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THE MAGAZINE OF WEST BERKSHIRE CAMRA SUMMER 2019



www.westberksamra.org.uk



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CAMRA Berkshire Pub of the Year 2019

On 8 May, announcing that The Bell Inn, Aldworth is West Berkshire CAMRA's Pub of the Year 2019, branch chairman Andy Pinkard said *'This year, the CAMRA selection criteria for the Pub of the Year put equal emphasis on both the quality of beer and the pub's role at the centre of a community. Great beer is a given for The Bell, as evidenced by its continuing presence in CAMRA's Good Beer Guide and the pub also stands out for its inclusive nature and is welcoming to all.'*

The unspoilt interior of the renowned traditional pub features three fireplaces. Earlier on this damp Wednesday evening, fires were burning to warm the pub which was filled with people by 7.30pm leaving standing room only. Some of the heat escaped through the front door as new arrivals waited to enter. Soon they could squeeze inside to reach the small bar counter.

Visiting for the award evening, regular suppliers were represented by Tim Wale (Tutts Clump Cider - Traditional Farmhouse), Nick Arkell (Arkell's Brewery - 3B) and Kevin Brady (Indigenous Brewery - Baldrick and Nosey Parker mild ales).

In addition to locals and regular customers, a good helping of CAMRA members from West Berkshire and Reading branches were also there to see Andy Pinkard present the branch's Pub of the Year award to landlord Hugh Macaulay surrounded by his family and staff.

Hugh said *'Thank you so much. It was an absolute team effort'*. Responding about the young team, Maryjane Macaulay added *'When you start working here you become part of the family'*.

Wearing striped aprons, the kitchen team included James, Rubi, Beth, Jacob, Kate and Izzy. The bar team included Iona, Dani and Emily.

After a group photo outside, they were busy



Photo: Richard Lock

The Bell Inn, Aldworth - Heather (with award), Hugh & Maryjane Macaulay

passing through the pub to serve wicker trays bearing plates of hot and cold food to share and pouring beer from brimming four pint jugs to those with empty glasses.

The Bell has been in the Macaulay family for generations and anyone wanting stories about the pub before Hugh's time has only to ask Heather, who remembers the days when visitors could rely on regular bus services passing outside. Sadly, buses no longer serve Aldworth but the Bell is often visited by ramblers, hikers and cyclists.

The use of mobile phones is banned at the Bell but soon after his visit Reading pub blogger Quentin Taylor tweeted *'Amazing evening at The Bell ... Top 10 UK pub without a doubt'*.

West Berkshire Brewery, the supplier of Old Tyler to the pub, tweeted *'This is incredible news, well done to The Bell Inn, very well deserved, one of our favourite spots'*.

The Bell Inn has featured in every CAMRA Good Beer Guide since 1979 and has now won a Branch Pub of the Year award nine times, most recently in 2010 and 2013. It was also CAMRA National Pub of the Year 1990.

As the recent winner of the Berkshire wide contest against the Nag's Head, Reading; the Craufurd Arms, Maidenhead and the Crispin, Wokingham, it now reaches the Central Southern region stage with the Fleur de Lys, East Hagbourne and the Rising Sun, Haddenham.

the globe opens



The Snooty Fox closed on 28 January 2018, it reopened as The Globe on 28 May 2019 with Colin and Katie Martin as the new owners. Dave, their Border Terrier, has been getting used to the move from SW London to his new home in Newbury and sharing it with two and four-legged visitors.

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Ian Batho - Cow & Cask micropub

Swift Halves



■ The **White Hart**, Hamstead Marshall, reopened on 25 March with Ben as manager and three cask ales on the bar - Saviour Boozer, Saviour Tipple and Fuller's London Pride.

The **Saviour Brewery** beers are brewed by

John Trueman in a converted outbuilding. Gas burners are used to heat both the kettle and the hot liquor (water) tank which is mounted above. Saviour Gold is the third beer to be brewed for the pub.

Members of the Saviour Pennies club can drink pints of the house beers for £2 or take away 3 litres for £10. saviourwhitehart.co.uk



■ The **Pot Kiln**, Frilsham, is expected to reopen in mid-July after renovation work. www.potkiln.org

Branch Chairman, Andy Pinkard writes:

As we head towards our **AGM** at the Lamb (Newbury) on 11 June, talk turns to finding the officers required to maintain our Branch as a going concern. However, while there is a degree of formality, this is a great time for meeting other members.

I encourage all branch members to attend, you may even like to become more active in the campaigning or social aspects. You may like to offer support to an existing incumbent or take a role directly. Please don't feel that just because someone already has a role that they wouldn't enjoy help.

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

Woolhampton:

Rowbarge

■ Andy Pinkard will lead a group of walkers and cyclists from Newbury via the canal towpath to visit Caroline and Les at Two Cocks Brewery, Enborne on **Saturday 15 June** (Beer Day Britain). The group will leave the Market Place entrance to the Hatchet Inn at 11am.

