

# ale

Cambridge & District Branch Newsletter

Issue 362

Summer 2013



CAMPAIGN  
FOR  
REAL ALE

**Heart Of The  
Community: The  
Three Horseshoes,  
Stapleford**



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# Pub News

One day, I hope, I will be able to begin this magazine reporting nothing but good news – sorry I can't do it this time.

The dust hadn't yet settled on the demolished Rosemary Branch when we heard from John Nixon, landlord until October of



**The Man on the Moon**, Norfolk Street. Struggling pubco, Punch had, he reported, sold the pub to property developers, and it would soon be turned into student flats. A subsequent article in the Cambridge News reported the sale, but also reported that the property would be re-opening as a pub. It reported a spokesman from consultants Everard Cole as saying, "(The Pub) ... will reopen as a pub and will remain so in the long term". There appears to be some confusion over whether or not the Man on the Moon, which is at the centre of the local music scene, will continue to provide an outlet for local musical talent. We understand the current Premises License holder is a company



called Redberry Inns, which also owns **The Waterman**, Chesterton Road, but, so far, it is

keeping tight lipped about its intentions for the pub.



The future looks bleak for **The Zebra**, Maids Causeway. The bar has been stripped

## Branch Diary

Don't forget that all Branch members are very welcome to attend the monthly business meetings.

Those upcoming are (all 8pm)

Tue 13-Aug : 8:00, Open Branch Meeting, Three Blackbirds, Woodditton

Tue 10-Sep : 8:00, Open Branch Meeting, Three Horseshoes, Stapleford

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Edited by Will Smith, 32 Lovell Road, Cambridge, CB4 2QR.

email:

will.smith@cambridge-camra.org.uk

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# Pub News Continued...

out and signs show that it will re-open as a shop.



Better news though from **The Queen Edith**, Queen Edith's Way,

which will return after development as a community pub – albeit in a slightly smaller form than the original.



I haven't yet managed to visit all of the local pubs that have re-opened over the last few months. My apologies to **The Brunswick**, Newmarket

Road, and **The Carpenters Arms**, Victoria Road, I'll be there soon – but must say I've been impressed with



Milton Brewery's makeover of **The**



**Haymakers**, Chesterton High Street. 5 Milton beers and 3 guest beers are on offer along with 2 ciders. I tried the Flava Bona Pretiosin est Runinibus, which roughly translated means "Blonde

is better than rubies" (or so I was told). At 6.2% it was a little over my strength range, but I did enjoy the honey-bitter taste.

Another of our recently saved pubs, **The**



**Three Horseshoes**, Stapleford, has announced a regular Tuesday evening quiz night. Entry is

£1.00 per person, and includes free chips. Their efforts to attract custom certainly

shows imagination; they have recently advertised an "Asparagus Evening". Colleagues in Stapleford say that the Horseshoes is going from strength to strength, and has the makings of a fine community pub. There are concerns though about **The Tree**.

Also in Stapleford, **The Tree** is currently tenantless. Greene King has installed



temporary pub managers, but the feeling in the village is that the

pub may be allowed to run down. Perhaps another community buy-out opportunity? Watch this space.

Meanwhile, **The Cambridge Brew House**, King Street has introduced a new beer to its



range. Ivy League (4.9%) is an American Pale Ale. It delivers an early hoppy bitterness,

followed by a lingering mild hop aftertaste.



**Cambridge CAMRA Pub of the Year The Flying Pig**, Hills Road, has introduced a 6th hand pump due to an increased demand for real ale.

Sales of real ale in **The Earl of Beaconsfield**, Mill Road, continue to increase, whilst friends in West Wrattling have told me that they now have to choose carefully when they want to visit their village

pub, *Cambridge CAMRA*, most improved rural pub of the year, **The Chestnut Tree**, because sometimes it is difficult to get a seat.



**The St Radegund**, King Street, is planning to introduce fortnightly Tuesday music evenings featuring folk groups and jazz ensembles throughout the summer.



Congratulations to the **Portland Arms**, **The Waterman** and **The Old Spring** on the success of the Mitcham's Triangle Beer Festival held in June.



**The Mitre**, **The Baron of Beef** and **The Pickerel**, enjoyed the Bridge Street Festival, a week or so after.



Future beer festivals are being held by **The Green Man**, Grantchester



19th -21st July, **The Anchor**, North street Burwell, 19th-21st July, **The Bath House**, Ben'et Street, 25th -29th July.

