

Ullage

FREE PLEASE TAKE ONE

THE MAGAZINE OF WEST BERKSHIRE CAMRA

SPRING 2019



CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE

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@WBCAMRA

Hamstead Marshall pub saved



THE
WHITE
HART

The White Hart Inn, Hamstead Marshall, is set to reopen in early March with a new brewpub format. Landlord Stella Coulthurst is keen that this should appeal to everyone who loves the comfortable and casual atmosphere of the pub with its open fires.

Customers can enjoy beers from its own microbrewery, Saviour, with John Trueman as Head Brewer. John first met Dave Maggs on a brewing course at the University of Nottingham. While Dave went on to found West Berkshire Brewery, John's brewery was a 5 barrel plant called Sam Trueman's in Medmenham which supplied his pub, the Crown & Anchor, Marlow, until 2002.

A new window in a rear outbuilding will allow visitors to view Saviour's 4 barrel plant, sourced from Tenbury Wells. The first beers planned are Saviour Gold (5% ABV), a classic pale ale brewed with Maris Otter pale malt from Warminster Maltings and English Fuggles and Goldings hops. Saviour Bitter (3.5% ABV), will be brewed with Northdown hops from Worcestershire.

Regulars are invited to join the Saviour Pennies beer club (£20 p.a.) for a 50% discount on its own ales. A range of other beers at the White Hart includes Fuller's London Pride as a permanent cask ale on one of the four handpumps. Wine drinkers will find a zesty selection of wines by the glass with discounts on bottles to take home.



Stella Coulthurst
Saviour microbrewery

Food will feature tempting bar snacks, pub classics and dishes like cottage pie and lamb / butternut squash curry. The Hart Club, a free loyalty scheme for foodies, allows accumulated points to be redeemed on meals. All purchases at the cashless pub will require a payment card or app. Dogs are welcome. The nine en suite double, single and family rooms, bookable via the website, will open a few weeks before the pub.

Since the White Hart closed in September 2015, the 'Save the White Hart Inn' group has campaigned for the retention of the pub and recently posted '... we would like to express our support for this venture.' on the campaign group's website: www.savethewhitehart.org



Andy Pinkard, CAMRA's branch chairman, said 'The pub is the vital hub of a vibrant community, and it's very good news that the White Hart is reopening. As others have recently demonstrated in our area, a committed and innovative publican is the basis for the successful reinvention of pubs.'

Opening hours: Mon-Thu 4-10pm; Fri-Sat 12-11pm; Sun 12-5pm.
www.saviourwhitehart.co.uk Tel: 01488 657545

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readingbeerfestival.org.uk



westberkscamra.org.uk



In December 2018, webmaster Tony Girling converted the West Berkshire CAMRA website westberkscamra.org.uk to use WordPress, an open-source content management system.

Now any committee member can add content or update existing pages on the new style website which is already proving popular.

The website has links: to breweries and cider makers in our branch area; to neighbouring CAMRA branches and to WhatPub for pub searches and beer scoring.

The 'All Branch Committee' tab lists committee members and enables messages to be sent to those with key roles. It also highlights current volunteer opportunities like Social Secretary and Ullage magazine Advertising manager.

A meeting for all interested in specifying and developing the branch's website further has been arranged for Tuesday 16 April 7pm at the Hungerford Club.

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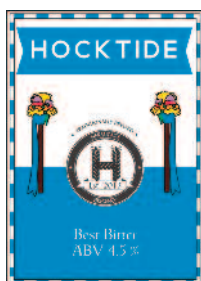
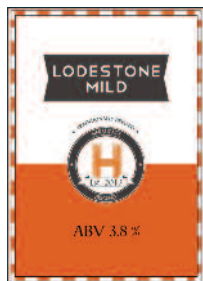


Swift Halves



■ The **Winterbourne Arms**, near Chieveley, has been closed since spring 2017. A planning application 19/00346/FULD to West Berkshire Council for conversion of the pub to a residential dwelling has expiry dates of 6 March (Standard consultation) and 8 April (Statutory). A Save the Winterbourne Arms campaign aims to spread awareness and gain support to fight the closure of the pub – twitter.com/ArmsSave

'Saving your local pub' a comprehensive toolkit for campaigners can be downloaded from pubs.camra.org.uk/savingyourlocalpub



■ **Hermitage Brewery** Hocktide ale will be ready for the Hungerford festival after Easter. The 4.5% ABV fruity ale is dry hopped with Fuggles. Lodestone Mild, 3.8% ABV, is full flavoured and smooth. In addition to the brewery's favourite Maris Otter pale malt, chocolate and crystal malts provide the flavour, colour and body. The Mild beer style is described by Jeff Evans on page 8.

■ Peter's Porter, a popular seasonal ale from **Arkell's Brewery** of Kingsdown, Swindon, is a 4.8% ABV smooth and dark porter.

After Head Brewer, Alex Arkell's 2018 New Zealand visit, he brewed Pioneer NZ IPA. The 3.8% ABV session IPA is now also available in cans.



CAMRA Discounts

Members enjoy discounts at CAMRA beer festivals, Wetherspoon pubs (* with voucher) and pubs below:

Aldermaston:

Hind's Head

Brimpton:

Three Horseshoes

Newbury:

Catherine Wheel

Cow & Cask

Gun, Wash Common

Hatchet Inn*

King Charles Tavern

Old London Apprentice

■ The 4.8% ABV Milk Stout from **Ramsbury Brewery** is described as 'smooth & thick, bitter & sweet, dark & rich'.

Blindside, Ramsbury's seasonal 3.9% ABV light copper ale, dry hopped with Mosaic, was named to tie in with the Six Nations Championship.



