

Crib & Ale at the Cow & Cask



'And one for his nob' Andy Tillen reminded beginners and returning crib players during a masterclass with Andy Love at the Cow & Cask micropub on Tuesday 16 February.

This expression, for the extra point for a Jack that would move the marker pin along one hole on the cribbage scoring board, was just one of the intricacies in the scoring and playing of the game that those attending would pick up during the evening. After gaining confidence, Jayne Kirk and Elaine Russell volunteered to play a game of crib while the others watched and learned.

The two Andys are members of the Cow & Cask crib team which competes in the Thatcham & District Crib League www.tdcrib.co.uk on most Tuesdays, from mid September until late April. Home and away games are played against teams from the Woodpecker, Taste of England, White Hart (Thatcham), Shaw Social Club and Thatcham Bowls Club. Each fixture involves six singles and three doubles matches.

Crib is also often played, on a friendly basis, in the Cow & Cask on Friday evenings.

Local ales from Butts, Hermitage, Indigenous and Ramsbury breweries were tapped, from cooled casks, by landlord Ian Batho during the crib evening. Although Newbury's micropub normally closes at 9pm on Tuesdays, Ian has the flexibility to extend hours for special events. See the Cow & Cask advertisement on page 9 for current opening hours. www.cowandcask.co.uk



Department for
Communities and
Local Government

www.camra.org.uk/listyourlocal

Hamstead Marshall residents are campaigning to save **The White Hart Inn**, which closed on 11 September 2015, from plans to convert it to four dwelling houses.

The 'Save The White Hart' campaign team is completing a viability test and applying for the pub to be listed as an **Asset of Community Value (ACV)** with advice and support from CAMRA members.

The future of the White Hart Inn will be discussed at a West Berkshire Planning Committee meeting on Wednesday 9 March (starts 6.30pm).

Anyone wanting further information can contact the Campaign Chairman on 07479 986897.

Visit www.camra.org.uk/listyourlocal for details of how a local group of 21 people or a Parish Council can nominate a pub as an ACV as a useful initial step towards securing its future. West Berkshire Council's **Community Right To Bid** page also has relevant information: info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=29483

The Tally Ho, Hungerford Newtown, is an example of a pub in our branch that used ACV status to give enough time to obtain finance for a local group to operate it as a community pub. The Tally Ho is now well established and employs a number of staff.

The Ibex, Chaddleworth; The Bladebone, Chapel Row and in Stanford Dingley - The Bull and The Old Boot are also already listed as ACVs.

After consultation, West Berkshire CAMRA will be applying for further pubs to be listed and has recently submitted an ACV application for The Three Horseshoes, Brimpton - the branch's 2015 Community Pub of the Year.

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Brewer Sam Jory - Brixton Brewery

See page 4 for details of how to nominate a pub for the **2016 CAMRA Community Pub of the Year** award.

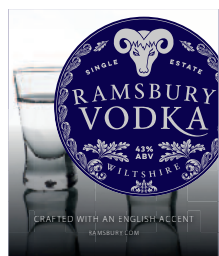
Swift Halves

■ The label for **Indigenous Brewery** Double Warp shows the start of the voyage of William Bush in 1607. Guiding a pinnacle down a ropeway from a church tower, he passed by air, land and water from Lambourn to Custom House Quay in London.

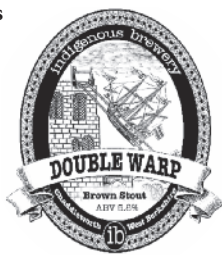
Double Warp (5.8% ABV) is a rich dark full flavoured brown stout which delivers deep chocolate notes with a hint of spice.

Another new beer from Chaddleworth's Indigenous Brewery is Moonstruck Porter (4.8% ABV). Brewed in classic 1850 'London' Porter style, this beer has plenty of chocolate and coffee notes, complemented by a subtle bitterness and smooth finish. www.indigenousbrewery.co.uk

■ Look out the seasonal beers from **Ramsbury Brewery** - Grand Slam (4.3% ABV) brewed to coincide with the RBS 6 Nations rugby championship and Over the Sticks (4.2% ABV) a fruity golden ale brewed in time for the Cheltenham Gold Cup on Friday 18 March.



Single estate vodka, using wheat from the Wiltshire estate, is also distilled. Ramsbury beers and vodka are available at the brewery shop near Aldbourne, the Wheatsheaf freehouse in Chilton Foliat and Inn at Home, Newbury. Daytime or evening guided tours of the brewery and distillery for groups of around six people can be booked in advance. Tel 01672 541407. www.ramsbury.com



■ A Meet The Brewer event at Woolhampton's canal-side pub, **The Rowbarge**, on Thursday **10 March**, from 6pm, will feature Longdog and Ramsbury breweries. Reserve a free place on 0118 9712213.