As numbers are limited, register (by 10 June) to attend the brewery visit from the diary entry on www.westberkscamra.org.uk

■ On **Saturday 6 July**, meet at Marlow station at 12 noon before visiting the Royal British Legion Marlow. Chris Reynolds will lead an ale amble, mainly on footpaths, to KEG, Bourne End. There will be a stop at the community owned Craufurd Arms, Maidenhead on the return. Meet Newbury station 10am for 10.16 train, changing at Reading and Maidenhead.

■ On **Saturday 27 July**, meet at the White Hart, Hamstead Marshall from 12 Noon for beers from Saviour brewery. Andy Pinkard will lead an ale amble, mainly on footpaths, to the Red House, Marsh Benham and then back via Hamstead Park to the Craven Arms, Enborne.

Kennations bus 3 from Newbury Wharf bus station at 11.50am serves the White Hart. Return journey at 5.25pm from the Craven Arms.

■ **Arkell's Bowled Over** is the Swindon brewery's seasonal beer for the summer. The 3.8% ABV amber / red ale has citrus and caramel flavours.



■ Enjoy a drink from the Bowler's Arms while watching cricket at Falkland Cricket Club in Wash Common. Sunday fixtures include: 16 June - (Twenty20) Berkshire v Herefordshire and 7 July - Berkshire v Wales.

■ The Hare, Lambourn Woodlands closed permanently in April. The closest pubs on Ermin Street are the **Pheasant Inn**, Shefford Woodlands (3.2 miles south east) and the **Red Lion**, Baydon, Wiltshire (2.8 miles north west).

■ **Wadworth Horizon**, the 4% ABV tangy golden ale, has a new pumpclip. It was first brewed to celebrate Henry Alfred Wadworth's hot air balloon adventure that ended in a crash landing on the beach in Poole.



■ Visit the **Rowbarge**, Woolhampton for Mikron Theatre Company outdoor performances in the tranquil setting by the canal: Wednesday 17 July 'All Hands on Deck'; Monday 22 July 'Redcoats'. 7.30pm start, no tickets required, a cash collection is taken after each show. Bring a camping chair or blankets.



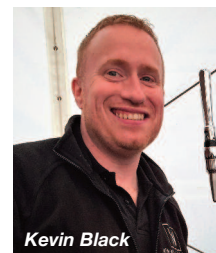
■ West Berkshire CAMRA members volunteering on the bars at **Reading Beer & Cider Festival** included Andy Pinkard (chairman), Richard Marshall (Hermitage Brewery) and Kevin Brady (Indigenous Brewery).



Kevin scored an impressive triple success at Reading with his **Indigenous** beers brewed in Chaddleworth. Silly Moo, 4.2% ABV milk stout won overall LocAle of the festival. In the two regional Champion Beer of Britain categories judged, Ammo Belle, 5.6% ABV American pale ale was the Gold strong bitter and Double Warp, 5.8% ABV brown stout was the Gold stout. In April, Indigenous Brewery won beer of the festival at Newbury Racecourse for Chinwag, 4% ABV Best Bitter.

Look out for Indigenous Gigglemug, 8.5% ABV Double IPA and Black Ram, 5% ABV dark lager, brewed for the summer. www.indigenousbrewery.co.uk

■ **New Wharf Brewing**, based near Maidenhead, won CAMRA's KeyKeg LocAle of the festival at Reading with DIPA, an 8.5% ABV Double IPA brewed with Simcoe, Mosaic and Centennial hops.



During the festival, brewer Kevin Black was kept busy, serving and talking about New Wharf's cask and keg beers, at the brewery bar. newwharfbrewing.co.uk

■ **Loddon Brewery** Ferryman's Gold was the LocAle winner in the middle ABV category at CAMRA's Reading festival.



New brewer Jake Bartleet-Perry, is shown above with brewery owner Chris Hearn at Loddon brewery's taproom. Jake's first new beer, Citra Quad, was so successful that it is now a

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 pub in our area can be nominated.

Factors influencing the award include charity support, team games, noticeboards, group meetings and activities like beer or cider festivals, quizzes, 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.westberkscamra.org.uk/nominate

permanent beer. The next monthly quadruple-hopped session IPAs (4.4% ABV) from June are Jester Quad, Dragon Quad and Mystic Quad, each named after the distinctive single hop varieties used.

Outdoor decking for the taproom (open Thursday - Saturday), gives more sunny seating space for the summer. Arriva 800 bus serves Dunsden Green from Reading.



■ The Cow & Cask looks smart after redecoration (see also photo on page 1). The micropub's crib team, was the winner of the Thatcham & District crib league 2018/19. Andy Love won a cup and trophy for most singles wins. Dickie Hayes won the Les Black runner up trophy. tdcrib.co.uk

■ The application for conversion of the Winterbourne Arms to a single dwelling was refused after 231 letters of objection were lodged. The refusal notice for 19/00346/FULD mentions that '... in the light of the advice contained in the West Berkshire Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance 19 - Public Houses and the commissioned viability review, the Winterbourne Arms PH is potentially viable for use as a licensed premises in the future.'