■ In the main bar of the **King Charles Tavern**, Newbury, new red banquettes corner seating, provides seating for groups of up to ten. The rear room has been redecorated and can be hired for parties etc. Kealey has introduced a typical East End dish of pie, mash and parsley liquor to the new menu which includes burgers and British classics like jam roly poly. kctavern.com

■ Kirsty has introduced daily happy hours at the **Lion**, Newbury, with beers reduced to £3 pint and free pool (not Tuesdays) between 5pm - 7pm. Facebook @thelionatnewbury

■ At the **Old London Apprentice**, Newbury, Sunday roast lunches, with a choice of meats, are served on alternate Sundays from 3 March (£10). The monthly music quiz, set by Colin Jones, is on Tuesday 12 March, 9 April and 14 May at 8pm.

■ A new monthly quiz at the **Craven Arms**, Enborne, is on the first Monday of the month from 4 March at 7pm for 7.30pm.



■ The **Cow & Cask**, Newbury, Christmas raffle raised £200 for Priors Court School. Additional prizes included beer and cider kindly donated by local producers.

Over 50s looking for friendship or company are welcomed at Cow & Cask Companions on Wednesdays (11.30am - 1.30pm) with games and drinks, including tea and coffee, available.

■ The planning application for partial residential redevelopment of the **Bell at Boxford** was refused (18/02816/FULD).

■ The **Monument**, Newbury, will shut for a few days from 18 March for removal of an internal wall enabling the pool table to be repositioned at the rear.

2019 West Berkshire CAMRA Outstanding Community Pub (previously unrecognised)

In 2018, the Cottage Inn, Cow & Cask and Old London Apprentice shared the Outstanding Community Pub award. For 2019, the branch is looking for a new pub to gain this award and receive valuable publicity.

Any previously unrecognised town or country pub in our area can be nominated. Factors influencing the award include charity support, team games, noticeboards, group meetings and activities like beer festivals, quizzes, trips, live music and performances.

Anyone, including the publican, can nominate one or more pubs. Please send details, by 30 June, to Mike Avery, Branch Secretary, whose contact details are on the back page or by using the online form at www.westberks.camra.org.uk/nominate



■ **Wild Weather** brewers Jamie Duffield and Chris Price talked about the brewery's new branding at the Grumpy Goat, Harris Arcade, Reading on 16 February. The larger 440ml cans with colourful artwork by Mark Bell (@markbellillustration) now have space for a near horizontal 'tattered flag' logo.



Jamie, Chris, Tim & Mike – Nag's Head, Reading

Wild Weather's founder, Mike Tempest, later joined the group at the Nag's Head, Reading, where a cask of their hazy 4.5% ABV American Pale Ale 'We bring scientists, you bring a rockstar?' soon sold out. The group photo includes Tim Lloyd (Tim's Beer Reviews on YouTube).

New equipment at the brewery includes a black mash tun and a hop torpedo for hop dosing. Wild Weather's core beer range includes: Shepherds Warning - hopped with Citra; Full of Beans (currently Irish Cream coffee stout); King Street Pale; King Street IPA and changing fruited lactose sours e.g. Damn Dead Gooseberry.

■ Entry and prize details for the Grumpy Goat's 4th Home Brew competition (closes 31 March) are at: thegrumpygoat.co.uk/brewcomp4



Double-Barrelled Brewery - Luci

■ Mike and Luci Clayton-Jones founded **Double-Barrelled Brewery** in Reading after a year long trip, via 29 countries, to visit some of the world's best breweries and hop farms. The brewery is on an industrial estate, accessible on foot from Wigmore Lane, off the Oxford Road, midway between Reading West and Tilehurst stations. Brewing began in October and the spacious Tap Room opened in December featuring a 12 line keg list. Tap Room hours are Friday 3-8pm, Saturday 2-7pm. Monthly brewery tours, eg Saturday 6 April, can be booked online. doublebarrelled.co.uk

■ Kevin Brady has brewed two new beers for **Indigenous Brewery** of Chaddleworth.

Chinwag is a 4% ABV Best Bitter and Tickety-Boo is a 4.2% ABV Golden Ale. www.indigenousbrewery.co.uk



■ On Mondays, the **Catherine Wheel**, Newbury, offers 50p off all locally produced beer and cider on draught and from bottles or cans. An alcove houses a fridge, full of local bottled ciders (photo). See page 5 for Easter beer festival details. thecatherinewheel.com



■ The **Nag's Head**, Newbury, reopened under new management on 15 February. Up to four cask ales are available. Daily opening hours are 12-12 (9.30pm Sundays). Twitter: @NagsNewbury

■ On 15 January, BBC South Today featured Mark Genders, landlord of the **Five Bells**, Wickham, discussing the importance of barley 'the soul of beer' for the pub with its INNformal microbrewery. Familiar from years ago at the (now closed) Rising Sun, Stockcross, Glen and Kelly are now running Mark's pub. INNformal Szechuan Porter was described as 'a delicious new take on their excellent Black Pepper Porter' by Mark Brown. www.fivebellswickham.co.uk

■ The lease for the **Old Bell**, Wash Common, which closed late in 2018, is offered via Fleurets.

■ Brighton based beer writer and radio broadcaster Emma Inch was named Beer Writer of the Year 2018 at the **British Guild of Beer Writers'** annual awards ceremony on 22 November. The Brewer of the Year award was shared between John Keeling, recently retired from Fuller's and Jaega Wise, Wild Card Brewery. The Long Live the Local Award for Best Writer about Pubs went to Jessica Boak and Ray Bailey. Further award details: www.beerguild.co.uk

■ **Long Live the Local** is a campaign backed by Britain's Beer Alliance to celebrate the positive role that pubs play in our lives and communities and to highlight the tax pressures the industry faces (VAT, Business Rates and Beer Duty). www.longlivethelocal.pub

■ A new walking tour of **Henley-on-Thames** highlights the town's rich brewing heritage. The 75 minute tour, led by Blue Badge guide Bobbie Latter, takes walkers to key brewing sites and pubs and is supported by local brewer and pub operator Brakspear.



