

Ullage

FREE PLEASE TAKE ONE



The Newsletter of West Berkshire CAMRA

May / June 2009

Dundas Arms Wins!

The West Berkshire branch of the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) has chosen the Dundas Arms, Kintbury as its Pub of the Year for 2009. The canal-side free house, near Kintbury station, is renowned for the quality of both its food and beer.

David Dalzell-Piper has been there since 1967. In 1969 he was able to buy the pub from Morland's and change it into a free house. He now stocks beers from local breweries including West Berkshire, Ramsbury and Butts as well as two beers brewed in Suffolk, Adnams Bitter and Morland Original. He picked Adnams Bitter because Southwold was his childhood home and he remembers his father often talking about John Adnams, his friend from the brewery. Morland Original was brewed in Abingdon before Greene King moved production to Bury St Edmunds. David recently reintroduced the beer out of respect for the Morland connection with the pub and reports that drinkers find the taste is still much as they remember it.

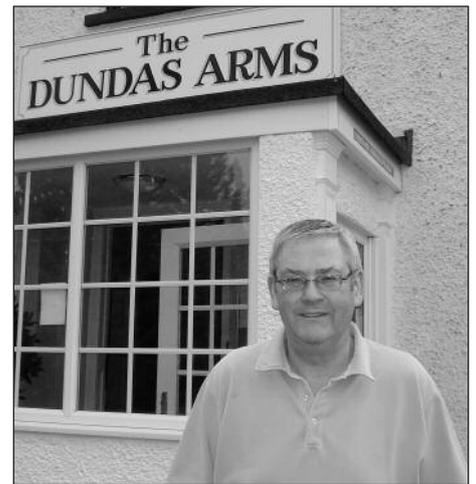
Adrian Bean, chairman of West Berkshire CAMRA, had this to say about the award

'Within West Berkshire we have about 200 pubs and picking a Pub of the Year is always tricky. We look for beer quality first, then look at the pub and how it is run. We have a number of stunning pubs, for example the Six Bells, Beenham (last year's winner); the Bell, Aldworth (former CAMRA National Pub of the year); the Downgate, Hungerford; the Fox Inn, Hermitage; the Castle, Cold Ash and the Lock, Stock & Barrel, Newbury. The Dundas Arms has been a regular in the Good Beer Guide, serves really good local ale and is an integral part of the Kintbury community. David has seen a lot of changes in the forty years that he been running the pub, but one thing that has remained constant is that David serves good quality beer.'

David said 'It's nice to gain some recognition'. He also thanked Roz Black 'for keeping our beers in tip top order'. More details about the Dundas Arms can be found at www.dundasarms.co.uk

The award will be presented at the Dundas Arms on Tuesday 12th May at 8pm.

The Dundas Arms now goes forward to the shortlist for the first round of the Central



Southern Regional Pub of the Year competition. The three other contenders are the Nags Head, Reading; the White Horse, Hedgerley and the Victoria Arms, Binfield.

Mild in May

May is the month when CAMRA publicises the often overlooked beer style of Mild. This year, Saturday 9 May has been designated National Mild Day. West Berkshire CAMRA have organised a mild trail in Hungerford on this date and welcome all to join us, at any stage, as we visit pubs serving mild.

The Hungerford mild trail kicks off at the Sun, Charnham Street (A4) at 1:30. We then plan to visit the Angel, Church Street (2:30); the John O'Gaunt



West Berkshire CAMRA Chairman, Adrian Bean, with Arkell's Maypole Mild

Inn, Bridge Street (3:30) and the Downgate, Park Street (4:30). Please check the local CAMRA website for the latest information (www.westberkscamra.org.uk).

Mild usually has a lower ABV and a darker colour than bitter due to the use of well roasted malts or barley. Mild is conventionally less hopped than bitter and can vary in colour from black to pale amber in colour. Mild styles vary from warming roasty ales to light refreshing lunchtime thirst quenchers. More mild than bitter was drunk until the 1950s but bitter has since become the dominant style. Today, mild accounts for approx 4% of all real ale sales. A popular drink in the 1960s that is still drunk in some parts of the country is 'Mild and Bitter'. This may also be known as 'Half and Half' or 'Mixed'.

