into a restaurant, in 1969 the Mitre stopped trading as a hotel and in 1990 Whitbread took over.

Other news:

- Holywells on Holywell Street has closed permanently
- the New Inn near Minster Lovell has been sold
- Burford Brewery's Cotswold Boy is selling well
- the future of The Friar in Marston remains uncertain
- the Morrells' depot on Osney Mead is closed and up for sale

**If you have any news on
your local pub please
contact us**

around the county

.....extras

The **Abingdon Arms** in Beckley is opening up a new wooden terrace for the spring/summer season so its customers can enjoy some of the loveliest views in the Oxford area - so says the publicity blurb. It is true though that on a clear days the views from there can be spectacular.

The **White Horse** in Forest Hill is now being run by Oak Taverns. A one time Morrells pub in this small village off the A40, it once again appears to be in good hands. Oak Taverns is a Thame based company which, starting with two pubs in 1991, now has about 20 throughout southern England and East Anglia, including the **Rising Sun** in Haddenham.

Now running the White Horse for the Oak are Linda and Ken Day, who have had many years experience in the licensed trade and own a pub themselves, the Griffin in Isleham, Cambridgeshire. Linda and Ken will be staying at the White Horse until

October and will see it through a major refurbishment. The real ales are from the excellent Goldfinch micro-brewery which is situated behind the Tow Brown pub in Dorchester, Dorset, which has recently been acquired by Oak Taverns. The brewery has increased its capacity from a one-barrel to a four-barrel plant and produces beers with names including 'Flashman's Clout' and 'Tom Browns'.

Missed an issue of
the
Oxford Drinker?

Seen an interesting
article that you want
to read again?

All new issues of the Oxford
Drinker are now available on the
Oxford City CAMRA website,
including some back issues

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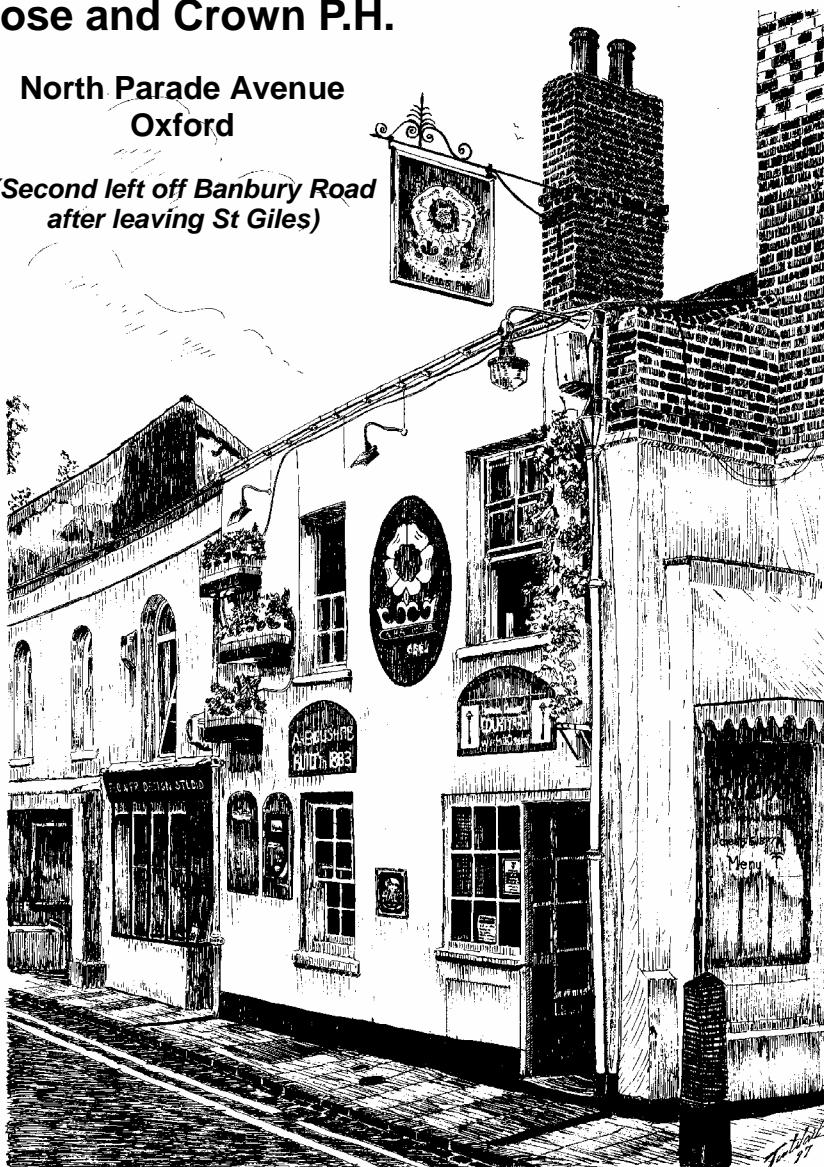
Oxford Trading Standards

01865 815000

Rose and Crown P.H.