The tour starts at 11am on the last Sunday of the month at the Hotel du Vin, New Street, site of the Brakspear brewery for nearly two centuries until it closed in 2002. For a limited time, a complimentary pint, from Brakspear's microbrewery, within the Bull on Bell Street, is offered to walkers at the Bull or the Angel on the Bridge. The tour costs £10 and places must be booked in advance on 07770 933117.

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 beer : cider : gin : pie

GOOD BEER GUIDE
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6 cask ales with at least 4 local
18 boxed ciders
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Local bottled ciders
130 bottled craft and continental beers
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35 Cheap Street, Newbury. RG14 5DB 01635 569897
www.thecatherinewheel.com

GIG GUIDE

Ace Space, St. Nicolas Road, Newbury. Tickets: Hogan Music, Newbury. www.acespace.org.uk



16 Mar - Mawkin + Katherine Priddy
23 Mar - Paul James & The Drowned Lovers
13 Apr - Urban Folk Quartet
17 May - Alden Patterson & Dashwood
Unplugged Open Mic - 1st Friday of month

Chequers Hotel, Newbury - 3pm Sundays
Jazz - Pay at the door on the day
31 Mar, 21 Apr, 19 May - Pete Allen & his band. Enquiries: 01635 44806

Newbury Jazz Platform
FB: @NewburyJazzPlatform
at **The Lamb**, Newbury
Jazz with Gavin Wilkinson's house band.



3rd Wednesday of each month:
20 Mar, 17 Apr, 15 May 7.30pm Entry £2

The Angel, Woolhampton
Jazz from 8pm Saturdays
www.jazzangel.co.uk
30 Mar, 27 Apr, 25 May - to be confirmed

The Monument, Newbury - Fridays & Saturdays

9 Mar - Jaw Breakers
15 Mar - Gary Myles
23 Mar - Street Corner Talking
30 Mar - Dusk Till Dawn
6 Apr - Stuart Marsh
13 Apr - JJ & The Jukes
20 Apr - Iron Lotus
27 Apr - Bottle Kids
4 May - Shakedown Prophets
11 May - Upraw
18 May - 13 Lies
25 May - Butt Monkeys
Open Mic night with Oli Hill on Thursdays

The Lion, Newbury

8 Mar - Sound Newbury (pop videos)
23 Mar - Iron Lotus
6 Apr - Straw Dogs
24 May - Iron Lotus

Lock Stock & Barrel, Newbury

3 Mar - Dirty Deeds
16 Mar - The Soultones
27 Apr - Pink Mac

Document House, Newbury
17 May - Wrong Jovi

The Starting Gate, Newbury
6 Apr - Juice

The Newbury, Newbury
Thursdays - Sion Whitey presents Open Mic night on the roof terrace

Old London Apprentice, Newbury
2nd Friday of each month is Folk Night
16 Mar - Mo Chairde (Irish music)
29 Mar, 31 May - Iron Lotus acoustic
6 Apr, 25 May - Rick & Nick
27 Apr - Iron Lotus

The White Hart, Thatcham - Saturdays
9 Mar - The NeverNevers
23 Mar - Mash
27 Apr - Fubar
11 May - Monkey Dolls

Fox Inn, Hermitage
18 May - Jukes Blues

More pubs with live music:

Hungerford area: Railway Tavern, Tally Ho, Wheatsheaf

Newbury area: Canal Bar, Catherine Wheel, Cross Keys

Thatcham area: Castle at Cold Ash, Swan



WEST BERKSHIRE BREWERY

■ **West Berkshire Brewery** has adopted stylish new branding. See back page advertisement for new pumpclip design and Taproom opening hours.

Have a Great Day, the next seasonal cask ale is a 4.2% ABV Rye Pale Ale with 'a subtle spice flavour, caramel, citrus and pine aromas with a refreshingly dry, peppery finish. Complex, resinous and bitter'.



A salted caramel edition of Maggs' Magnificent Mild is due to follow.

On 21 January, known as 'Blue Monday', a #BrewMonday event was held at the brewery's taproom, raising almost £200 for Samaritans from the sale of cakes.



Tickets sold out for the #Tryanuary beer festival at the taproom on Saturday 26 January featuring original roots / blues music performed by guitarist Mark Harrison with Charles Benfield on double bass. Bond Brews, Two Cocks Brewery and Elusive Brewing were among the festival beer suppliers whose brewers attended.

Brewery tours can be booked online for Saturday 23 March, 13 April and 11 May. www.wbbrew.com



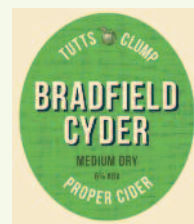
■ The **Loddon Brewery** Taproom at Dunsden Green Farm, near Reading, opens at 10am from Thursday to Saturday with closing time varying according to customer demand.

With the retirement of Steve Brown, after 15 years as Head Brewer, Jake Bartleet-Perry moved from Bradford Brewery to take over in November 2018. Jake's first new beer is being released in March. Citra Quad, a 4.4% ABV session IPA, is hopped four times to give intense flavour and aroma from the Citra hops.



■ **Bingham's Brewery** vegan-friendly cask stouts and porters are available from the Tap Room at 2b High Street, Twyford crossroads, on Fridays and Saturdays until 9 March. New permanent tap room premises are sought. binghams.co.uk

■ **Tutts Clump** is a hamlet in the parish of Bradfield. The new Bradfield Cyder ties in with Tutts Clump Cider's sponsorship of Bradfield Golf Club's Cyder Cup.