**The White Swan**, Conington will be holding its first ever beer festival over the weekend beginning 2nd-August, Live music will



feature from 4pm on the Saturday 3rd August.



Jethro, of the **Cambridge Blue**, Gwydir Street tells me that they will be holding impromptu barbecue evenings throughout the summer, and Adam, in **The White Horse**, Milton asked that we mention the beer festival they will be holding in early

September.



Good Luck to Lawrence Dixon, who, not content to look after just the **Champion of the Thames**, King

Street, and **The Clarendon Arms**, Clarendon Street, has taken on **The Great Northern**, Station Road. We understand it is to be a food-orientated bar. Let's hope for some quality beer too!



# Not Just a Fair Weather Festival!

Cambridge CAMRA Summer Festival 20th  
– 25th May 3103



Despite the unseasonably cold and occasionally wet weather the 40th Cambridge Beer Festival was a success. Thirty five thousand people came through the doors over the week, and they managed to drink 75,000 pints of real ale, 12,000 pints of cider and around 10,000 pints of



foreign beer. As well as three quarters of a ton of cheese, the CAMRA

cheese counter provided 2,000 scotch eggs and pork pies and nearly a quarter of a ton of pork scratchings. The cider bar sold out a couple of hours early on the Saturday – even in the cold, cider is increasing in popularity year on year. The beer fared slightly better, with around 40 beers left at the end of the festival.

The visiting public had the opportunity to vote for their beer, cider and perry of the festival. The results were:

## Beer of the festival

Joint award:

Moor Brewery Old Freddy Walker Porter

(7.3% ABV)

Oakham Ales Dreamcatcher (6.3% ABV)

## Cider of the festival

Cromwell Oliver's Choice (7% ABV)

## Perry of the festival

Whin Hill Perry (6.2%)

As well as the public vote, a panel made up of CAMRA festival volunteers also chose their beer of the festival. This went to Moor Old Freddy Walker Porter – a particularly good showing for an excellent beer.

Nearly £7,000 was raised for this year's festival charity, Camtrust.

Finally, the festival wouldn't be possible without the efforts of all the volunteers. This year over 400 people gave up their time to help with the festival. We're always looking for more people – in particular, if you could help with the set up and take downs which occur during the week before and the week after the actual festival, that would be wonderful.



The next beer festival organised by the branch will be the 7th Cambridge

Octoberfest. As always, this will be at the University Social Club on Mill Lane on Friday the 18th and Saturday the 19th of October. The Winter Ale Festival will be there as well in January, and we'll be back on Jesus Green in May 2014.

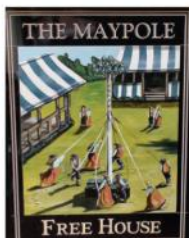
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*Festival Organiser*



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# Histon and Impington pubs

There are five pubs in Histon, all within a short walk of each other, and a route from the Guided Busway stop at Impington will also pass the Railway Vue. Histon and Impington are within easy reach of Cambridge, via the Citi 8 bus, the Guided Bus or the footpath and cycleway that runs alongside it. Leaving the busway, passing the Railway Vue, to which we return later, and heading north along Station Road, it's less than a mile to the Boot.

## Boot

Probably the oldest of the remaining pubs,



an inn since the 17th century, the Boot stands on the corner of Station Road and the High Street. Entering the oldest part of the building, a small front bar with a fireplace leads to a larger bar and extension. A welcoming place with several diners and drinkers, I had a refreshing Kite Bluestone bitter; the other guest beer was Theakston Lightfoot, with Sharp's Doom Bar and Woodfordes Wherry on permanently.

It's worth stepping outside to the beer garden to see the former 19th century brewhouse and a large stone by the fence. Legend has it the boulder was carried to the Boot from over 2/3 mile away by the 'Histon giant' Moses Carter, a feat of strength depicted on the village sign.

## Barley Mow

Next door to the Boot, just a stone's throw

for a giant, stands the Barley Mow, a large pub that's been here since at least the



1770s. It used to be the venue for the annual 'Horkey

Supper' celebrating the end of the harvest, and although refurbishments have removed a sense of its long history, it's a pleasant place with a beer garden at the back and outdoor seating at the front next to the new inn sign. A Greene King pub, the beers served at the long wooden bar were Abbott, IPA Gold and Milestone St George's Legend, of which I had a decent half. There was only one or two other customers, so it was nice for the barmaid to have engaged in conversation and I left determined to return soon to sample the Thai food menu.