■ CAMRA is encouraging pub visits during the *Summer of Pub*. Based on PUBLIC Bank Holiday dates, it runs from 24 May to 26 August. Find or submit summer pub events using www.camra.org.uk/summerofpub



There are now 39 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 - EAST of A34

The Bell Inn	Aldworth
The Bladebone Inn	Chapel Row
The Castle Inn	Cold Ash
The Castle	Donnington
The Catherine Wheel	Newbury
The Coopers Arms	Newbury
The Cow & Cask	Newbury
The Cottage Inn	Upper Bucklebury
The Fox Inn	Hermitage
The Hatchet Inn	Newbury
The King Charles Tavern	Newbury
The Old Boot Inn	Stanford Dingley
The Pot Kiln	Frilsham
The Rowbarge	Woolhampton
The Royal Oak	Yattendon
The Six Bells	Beenham
The Three Horseshoes	Brimpton
West Berkshire Brewery Taproom	Yattendon
The Woodpecker	Wash Water

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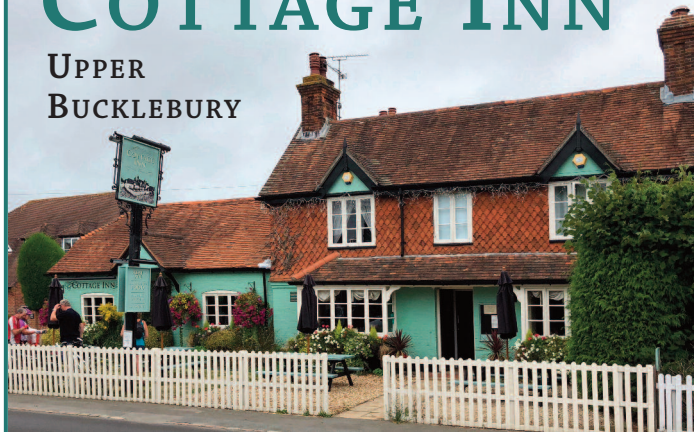
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Sunday 12 - 8 Lunch 12 - 3

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www.thecottageinnupperbucklebury.co.uk



■ The new WBB sign shone out from above the **West Berkshire Brewery** bar at the Reading Beer & Cider Festival.

The Grapes, the brewery's first pub in Oxford, also features new branding. Tom Lucas, Managing Director at WBB, said 'We've kept our iconic gentleman character and he's been given a facelift with a new bold graphic ...'.



The Grapes, across George Street from the New Theatre, was previously operated by Bath Ales before a BeerD revamp. The City Pub Company restored its traditional look in 2017. WBB made further improvements before the latest reopening on

26 April. The deep and narrow pub with a long bar has plenty of seating including wooden booths with tables. The new lighting system uses dimmable spherical shades. The menu offers exclusive dishes to attract discerning diners.

The next date for West Berkshire Brewery tours is Saturday 6 July.

With the help of Valley Gas Speed Shop in Andover, WBB have been converting a 1950's J-type Luton furniture van into a purpose built mobile bar for use at festivals and events. See Matt Lawson's April post with more details and photos on www.wbbrew.com/blog



Philip Hardman Photography

■ **Elusive Brewing's** Andy Parker was busy at the brewery bar section of CAMRA's Reading festival serving two KeyKeg beers. Elusive's cask ales Happiness Dragon (3.8% ABV) Simcoe & Mosaic pale won the lower ABV LocAle of the festival and Morrisman (5% ABV chocolate stout) won Bronze in the regional Champion Beer of Britain stout category.



The brewery has recently leased an adjacent unit at its Finchampstead base to provide space for a cold store and additional fermentation capacity. www.elusivebrewing.com

■ New hours for **Siren Craft Brew** Tap Yard are Wed-Sat 12-8pm, Sun 12-6pm. Hogwood Industrial Estate, Finchampstead is served by Reading Buses Leopard 3 service from Reading.



Photo: Richard Lock

On 16 April, Andy Pinkard presented the West Berkshire CAMRA Club of the Year 2019 award to the **Hungerford Club**.

Bar Steward Marie McConnon has been instrumental in getting the bar refurbished and maintains the highest cellar hygiene standards. She thanked Dave Broderick who suggests all the guest ales that are served alongside Fuller's London Pride.



■ Iain Clarke constructed a temporary bar for the trade session at CAMRA's Reading festival and served two of **Wild Weather's** fruited lactose sours from casks. Cucumber and Blueberry sours were available from 440ml cans.

Iain and others have been involved in collaboration beers with other breweries including Glen Affric (Birkenhead), New Lion (Totnes) and Wette Bryggeri (Oslo).

On 18 April, Wild Weather Ales announced on their Facebook page that '... Mr JD (Jamie Duffield) has been promoted to Head Brewer ...'.

JD represented the brewery at Inn at Home's *Weird & Wild* night on 10 May which featured beers from Weird Beard Brew and Wild Weather.