Tim Wale reports that 'Due to our new pressing line we were able to increase our production by around 30% in 2018 making around 80,000 litres of cyder and 10,000 litres of perry. We have launched a second round of fund raising to purchase an automatic canning machine ...'. www.tuttsclumpcyder.co.uk

■ Look out for Dave Bailey with stocks of **Green Shed Cider** at the Newbury Farmers' Market on the first Sunday of every month. Twitter: @greenshedcider

■ Rick Wyatt (Wyatt's Craft Cider) partnered up with an old school friend to take his cider to the next level. They secured premises at Broadview Farm, Cold Ash and during the autumn pressed 6,500 litres. They will soon commence trading as **Pang Valley Cider**.

TUTTS CLUMP
— PROPER CIDER —

About us

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Tweet: @tuttsclumpcyder
[facebook.com/tuttsclumpcyder](https://www.facebook.com/tuttsclumpcyder)
www.tuttsclumpcyder.co.uk

Beer Festivals

■ The **branch social** at the 9th **Wantage Beer & Cider Festival**, 15-16 March, is on the starting Friday. Meet Tim (with Ullage) at Newbury station for the 11.58 train to Reading, changing for Didcot and then X32 bus to Wantage (arrive 13.43). CAMRA members gain free festival entrance at The Beacon civic hall. Saturday's Six Nations rugby games will be shown live. www.whitehorsecamra.org.uk

■ The **branch social** at the 9th **Newbury Racecourse Beer Festival**, 12-13 April, is on the closing Saturday. Meet Chris Reynolds (with Ullage) in or near the festival marquee from 1pm. See advertisement on page 7 for festival details and CAMRA discount for advance tickets.

■ **Craft Theory** - beer and music festival returns to South Street, Reading on 19-20 April. crafttheoryfestival.co.uk

■ The Easter beer festival at the **Catherine Wheel**, Newbury, from 18-22 April, will feature local beers and ciders with live music #behindthegate.

■ Session times and prices (including glass and programme) for the 24th **Reading Beer & Cider Festival** are: Thu 2 May 4.30-11pm £5;
Fri 3 May 11am-11pm £11;
Sat 4 May 11am-4.30pm £10;
Sat 4 May 6-11pm £10;
Sun 5 May 12-7pm £5.

See advertisement on page 1 for more details.

To join the **branch social** at the festival in Reading, meet Tim or Andy (with Ullage) at the CAMRA bookstall on Thursday 2 May at 7pm.

■ Clive and Kinga have organised a live music festival weekender with camping and some special ales and gins at the **Craven Arms**, Enborne, on 4-5 May (Bank Holiday weekend). thecravenarmsenborne.com

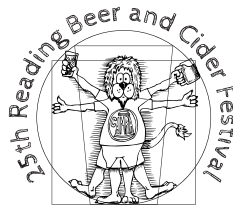
■ The **Bracknell Ale & Cider Festival** returns to Bracknell Rugby Club on Sunday 26 May (Bank Holiday weekend) with real ales, ciders, wine, food and live music.

Tickets via festival.bracknalevents.co.uk

■ Also on 26 May is the **Fox & Hounds**, Donnington, Hog Roast and Ale festival with live music from The Side Project. www.foxandhoundsnewbury.co.uk

■ The **Donnington Valley Hotel** hosts a 'Taste of British' food and wine festival on Saturday 1 June from 12pm to 3pm. The event will also feature cider makers and breweries including Ramsbury, Two Cocks and West Berkshire.

Tickets £5 on the door. Tel 01635 551199.



■ The 10th **Twyford Beer Festival**, raising money for the male cancer charity Orchid, moves to Stanlake Meadow, Waltham Road, closer to Twyford Station. Sessions are Fri 7 (5-11pm) and Sat 8 June (12-10pm). £5 entry includes glass. twyfordbeerfest.co.uk



There are now 40 LocAle pubs in our branch serving beer from breweries within 25 miles.

pubsofficer@westberkscamra.org.uk

See also the LocAle page on our website: www.westberkscamra.org.uk

LocAle Pubs - WEST of A34

The Bell at Boxford	Boxford
The Blackbird	Bagnor
The Blue Ball	Kintbury
The Coach	World's End, Beedon
The Downgate	Hungerford
The Eastbury Plough	Eastbury
The Five Bells	Wickham
The Fox at Peasemore	Peasemore
The John O'Gaunt Inn	Hungerford
The Red House	Marsh Benham
Royal British Legion	Hungerford
The Tally Ho!	Hungerford Newtown
The Three Swans Hotel	Hungerford

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COTTAGE INN

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of the Year: 2012, 2013, 2016, 2017 & 2018

Families welcome - Outdoor Play Zone
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Great circular walks from the pub to
the Pang valley & Bucklebury Common

Lounge and separate bar with Sky Sports & BT Sport

Three Cask Ales including Good Old Boy

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Saturday 12 - late Food 12-2.30 & 6-8.30
Sunday 12 - 8 Lunch 12 - 3

26 Broad Lane, Upper Bucklebury RG7 6Q 01635 864544
www.thecottaginnupperbucklebury.co.uk

The Downgate Hungerford

There is much to explore in Hungerford, a historic town surrounded by an area of outstanding natural beauty. Some visit the famous antique shops, many others enjoy the waterways or the variety of walking and cycling trails that are available. Whatever the reason for your visit, please do find time to call in at the Downgate pub, with its welcoming village inn atmosphere, located at the edge of Hungerford Common and within a short distance of the railway station.