■ Events at the **Rising Sun**, Stockcross, include a book club every first Tuesday of the month, a quiz night every second Tuesday of the month, a bridge night every Thursday and a folk night on alternate Sundays from 6 March. Tel 01488 608335

■ The **Bladebone**, Chapel Row, Bucklebury reopened on 9 January after a major refurbishment. Sharp's Doom Bar and two West Berkshire Brewery beers are served.

www.thebladeboneinn.com
For further details about the pub, read James Hussey's blog post about his visit when he met Chef Patron / Landlord and owner of the local catering business RS Catering & Events, Richie Sanderson. Other recent posts, all featuring several photos, accessible from the 'blog' tab of the website www.eatdrinkgreatevents.com are about Sunday lunches at **The Lion**, Newbury and **The Three Horseshoes**, Donnington.



■ Beers brewed by the **INNformal** brewery at the **Five Bells**, Wickham are also available at the **John O'Gaunt** Hungerford. Recently available, INNfusion is a 3.9% ABV Apollo and Centennial hopped session beer. Look out for the return of the 6.1% ABV hoppy Citra hopINNmad.

INNdeep chocolate stout and San FrINNcisco West Coast IPA are available in bottles, including presentation packs with a branded glass.

■ Congratulations to Mary and Bernard Harris who bought and re-opened the **Swan Inn**, Inkpen on 22 April 1996. They will commemorate twenty years at the pub on St George's Day, Saturday

23 April with Morris dancing from the Garston Gallopers in the afternoon and music from the Chris Jagger trio in the evening. A guest ale and organic beers from Butts Brewery - Jester and Traditional - are served. West Berkshire CAMRA has planned a daytime social visit to the event. The pub can be reached by Newbury & District bus service '3' from Newbury to Hungerford via Kintbury which also passes the Craven Arms, Enborne and the Crown & Garter, Inkpen. www.theswaninn-organics.co.uk



■ **Elite Stainless Fabrications** have donated a 100 litre microbrewery system to be raffled by Swindon Women's Aid charity on 8 April. Tickets £5. Details via www.esfabrications.co.uk



■ **Arkell's** Flavour Collection of ales will be available during the Spring. Strawberry Sensation (5% ABV, February), Tinge of Ginge (3.5% ABV, March) and VPA, Vanilla Pod Ale (4.5% ABV, April) each feature a hint of an added ingredient.

■ In February, the **Catherine Wheel**, Newbury, introduced a monthly brewery Showcase event with



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INNformal
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Wild Weather brewery. There will be an opportunity to meet the brewer, from a different brewery, on the last Thursday of the month.

On these nights, three beers from the showcase brewery will be available, for £3 per pint, from 7pm until close. Any remaining beer will be available, in addition to the usual six ales, over the weekend. www.thecatherinewheel.com



West Berkshire Brewery has launched a Homebrew Club. In Yattendon, on Sunday 13 March, brewer Steve will demonstrate a live brew on the newly installed pilot plant kit. Home brewers or beer enthusiasts wishing to attend should email clare.candy@wbbrew.com to apply for a place.

■ Skiff, first brewed in 1966 for the Reading Beer Festival, is the **West Berkshire Brewery** seasonal beer. The 3.6% ABV pale bitter, gently hopped with Bramling Cross and Willamette has 'a caramel and biscuit aroma overlaid with light citrus and berry fruit'. Screaming Eagle is the name of the seasonal beer from May.



■ Jade Clark was one of 15 chefs who entered the fourth Great Sausage Roll Off contest at the Red Lion, Barnes on 27 January, hosted by beer and food writer Melissa Cole.

Achieving third place with her venison, wild mushroom and pickled blackberry roll was an excellent result for the Chef from the **Hind's Head**, Aldermaston. Jade is also Fuller's current Chef Scholar of the Year.

■ From 490 applicants, **Wadworth Brewery** Visitor Centre & Brewery Tours won the bronze award in the Small Attraction category of the 2015/16 South West Tourism Excellence Awards.

See advertisement on page 10 for more details about visiting the brewery in Devizes.

Seasonal beers from **Wadworth Brewery** include St George & the Dragon (4.5% ABV, March / April) and to mark the start of the cricket season, **Boundary** (3.8% April / May) a tangy golden ale, brewed with hops from Oregon, USA.



■ CAMRA card holders now enjoy a 20p pint discount on cask ale at the **Three Horseshoes**, Brimpton. See the box on page 6 for more pubs offering membership discounts.

■ West Berkshire Brewery staffed the **Renegade Brewery** stand at CBR16, the Craft Beer Rising event in East London, on 26-27 February. Beer enthusiasts enjoyed the Indian Session Ale (4.2% ABV) and West Coast Pale Ale (5.1% ABV) from a range of beers brewed at Yattendon. www.renegadebrewery.co.uk



■ At the Cow & Cask, Newbury, Andy Parker recently hosted a beer tasting and talked about the steps involved in setting up **Elusive Brewing** since leaving his IT job. In mid February, he finally got the keys for the brewery unit which is on the same Finchampstead estate as Siren Craft Brew.



Smoked Mild, English Pale Ale and American Red Ale are three of the initial beer styles to be brewed. Read Andy's beer and brewing blog posts including 'So You Wanna Open a Brewery?' on www.graphedbeer.com for more information. www.elusivebrewing.com

■ Simon Grist, a local CAMRA member, operates **Clear Brew**, a professional beer line cleaning service, in the Thames Valley area. A free initial clean is currently available. Contact Clear Brew on 07817 950853 or SimonGrist@clearbrew.co.uk

Beer book prize

Andy Tillen correctly answered three questions set by Jeff Evans (see footnote) and his name was drawn to win the prize of Jeff's latest CAMRA book - *So You Want to Be a Beer Expert?* In February, local author Jeff presented Andy with the book, in front of shelves full of local beers, inside Newbury's Inn at Home, stockists of the book.