■ Following his *Introduction to Trappist Beers* at **Inn at Home** in February, Newbury beer writer **Jeff Evans** will present *Five Best Beer Styles for Summer* at the Newbury store on Friday 12 July at 7.15pm. Jeff will provide background for the styles and a fine example of each will be poured for tasting. Tickets (£15) from the shop at 151 Bartholomew Street or www.innathome.co.uk

■ Also a quiz enthusiast, Jeff Evans is hoping to organise a new pub and club **quiz league** for West Berkshire this autumn/winter. The league will operate similar to existing darts or pool leagues, with each venue nominating a team to play on its behalf in home and away matches, probably on Monday evenings (approximately 8.30 - 10pm). Any pubs or clubs interested in entering a team should contact quiz@jeffevans.co.uk for more details. Any keen quizzers who would like to get involved and join a team, please get in touch.

■ There is a monthly quiz at Marsh Benham's traditional thatched pub, the **Red House**. There

are cash prizes and money is raised for a different local charity each month. Tuesdays 11 June - '90s music, 16 July - General Knowledge, 20 August - '70s music. Quiz entry is £3 with start at 7pm. Booking is advised. www.theredhousepub.com

■ Dates for the music quiz set by Colin Jones at the **Old London Apprentice**, Newbury are Tuesday 9 July and 13 August at 8pm.

There will be music acts all day at the OLA on Saturday 10 August for a charity event in aid of Diabetes UK.

■ Rick Wyatt offered samples of freshly bottled **Pang Valley Cider** from his trade session stall at Reading Beer & Cider Festival. Rick's new Cold Ash premises have been licensed. See Cider Profile, page 9, for more details.

■ Four ciders from **Green Shed Cider** were served at the Reading festival including Big Tony and Wheel Cider which was launched at the (Newbury) Catherine Wheel's Easter festival. www.greenshedcider.co.uk

■ Tutts Clump Rhubarb was the 2019 Wantage Cider of the Festival, a 4% ABV medium sweet cider infused with rhubarb juice.



Further congratulations to Tim Wale for **Tutts Clump Cider** gaining first place in the CAMRA South of England Perry competition, judged at Reading Beer & Cider Festival.



Tim & Lucy Wale, Reading festival trade session

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Beer & Cider Festivals

- The new location for **Twyford Beer Festival** on 7/8 June, with 70 real ales, food and live music, is Stanlake Meadow Rec Ground, Waltham Road RG10 0AB, uphill from the station's southern exit. twyfordbeerfest.co.uk
- Saturday 8 June - The **Catherine Wheel**, Newbury, 5th birthday party / beer & cider festival + live music. Contact details as advert below.
- The annual **White Hart**, Hampstead Norreys, returns from Thursday 24 - Sunday 30 June. See pub profile on page 6 for all contact details.
- **Pallet Stage Presents Cider** is at Crazy Dave's Cider, Holyport on Saturday 29 June from 2pm with live music, cider, beer and food. Tickets via eventbrite or Facebook @crazydavesider.
- The annual branch visit to the **Great British Beer Festival** (GBBF) at Olympia will be on **Friday 9 August**. There will be over 1000 British and international beers, ciders and perries. This year there will be a wine and gin bar and more brewery bars. There are discounts for advance booking and CAMRA members. gbbf.org.uk/tickets
- The annual **Rowbidge Summer Festival** at Woolhampton on 16-18 August with live music features 35 real ales, craft beers and ciders.. Meet up with CAMRA members, in the pub's riverside garden, on the afternoon of **Saturday 17 August**. www.brunningandprice.co.uk/rowbidge
- The annual **Hungerford Club Real Ale Festival** at 3 The Croft is free and open to all from 24-26 August. On each day there will be 12 real ales and two ciders, a barbecue and live music. Meet up with CAMRA members there on the afternoon of **Saturday 24 August**.
- See page 12 for details of CAMRA beer festivals: **Ealing** (10-13 July), **Woodcote** (13-14 July), **Maidenhead** (25-27 July), **GBBF** (6-10 August). Further details of CAMRA and other festivals can be found on our website: westberkscamra.org.uk



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The White Hart Hampstead Norreys

Set in the attractive North Wessex Downs, Hampstead Norreys was narrowly beaten in the final of Channel 4's Village of the Year 2018 competition. The White Hart played a large part in establishing the close-knit nature of the community that led to this notable outcome.

Mine hosts, Tracey Clemson and James Stanley, have run the Greene King pub for 11 years making it a successful, welcoming establishment. On the visit day, the beers on offer were the regular Morland Original together with Hogs Back T.E.A. (Traditional English Ale) and Bath Ales Gem as guest ales.

Landlord James is the head chef and is responsible for the extensive menu that is mainly Modern British, but with plenty of dishes inspired from further afield. A good value separate children's menu makes life easier for young families and a lunchtime bar menu has soup, a selection of light bites, a traditional ploughman's and extends to ciabattas and baguettes, available with various fillings. Regular specials are on offer to further tempt diners. The pub is particularly proud of its wine list, which is augmented by a Wine of the Month selection.

The spacious and light building is cleverly organised into areas with tables for small groups and larger tables suited to family gatherings. Blackboards in the bar and in the entrance reveal a large number of regular events. The first Sunday of the month is Quiz night (from 20:00), the second Saturday of the month is Open mic night (from 20:00) and every Wednesday is Steak night. All their steaks are dry aged by a local butcher for 35 days in a Himalayan rock salt chamber. An annual Beer festival is held on the last weekend in June.