The Downgate started life as a beer retailer in the early 1800s and a full alcohol licence was not granted until 1958. Up until the late 1980s, there was always an off-sales counter on the exterior of the building. Over the years it has been variously known as the Spotted Cow and the Royal Exchange and has been owned by a number of breweries including the Phoenix Brewery of Newbury. It was bought in 1994 by Arkell's Brewery who had it refurbished and have owned it ever since. A more detailed history of the pub can be found on the website pennypost.org.uk (search 'hungerford pub').

The current licensee, Lauren Weir, took over the pub in 2017 from David and Janet Yates, who ran the pub for some 13 years. Lauren is only in her mid-twenties but has held a licence for several years and is the youngest licensee in the area.

Her parents' nearby pub for 17 years till 2015, the Plume of Feathers (now the Hungerford Arms), is where Lauren worked previously. Before that, her father managed Fuller's flagship pubs in the City of London, including the Counting House, so Lauren has been exposed to the licensed trade for most of her life.

Lauren explains that when she took over the Downgate she wanted to run it as a traditional British country pub. With no noisy games machines, television or piped music, the emphasis is very much on good beer, good food and good conversation. Traditional pub board games are provided and are proving to be popular and fun. In keeping with her aims, the



will be offered water and treats. Towels are provided to dry your dog on a rainy day and it must be one of the few pubs that offer dog beds! There is ample car parking outside the pub and nearby on the adjacent common.

Lauren is keen to foster a community spirit and raises funds for the Hungerford charity, CHAIN, which undertakes voluntary work and related activities for the benefit of elderly, sick or disabled people in and around the local area.

Christmas and Summer Solstice walks are organised by the pub which have been well supported. Lauren intends to put on an outdoor real ale and cider festival and paella party in the summer. Given that the pub has an outdoor seating area with expansive views of the common this should prove to be very popular!

All in all, no day or evening in Hungerford would be complete without a visit to this friendly and highly recommended traditional hostelry.

Mike Avery

interior has been redecorated in neutral colours with a modern light feel. There is a restored hard floor throughout, with the exception of a lower drinking and dining area known as 'The Pitt' which is carpeted, has an original fireplace, and is the only area where dogs are not allowed. Arkell's beers available include keg Hurricane Ale with cask 3B, HOPeration IPA and Moonlight on hand pump. For variety, a seasonal Arkell's cask ale may substitute for one of these. The pub is CAMRA LocAle accredited and as a mark of quality has Cask Marque status.

Lauren strongly supports local traders and ensures that as much of the menu as possible is comprised of locally sourced produce and ingredients. Menus change frequently and in addition to deliciously cooked starters, mains and desserts, light snacks are offered. The Sunday roast is very popular and advanced booking is advised. If beer is not your tittle, a varied selection of wine, from old world to new world, is available to accompany your food. Lauren explains that the accent is on providing high quality pub food at an affordable price. She appointed a new chef in January and there are plans to expand the menu during the course of this year.

The pub is understandably popular with walkers (with or without dogs) and cyclists due to its location at the edge of the Common. Cyclists are offered the opportunity to top up their water bottles whilst your four legged friend



The Downgate, 13 Down View,
Hungerford RG17 0ED
Telephone: 01488 682708
Website: thedowngate.com
Facebook: @TheDowngatepub

Opening & Meal Times

Closed Monday

Tue - Sat: 11.30 - 11 (Food 12 - 2.30; 6.30 - 9.30)

Sunday: 12 - 9.30 (Food 12 - 4)

Reading ale trail 2019 includes the Rowbarge

During their time in Reading, Paul and Jennie Rayner visited all 24 pubs on the 2017 Reading Ale Trail for the reward of commemorative t-shirts. It was a social time meeting other trail-goers who were made easily identifiable by their booklets. There was even one minibus group determined to complete the full trail in a single day!

Now living in Newbury, Paul explains how to visit 16 or more pubs of Reading Ale Trail 2019 by travelling cheaply with a Reading Buses simplyNetwork group ticket. His 'Carbon-Neutral Beer Blog' (fueledbybeer.wordpress.com) provides details, an interactive Google map and WhatPub links.



Pubs 1-8: The Central Reading part of Paul's trail starts at the Fox & Hounds, Caversham, where hopefully some booklets remain and the first sticker can be obtained for drinking real ale or real cider.

Pubs 9-16: Paul suggests starting his Newbury to Reading West route at the Rowbarge, Woolhampton, the only pub in the West Berkshire CAMRA area on this year's trail. Crossing into Reading & Mid Berks CAMRA area, the next pub is the Fox & Hounds, Theale, voted Britain's most dog-friendly pub in 2017.

While 16 pub stickers earns respect and two



free half-pint vouchers at Reading Beer & Cider Festival, Paul provides three further itineraries for those wishing to visit more distant pubs, like the Bell, Waltham St Lawrence, in order to claim a distinctive t-shirt for visiting all 24 pubs on the 2019 trail.

The closing date for completed ale trail booklets is 4 April 2019. A total of 700 booklets were put on sale, for a £1 refundable deposit, at the Nag's Head and the Alehouse in Reading and the Fox & Hounds in Caversham, on 9 February.



Photo: Steve Kelly

At the Allied Arms launch event in Reading, a steady stream of people visited to obtain a booklet and drink real ale or cider before covering the B&W pub photo in the booklet with the matching colour sticker and moving on to another trail pub.

Full details, with FAQs, can be found at readingcamra.org.uk/aletrail with the latest information on the Reading Ale Trail Facebook public group.

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CAMRA member Chris Reynolds is also Membership Secretary of West Berks Ramblers and will be leading the following walks:

Sun 3 Mar 9.30am: Park in Impstone Road, Pamber Heath. 9.5 mile walk with lunch at The Plough, Little London.

Sun 24 Mar 9.30am: Meet at Childis Court Farm, Ashampstead Common RG8 8QT. 10.5 mile walk with lunch at The Bell, Aldworth.