## Red Lion

Just along the High Street stands the Red Lion, a pub that sprang up in the 1830s as a result of the 1830 Beer Act which made it much easier for people to brew and sell their own beer. It's an impressive building



with painted signs on the outside advertising Lacons Ales and 'well aired beds' dating back to its time as a Lacons owned pub. Inside, the ceiling is lined with pump clips and brewing memorabilia is dotted about everywhere. A former CAMRA Pub of the Year, ten years on the Red Lion continues to be a 'consistently-good Free House' and is reason enough to visit Histon.



There are generally seven real ales on – I had good drops of Whitstable Mild and Ramsbury Chalk Stream - along with a selection of Belgian bottled beers. Two beer festivals are held each year, the next taking place from 2nd – 8th September. The new extension to the dining area was days away from completion when visited, but looked to be in keeping with the rest of the pub and good to see a pub thriving.

## King William IV

A 17th century timber-framed cottage, the King Bill feels like an ancient pub, although it probably only became a pub in the 1830s (during the reign of King William IV). A cosy place with low-beamed ceilings, floors



at different levels, a roaring log fire in the winter, and a separate pool room leading to an outdoor patio. Fullers London

Pride and Greene King IPA are regularly on, Shepherd Neame Spitfire and St Austell Tribute were on guest.

Perhaps owing to its location just around the corner from the High Street, even though it's only a couple of minutes from the Red Lion, the King Bill has been amongst the quietest of the pubs on the past couple of occasions I've walked this Histon pub crawl.

## Rose and Crown

One of the oldest buildings in Histon, with part of it dating back to the 16th century, the Rose and Crown was originally a farmhouse that became an alehouse in the mid-19th century. Most of the pub is laid out for dining, which is a shame as I'd liked to have settled by the inglenook hearth and looked out across The Green, although

there are leather armchairs and some



lounge type seats around the smaller bar area. An Everards pub, Tiger Best and Original are always on but I opted for Flourish, a seasonal offering. Finding it not

to my tastes, and being the only person not dining, I decided to leave without finishing my beer, encouraged by the thought of one more for the road at the Railway Vue.

## Railway Vue

Probably the most recent of the six pubs, dating from the early 1850s, the Railway Vue was built overlooking the station shortly after the coming of the Great Eastern



Railway in 1847. Although the line was closed to passengers in

1970, the pub survived and now overlooks the Guided Busway. This is a two bar pub, with the addition of a conservatory that leads to the beer garden - a triangle of grass at the front, all that is left of Little Green where the Impington Feast used to be held. I had a decent St Austell Tribute – also on were Greene King IPA and the guest Tetley Gold - before making the short journey back to Cambridge.

Histon and Impington have had many other pubs – the former Green Hill became the Brook and is now the Phoenix restaurant, The Black Bull and the Chequers on Station Road are now private houses, several others have been demolished and replaced by houses. Still, it's remarkable to find six village pubs within a short walk of each other and easily reached from Cambridge so visit them while you still can.

# A tALE of two cities

Georgie Root, from Colchester Branch takes a brief tour o Cambridge Pubs, and Barney Dennison beams over to Colchester to make first contact.

## We Cam, we saw, we drank

Date- 24th November 2012.

Destination-Cambridge.

CAMRA members attending-Just the two of us.

Twas a dull and rainy day that we set out on our drinking adventure. The train was obviously late but the driver however was a cheerful chappy and wished us all 'tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy' on reaching Bury St Edmonds.

On arrival in Cambridge Mark wet himself with excitement at all the bikes. We then decided to light weight out and start off with a cup of tea. We found a wonderful café which claimed to be the oldest internet café in the UK (CB1) and was very quirky with a mixture of old TVs, Computers, Typewriters and books. The books ranged from 'Birthing from within' to 'the old man that sneezed' I enjoyed some organic bread with olive oil, salt and paprika, whilst Mark opted for Victoria sponge.

En-route to the first GBG listed pub we thought we would do a reccie of the Christ College which was serving 'Master Brew' but I wasn't allowed to stop and beer score it, apparently we had proper pubs to scratch. We planned to see if they had further hand pulls in St Johns College but you had to pay to look round that one.