North Parade Avenue
Oxford

(Second left off Banbury Road
after leaving St Giles)



Oxford City CAMRA Pub of the Year 2001

Listed in the Good Pub Guide 2006

www.rose-n-crown.co.uk

what's on

Neil Hoggarth

Saturday 2 June
Daytime

Black Country crawl by train and bus. Rendezvous at Oxford Station by 8.45am at the latest

Saturday 9 June
Afternoon

Branch Social at Oxford City Football Club Beer Festival

Court Place Farm Stadium,
Marsh Lane, Marston,
Oxford
www.oxfordcityfc.co.uk

Monday 18 June
7.30pm

Branch Meeting and Pub of the Year Presentation

General Elliot, Manor Road,
South Hinksey, Oxford

Saturday 7 July
Daytime

Branch Social at Merton Summer Beer Festival,

Merton Village Hall. Number 94 bus from St Giles (nr the Ashmolean Museum) at 12.40 or 1pm. Return via taxi to Bicester.

Monday 16 July
7.30pm

Branch Meeting

Somerset, Marston Road, New Marston, Oxford

Wednesday 8th August
Daytime

Branch Social at the Great

British Beer Festival, Earl's Court, London. 10am coach from Gloucester Green bus

station, or rendezvous inside the festival at the Charles Wells Routemaster bus, 1pm.

Saturday 18th August
Afternoon

Aunt Sally match

Aylesbury Vale and Wycombe CAMRA, at the Mason's Arms, Headington Quarry.

*Branch meetings are on the **third** Monday of each month. All meetings and events are relaxed and friendly. Members and non-members are welcome at all events. Further details are available at branch meetings, on our website or by contacting the Social Secretary social@oxfordcamra.org.uk*

6X equality



Every drop of 6X is Handmade in Devizes and brewed especially to suit both half and pint glasses at a pub near you.

did you know?

ANSWERS

1. B: A fear of drinks
2. Women were banned from getting drunk
3. B: The 'heat' of chillies. A jalapeño pepper has 4500 Scoville Heat Units. The hottest chilli comes from Dorset, England - the Dorset Naja - at 923000 SHU.
4. B: It was, and still is, a tribe of people in Egypt known for their bread and beer.
5. A: Labologist. This started in 1959 after a Guinness promotion to encourage the hobby.
6. C: Eating stinging nettles. The winner has the longest set of bare stalks after an hour - about 48 feet for men, 26 feet for women. The secret is lots of beer!
7. C: A part-filled cask was allowed to run down the conveyor for the brewery workers - it struck the end of the line.

brewers' phrases

The frothy head that rises to the top of a fermenting vessel and often torrents all over the floor is called barm. Hence a **"barmy person"** is lively and effervescent.

"Wetting ones whistle" comes from a time when usual Vikings (it just had to be them!) would blow a whistle on their 'tankard' to summon more ale.

"Small beer" or something of little value derives from the time when ale brewing was a cottage industry and subsequent rinsing of the mash would yield lower sugar levels and hence lower alcohol content. The weakest was *small beer* - a tuberculosis free and hygienic drink for children.

Lush, as referring to drunk or soberless, refers to the brewers Joseph Lush and William. They brewed in Portsmouth from the 1850s. The brew would have been a strong one, being a naval town. People took their favourite ceramic beer jugs with them on their trips and may have been referred to by the ale they drank leading to 'he's a lush' - consumer of Lush ale.

In the 12 century, people dipped toast, sometimes spiced, into their ale to improve the flavour, in a similar way to adding a garnish. This tradition continued for years and at some point it became common to offer praise to an honoured guest by saying their presence made the drink taste better than the best toast dunked in one's drink. By about 1700, this became known as making a **"toast"**.

"Take down a peg", meaning a swig of ale, refers back to pewter tankards that had pegs mounted on the inside so the barmaid could tell how much had been drunk.

Years ago, ale and whiskey were drunk from lead cups. The result could knock them out for days. If someone came across them lying in the road they would think they were dead and prepare them for burial. They were laid out on the kitchen table for a few days and family members would sit around, eating and drinking, waiting to see if they would wake up. Hence the custom of holding a **"wake"**.

The phrase **"here's looking at you"** comes from the days when fights often broke out in pubs - no I don't mean last Friday night! - and one party would wait for the other to be drinking from their jug of ale, and their vision therefore impaired, before launching their attack. Steins were developed with glass bottoms so the drinker could keep an eye on their adversary, hence the toast, here's looking at you.

In Bristol city centre, landlords used to send small boys to collect sand from the nearby Redcliff caves. The sand was spread on the floor to soak up the beer and ale drippings (as sawdust in butchers' shops) and the boys were paid in beer hence the phrase **"happy as a sandboy"**.