A CAMRA member for more than twenty years, Andy has visited many pubs in CAMRA's Good Beer Guide when off duty from his job as a courier driver. He also delivers Ullage to pubs in Lambourn and Baydon and has taken spare copies to pubs in some of the far flung places he visits. Andy enjoys drinking different beers at the Cow and Cask micropub and will choose Ruddles in other pubs that serve it, like the Diamond Tap and Hatchet Inn. A loyal supporter of Reading FC and Hampshire County CC, Andy is also a player in the Cow & Cask crib team and arranged the recent beginners crib and dominoes evening at the Newbury micropub.

Jeff said 'It's wonderful to see such an interest in beer these days but I know from the many talks and tastings I give about beer around the country that many people – even those who have been enjoying beer for many years – still have lots of questions that need answering. I hope the book provides those answers, whether it is about how beer is made or the difference between styles of beer.'

Jeff added 'The book has been designed to cater for both the absolute beginner and the seasoned drinker, so whatever questions they may have, the answers should be there. But I've also tried to make sure that people have a chance to learn for themselves, rather than just taking my word for it. That's why the book is full of taste-offs and experiments to try at home and offers suggestions for fascinating places to visit where you can learn all about such subjects as malt, hops or individual beer styles.'



- 1) In which country do the hop varieties Cascade, Centennial and Columbus originate? *USA*
- 2) Thwaites Nutty Black, Brains Dark and Moorhouse's Black Cat are three examples of which beer style? *Mild*
- 3) In which country was the first golden lager produced, in 1842? *Czech Republic*



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(8th year
running)

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West Berks CAMRA Pub of the Year 2008 and 2015

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Email: info@thesixbells.co.uk
www.thesixbells.co.uk

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pubsofficer@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 Peasmore	Peasmore
The John O'Gaunt Inn	Hungerford
The Red House	Marsh Benham
Royal British Legion	Hungerford
The Rising Sun	Stockcross
The Stag	Leckhampstead
The Swan Inn	Great Shefford
The Swan Inn	Inkpen
The Tally Ho!	Hungerford Newtown
The Three Swans Hotel	Hungerford
The Winterbourne Arms	Winterbourne

Locally Brewed Real Ale

Wild Weather Ales

Wild Weather Ales, near Silchester, is owned and operated by music lovers who 'brew beer for the musically minded'.



Black Star (5.2% ABV, a David Bowie tribute) is brewed in collaboration with Uprising Brewery, Windsor, where Kieran Johnson is Head Brewer. A lot of hops were used and the beer has been infused with squid ink 'to turn the idea of a black IPA on its head'.

Owner / Head Brewer Mike Tempest and Brewer Iain Clarke have both started their own 'Favourite Song Series' of beers where the flavour is inspired by the music.

Motorcycle Emptiness (5% ABV, Manic Street Preachers) is Mike's recipe giving a hoppy IPA with bitter undertones.

Iain describes his single hop Sorachi Pale - The Science of Selling Yourself Short (3% ABV, Less than Jake) as 'a massive beer'.

2016 West Berkshire CAMRA Community Pub of the Year

If you have noticed a pub making a difference in the local community then please nominate it and the pub could gain valuable publicity.

Previous winners of the branch Community Pub award include: Three Horseshoes, Brimpton (2015); Tally Ho, Hungerford Newtown (2014); Cottage Inn, Bucklebury (2013, 2012) and Castle Inn, Cold Ash (2010).

Note that the branch is not looking for nominations simply based on good food, beer or service. Instead, consider factors like charity events, team games, noticeboards, space for local meetings and whether the pub hosts events like beer festivals, quizzes and live performances.

It's easy to submit a nomination. Anyone, including the publican, can nominate one or more pubs. Please do this, by 30 June, by sending details to Mike Avery, Branch Secretary, whose contact details appear on the back page or by using the online form on our website www.westberkscamra.org.uk/nominate



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www.wildweatherales.com

Beer Festivals

■ From Friday 11 March to Sunday 27 March the **Wetherspoon Spring Beer Festival** will feature fifty ales from the UK and around the world. On any day, a selection from these will be available at the Hatchet Inn and the Diamond Tap in Newbury. www.jdwetherspoon.com/real-ale

■ On Friday 15 and Saturday 16 April **Newbury Racecourse** hosts Dubai Duty Free Spring Trials Weekend

with a Beer Festival on both days featuring over 40 real ales and ciders. CAMRA members can book half price Grandstand tickets in advance by phone (01635 40015) or online using promo code CAMRA2016 until midnight on 11 April.

To use the promo code online, visit newburyracecourse.co.uk select either of the two racedays and click BUY TICKETS, choose full price Grandstand tickets and insert the code at the checkout.



The gates open at 12.00 noon on the Friday and 11.00am on Saturday. The beer festival is held in a marquee, on the lawn next to the parade ring inside the Grandstand Enclosure.