Thu 9 May 9.30am: Park by byway in Green Drove, Upper Enham. 10.7 mile walk, with lunch at The George, St Mary Bourne.

Contact Chris on 01635 226826 or 07979 804637 about a trial ramble.



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Beer style guide: **Mild** by Jeff Evans

It's hard to believe today but mild was the most popular beer style in Britain until the 1950s. It was a drink closely associated with heavy industries – the beer that miners, steelworkers, foundry men and farmers reached for in search of both refreshment and nourishment at the end of a sweaty day's toil. The decline in such industries has been mirrored in the decline of mild.

Being 'mild' in alcohol, the beer offered tired workers the welcome opportunity of sinking a few pints without feeling too much the worse for wear, although this is not actually where the name comes from. Neither does it come from the fact that the beer is traditionally not as highly hopped as other beers, so it is milder in bitterness, although both these attributes do sum up what mild is mostly about. Instead, historically, mild was simply a beer that was fresh, as opposed to one that had been allowed to age and therefore had a more demanding, sour flavour. It had a mild taste. This, of course, doesn't explain how the beer is made today, or the ingredients that shape its character.



A typical recipe for mild is based on a generous use of malt – both pale malt to provide most of the brewing sugars and darker malt to add roasted grain character and colour. Hops provide a gentle balance of bitterness rather than

taking over. But these are not rules, just generalities. Some milds are, perversely, fairly bitter, and some milds are not even dark. There's a type of ale, with the traditional amber hue of a bitter, but with only gentle hopping, that falls into the category known as 'light mild', and then there are also milds that are not so easy on the alcohol. Whereas most milds contain about 3–3.5% alcohol, some are quite strong, heading up towards 6% and more.

Editor's notes: Local milds include Magnificent Mild, Indigenous Brewery Baldrick and Hermitage Brewery Lodestone Mild.

CAMRA promotes mild throughout May which makes it a good month for any pub to introduce mild. There are a few pubs where it can usually be found: the Bell Inn, Aldworth; the Six Bells, Beenham; West Berkshire Brewery Taproom, Yattendon and the Nags Head, Reading.

Wannabe Trappist beer experts!

After judging Czech beers in Prague, Jeff Evans returned to Newbury to host a Trappist beers event at the Inn at Home on 8 February. David Marklew greeted around 20 ticket holders with a glass of Arbor stout before introducing Jeff whose latest book is 'CAMRA's So you want to be a Beer Expert?'

Jeff mentioned the 12 breweries allowed to use the Trappist label. The latest is Mount Saint Bernard Abbey of Leicestershire which introduced Tynt Meadow in 2018, the third beer of the tasting.

Page 168 of Jeff's book has details for 11 of the breweries and includes a photo of Orval monastery in the south of Belgium where the only beer produced for general sale is a pale ale. A favourite of Jeff's, Orval with its distinctive bottle and label, was the first beer in the tasting. Also tasted from chilled bottles were La Trappe Dubbel, Chimay Triple / Blanche and finally Trappistes Rochefort 10.

In the Taste Off section on page 169, Jeff describes Rochefort 10 'A masterclass in strong beer, this red-amber ale skilfully combines complex fruit and spice with a

surprising delicateness'. Although not mentioned on the label, Jeff explained that the 11.3% ABV beer is subtly spiced with some ground coriander.

As mentioned in the Technicalities section on page 167, 'Strength is a prominent feature of Trappist and abbey beers, but what is remarkable about most examples is that they are not thick or cloying. The reason for this is that brewers use sugar in many brews...'

Potential beer experts can buy Jeff's book from shop.camra.org.uk or via good bookshops. Various Trappist beers are stocked by Inn at Home, 150 Bartholomew Street, Newbury. www.innathome.co.uk



Jeff Evans

Two East London Tryanuary Trails

Camera: Tony Girling, Photo: Tim Thomas



Mike Avery, Richard Scullion, Jennie Rayner, Frank Jessett, Chris Reynolds, Tony Girling and Paul Rayner - Hamilton Hall balcony

At noon on **Saturday 19 January**, a group of West Berkshire CAMRA members met up with former branch chairman Richard Scullion and members from other branches, at the Hamilton Hall, for the Central Southern region annual London ale trail. The ornate Wetherspoon pub, with a balcony level, is the former ballroom of the old Great Eastern Hotel at Liverpool Street station.

This year, John McLaughlin researched a route via Shoreditch to the Camel, Bethnal Green and south to the Mahogany Bar of Wilton's Music Hall, tucked away in Grace's Alley, between Wapping and Whitechapel. A project of 'conservative repair' to the semi-derelect Wilton's buildings began in 2012 and won building and conservation awards in 2016.

Cask ales enjoyed on the trail included Five Points XPA at the Camel, Cloudwater Red Ale at the Kings Arms and Redemption Rock the Kazbek at the Dog & Truck, Aldgate.



At 2pm on **Saturday 5 January**, Tim Thomas joined up with *Ullage's* hiking trails contributor, Alan Haselden and his group at the Pembury Tavern, Hackney Downs.

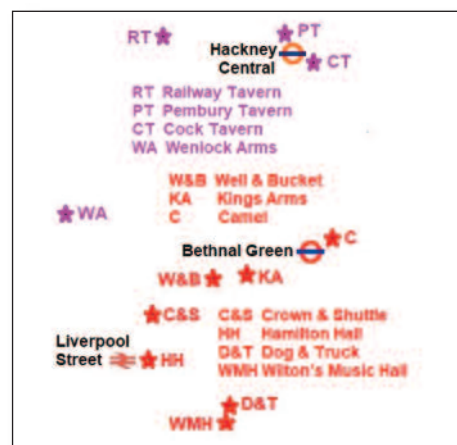
They had just completed a hike northwards from Hackney Wick to White Hart Lane, Tottenham, following the River Lea for part of the route. Pints of Railway Porter and pizza slices provided welcome refreshment at the refurbished pub which is now owned and operated by Five Points Brewing Company whose brewery is on the other side of Amhurst Road.