The editor does not in any way suggest that these derivations are necessarily correct.

GBBF 2007 - Celebrating 30 years of "the largest pub in the world"

The **Great British Beer Festival** is 30 years young in 2007, and to celebrate CAMRA wants this year's festival to be better than ever before.

In 2007 at its official 30th birthday, the festival will include:

- Over 450 of the UK's finest ales from the smallest microbreweries to some of Britain's best known beers.
- A Bottled Beer Bar offering more than 100 varieties of real ale in a bottle.
- The prestigious CAMRA Champion Beer of Britain 2007 will be announced on Tuesday August 7th during the trade session.
- Beers from around the world at Bières Sans Frontières, including Germany, Belgium, Italy, USA and the Czech Republic.
- A wide variety of unique and tasty ciders and perries from some of the UK's finest independent producers.
- Tutored beer tastings with brewing experts
- Full liquid pints guaranteed thanks to the use of oversized lined glasses.
- A great selection of delicious food
- Live Music
- Pub games
- A family room for under 18's.

For more information, visit www.gbbf.org.uk

Book your tickets for the festival in advance and save typically £2 per ticket!

Short Pints Cost Drinkers 1.3 Million Pounds a Day

CAMRA, the beer consumers' champion, wants to see an end to short beer measures and we need your help.

The current law means you may receive a pint only 90% full. The Government is allowing beer consumers to be cheated out of £1.3 million every single day. As a beer drinker you stand a one in four chance of being served a pint of beer that is 5% short or more.

In the 1997 General Election the Labour Party promised that it would protect consumers from short beer measures. Ten years on the Government are yet to keep its promise. Please sign up to the National Full Pints Petition to call on the Government to keep to its word and end short beer measures.

Sign the National Full Pints Petition at:

WWW.TAKEITTOHETOP.CO.UK

local legislation



Sam French

The appeal to the Planning Director by supporters of the **Globe** pub in Jericho in February this year was sadly lost. The appeal had aimed to stop planning permission being granted for change of use from public house to four houses but this failed.

Labour city councillor Colin Cook has taken on the cause and submitted a motion to the Full Council Committee Meeting on Monday 30 April designed to reduce the loss of more pubs to developers.

The Motion

This Council believes that the Local Development Framework should be amended at the earliest

opportunity to one where:

- Planning permission will only be granted for the change of use of a public house if evidence is provided to show a lack of viability, over a reasonable time period, which meets all of the following criteria:
- the lack of viability is not due to operational or marketing practices;
- the property has been actively marketed for its existing use at a reasonable price;
- an assessment of the contribution made by the public house use to the character and appearance of the area has been made; and

- there are other suitable alternative public houses in the local catchment area serving the same market

The motion, which in summary makes it necessary for developers to demonstrate that pubs are not viable before they can be closed, was carried unanimously with one minor amendment.

Cllr Cook states: "I think the fact that Full Council has approved this motion, will of itself help with appeals against any future redevelopment refusals."

Sincere thanks to Colin for his support of our local pubs!

art and inn-trigue



curious art & history of pub signs

banbury museum

21 July to 16 september

free admission

English pubs have been described as the greatest free art gallery in the world. Many signs are being painted over, thrown away or exchanged for computer designs, and we would like to see these signs saved and preserved, together with their history.

In this hands on exhibition, based on the exhibition previously housed at the Coors Visitors Museum, a colourful selection of traditional signs and shown and visitors are invited to explore the fascinating and humorous stories behind their imagery and strange names.

Children and adults alike will enjoy the interactive activities and you will never see a pub sign in quite the same way again.

Features include pub signs made into large jigsaws which you can complete and a life-size hand painted copy of a sign with the head cut out so all can see themselves as an inn sign.

Topics covered include: a general history of inn signs, how pubs came by their name, 'Railways on Inn Signs' including a special section on the Mallard Steam Train,

There is also a section on artists and their work including at least 15 original inn signs, and some of Stanley Chews work, a former Devon painter.



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For concessionary rates please visit www.camra.org.uk or call 01727 867201.

I wish to join the Campaign for Real Ale, and agree to abide by the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

I enclose a cheque for

Signed Date

Applications will be processed within 21 days



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OXFORD CITY CAMRA



NEEDS
YOU

A Pubs Database has been set up on the Oxford City CAMRA website which shows all the pubs and bars listed in the region. This can be searched by pub name, town or postcode. The information on each pub is very limited at the moment and this is where you come in.....

We would love to hear from you about your local pub or any you visit in our region. Just look up the pub on the database and click on 'Send a comment'.

We try to visit pubs across our region as much as we can, often visiting hard to reach pubs in one of our car trips but we always on the look out for great pubs in our area which we may have missed or not visited for some time.

www.oxfordcamra.org.uk/pubs.php