At their historic Kingsdown brewery, Arkell's launched Maypole Mild on 7 April. This 3.6% ABV mild will be available at selected Arkell's pubs until the end of May. West Berkshire CAMRA were one of eleven local branches able to enjoy the opportunity to sample Maypole Mild and meet directors of the brewery including James Arkell and his son George in the brewery bar which is on the basement floor of the tower brewery. Arkell's made a video of the event which included brief interviews with West Berkshire CAMRA members where Roy Bailey described the mild as 'excellent', Richard Milligan found it 'very smooth and quite chocolatey' and Steve Kelly mentioned that it was 'easy to drink'. Members from other branches found hints of bubblegum and toffee in the flavours. Head brewer, Don Bracher took parties of guests on a tour using narrow wooden stairways to access the various levels of the traditional tower brewery where many of the original fixtures and fittings are still in current use.

Maggs' Magnificent Mild, 3.8% ABV, from West Berkshire brewery is a dark mild with a slightly higher hop rate than normally used in milds. It is not too sweet and very popular.

Last year, Ramsbury brewery introduced Hell's Highway, a 3.8% ABV ruby red mild ale hopped with Celeia and Goldings. It was named to commemorate the 1944 liberation of Holland involving the American 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment, then based at nearby Littlecote. This mild will be available again during May at certain Wetherspoon pubs nationwide and until June at the Wheatsheaf, Chilton Foliat and the Nags Head, Reading.

Another mild to look out for at Wadworth pubs such as the Lion, Newbury, is Pint-size Mild.

West Berks CAMRA AGM

The Annual General Meeting of West Berkshire CAMRA will take place on Tuesday, 23 June, at the Hungerford Club, Hungerford, starting at 7.30pm. All members are invited to attend and have their say on how the branch is run. If anyone is interested in a more active role, positions may be available on the branch committee.

A buffet will be available. There will be a free raffle with every member attending receiving a raffle ticket. The winning raffle ticket holder will receive a voucher for 2 tickets to the 3rd Ascot Racecourse Beer Festival in September.

See page 3 for branch contact details.

Inside: All the latest pub and brewery news from West Berkshire, and much more!

The West Berkshire Brewery

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Champion Best Bitter
Dr Hexter's Healer -
Champion Strong Bitter



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Swift Halves

■ As part of the CAMRA Champion Beer of Britain competition, the London & South East Regional Beer of the Year 2009 was awarded to **West Berkshire brewery** for two categories: Champion Strong Bitter - Dr Hexter's Healer; Champion Best Bitter - Good Old Boy. The brewer, Will Twomey, was on hand to accept the awards at the 19th Sussex beer and cider festival in Hove on 13 March.



CAMRA's Adrian Bean and West Berkshire Brewery's Will Twomey with awards at Hove, Sussex

The West Berkshire brewery monthly beer for May is 'Bitter Thistle' 4.3%, tawny brown with full robust flavour and rounded bitterness. The June beer is 'Elder' 4.3%, an amber coloured beer.

■ Arkell's brewery have provided the **Coopers Arms** in Newbury with a new roof and the scaffolding has finally gone. On the first Monday evening of each month a hypnotist and magicians provide unusual pub entertainment at the pub.

■ **The Starting Gate**, Speen has reopened. Wadworth 6X and a guest ale are served there.

■ If you enjoy visiting the Cotswolds, make a note in your diary for Charlbury charity beer festival on Saturday 4th July at the cricket club, near the station. www.charlburybeerfestival.org

■ Another place where you can often enjoy live cricket with your beer is the **Bowler's Arms**, Wash Common. County cricket fixtures at the Falkland Cricket Club ground include: 17 May, Berkshire v Cornwall; 7-9 June, Berkshire v Devon.

■ Tim Wale of Tutts Clump, Bradfield is the fourth cider maker to become a member of West Berkshire Cider Makers. Tim has started **Tutts Clump Cider**, using local cooking and eating apples from that area. Traditional Farmhouse is the first variety of his 6% ABV medium dry cider. He will soon be blending a second variety - Special Reserve. Local pubs that are selling his cider in draught or bottled form include the Bell, Aldworth; the Four Points, Aldworth; the Queens Head, Bradfield and the Six Bells, Beenham. Local shops selling 500 ml bottles

include West Berkshire Brewery shop, Yattendon and Cobbs farm shop, near Hungerford.