■ The **22nd CAMRA Reading Beer and Cider Festival** will be open to the public from Thursday 28 April until Sunday 1 May.

After twenty years at Kings Meadow, the festival is moving to Christchurch Meadows, Caversham, on the other side of the River Thames. With over 500 real ales and 150 ciders and perries this is one of the biggest beer festivals in the country, housed in a 150 metre long marquee and regularly attracting over 13,000 visitors.

A general volunteers meeting will be held on Wednesday 16 March (8pm) at the Castle Tap, Reading for anyone interested in getting involved.

Meet up with West Berkshire CAMRA members at the festival on Friday 29 April. Look for branch members with a copy of

Ullage at the CAMRA books and information stand at 6pm and 7pm.
www.readingbeerfestival.org.uk

■ **Bracknell Ale & Wine Festival** on Sunday 29

May is moving to Bracknell Rugby Club. Martins Heron is the nearest railway station. Expect over 30 real ales, a good selection of wine and locally brewed cider as well as food options and live music at the Lily Hill Park ground - all in aid of raising money for the rugby club.

The 6th annual event promises to be the biggest yet after 1,000 visitors came through the gate in 2015 - with beers from breweries including Bingham's (Twyford), Siren Craft (Finchampstead) and Windsor & Eton.

Tickets via www.bracknellalefestival.co.uk are £5 with Free entry for CAMRA members.



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GIG GUIDE

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

12 Mar - Kit Holmes & Al Greenwood
2 Apr - Phil Beer
9 Apr - The Willows
21 May - Dan Bettridge, The Engineers

The Canal Bar, Newbury - Fridays.
27 Mar - Riff Raff

The Monument, Newbury - Fridays and Saturdays. Open Mic night with Oli Hill on Thursdays.
2 Apr - Red Aztek
16 Apr - Beatle Juice

The Dolphin, Newbury - Fridays.
25 Mar - Fubar
22 Apr - The Thrill
13 May - Hennessy

Lock Stock & Barrel, Newbury - Open Mic night on first Wednesday of month.

The White Hart, Thatcham - Saturdays.
2 Apr - Steeler
16 Apr - Ray Jones Band
21 May - The Presidents

The Rising Sun, Stockcross - folk night sessions on alternate Sundays from 6 Mar. www.therisingsunstockcross.com

The Swan, Great Shefford
7 May - Roland Chadwick

More pubs with live music:

Baydon: Red Lion

Hermitage: Fox Inn

Hungerford area: Railway Tavern, Tally Ho, Wheatsheaf

Lambourn: George

Newbury area: Cock Inn, Cross Keys, Nag's Head, Old Bell, Old London Apprentice, Royal British Legion Club

Thatcham: Kings Head, Mill, Old Chequers, Plough, Taste of England



CAMRA member Chris Reynolds is also Membership Secretary of West Berks Ramblers and will be leading several spring walks including:

Thursday 31 March 9.30am Meet Boxford Village Hall. 10.7 mile walk. Lunch at the Stag, Leckhampstead, during the walk.

Tuesday 19 April 10.00am Meet Leckhampstead Village Hall. 6.3mile walk. Lunch afterwards at the Stag, Leckhampstead..

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

CAMRA Discounts

CAMRA membership unlocks discounts at CAMRA beer festivals, Wetherspoon pubs and pubs below:

Brimpton:

Three Horseshoes

Hungerford:

John O'Gaunt Inn

Newbury:

Catherine Wheel
Cow & Cask micropub
Diamond Tap
Gun, Wash Common
Hatchet Inn
King Charles Tavern
Narrow Boat

Wickham:

Five Bells

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The Wheatsheaf, Chilton Foliat

Ollie and Lauren are an energised young couple who have just taken over the Wheatsheaf pub in the Wiltshire village of Chilton Foliat, near Hungerford. They have grand visions to make it one of the most sustainable pubs in the UK with art and music studios too.

They bought the freehold of the pub, so have the pleasure of being able to select their own real ales, lagers, ciders, wines and soft drinks and are able to sell them at affordable prices to their customers. At the moment, the freehouse has a selection of three real ales; Ramsbury Gold, Ramsbury Bitter and a revolving guest ale, often from Cornwall (where Ollie spent most of his childhood summers).

Ollie and Lauren are passionate about sustainability, the environment and supporting local trades and businesses who supply organic wine, tea, coffee, milk, biscuits, chocolate, soft drinks and olive oil. They have chosen real ales from Ramsbury Brewery and cider from Tutts Clump due to their great taste and locality. Ollie is the Head Chef in the Kitchen, where he sources



their free-range and organic meat, organic vegetables and honey from Hungerford Park (Ollie's parents' farm).

After some renovations and refurbishments this year, they plan to have double the amount of real ale pumps, a larger kitchen in the old, unused brewery, a wood-fired pizza oven, functioning art and music studios (Lauren is a singer/songwriter herself), a beautiful beer garden with all year round booths, and to bottle their own water from a well in the garden.

www.thewheatsheafchiltonfoliat.co.uk

Camden Crawl

On Saturday 23 January, CAMRA members from branches in the Central Southern region including West Berkshire met at noon in Our Black Heart, Camden Town.