The pub is popular with walkers because the area is crisscrossed with footpaths, one of which, on the hill beside the pub, leads up to a former World War II RAF Wellington bomber base, where there is still an airstrip. Some walks follow the dismantled Didcot - Newbury - Southampton railway line. The village used to



have a railway station until the line was closed after Dr Beeching's 1963 report. Walkers with dogs are welcomed in the bar and on dry days there are also plenty of tables for sitting outside.

The pub is roughly halfway along the B4009, which goes from Newbury to Streatley and there is a constant but light flow of traffic in both directions. On the day of the visit there were some people who had travelled from Reading and had visited the nearby Living Rainforest attraction, which features tropical plants and animals. Others had come to explore the river Pang and the village, with its noted Community Shop and St Mary's church - with stepped cast iron Lowsley family memorial behind. Whatever your reason for dropping in at this pub, you are assured of a warm welcome.

Chris Reynolds



The White Hart
Church Street
Hampstead Norreys
RG18 0TB

Tel: 01635 202248

Email: the.white.hart@hotmail.co.uk

Website: www.goodfoodatthewhitehart.co.uk

Facebook: @TheWhiteHartHN

Twitter: @WhiteHartHN

Opening hours

Closed Monday

Tue-Fri: 12:00 - 15:00 & 18:00 - 23:00

Sat: 12:00 - 23:00

Sun: 12:00 - 22:30

Kitchen hours

Tue-Fri: 12:00 - 14:30 & 18:00 - 21:00 (21.30 Fri)

Sat: 12:00 - 14:30 & 18:00 - 21:30

Sun: 12:00 - 15:00 & 18:00 - 20:30



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



7 Jun, 5 Jul - Unplugged Open Mic
14 Jun - Edgelarks + Blánid Vox
20 Jul - Dan Webster + Richard Cox-Smith

Chequers Hotel, Newbury - 3pm Sundays
Jazz - Pay at the door on the day
18 Jun, 14 Jul, 18 Aug - 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 7.30pm:
19 Jun, 17 July, 21 Aug. Entry £2

The Angel, Woolhampton
Jazz from 8pm Saturdays
www.jazzangel.co.uk
29 Jun - Claire Jones Quintet
27 Jul - Fleur Stevenson
31 Aug - Judy Vaughan Quintet

The Monument, Newbury - Fridays & Saturdays
14 Jun - BeatleJuice
20 Jul - JJ & the Jukes
Open Mic night with Oli Hill on Thursdays

Lock Stock & Barrel, Newbury
15 Jun - Pink Mac
6 Jun (2pm) - Jon Walsh
29 Jun - The Soultones

Document House, Newbury
5 Jul, 30 Aug - Roadhouse

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

Old London Apprentice, Newbury
8 June - Wardour Street
6 Jul - Iron Lotus
3 Aug - Iron Lotus (acoustic)
2nd Friday of each month is Folk Night

The White Hart, Thatcham - Saturdays
22 Jun - Blue Hayz
6 Jul - JJ & the Jukes
27 Jul - No Way Out
10 Aug - Fubar
31 Aug - The Difference

Fox Inn, Hermitage
15 Jun - Nicole & the Papas

Old Boot Inn, Stanford Dingley
15 Jun (2pm) - Bootfest (£5 incl. drink)
7 Jul (5pm) - Acoustic Blues
28 Jul (5pm) - Open Road

More pubs with live music:

Hungerford area: Railway Tavern, Wheatsheaf

Newbury area: Catherine Wheel, Lion, Nags Head, Starting Gate

Thatcham area: Taste of England



Social Media



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Sun Closed

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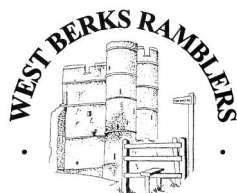
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CAMRA member Chris Reynolds is also Membership Secretary of West Berks Ramblers and will be leading the following walks:

Sun 30 June: 9.30am: Park in Theale's main car park (RG7 5AN). 9.6 mile walk, lunch at The Greyhound, Tidmarsh.

Thu 11 July: 9.30: Park considerably in Chapel St, Compton (RG20 6QH). 10.3 mile walk, lunch at The Bell, Aldworth.

Thu 18 July: 9.30: Park at Hampstead Norreys village hall car park. 9.9 mile walk, lunch at The Bell, Aldworth.

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

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Theale to Aldworth Hike Alan Haselden

On a dry, sunny, April Saturday my three friends / colleagues and I set out on foot from Theale to explore the Berkshire Downs and a few of their fine hostleries, following a cross-country route as far as Streatley.



North Street

Meeting early at La Baguetterie, Theale's High Street cafe, we stopped to enjoy bacon and sausage baguettes before venturing north out of town along footpaths into the meadows of Sulham parish where many trees and hedgerows were in blossom.

