

ale

Cambridge & District Branch Newsletter

Issue 372 April 2015



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in the CAMRA Ale Trail.



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Pub News

A recent round of refurbishments has seen several changes in both décor and direction for a number of Cambridge pubs.



The Avery, Regent Terrace, recently given a “six figure” makeover by Greene King, has

emerged as The Grain Store. I haven’t managed to get there yet but fellow CAMRA stalwarts inform me that apart from the installation of 4 beer tanks, each brimming with unpasteurised Pilsner Urquell brought “straight from Plzen in the Czech republic”, there is little change from the original pub’s Greene King beer list. It is early days yet, and there is always the hope that, like Everards, owners of The Architect, Castle Hill which is a permanent outlet for Locale beers, Greene King will wake up to the idea that many local people enjoy tasting a variety of small brewery local beers. I found the Grain Store’s fashionable web site a little confusing: stating that it is “tired of pubs feeling like boys’ clubs”, it goes on to advertise “a great evening of burgers and beers” with The Brew Dog Craft Beer Company. Definitely not one to take the kids to!



Marginally more successful, but equally disappointing to me, was the re-opening, after undergoing a “complete

transformation,” of The Salisbury Arms, Tenison Road. Whilst the new layout may be “bright and airy”, and the inclusion of a working pizza oven in the centre of the pub might be considered an attraction (as well as an obstacle for drinkers attempting to get to seats in the rear room, as they have to dodge around staff waiting to collect and deliver pizza), the pub, which appears to have been outfitted with broken up wooden crates, has for me lost a great deal of its original character. This may return as the décor

Branch Diary

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

Tue 14-Apr : 8:00, Open Branch Meeting, Plough, Great Shelford

Tue 12-May : 8:00, Open Branch Meeting, Portland Arms, Mitcham’s Corner

Mon 18-May - Sat 23-May : 42nd Cambridge Beer Festival, Jesus Green

Tue 9-Jun : 8:00, Open Branch Meeting, Plough, Duxford

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Pub News continued

mellows with age. On my visit the beer range was disappointingly limited to Charles Wells and Young's. I'm afraid I didn't stay too long, opting instead to try the excellent selection of beers in the nearby Devonshire Arms, Devonshire Road.



There has been a lot of speculation and concern in CAMRA circles about the month long refurbishment of The St Radegund, King

Street. Would leaseholder and Saffron Brewery owner James Hoskins treat this iconic local with the reverence it deserves? Well, we needn't have worried. Whilst the raised ceiling does offer more light, and the re-positioning of the bar has given a larger seating area, the pub maintains the intimacy that is unique to the smallest pub in Cambridge. Six beers are on offer, four from the Saffron Brewery stable and two guests.



I'm afraid I couldn't bring myself to go into The Castle Bar, Regent Street.

Perhaps I should have as it is getting some very good Facebook reviews, but it made me feel old just looking in the window of this "contemporary music led bar with restaurant".



The Fountain, Regent Street, closed for refurbishment on March the 8th. Branch Pubs officer Ali Cook has maintained an e-mail conversation with the owners, and has been assured that the pub will open late in May and will remain an outlet for "premium craft ales".



Rumour has it that the newly built pub could be open for business by the end of April.



Congratulations to The City Pub company, lessee of The Mill, Mill Lane, which has just been voted as The Cambridge CAMRA Pub of The Year 2015.

The pub is celebrating with a week of events. Running from 20th to 26th April, activities will include a guided beer tasting; a return of the "Battle of the Brewers" competition, and a chance to "Meet the Brewer", hosted by Mark Burton, head brewer of The Cambridge Brew House. The company, which also runs The Cambridge Brew House, King Street has asked us to announce that they have reduced the price of local beers by 5p.



Congratulations too, to the Live and Let Live, Mawson Road, which is The Cambridge CAMRA Cider/Perry Pub of the Year 2015. A pub that has long

had a reputation for the quality and range of its ales especially its dark ales, it is now earning a reputation for the quality of its real ciders. The Live is no stranger to awards, having been included in every Good Beer Guide since 2001, it won the Pub of the Year title in 1999 and 2006.

Vincent Castiglione, of The Maypole, called to thank me for including his pub in the first Cambridge Pub Tour walking guide, but noted that we had made a couple of mistakes. His father, Mario, became tenant, not as we had written, owner, of the pub in the early 1980s,



whilst Vincent actually joined the business in 1988, not 2010 as reported. My apologies for any embarrassment caused.