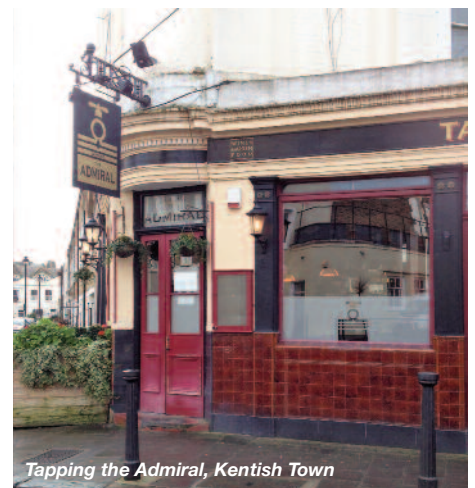
It was disappointing to find that this music pub has recently stopped serving cask ale. A few headed straight to the Spread Eagle, a wood panelled traditional Young's pub.

The ale trail listed seven pubs finishing at Camden's Daughter, the new Camden Town Brewery pub in Kentish Town. We soon discovered that some of these pubs were also being visited by a CAMRA group from West Sussex.



In mid afternoon, locals at Tapping the Admiral, a friendly back street community pub, must have been surprised to find their pub filled with CAMRA members! With nautical decor, a pub cat and eight cask ales with a 30p CAMRA discount, this pub was popular with everyone. It is in the 2016 Good Beer Guide and was North London CAMRA Pub of the Year in 2013. There were beers from Adnams, Dark Star, Signature Brew and New River breweries. A guest beer from West Berkshire Brewery is sometimes available.

Tapping the Admiral, 77 Castle Road, is about 100 metres from Kentish Town West station



(served by London Overground) and from Camden Town Brewery, currently located in railway arches underneath the station.

Thanks go to John and Sue Thirlaway who research and organise the annual January London ale trail, publishing full details of pubs to be visited and who were on hand throughout the day.



Sue & John Thirlaway, BrewDog Camden

The Coach World's End, Beedon

If you follow the route of the old A34 towards Oxford, a couple of miles north of Chieveley, you will come across the strangely named hamlet of World's End, home to a country pub, The Coach.

Formerly thought to have been an old coaching inn known as the Waggon & Horses, The Coach is situated on the old Oxford to Winchester turnpike. Historically this would have been a horse-changing stop before the climb to East Ilsley. Today the pub is located in the former stables, with the original pub building forming the adjoining cottages. Although little trace of the stables remain, the cellar still contains much of the old brick and woodwork. There is also talk of a ghostly rider who puts an appearance in now and again!

For the past six years, the Coach has been run by the same family. Tracey and Paul pride themselves on the warm welcome to all who visit. The contemporary interior comprises a

main public bar area, a family room with pool table, and a self contained dining area (which doubles as a function room available for private party hire). Outside, a small patio area to the rear leads to a large secure garden with swings for the children. During the summer months, this area is very popular, with regular barbecues and provision of a bouncy castle. Wheelchair access is possible throughout the pub which also has a spacious disabled toilet.

Inspired by nine years spent living in the United States, the food menu offers something a bit different with an American theme. On offer is a wide selection of gourmet burgers, chicken, ribs and stone baked pizzas; although the ultimate treat has to be the mouth-watering bourbon smoked sliced beef brisket. A separate children's menu is available and most menu items can also be ordered to take away.

On the beer front, a number of local real ales are always available, from breweries such as West Berkshire Brewery and Indigenous Brewery. The Coach provides all that is needed for a friendly hospitable country pub, somewhere to meet up for a drink in a comfortable environment, that also serves tasty pub fare. As well as regular customers, including families with young children, it has an enduring

appeal with local clubs, walkers and cyclists. Dogs are welcome too. If you are looking for a warm welcome, coupled with good food and ale, why not stop by for a drink, a chat with the regulars, or a bite to eat sometime.

The number 6/6A circular bus from Newbury provides a limited service, and stops right outside the pub.

Kevin Brady

Opening Times:

Tuesday to Thursday 17.30-23.00

Friday to Sunday 12.00-23.00

Closed on Mondays (except Bank Holidays)

Food served until 21.00 Tuesday to Thursday, 21.30 on Friday and Saturdays, 12.00 to 16.00 and 17.30-20.30 on Sundays.

The Coach, World's End, Beedon, Newbury RG20 8SD

www.thecoachworldsend.co.uk

Tel: 01635 247271



New Zealand Beer Collective - Inn at Home

On a wet and windy January evening, a small corner of Newbury was transported to the South Pacific as the Inn At Home hosted another of their popular beer tasting events, this time welcoming the New Zealand Beer Collective.

Porter, Witbier, IPA and even a strong Scotch Ale (Renaissance Stonecutter). The chaps also fielded plenty of questions covering both the technical and practical aspects of brewing.

Heather Kensett, from Inn At Home, said: 'We invited New Zealand Beer Collective to speak because they are adventurous with their styles and make some really fun beers to drink. The achievements of the collective are impressive. Regularly bringing in beers from five breweries around the world is no small feat, so to maintain quality and build a business on this is fantastic.'