■ New books from CAMRA include 'A Life on the Hop - Memoirs from a career in beer' by Roger Protz and 'Cider' a lavishly illustrated book about real cider and perry with contributions from a range of writers. CAMRA members enjoy a £2 discount when ordering either book via www.camra.org.uk/shop



■ **Rebellion Beer Company** of Marlow are holding their 7th open weekend on 4-5 July from 11am - 5pm. Free brewery tours will be given every half hour. Thousands are expected to attend and they hope to raise more than last year's £10,000 from donations for Wycombe hospital scanner appeal. www.rebellionbeer.co.uk

■ **The Taste of England**, Thatcham, has been testing the reception for ales from a number of breweries including Batemans, Exmoor and White Horse. The favourite offering so far has been Arkell's 3B. www.thetasteofengland.co.uk

■ There has been a change of management at the **Crown & Horns**, East Ilsley. Josie is the new manager and the staff remain the same. Real ales in April were Brakspear Bitter, Wychwood Hobgoblin and Adnams Broadside. Timothy Taylor Landlord is set to return when supplies become available.

■ **The Bull**, Stanford Dingley, is hosting Classic cars on 16 May and Morris dancers on 20 June. Their beers are from West Berkshire Brewery, Ascot Ales, Loddon Brewery and Rebellion Beer Company. www.thebullcountryinn.co.uk

■ Advance Day, Season and Tutored Tasting tickets for the **Great British Beer Festival** at Earls Court are now available to buy online, with discounts for CAMRA members. See Beer Festival Diary, page 3, for further details.



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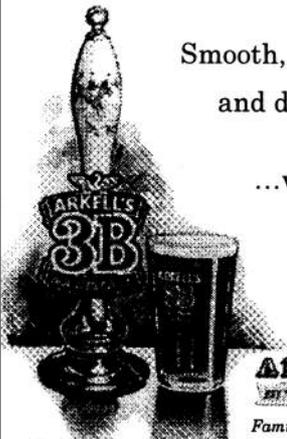
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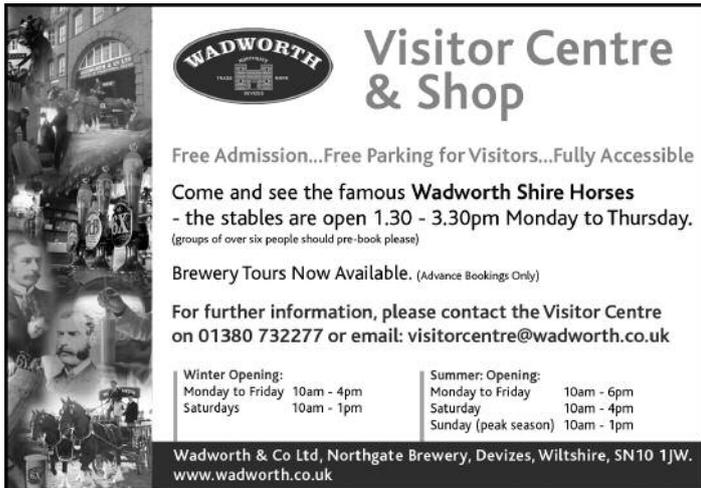
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Next Pub Profile **The Pot Kiln** Frilsham

Look out for a pub profile on the Pot Kiln, Frilsham, in a future issue. Mike and Katie Robinson's country pub features beers from West Berkshire Brewery and food with an emphasis on game. www.potkiln.org



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	Sunday (peak season)	10am - 1pm		

Wadworth & Co Ltd, Northgate Brewery, Devizes, Wiltshire, SN10 1JW. www.wadworth.co.uk

Philip's Proud moment

Philip Davison of the Sun in the Wood, Ashmore Green, Newbury was presented with the 2009 British Institute of Innkeeping Licensee of the Year award by Des O'Connor at the Publican awards ceremony in London on 24 March.



Philip Davison, behind the glass winner's trophy and finalist's decanter, at the Sun in the Wood

West Berkshire CAMRA were quick to congratulate him on winning this prestigious national award.