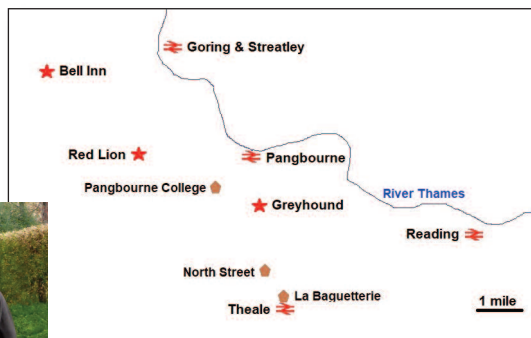


Our first stop, Fuller's Greyhound in Tidmarsh, is a thatched building and is mainly a smart restaurant with three rooms, replete with sturdy woodwork and low ceilings. It was offering London Pride and Dark Star's 3.8% Hophead and 4.1% Partridge. Pints of Hophead were served to us in good condition by the friendly bar manager. We were first in, but soon families and walking groups began to pour in and the place was a happy hive of busy-ness by 1pm.



The Greyhound, Tidmarsh

Veering west from Tidmarsh, we traced a lengthy zig-zagging footpath, defined by the hedgerows dividing the rolling, chalky, flinty landscape of Gregory's Hill. After traversing Pangbourne College premises and following a minor road, we arrived at the Red Lion in Upper Basildon by mid-afternoon. This light-filled, spacious, open-plan pub with white-washed interior walls and robust wooden beams,



comprised three areas. There is also an extensive rear garden with benches. The cask ale selection was Doom Bar, St Austell's 4.5% Proper Job and West Berkshire's 4% Good Old Boy. Happily, the kitchen was open and so we ordered a large pepperoni pizza to share between us and also a round of Good Old Boy, which was served on admirable form.



Following Adder's Lane, a shady, wooded byway and onward through Greenaway's Copse and the grounds of St Clement's church in Ashampstead, we arrived at Aldworth's The Bell Inn by late afternoon.



Being West Berkshire's only pub with a Heritage Pub interior, it is the hike team's favourite and between us we leisurely savoured a couple of four-pint pitchers of West Berkshire Brewery's finest, the 3.8% Maggs' Magnificent Mild, which was served in perfect form. The Bell Inn's home-made bread rolls with fillings such as Stilton, the sponge puddings soaked in hot custard, the golden sunshine beaming through the front windows together with the Aldworth locals, former locals, other visitors and pet dogs all conspired to make the perfect evening in this rural corner of Berkshire. It was, by far, the pinnacle of our day out. However, even the short two mile trek down through Streatley's tranquil valley, in the chilled twilight glow, to Goring & Streatley rail station was a pleasant experience too.

Finally, some of us visited Reading's Alehouse, for a swift round of Slater's 5.2% Smoked Porter, to break up the home-bound rail journey!

Pang Valley Cider

Nestled amongst fields and trees with ravens swooping overhead, leverets skipping across fields and keenly observant farm cats, is where Pang Valley Cider can be found.



Rick Wyatt

Formerly known as Wyatt's Craft Cider, cidermaker Rick Wyatt made the decision to move production from his family home to a new site. Together with Gary Wickens, his lifelong friend, they formed Pang Valley Cider in the late summer of 2018. The first reason for the change in name was due to the fact that Rick was no longer a one-man band. Secondly, he and Gary both wanted a more local identity for their product and as the new premises overlooks the stunningly beautiful River Pang, the new business name fitted nicely.

Pressing commenced in the autumn of 2018 using a variety of specific cider apple cultivars from Herefordshire including Michelin, Browns and Dabinett as well as culinary varieties from Kent. Food waste and fuel use are minimised by also using locally sourced apples from West Berkshire including Douai

Abbey and orchards passed down from Roy Bailey. That first year of pressing has produced just under 6000 litres of pure apple juice which then fermented slowly over the winter and spring months.

The first public serving of the new cider was at this year's Reading Beer & Cider Festival in May when Midway, an 8.1% ABV blend of Hereford, West Berkshire and Kentish apples, was available. Midway is aptly named because the cider is made at roughly the midway point of the sourced apples' origins.

Further blends will be made available throughout the year including Royal County, given the same name as the former flagship Lambourn Valley cider to recognise Roy Bailey's help for Rick when he started producing cider. Rick's old favourites - Berkshire Gold and Abbey Gold - will also return.

Looking to the future, Rick & Gary are looking to broaden the range that they can offer by producing 100% pure apple juice and an apple cider vinegar. They also plan to offer people the chance to visit the cider house to learn all about the cidermaking process and sample some ciders whilst marvelling at the surroundings. Ciders will also be made available to purchase.

To keep up to date will news from Pang Valley Cider, outlets for their cider and details of forthcoming cider releases, please follow @PangValleyCider on Twitter.

Wassail!

Rod Holmes

West Berkshire CAMRA Cider Liaison Officer
Twitter @WBCAMRAcider



the globe opens

[continued from page 1]

The original Globe Inn lettering was revealed by the removal of the Snooty Fox frontage. However, as there are no letting rooms the pub is now simply The Globe. Keeping the old lettering fits with Colin and Katie wanting to give the pub a new lease of life without erasing any history.