All five beers sampled, as well as a large selection of national and international beers, are available from Inn At Home, 151 Bartholomew Street, Newbury. The shop plays host to regular tasting evenings, so be sure to call in or check www.innathome.co.uk for details.

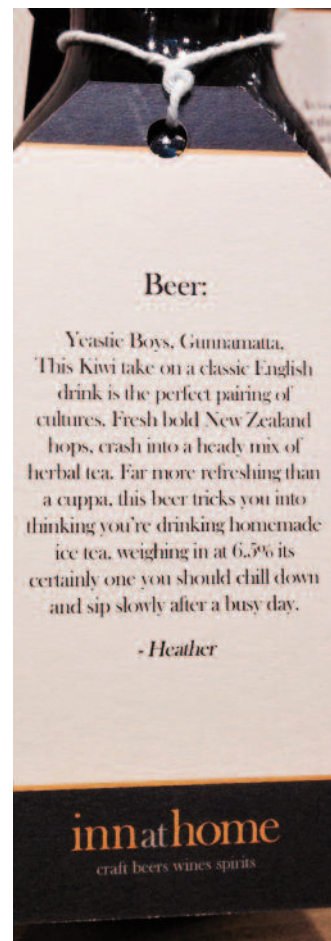
More beer writing by Sam Williams can be found on his blog: beer-branches.blogspot.co.uk



Stu McKinlay and Todd Nicolson


Headed up by Todd Nicolson and Stu McKinlay (one half of the Yeastie Boys) the NZBC aims to promote New Zealand breweries in the UK, as well as provide a central point for import, sales and distribution. Five breweries are represented: Renaissance, 8 Wired, Tuatara, Three Boys and Yeastie Boys.

On the night, Todd and Stu spoke a little about these breweries and provided samples from a range of bottles and cans. A number of styles were featured including




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Aphrodite's Rock Microbrewery - Cyprus

Beer drinkers may consider where good local beer is available when deciding where to take their holidays. Some Mediterranean islands cater for people who enjoy British beer styles.



Episkopi Bay - looking west from Ancient Kourion, about 25 miles from Paphos, Cyprus.

Photo: Andy Pinkard

Beers from the long established Simonds Farsons Cisk brewery in Malta include Hopleaf Pale Ale, Blue Label Ale and Lacto Milk Stout. From a Greek island, Special Red and Contessa IPA are amongst the ales brewed by Corfu Beer.

Cyprus is another island offering locally brewed ales since the establishment of Aphrodite's Rock Microbrewery as Andy Pinkard discovered on a recent trip to Cyprus.



Jules and Melanie

Paphos, situated on the south western coast of Cyprus, is on the UNESCO World Cultural Heritage List and has been selected as a European Capital of Culture for 2017. Aphrodite's Rock Microbrewery and Brewpub is situated in an old defunct winery in the hills, surrounded by olive groves and grape vine terraces. It is about 8 miles from Paphos and the bus journey takes about 25 minutes.

William (Bill) and Jean Ginn prepared a business plan for their new family business, with daughter Melanie as brewer, in 2010. It took nearly four years of struggles before a Permit to

Brew was finally granted. Bill said 'After all those years of Cyprus bureaucracy, I nearly called our Irish Red Ale 'Red Tape'!

Lian Shee was the name chosen for the 4.5% Irish Red Ale. Yorkshire Rose (3.8%) Best Bitter reflects the family's Yorkshire roots. Other 'Island beers' in the range are West Coast IPA (6%), ESB (5%), London Porter (4.5%) and Rock Premium (4.8%) a Bavarian lager.

Visitors to the microbrewery can enjoy meals, pizzas and beers at tables in the traditional stone courtyard shaded by walnut, hazelnut and mulberry trees. A complimentary brewery tour is given every Monday to Friday after lunch.

'When next in Cyprus, seek out this oasis of cask ale' says Andy Pinkard.

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South London Brewery Taps

When By The Horns brewery started brewing in 2011 there were only eight breweries in London. Beer Guide London www.beerguidelondon.com now lists 79 active breweries in the London area, comprising 57 breweries and 22 brewpubs.

By the Horns brewery and tap room in Summerstown is between Tooting Broadway and Earlsfield stations. The taproom is open from noon at weekends and during the evening from Tuesday to Sunday. A varying selection of beers on cask and keg is available from By The Horns with rotating guest taps. Flagship beers include Wolfie Smith (5.2% ABV) amber ale and The Mayor of Garratt (4.3% ABV) best bitter. You can play table football and watch films or sports on the HD projector big screen in the Beer Hall.



By The Horns brewery 30/11/2016

Paul Rayner posted, on his Fueled by Beer blog, a report on a visit made by Berkshire CAMRA branches to brewery taprooms on the **Bermondsey Beer Mile**, before The Kernel closed their taproom. The 24 August 2015 blog post includes a useful map plus links to the individual brewery websites including Fourpure Brewing, and Brew by Numbers.