Alan Haselden (left) and hiking group - Mare Street

Next, at 4pm, the nearby Cock Tavern, a pub built by Truman's in the 1930s, now serves 24 draught beers and ciders from its L shaped bar. Before a move to Hackney Wick, Howling Hops brewery was housed in the pub's large cellar.

A longer walk, via Dalston's colourful Ridley Road Market, led to the compact Railway Tavern, which often serves cask ales from West Berkshire Brewery.



Finally, after a bus ride, a core group enjoyed PieMinister pies and Block Brewery Pale Ale (brewed in the cellar) at Hoxton's Wenlock Arms, a cosy traditional pub south of the Regent's Canal. The Wenlock Arms reopened in 2013 after a campaign to save it from demolition.

See also Tim's 'Hackney Wick to Hoxton' post on www.beereurope.blogspot.com

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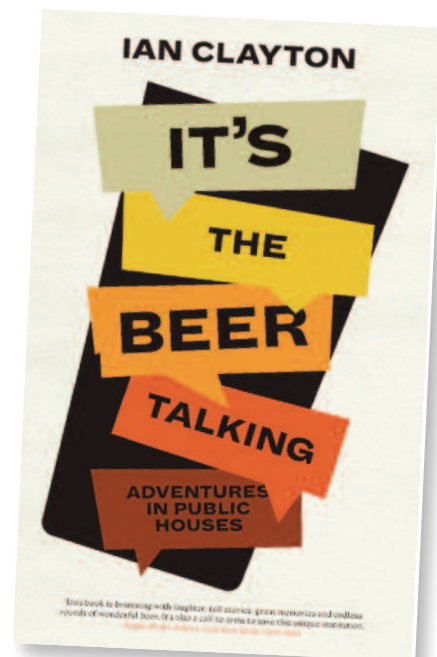
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Ian Clayton's book of pub memoirs



In a previous book, 'Bringing it all back home', Yorkshireman Ian Clayton wrote about one of his loves - music. His latest book 'It's the Beer Talking: Adventures in Public Houses' celebrates two more - pubs and ale.

The writer and broadcaster draws on stories from over 40 years of adventures in pubs and the book reflects the pleasure and importance of these wonderful, communal meeting places. As Roger Protz says in his foreword, *'Ian's book is brimming with laughter, tall stories, great memories and endless rounds of wonderful beer. It's also a call to arms to save this unique institution.'*

Asked if he had a memorable link between beer, music and a pub, Ian mentions the night he bought a pint of Tetley's Bitter (costing 19p!) before playing Curved Air's Back Street Luv on a Rock-Ola jukebox in the Blackmoor Head, Pontefract, his local in the early 1970s. Ian's book includes the bigger story of how playing this song led to a long-lasting friendship with Burt, a Triumph Tiger owner, who he would sup ale with in pubs the length and breadth of Britain.

Ian remembers drinking lovely flat pints of Courage Best in the Angel, St Giles High Street, as he was a regular customer at Ray's Jazz Shop, 180 Shaftesbury Avenue, nearby. Nowadays the Angel is a Sam Smith's pub like the Chandos, Leicester Square, another London pub that Ian likes.

Ian says *'The Greystones, in Sheffield 11, is a cracker. It's a proper locals bar catering for all ages. It has superb Thornbridge beers. It's a pub for the community it serves but it also embraces the world far beyond, as all good locals should, and they feature music from all over the world.'*

Ian mentions that his book features plenty of beers adding *'My old mate Tetley Dave, a landlord of renown, used to say, 'There's no such thing as bad beer, if it's kept right'. My mate Paul has just started brewing Henry Smith beer for the Robin Hood in Pontefract. It's brand new but I like it already. Further afield I love Mikkeller beers in Denmark, the beer they brew for U Flekú in Prague, Altbier in Düsseldorf, all of em! At home I pour a bottle of Orval as a treat before bedtime.'*

Ian Clayton's current local is the Junction in Castleford, West Yorkshire. Maureen Shaw and Neil Midgley reopened the pub in 2010 and made it into the Home of Beers from the Wood where real ales are served from handmade wooden casks.

Their tale is told by David Litten in his book 'From Junk to Junction' which also has a foreword by Roger Protz. The pub's website thejunctionpubcastleford.com has further details.

A brief and entertaining YouTube video - accessible from the 'Watch' tab of www.route-online.com - features Ian Clayton reading brief extracts from 'It's the Beer Talking' at a launch event inside the Junction. It ends with the snippet *'The best pub is the one you go back to, it's called your local, and I'm lucky, I've had a lot of locals!'*

Ian Clayton's 'It's the Beer Talking' (264 pages, paperback, £12.99, ISBN: 978-1901927-74-0) published 28 February 2019, can be obtained from bookshops or direct from Route Publishing www.route-online.com

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Pub Life: The Weegie and the Marbles

An old pub in a quiet part of a busy city, and an elderly regular, watery-eyed and pale as paper, is sunk in his usual seat waiting for something to happen.

He looks at the TV, then at his newspaper, then at his watch. He stares into space, and perhaps into the past. He lines up the spare beer mats, then shuffles them out of line again. Then, at least, some real excitement: a mixed group of twentysomethings enters, laughing and chattering. They are all tall, stylish, and distinctly Mediterranean.

The Regular's glittering eyes track them across the pub carpet. Two per cent of a smile appears on his thin lips.