**The Maypole** was our first pub. It won Locale pub of the year 2012 and had 2 bars and an upstairs. Mark sighed as the cricket promptly vanished from the screens and rugby appeared.

Fantastic beer range: 16 handpulls, Dutch, Belgian, Scottish and USA bottled beers as well as mulled cider! Mark had Dark Ash



(Grain Brewery 4.5%) and I opted for Elgoods North Brink Porter (5%), both lovely.

We ignored the 'eating is cheating' rule and ordered tasty meals from the Italian menu. As I read the copy of 'ale' Mark cruelly texted his mate Charlie who was on his way to Milton Keynes saying that the MK v Colchester United game had been called off because of a 'water logged pitch' (how rude and completely untrue).

We set off to find our second pub. Mark described the journey as 'going from tranquillity to carnage!', as we meandered between grassy areas and bridges over the river Cam, looking down on people with brollies punting down the river into the hustle and bustle of the main drag and chain store city. Due to time restrictions we went past the Greene King Champion of the Thames and gave the King Street Run a miss.

A few yards down the road we reached the **St Radegund**. A wonderful small 'basic



boozer' with a graffiti ceiling and 7 hand pulls and 1 Cider. Mark had Pepys Ink (4.5%) by Fellows

Brewery a lovely stout and I opted for Milton Tiki(3.8%) a very pale and mega hoppy beer. We were a bit confused as the GBG

claimed there were pictures of steam trains but we could spot none, instead we were entertained by a conversation about chest wigs! I read an interesting article on the wall describing how some medical students and St Johns College students had a dispute about how much the bladder could hold.

It was proposed that it could hold only 8 pints. After testing this theory on a pub crawl it was proven however that it could in fact hold 12.5 pints!!!!

We left to seek out the **Elm Tree**. After



marvelling at the magical tube that came out the ground to stop cars driving

down the bus lane we reached our destination. Yet another fantastic pub with 10 pumps and copious Belgium beers. Some cost up to £15 each as they were sold in champagne bottles. There was also (in my opinion) the dreaded geuze and lambic beers available. The décor reminded me very much of a 'brown café' Mark seemed more excited however that the barman was wearing a Megadeth t-shirt and playing some vintage Queensryche. Black Dragon Mild (4.3%) from B & T was my selection and Mark opted for Umbel Magna (5%) (Nethergate/Growler brewery).

With time pressing on us we had to make like the government implementing some devastating cuts.

Reluctantly we wiped the Kingston, Geldart and Live and Let Live off our list. As we made our way to **Cambridge Blue** I was dragged past the Free Press and I dragged Mark past the Norfolk St Deli. I really liked Cambridge Blue however Mark felt it has lost a bit of character since they had built an



extension. The beer range was immense with 9 hand pulls and huge fridges with Belgium bottled beer, 4 real ciders and a perry. Mark opted for a Stamps brewery beer called Russian( 4.2%). It was recommended that I try Trappe Quadrupel (10%)

which was stunning.

Last pub was the **Devonshire Arms**, yet another wonderful find although I wasn't too sure about the posters advertising bands



such as 'casual nausea' and 'war on terror' board games. The building had a decorative ceiling and wood burner out back, and most importantly the beer range

lived up to the standards that we had grown used to. I had Milton Nero (5%) a more-ish dark beer with vanilla tones and Mark went for the 7.5% Marcus Aurelius, which was also dark. Some guys we recognised from the previous pub described this as a wonderful short session beer! Here we received several texts each letting us know the U's had conceded more goals.

Homeward bound the train was rammed but we sat in our posh 1st class carriage that we shared with a stray 4ft cuddly toy dog and had a well earned kip. Fantastic day out, we plan to return to scratch the untried pubs ASAP.

**Georgie**



# A tALE of two cities ... continued

## Colchester Landing

Train for Hogwarts? No, in fact, it was the platform for Colchester Town, off down a spur from the mainline station. At the other end the crew arrived at a disappointingly down to earth, wet, cold Colchester. With the Barship still short of a helmsman the crew had taken advantage of Greater Anglia's '4 travel for 2' deal; now read on.

First stop was **The New Tavern**. The



Adnams Southwold Bitter and Broadside went down well but the star was Bishops Nick's

Ridley's Rite (3.6%): Essex, your brewers are indeed back. What with this and the success of the Little Green Compasses public house the Ridley family are resurgent. As regards the Tavern, it shows a good use of space including a nice long bar providing plenty of leaning room where a drinker can drop anchor without interference from large groups of visitors or the pool players. For the purist there are simply too many TVs but this is a nice pub and well worth a visit.