There are plenty of other South London brewery taprooms and a group from West



CAMRA members at Brixton Brewery

Berkshire visited three on Saturday 16 January. **Bullfinch Brewery** relocated from a shared railway arch in Bermondsey to railway arches in Herne Hill in 2015. The tap room is open on Friday evenings and from 1pm on weekends. There are 12 taps featuring the core range of beers plus exclusive editions and guest beers from favourite local breweries. The core range includes Rascal (4.8% ABV) Session pale ale and Wolf (5.8% ABV) American pale ale.

Brixton Brewery is located under a railway arch in the vibrant market district. There is just enough space for a small bar and some tables and benches next to the brewing vessels and bottling equipment. It is usually open from noon to 5pm on Saturdays. Core beers include Effra Ale (4.5% ABV) amber ale and Electric IPA (6.5% ABV) American IPA.

Mondo Brewing Company in Battersea has an impressive Tap House with full height internal windows giving views of the shiny state-of-the-art brewery. The tap room is open from 2pm on Saturdays and on Wednesday to Saturday evenings. Behind the copper bar there are 15 taps for Mondo beers including exclusives and unique guest beers. Core beers include London Alt (4.8% ABV) a Dusseldorf style 'Old' ale and Rider Pale Ale (4.6% ABV).



See uk.pinterest.com/timofnewbury/south-london-brewery-taprooms and beereurope.blogspot.co.uk for posts by Tim Thomas about visits to these breweries with photos and links.



Mondo Brewing Co - Tap House window

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insidebeer

with Jeff Evans

West Berkshire CAMRA member Jeff Evans is the beer writer behind the Inside Beer website. Updated daily, www.insidebeer.com includes The Beer Buzz (news), Events & Festival listings and exclusive features. There are archives for Pub / Beer of the Month, including those below.

Dec: Citty of Yorke, London WC1
St Bernardus - Tripel

Jan: The Laurieston, Glasgow
Batmans - XXXB

Feb: The Old Green Tree, Bath
Butcombe - Bitter

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Liverpool CAMRA Members' Weekend & AGM

Historically, Britain's premier Maritime Mercantile City, Liverpool hosts the 2016 CAMRA Members' Weekend & AGM from Friday 1 to Sunday 3 April.

In the Spring issue of *Beer*, the quarterly magazine sent to CAMRA members, John Armstrong's travel feature starts 'Liverpool is a city of surprises. It is also a city on the edge... A city where life is lived to a different beat, socially, economically and politically to the rest of the UK.'

Visitors to the Members' Weekend, at the Liverpool Guild of Students, will have the opportunity to visit some of the outstanding pubs listed in CAMRA's National Inventory including the Philharmonic Dining Rooms on Hope Street, built in 1898-1900 for brewer Robert Cain. The 'Marvellous Merseyside' feature in *Beer* by Geoff Brandwood also mentions the Crown Hotel and Peter Kavanagh's with several photos.

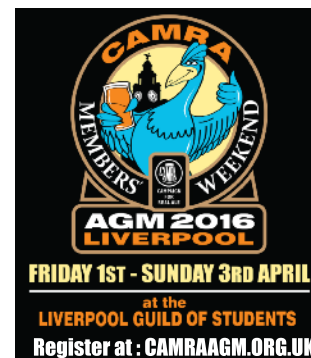
The February issue of *What's Brewing*, the monthly CAMRA newspaper,

gives tips for the Members' Weekend and mentions that this year's guest speaker will be JD Wetherspoon founder and chairman Tim Martin.

James Lynch, founding secretary of the original Newbury CAMRA branch, will attend. James is a member of CAMRA's recently formed Revitalisation Project Steering Group.

Nick Boley, who is moving to Suffolk and standing down as Central Southern Regional Director, is standing for election to the National Executive.

The Members' Weekend & AGM is free to attend and members can pre-register (before 11 March) at www.camraagm.org.uk/register



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Marlow to Windsor hike Alan Haselden

On November's last Saturday, Maidenhead's The Bear was the breakfast meeting point for four colleagues and me before starting a 15 mile hike from Marlow to Windsor.

Local breweries represented at The Bear were Bingham's, Loddon, Ascot and Vale and - watches indicating the passing of 9am - we opted for a pint each of Bingham's 'Old Ale', which is a 5% dark brown, malty ale and full of flavour. Along with the bargain Wetherspoon's full English, it was an energising boost as we anticipated our hike for the day.



Two Brewers, Marlow

Following a short train ride to Marlow, we called for a swift one at the town's Two Brewers and most of us ordered a pint of Rebellion 'Roasted Nuts' (4.2%); the others going for the 4.5% 'Mutiny' (4.5%). The pub has recently been refurbished, following fire damage and it feels fresh and smart inside whilst retaining a traditional feel by way of low ceilings and log fire. The ales served were in good condition.

Passing Marlow church, we crossed William Tierney Clark's bridge over the River Thames. The bridge is a scaled-down version of the more famous one, connecting the twin Hungarian cities of Buda and Pest, over the River Danube.



Once we were back into the Royal County of Berkshire, we ascended through Quarry Woods to Winter Hill, which offers impressive, sweeping views across Buckinghamshire and Berkshire, even in an overcast late November. The area is the inspiration for the wild wood made famous by Kenneth Grahame in his 'Wind in the Willows'.