The Visitors are quietly excited to be in a Real English Pub, staring at the ceiling, the ornate bar, the prints and mirrors.

They all thrust bank notes at one woman, apparently the best English speaker, and shove her towards the bar as they take over the table next to the Regular.

The Regular, his neck long gone, slowly turns his entire torso so he can watch them. The smile increases by another degree.

'Where you from?' he gargles in their direction. The Visitors freeze and mutter attempted translations at each other. The second best English speaker, bearded and quiffed, acts as spokesman.

'We come from Greece.'

The Regular nods – of course, he thought as much.

'Well, me – I'm a Weegie.'

Silence. Baffled blinking.

'A Glaswegian.'

Further muttering.

'I'm from Glasgow.'

Bulbs light up.

'Ah! Glasgow! Yes, we know it! Alex Ferguson! Celtic football club!'

A lucky guess, apparently, as the Regular is not offended, but after this breakthrough, conversation stalls.

Lagers and gins are sipped as the Greeks look anxiously at each other – when is it acceptable to start talking among themselves again?

After an uncomfortable while, the Regular shifts some phlegm about, and leans closer.

'So,' he says, 'here's what I'm wondering...'

'Yes?'

'When are the English going to give you back those Elgin Marbles?'

And with that, the conversation really catches light.

We're Boak and Bailey

We're geeks in general, but especially about beer and pubs. We write under the names Jessica Boak and Ray Bailey. We live in Bristol in the UK. We've been blogging about beer since 2007.

www.boakandbailey.com



Curmudgeon

What Goes Around, Comes Around

Sixty years ago, most pubs in the UK had a compartmentalised interior layout. Typically, they would have the standard demarcation between public bar and 'best room' – the term 'lounge' was not yet in general use. Some had a three-level division between public, saloon and lounge, with subtle gradations in clientele and ambiance between the three. Plus, there could be a whole variety of other rooms such as news rooms, tea rooms, games rooms and, at the time, ladies' rooms.

But, since then, pretty much all this has been swept away by knocking pubs through into a single-bar layout. The main reason always given for this was that it reflected a more democratic and egalitarian society in which the old class divisions no longer applied, and there's certainly some truth in that. But it also made pubs easier to manage and supervise, plus in the 1960s and early 70s there was the factor that public bar prices were subject to government price control, which could be circumvented by turning the entire pub into a lounge.

However, it didn't always work out quite as intended. In many cases, rather than everyone happily mixing together in the same pub, the class division moved from one between different bars to one between different pubs. The middle classes used one pub, the working classes another. But, according to a recent report, a growing number of pub operators are realising that there is a need to cater for different audiences within a single venue, and are thus returning to the concept of pub 'zoning'. It's all too easy if you're not careful for one aspect of a pub to take over the whole place and alienate many potential customers.

There are two obvious divisions between different customer groups that often rankle in pubs today. One is showing big-screen TV sport, which brings in a specific crowd who may well put a lot of money across the bar, but deters those who just want a quiet drink. And allowing children, while key to the concept of family dining, is something that those who prefer an adults-only environment feel uncomfortable with. Plus, if legislation permitted, there would be a strong argument for a division between smoking and non-smoking areas.

The Curmudgeon column appears in *Opening Times*, Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA's bimonthly magazine. Comments on his articles can be left on the website curmudgeoncolumns.blogspot.com



Ye Cracke, Liverpool
Illustration: Ed Farrell @edwardrolf (Twitter)



The Liverpool Scene

The Roscoe Head, Liverpool, is one of only five pubs that have appeared in every edition of CAMRA's Good Beer Guide.

Jeff Evans described it as 'a small but beautifully formed sidestreet local ...' for the

October 2018 Pub/Bar of the Month in his www.insidebeer.com website, sadly now discontinued but still available online.

On Thursday 10 January, Mark Geeson led a group of CAMRA members to the Roscoe Head and later to Ye Cracke, in nearby Rice Street, off Hope Street. a pub once frequented by John Lennon and his

College of Art friends.

More photos and details of both pubs can be found in a post about the trip on www.beereurope.blogspot.com by Tim Thomas.



Ye Cracke, Liverpool

Mark Geeson (right)

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Beer Festival Diary

CAMRA run or supported 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. See page 5 for more festival details.

15-16 March

9th Wantage Beer & Cider Festival

The Beacon, Portway, Wantage OX12 9BY
www.whitehorsecamra.org.uk

22-23 March

Winchester Beer & Cider Festival

Guildhall, Broadway, Winchester SO23 9GH
www.winchesterbeerfestival.org.uk

12-13 April

9th Newbury Racecourse Beer Festival

newburyracecourse.co.uk

2-5 May

24th Reading Beer & Cider Festival

Christchurch Meadows, Caversham RG4 8DH
www.readingbeerfestival.org.uk

26 May

Bracknell Ale & Cider Festival

Bracknell RFC, Lily Hill Park RG12 2UG
festival.bracknalevents.co.uk

Diary Dates 2019

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!

Sunday 10 March

Reading Ale Trail social

Meet: Newbury Wharf bus station 10.20am

Friday 15 March

Wantage Beer Festival social

Details: page 5 2pm

Sunday 24 March

Ale Trail social c/o Reading & Mid-Berks CAMRA

Starts: Fox & Hounds, Theale 11.15am

Walk to Rowbarge, Woolhampton via Butt Inn

Tuesday 16 April

Website meeting then Branch meeting

Hungerford Club, Hungerford RG17 0HY

7pm (website - see page 1) 8pm (branch)

Saturday 13 April

Newbury Racecourse Beer Festival social

Details: page 5 1pm

Thursday 2 May

Reading Beer & Cider Festival social

Details: page 5 7pm

Check our website for further details: www.westberkscamra.org.uk

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