On to **The British Grenadier** where the welcome was warm and fulsome: within a couple of minutes of our walking in, all the



locals were engaged in conversation with their visitors – rather different from the

"We're being invaded" which greeted us at The Tavern. Beers were from Adnams with Grain Oak a guest; the crew's favourite and possible Beer of The Day was Adnams Shingle Shells (3.9% – I'd have believed a tad higher), a lovely ruby coloured beer. Landlady Linda told us that she often has a cider on but we'd arrived on an apple-free day.

The Grenadier is a gem – don't miss the back bar and the hand bell - but is sadly in need of maintenance, some of it quite basic. From a Bury perspective it's interesting to see the way Adnams are letting it slide into the road. Some of us at this end of the county have, perhaps, a rather starry-eyed view of the company. It may be due to memories of a time when something other than a Greene King beer was a rare treat, a thing to be sought out even if it wasn't always worth finding. Far to the East, legend had it, was a place with a different brewery where beer was free and the owners, landlords and their fair-haired children danced together on the village green. Ah well. Of course, the major redevelopment occurring next door can have had no influence on events whatsoever.

If you are in Colchester **GO TO THIS PUB** and show your support. Hope that's clear.



Down the road at **The Odd One Out** we found a pub happy to live up to its name - in the

niciest possible way. In the words of one gentleman at the bar "A great pub, look at

the ceiling – years of nicotine. I've never seen it that thick and it would be a shame to remove it". Anyone wondering why The O3 doesn't give samples should take a look at the cider prices: in a world being introduced to the concept of £4 a pint, to see three out of the four (yes, four - despite there being "no demand for it") at less than £3 is, well,

refreshing. Crones Rum Cask (7.4%) and User Friendly (6.2%), Wilkins Zomerzet Zider (6.0%) and Thatcher's Farmhouse (6.0%) provided a veritable orchard of choice. On the beer front there was a good range, but special mention must be made of the excellent Bridestone's Dark Mild (4.5%)



and Mauldon's Black Adder (5.3%).

It was a rather hungry crew that arrived at **The Fat Cat** to be told "I wouldn't eat here today if I were you". Some perspective is called for. All the pies had gone and supplies were generally low, but the resulting run on the very reasonably priced Ham, Egg and Chips would have driven up the FTSE on a trading day. There was universal approval for the catering, rave reviews for the Mocha Moggie (4.6%) and some sublime Fat Cat Honey Cat (4.3%). There were also two ciders, Strawberry Cider (origin unrecorded) and Gwynt y Ddraig (4.5%).

This is an interesting place although anyone looking for FC Norwich or Ipswich might be disappointed. The elbows-down-drinking-

den style has been eschewed, in favour of something a little more upmarket, quite a brave decision when one considers the success of the standard model. Take a look.



From the Fat Cat it's a shortish stagger to **The Hospital Arms**. The crew liked the atmosphere

here but were short on time to savour it properly. It's a very relaxing place (by this time the author was thoroughly relaxed) with a good range of Adnams; the Ghost Ship(4.5%) was a particular hit.

On to our final port of call, **The Bricklayer's Arms**, a route march away by the mainline station. Again, there was a good range of



Adnams and it was particularly nice to see their Old (4.1%) on the bar. Crone's User Friendly (6.2%) cider

was also available.

Suddenly, making the connection at Ipswich no longer seemed so important (just as well, as it turned out); however, the decision to play darts at this stage was unwise but I think we got away with it.....

We just scratched the surface of the Colchester Pub Scene but we'll be back. It would be nice if someone from the area willing to show us around the less obvious watering holes (are you reading this, Ginge?) got in touch.

**Ed Uhura**

# An A10 Beer Pilgrimage:

It seemed quite a good idea at the start. My son-in-law, or rather his wife, had just produced his second son, very close to his own birthday, and he broached with me the idea of an extended pub crawl. He lives in Dalston, North London, but most of his friends are still in Cambridge, so the idea of an extended pub-crawl raised logistical problems of getting the crawlers to either Cambridge or Dalston.

It was then that we jointly evolved the idea of a beer pilgrimage rather than a pub crawl. We would hire a minibus and driver, ship most of the drinkers from Cambridge down to North London, then start making our way back, roughly along the A10, via pubs in The CAMRA Good Beer Guide. Our joint enthusiasm overcame any organisational doubts, and my son-in-law went ahead and organised the minibus.