Following the waymarked Thames Path, we soon reached Cookham's Bounty Inn, a quirky, humorous, dog-friendly pub with mock Tudor exterior. Its two main rooms are filled with various posters, national flags and shelves of books. We enjoyed a pint of Rebellion's seasonal ale 'Cross bones', an easy-going 4.2% bitter, in the rear half of the pub, amongst the hubbub of many customers outnumbered by their pet dogs.

Onward, along the Thames Path in a downstream direction, we passed the town of Maidenhead, Brunel's sounding arch (the red brick railway bridge), the village of Bray and the Eton Dorney rowing lake as the diffuse, late Autumn light faded sombrely. By 5pm, darkness



had certainly descended, but the magnificently illuminated Windsor castle served as a steadfast guide into town.

Our final pub stop of the day was Windsor's Carpenter's Arms, owned by the Nicholson's empire and tucked away, along a narrow side alley, near the castle. Descending the stairs, located to the bar's rear, is a gated dungeon, which customers can visit (or languish in for misbehaviour!) and it is believed there could be a secret entrance to the Castle that is accessible from the pub.

For dinner, some of us were easy and enjoyed classic fish and chips, or the home-made burger and chips; however three of us were more than delighted with the special venison and port pie served with mash, gravy and vegetables. A proper enclosed pie stacked with tender chunks of meat, with a lightly smoked flavour, it matched our pint of Loch Lomond's 5% 'Silkie Stout' - described as a chocolate, coffee and orange stout - perfectly. Castle Rock's 5.5% 'Midnight Owl' black IPA and well-known ales from Marston's, St. Austell, Sharp's and Adnams were also available at the Carpenter's. Staff were attentive and friendly and the many other customers looked content and affable. It is an essential visit, in my opinion, and it was a superb end to our day out. The wet, drizzly conditions we faced that evening on the scamper to the train station hardly seemed to matter!



Curmudgeon Close Your Eyes and Drink Up

One of the founding texts of CAMRA was Christopher Hutt's brilliant polemic *The Death of the English Pub*, first published in 1973. From the perspective of 2015, the English pub back then might have seemed in rude health, but in the preceding decade it had experienced a dramatic upheaval. He describes the tidal wave of brewery takeovers and closures, the loss of distinctive local beers, the spread of pressurised dispense, and the rationalisation policies that deprived many villages of their last pub.

He reserves some of his strongest vitriol for an attack on the brewers' large-scale wrecking of pubs - imposing ludicrous, contrived themes that rapidly dated, knocking lounge and public bars through into one, and removing small rooms and cosy snugs to produce an easily-supervised open-plan interior. In its early years, CAMRA very much took this on board, strongly criticising pub operators for insensitive refurbishments and creating the laudable National Inventory of Historic Pub Interiors.

However, as the focus has shifted from tradition to innovation, priorities have changed. The economic recovery has given brewers and pub owners more money to invest, and they have been up to their old tricks again. Sadly, though, much of this has been welcomed, with praise being lavished on 'light, airy, open-plan' interiors, modernity in its own right seen as a virtue, and one scheme even applauded for 'removing obstructive internal walls'. Yes, beforehand, these pubs were often a bit down-at-heel, and the changes have also generally included a wider and more enterprising beer range. And, given that, some have criticised anyone raising objections for being negative and churlish. 'Would you prefer it closed, then?'

But a pub isn't just another retail outlet, it's somewhere people actually visit to spend time socialising. It is passed down through the generations, so you will often hear older customers talking of things forty or fifty years ago. Of course pubs cannot set their face entirely against change, but destructive, gimmicky alterations will never stand the test of time. Is it time for CAMRA to return to standing up for pub interiors as well as beer?

The Curmudgeon column appears monthly in Opening Times, the CAMRA magazine published by Stockport & South Manchester branch. His other articles can be read at curmudgeoncolumns.blogspot.com



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Diary Dates 2016

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 8 March

Branch meeting
Gun, Wash Common

Thursday 24 March

Hungerford ale trail
Start at Hungerford Club
7.30pm

Wednesday 6 April

Social
King Charles Tavern
7.30pm

Tuesday 12 April

Branch meeting
Swan, Thatcham

Saturday 23 April

20 year anniversary event
Swan Inn, Inkpen
from 12 noon

Friday 29 April

Social
Reading Beer Festival
6pm & 7pm (see page 5)

Wednesday 4 May

INNformal Brewery /
Cider Social
Five Bells, Wickham 7.30pm

Tuesday 10 May

Branch meeting
Crown & Horns, East Ilsley

All meetings start at 8pm
unless otherwise stated.

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



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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.

24-27 March

23rd Egham Beer Festival

EUSC, 111 Spring Rise, Egham. TW20 9PE
www.eghambeerfestival.co.uk

15-16 April

Newbury Racecourse Beer Festival

newburyracecourse.co.uk
see advertisement on page 5

28 April - 1 May

22nd Reading Beer & Cider Festival

Christchurch Meadows, Caversham
www.readingbeerfestival.org.uk

29 May

Bracknell Ale & Wine Festival

Bracknell Rugby Club, Lily Hill Park. RG12 2UG
www.bracknellalefestival.co.uk

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