Inside, the extensive refurbishment by Heineken's Star pubs & bars, features a ground level cafe style area that can open up onto Bartholomew Street. This front area has a hard floor and a high ceiling giving extra natural light from the first floor windows. Greenery and the spoked light fitting break up the tall space.

A ramp from the main entrance, on the right, leads up to the central bar area with high tables. Uneven renovated floorboards lead through to the rear, furnished with sofas and low tables. Framed photos decorate



the grey painted walls here with books and games available from a shelf. The front of the old bar counter now features black and white tile patterns. Handpumps supply up to four cask ales. There are beers from Beavertown and Brixton breweries in the keg and canned ranges.

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Ullage on Tour

In 2019, *Ullage* editor Tim Thomas took the magazine with him on trips to Liverpool, Porto and Belgium. Tim's photos, featuring Ullage, illustrated some posts on Twitter and Instagram with hashtag #UllageOnTour.



Marta Gonçalves

Quinten Taylor visited bars in Porto in January 2018. His article, mentioning A Fábrica da Picaria brewpub, was published in the Spring 2018 issue of *Ullage*. This was a useful calling card when Tim visited the brewpub and met Marta. She remembered Quinno visiting from his photo on the cover of Reading CAMRA's Mine's a Pint. A Fábrica is Porto's first brewpub and offers two beers brewed on the premises and served direct from the tank. The other draught beers available are from the Super Bock Selecção 1927 range. Tim recommends also visiting Catraio Craft Beer Shop, Letraria Craft Beer Garden and Calem Port wine lodge when in Porto.

Het Anker brewery in historic Mechelen (Flanders) was a highlight of Simon Grist and Tim's visit to Belgium by train in March. The family business started brewing five generations ago. Marc De Knijf (photo below), guided the interesting brewery tour before providing us with 15cl glasses of Gouden Carolus Tripel and Classic in the tasting room. He challenged us to recognise the flavours from coriander, chamomile, cumin and orange peel in the pale 9% ABV Tripel. Afterwards, Tim gave Marc an *Ullage* magazine which he read with interest.

For the benefit of beer enthusiasts, Tim wrote up his 2019 visits in beereurope.blogspot.com (Porto & Guimarães - 4 posts; Brussels, Mechelen and Leuven - 7 posts). The Brussels posts include details of L'Ermitage brewery and bars in Saint-Gilles.

Please take a copy of *Ullage* to pubs and bars you visit on holiday. If you share an #UllageOnTour photo on Twitter or Instagram, it boosts the appeal of *Ullage* to readers and advertisers! If you are not social media savvy then old school conversation with staff about the featured local breweries and cidemakers could influence new orders for our excellent producers. Thank you!






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Citra as Brand

Every now and then we'll reach a point in a conversation where the person opposite wants to know, 'What's a good beer I should be looking out for, then?'

This used to be fairly easy to answer, but with more breweries, and more beers, and what feels like a tendency away from the concept of the core range or flagship beer, it's become tricky.

There are beers we like but don't get to drink regularly enough to say we know, and others that we love but don't see from one year to the next.

Last time someone asked, though, it just so happened that we'd reached a conclusion: 'Well, not a specific beer, but you can't go wrong with anything with Citra in the name.' We were thinking of Oakham Citra, of course – the beer that effectively owns this unique American hop variety in the UK, and has done since 2009.

Citra was very much the hot thing in UK brewing about six or seven years ago. It was a sort of wonder hop that seemed to combine the powers of every C-hop that had come before. It was easy to appreciate – no hints or notes here, just an almost over-vivid horn blast of flavour – and, in our experience, easy to brew with, too.

Now, with the trendsetters having moved on, Citra continues to be a sort of anchor point for us. If there's a beer on offer with Citra in the name, even from a brewery we've never heard of, or even from a brewery whose beers we don't generally like, we'll always give it a try.

Hop Back Citra, for example, is a great beer. It lacks the oomph of Oakham's flagship and bears a distinct family resemblance to many of the Wiltshire brewery's other beers but Citra lifts it out of the sepi. It adds a pure, high note; it electrifies.

Since concluding that You Can't Go Wrong With Citra, we've been testing the thesis. Of course we've had the odd dud – beers that taste like they got the sweepings from the Citra factory floor, or were wheeled past a single cone on the way to the warehouse – but generally, it seems to be a sound rule.

We were recently in the pub with our next door neighbour, a keen ale drinker but not a beer geek, and a Citra fan. When Hop Back Citra ran out before he could get another pint his face fell, until he saw that another beer with Citra in the name had gone up on the board: 'Oh, there you go – as long as it's a Citra, I don't mind.'

All consumers want is a clue, a shortcut, a bit of help. That's what they get from IPA, or 'craft'. And apparently also from the name of this one unsubtle, good-time hop variety.

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

The Squeezed Middle

The sale of Fuller's brewing interests to Asahi underlined the exposed position in which many of the established, medium-sized firms find themselves.

As a mid-sized brewer, Fuller's said, it was being squeezed between the global giants and the 2,000 smaller brewers across the UK. The tax breaks given to microbrewers and the power of the big global drinks firms have left little space at the bar for those in the middle.