So, on Saturday, May 18th, at 9.45 a.m., twelve drinkers congregated at the entrance to Shire Hall, Cambridge to meet the bus. It was late, as were a number of the pilgrims. The driver arrived, in urgent need of a comfort break, at a locked Shire Hall.

We left Cambridge alarmingly late, stopping at the local Park and Ride for the driver to become more comfortable. The journey was without event, apart from an on-going dialogue between the driver, his boss, my son-in-law, who was waiting in London, and me. Ensuring that things were not going smoothly at his end, his wife (recently, remember, having given birth) had broken her little toe on their staircase, requiring a visit to the local A&E.

We arrived in Dalston round about the time we were due to leave for the next stop. So our stop in the Railway Tavern was brief, almost a gulping stop. I had taken on the role of kitty master, which also carried the

responsibility of ordering fourteen pints of the same beer. One of the pilgrimage rules was that no lager could be consumed, upsetting at least two of the pilgrims. I had also taken the precaution of warning the landlords/ladies of the eight pubs at least a week in advance that fourteen moral and upright (I used some poetic licence) males would be invading their pub. This was not a problem at the Railway Tavern, which had just opened and was empty.

We drank our pints of Clark's Traditional Bitter, brown and hoppy and 3.8% (being the oldest member of the group by some 25 years, I was also trusted to ease the pilgrims' palates gently through the day). All set to go, we learned that the last member of the group was still in a taxi near Primrose Hill. We had now reached the time we should have been arriving at the second pub.

The Crooked Billet was only 20 miles away in Ware, but we hadn't allowed for north London lunchtime traffic, and we arrived there at about 1 p.m. It was a very nice two-room local at the top of a steep hill and, surprise, they had another Clark's beer on. I ordered the Classic Blonde, straw-coloured and fruity, and a respectable 3.9%. This enabled most of the party to play a reasonable game of pool while we were there.

The unseemly rush between pubs had been occasioned by the Prince of Wales at Green Tye, our fourth call, closing at 3, but a phone call confirmed that they were open all day. The pilgrims were, however, getting hungry. I had downloaded the menu of our next pub, The Gate at Sawbridgeworth, the previous evening, and thought they had left their 1970s menu on-line. The most expensive item on the list was £6.75, and



# The Fathers Tale

that was sirloin steak and chips. Assuming the menu was bona fide, the cost of the journey for each pilgrim had been cut by £10. I rang through the group's orders, and we set out on the eleven-mile trip to lunch.

The Gate is a wonderful barn of a pub, with lots of interesting niches and corners. The landlady had kindly laid out a corner for the party, and supping pints of Sawbridgeworth Gold (4%), brewed on the premises, we waited in anticipation for our unbelievably good-value lunches. We were not disappointed. The portions were ample, and the glutton, sorry, party member, who had ordered the sirloin said it was very good. The only mishap during the stay was a personal tragedy, when I managed to explode a brown sauce container over my trousers, coat, and scampi and chips (which still tasted very good).

The cost of our stay, bearing in mind that we bought 14 pints and 14 main courses, was £113. When I asked in disbelief how the pub managed to do it at that price, I was shouted down by the locals, who pointed out that the landlady had recently put up the prices! After a quick brewery trip from the kindly landlord, we set out for the Prince of Wales, four miles away.

The pub is a wonderful local, and had some wonderful locals drinking there. They were very interested in our trip, and asked my son-in-law, as the main celebrant, what music he would like on the juke-box. I was disappointed that the pub didn't currently have any of its own local brew, but we all supped a very pleasant pint of Portobello Very Pale Ale, citrus and hoppy at 4.0% (and brewed, ironically, reasonably close to our starting point) to the sound of Jimi Hendrix.

We were now reasonably relaxed about

time, and turned up at the Bricklayers' Arms, twelve miles away in Bishop's Stortford, about an hour later than planned, but found time for a slightly less controlled game of pool while drinking Colchester Braggot, honey tasting and 4.0%. The pub was spacious, with two large rooms and a beautifully laid out patio. Our driver disconcertingly disappeared, but only for cigarettes.