Philip and his wife Lauren have been running the Sun in the Wood as Wadworth tenants since 1997. He took his family plus four members of his team to the awards ceremony and said afterwards 'Tuesday was a fantastic night and to win was simply amazing. It certainly was a very proud moment...'. He added, 'Since we returned, I have been amazed how many cards and emails I have received and am really looking forward to the year ahead. I really want to use this unique opportunity and my experience to help our industry thrive and prosper through these very challenging times and hope I can truly rise to the challenge.'

The Sun in the Wood is only two miles from Newbury but the countryside feeling and excellent service calls for a visit, to be fully appreciated. www.suninthewood.co.uk

Beer Miles



Chris Hearn, Ted Allnutt and Chris Gill on board the Caversham Princess

■ Tim (Ullage editor) and Meg Thomas enjoyed a 15 mile round trip from Reading to Pangbourne aboard the Caversham Princess on 21 March, a sunny Saturday. Ted Allnutt of the Nags Head, Reading had organised this real ale cruise and the £10 tickets sold out a week in advance. Last to board were Chris and Suzanne Gill of Ascot Ales who joined Chris Hearn of Loddon Brewery on the top deck.

Passengers, armed with souvenir pint glasses and beer tokens, formed an orderly queue at the temporary bar. Soon they were able to sample beer, straight from the cask, supplied by these local brewers. On the return leg, Ferryman's Gold and Bamboozle from Loddon Brewery were the first to be emptied. Their other casks on board contained Hoppit and Rin Tin Tin. Ascot Ales supplied Anastasia's Exile Stout, Double Trouble, Posh Pooch and Alley Cat, a new 3.8% ABV brew, hopped with Brewers Gold. The Pheasant Inn at Shefford Woodlands serves beers from Loddon Brewery and Chris Hearn mentioned that the windsock, for the inn's new helipad, will be sponsored by his brewery.

■ The six mile long Swanage railway links the Dorset town to the village of Corfe Castle. Real / Rail ale enthusiasts can combine a trip on a diesel hauled train from Harmans Cross station with attending the beer festival in a nearby marquee, offering more than 50 real ales and ciders. The festival runs from 8-10 May and CAMRA members enjoy a 50% reduction on Swanage railway fares. www.swanagerailway.co.uk



the Six Bells West Berks CAMRA Pub of the Year 2008

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AA ★★★★★ Inn

Beer Festival Diary

CAMRA-run beer festivals provide excellent opportunities for sampling a wide range of real ales, from all over the UK and overseas. Here are some of the major and most accessible festivals for West Berkshire drinkers.

7-9 May

Banbury Beer Festival

TA Centre, Oxford Road. OX16 9AN
Details: www.northoxfordshirecamra.org.uk

28-30 May

Southampton Beer Festival

Guildhall, West Marlands Road
Details: www.shantscamra.org.uk

11-13 June

Great Welsh Beer & Cider Festival

Cardiff International Arena, Mary Ann Street
Details: www.gbcbf.org.uk

11-12 July

Woodcote Festival of Ales

A4074. 8 miles North of Reading. RG8 0PG
Details: www.woodcoterally.org.uk

4-8 August

Great British Beer Festival

Earls Court, London
Details: www.gbbf.org.uk

Diary Dates 2009

The following is a list of all forthcoming meetings of the West Berkshire branch of CAMRA. Some are 'social' meetings, lively and friendly occasions where we enjoy a few beers; others are 'branch' meetings, which are slightly more formal and where we discuss beer and pubs issues. Unless stated, our meetings are open to all-comers - and new members are particularly welcome!

Sat 9 May Mild Week Celebration

See page one for Hungerford Trail **1.30pm**

Tue 12 May Pub of the Year Presentation

Dundas Arms, Kintbury, RG17 9UT

Tue 26 May Branch Meeting

The Castle, Cold Ash, Berkshire, RG18 9PS

Sat 6 Jun Joint Branch Social with South East Berkshire Branch Dundas Arms, Kintbury 12.30

Tue 23 Jun Branch A.G.M - Members only

The Hungerford Club, RG17 0HY **7.30pm**

Tue 7 Jul Joint Branch Social with

White Horse Branch (Aunt Sally Match)

The Plough, West Hanney OX12 0LN

All meetings start at 8pm unless otherwise stated. Please check the local CAMRA website for further details of events: www.westberkscamra.org.uk

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