Progressive Beer Duty was introduced in 2002 by Gordon Brown with the aim of stimulating the number of small breweries in the UK. It has certainly succeeded in this objective, with over 2,000 now in operation. However, as with many such well-intentioned measures, it has had unintended consequences. The 50% duty relief on offer starts to be clawed back above an annual production of 5,000 hectolitres, and entirely disappears at 60,000 hl (1 hl = 176 pints). Many of the established family brewers are above this figure, or only just below it. Fuller's, who were one of the biggest, were producing about 200,000 barrels a year.

In practice, many of the new small brewers have used the duty relief not to bolster the finances of their business, but to sell beer more cheaply, putting the established brewers at a severe price disadvantage. The overall market share of these small brewers is relatively small, and to the likes of AB InBev they are no more than a pinprick on an elephant's backside. But they have a much higher share of the market for cask beer in the free trade, and if you go in any pub that is able to buy beer on the open market it is likely that most of its cask lines are from microbreweries. Some of these beers are very good, but the main reason many of them are there is that they are cheap to buy.

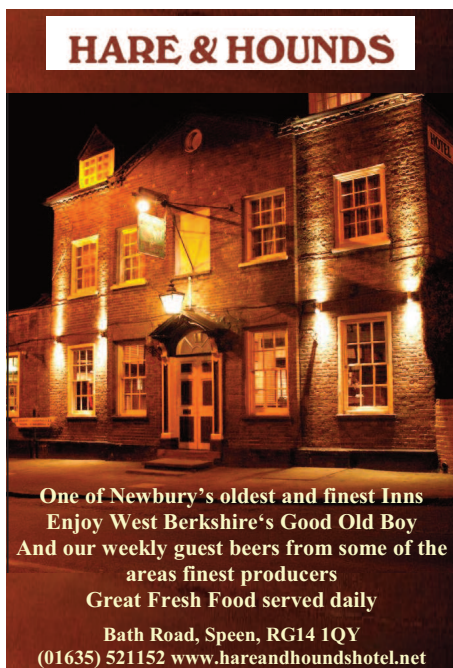
The mid-sized brewers found that the general decline of on-trade beer consumption

and the rise of lager greatly reduced the amount of beer they were producing from their own breweries. But, at the same time, the rise of up-market dining provided an opportunity for some of the pubs in their tied estates, and many of them bought more as cast-offs from the debt-ridden pubcos. This essentially turned them into pubcos with an under-utilised brewery as a sideline. Fuller's reckoned that 85% of their profits came from their pubs and hotels, so it is perhaps understandable that they decided to concentrate on that part of their business and accept an attractive offer for the brewing side.

It's also debatable whether you can make such a clear distinction between the brewing and pub sides of the business, as to some extent they support each other. If you separate them, both will be diminished and their viability undermined. A brewery produces a unique, identifiable product that is recognisable to customers and may command a great deal of loyalty, but a pubco is, well, just another pubco, and in the long-term that must make them more vulnerable to takeover. Fuller's stood out from the crowd both because of the high profile of their beers and the valuable redevelopment potential of their site. But the announcement of this deal will certainly have given many directors of family brewers cause for thought about their long-term future.

It's often the case that people attract warm tributes when they die while having a much more equivocal reputation during their lives, and it's hard to avoid the feeling that some of those shedding crocodile tears over the sale of Fuller's were happy a year before to dismiss London Pride as 'boring brown beer'. Maybe if we want to help the prospects of the family brewers, beer enthusiasts should give them a bit more love as upholders of a unique British tradition, rather than constantly chasing after the novel and trendy.

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



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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.

10-13 July

30th Ealing Beer Festival

Walpole Park, Mattock Lane W5 5BG
www.ebf.camra.org.uk

13-14 July

Woodcote Festival of Ale

56th Woodcote Rally
8 miles NW of Reading on A4074
www.woodcoterally.org.uk

25-27 July

7th Maidenhead Beer & Cider Festival

Desborough College SL6 2QB
www.maidenheadbeerfest.camra.org.uk

6-10 August

Great British Beer Festival

London Olympia W14 8UX
www.gbbf.org.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!

Tuesday 11 June

Branch Annual General Meeting
All members welcome as page 2
The Lamb, Newbury 8pm

Saturday 15 June

Beer Day Britain #CheersToBeer
Cow & Cask, Newbury 7pm

Two Cocks Brewery Visit

Registration details: page 2

Saturday 6 July

Marlow Ale Amble
Details: page 2 1pm

Saturday 27 July

Hampstead Marshall Ale Amble
Details: page 2 12 Noon

Wednesday 7 August

Branch meeting 8pm
Old Boot Inn, Stanford Dingley

Friday 9 August

Great British Beer Festival Social
Details: page 5 1pm

Saturday 17 August

Afternoon Social
Rowbarg Summer Festival,
Woolhampton Details: page 5

Saturday 24 August

Afternoon Social
Hungerford Club Real Ale
Festival Details: page 5

Further details on our website: www.westberkscamra.org.uk

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