We had a breather while we travelled the 12 miles to our next stop. One or two of the travellers had opted for half-pints at the last pub, so perhaps were feeling the strain (another of the pilgrimage rules was that no-one was to be ribbed/rinsed for drinking halves). The bus drove along Buntingford's lovely High Street, and dropped us off at the Brambles. The welcome here was phenomenal. The landlady brought out plates of quiche, sausage rolls, a substantial cheeseboard and bowls of nuts and crisps. We estimated the cost of this fare was as much as the round of beer we bought, this time the local Buntingford Britannia, brown, spicy and malty at 4.4% (notice how I was gently upping the ante). The landlady said she understood we had been drinking most of the afternoon, and thought we would need something to soak up the beer. It was the kind of thing our Mums would have done – we were overwhelmed.

Full of food as well as drink, we travelled the 17 miles to one of the great pubs of the world, the Queen's Head at Newton. We were even graced by being served by the legendary David Short, who was on relief duty for his son, who had also recently helped bring a child into the world. We had the run of the public bar, and wallowed in its unique atmosphere while drinking Adnam's Broadside, which needs no description to

# A10 Beer Pilgrimage continued ...

seasoned drinkers, at 4.7%. Those readers who do not know this pub are missing a trip back to a golden age of drinking, plastered walls and huge fireplaces. There is a stuffed goose which, when alive, attacked my mother in the car park.

Nearly home now, and a short trip of seven miles took the group to our equivalent of Canterbury Cathedral, the Cambridge Blue. The fourteen of us quietly blended into the crowd that was already there. At this point the two lager-drinkers made a special plea to break a pilgrimage rule. "We don't mind drinking continental lager". I consulted with my son-in-law, who grudgingly gave way.

Ordering fourteen pints was problematical. I had planned to order something 'pokey', in the region of 6%, but there was only one pint left of such an ale, which we gave to the celebrant father. The two lager drinkers

slunk off to a shady corner, and the rest of us enjoyed pints of Church End Hathor Ale, brewed in Nuneaton, at 4.0%.

And that was the end of the day. Was it worth it? Well, if you enjoy herding cats it was. I can't help thinking it might have been more relaxing to walk around the pubs of either Dalston or Cambridge without having to worry about opening times, lunches at specific places and worrying and worried drivers. But we would not have experienced the special welcome that pilgrims receive, and ours in particular at the Gate and the Brambles. Thank you to all the landlords and landladies who took us in and made us welcome. Like the Friar in the original Canterbury Tales, we can now say that we "know the taverns well in many towns".

**John Beresford**



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# Tucking Inn

## Pickled Pig Pulled Pork with Coleslaw and Amazing Crackling

Since being taken over by the City Pub



Company in 2011 **The Mill**, Mill Lane, Cambridge has become well known for the quality and the variety of locally brewed real ales and ciders it has to offer. The quality of the food is pretty good too. Chef Paul Patching likes to use local ingredients and has introduced naturally produced cider from Pickled Pig Cider of Stretham to this traditional pork recipe.



Pickled Pig is regularly available in a number of local pubs including The Kingston Arms, Kingston Street, and The Maypole, Portugal Place. It is

available in 2.5 litre flagons from Stretham Stores, High Street, Stretham.

### For the Pork

- 1kg pork shoulder
- 1 stick celery, sliced
- 2 large carrots sliced
- 1 small onion sliced into three
- 4 sprigs thyme
- 3 sprigs parsley
- 1 star anise
- 2 bay leaves
- 1/4 spoon of coriander seeds

- 1 teaspoon mixed spice
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1/4-cup cider vinegar
- 1 -2 Pickled Pig Cider

### For the Coleslaw

- 1 braeburn apple
- 2 sticks celery
- 1 pot of good quality ready-made coleslaw

Grate the apple and celery into the coleslaw. Place in a bowl, cover and chill in a fridge for at least 30 minutes.

Remove the fat and skin from the pork. Rub salt into the skin; place it on a tray and roast at 200 degrees until it is crispy (about 20 minutes)

Break up with a knife and fork and wrap in foil to keep warm.

Cut the pork into 4 even pieces.

Place carrots onions and celery in the bottom of a metal casserole and sit the pork pieces on top

Add the cider, vinegar and water and all of the spices and herbs

Cover with a tight fitting lid and cook at 160 degrees for 3-4 hours, or until the pork is tender enough it can be pulled apart with two forks.

Remove the pork from the tin and cover in foil to keep warm. Sieve the remaining liquid into a pan and reduce liquid over a low heat by half.

Shred the pork using two forks and place in a serving dish. Pour a generous amount of the reduced liquid over the meat.

Serve with floury bread baps a spoonful of coleslaw and a large helping of crackling - oh - and a glass of Pickled Pig Cider.





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# Heart Of The Community:

The Three Horseshoes in Stapleford has been reincarnated recently and, as Fred Laband discovers, heralds a much needed boost to the real ale fraternity in this area just south of Cambridge...

This pub (not unlike many others) has had a



troubled recent history, indeed to my knowledge it has closed at

least twice within the last 10 years. Most will remember this pub as The Longbow.

Always a real ale pub, at one time the Longbow survived serving quality Thai food. However, this was short-lived; the pub continued for a while without food but eventually succumbed due to financial pressures in late 2010. It subsequently re-opened but was then suddenly closed again in May 2012.

We skip forward to February 2013; the floors are re-decked, the serving bar is enlarged (impressively so!), there is a brand new beer garden and several other changes have been made. It is now owned by Terri and Jethro of The Cambridge Blue. When I initially heard of this, I expected the pub to be named The Stapleford Blue, but it was always their intention to return the pub to its former pre 1976 name. The pub now has 8 hand pumps, and always has a real cider too. It tends to stock an Adnams beer in some form (currently Fat Sprat at 3.8%), and an Oakhams ale, usually Inferno (4.0%). On my 3 or 4 visits so far, Growler Brewery (nee Nethergates) offerings have also been ever present. I am very pleased that the Three Horseshoes also stocks the wonderful Corkers crisps range, which comes from near Ely.

Apart from the real ale selection, another similarity with The Cambridge Blue is the imposing refrigerator in the centre of the pub, which contains an excellent selection of imported foreign beers.

The pub has also celebrated its arrival on the scene by holding its first Summer Beer Festival at the end of June. We attend on the Saturday afternoon and bar manager Chris pours my Green Jack Orange Wheat (4.2%) straight out of the barrel with a tremendous arc resulting in a beautiful frothy beer – the spectacle is worth the entrance money alone, (albeit the festival is free!) This beer is more lemon than orange in my opinion, but it hits the spot. My friend Simon opts for an intensely bitter Oakham's Tranquility IPA (6.5%). It helps to wash down his burger brilliantly. Nicola, being a Dorset girl, goes for half of Studland Bay Wrecked (4.5%) from the Isle of Purbeck brewery. This is not her normal choice, as she prefers darker beers. Chris tells us that the Three Horseshoes always tries to stock at least one mild/porter to compliment the range on offer.

The pub is busy in all 3 main areas. The



smallest room on the left hand houses most of the beer today.

We note

that the newly decorated mocha walls are already well chipped above double top on the darts board, so we are pleased to see that it gets plenty of use even if the customers' aim in this pub is not so good! The main lounge area, a pecan toffee colour, still has a longbow above the entrance, which, I think, is a nice touch. The pistachio hued "garden room" is very lively

# The Three Horseshoes, Stapleford

and every other Tuesday we are told that it is full of regulars for the "Big Pub Quiz."

We decide to return to this self-styled "real ale paradise" on the Monday evening to have a better opportunity to chat with Terri. However, it is busy again... the Morris Men are here tonight. Caroline goes for an unappealingly named "Streaky" (3.6%) from the Potbelly Brewery. This golden ale nevertheless has a depth of flavour that belies its alcoholic strength. I try Colchester's "Romans Go Home" (4.3%) followed by a powerful pint of Hoggley's IPA (5%). Duncan declares his love for Batemans Yella Belly Gold (3.9%), which is as hoppy as he was expecting!

Terri has time for a quick interview... Terri tells us that apart from the cosmetic changes, which had had to be made to the pub, perhaps the most stressful was the

entire rewiring of the electrical system. The cellar also has had a major refit, with much help from Adnams. They already have plans for a winter festival and are looking to invest in a bar billiards table. Food is already well liked by locals. (The fish finger sandwiches are superb) and many of the ingredients are sourced locally; for example, Terri wisely uses sausages from Barkers of Great Shelford.

We are impressed that a newly owned pub can host its debut beer festival featuring as many as 26 real ales and 4 ciders. The pub also is making great strides in the local community - the tombola during the festival raised a remarkable £560 for Marie Curie Cancer Care!

The Three Horseshoes really is becoming a real ale paradise, and a real community pub.

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