Further afield, planning permission has been given for The Railway Tavern, Great Shelford to be turned into a residential development. Also in



Great Shelford, The Plough has been given permission by owners, Hawthorn Leisure, to source ales from the SIBA beer list.



Maybe it is just my cynical mind, but I do wonder whether or not local MP Sir Jim Paice would have been so keen to throw, last minute, his weight behind the long-standing campaign to

save The Pear Tree, Hildersham, if we weren't so close to a general election. I'm less cynical about the South Cambridge District Council decision to apply Article 4 protection to any pub registered as an Asset of Community Value. Councillor Nick Wright, who is often quoted in local newspapers, and who has consulted with Cambridge CAMRA, has been working towards this goal for some time.

There has been flurry of management changes over the last couple of months.

Neil and Caroline Humphreys, formerly of The Poacher, Elsworth, are now in charge of the community run White Swan, Conington. Their aim is to introduce a wider range of local beers, to increase food sales, and to increase opening hours.



There are new managers, too, in The White Horse, Swavesey, and The Three Tuns, Fen Drayton.

And finally, it would be wrong not to mention the



devastating fire which "gutted" the top floor of Wetherspoon's pub, The Tivoli, Chesterton Road, earlier in March. Some

people love Wetherspoons, others don't like them at all, but I think it is true to say that, wherever it is, a Wetherspoon pub will attract large numbers of customers, many of whom will take advantage of other businesses in the area. The Tivoli has played a large part in the ongoing rejuvenation of the Mitcham's Corner district. We understand that the company is prepared to rebuild the pub. For some the sooner this happens, the happier they will be.

Great Community Pubs

the perfect blend for everyone



A great community pub is adaptable to the needs of its locals offering the perfect social environment for all to enjoy.

Please support your local in Community Pubs Month, April 2015.

www.communitypubsmonth.org.uk





The Crown Inn

Sarah and Larry welcome you to the Crown Inn. We have been in the pub just over a year and it has undergone a major refurbishment with more improvements planned.

Food

Bar snacks are available all the time – pork pies, pasties, chips, sandwiches. At weekends a bar meal menu is offered e.g burger and chips, pie and mash, fish and chips all sourced locally and freshly prepared.

Able to cater and open for large groups (booked in advance) or events including meetings.

Facilities

Large enclosed garden with pétanque terrains
Big Screen • BT Sports • Pool and Darts
Free wifi • Dog friendly and Children friendly
Cask ales with regularly changing guest ales
Able to accommodate and welcome coaches

Upcoming events

Live music every month
Easter Monday 6th April Charity Quiz Night
Sat 19th April – True Pacific
Sat 16th May – Jump The Gun

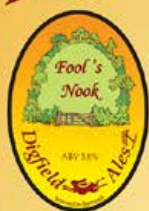
Beer and Cider Festival

Friday 19th June live music in the evening with The Bounty Hounds, Saturday 20th June live music in the evening with Akimbo, finishing Sunday 21st with Karaoke. Barbeque all week end.

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& Freinds

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Lost pubs of Cambridge(shire)

Something a little easier and within more people's memory this issue



Where is/was it? What was it called? Do you remember it when it was a pub? We'd like to find out more about all our lost pubs, so if you have any memories of it -- and even better, photos of when it was still open -- please get in touch with pub-history@cambridge-camra.org.uk

Answer, hopefully some stories about it, and another teaser, next issue.

Last time

Congratulations to David Elborn, who correctly identified the Duke of Cambridge in Short



Street, Cambridge, a Lacon's pub which closed in around 1969/1970. It dates back to at least 1830, when it was known as the Green Lion. Then some time in the early

1870s it was renamed in honour of the then Duke of Cambridge, Prince George, a grandson of George III, for reasons as yet unknown. Perhaps the licensee at the time, one Thomas Matthews Charles, was an ex-soldier who had served under him. If anyone knows, do drop us a line.



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At Your Place

A pub that is going from strength to strength at the moment is The White Horse Inn in Swavesey. Back in issue 364 of ALE, we saw that this pub was in real danger of closure, being the “Last Pub Standing” in a village that once boasted up to 13 pubs

Since 2001, The White Horse had been in the hands of pubco Enterprise Inns but with soaring rents and ever more expensive beer something had to change. The village via its parish council took swift action to successfully register the pub as an Asset of Community Value (ACV). The pub has since had a rapid new lease of life. Locals are happy, the beer is good. With new landlord Baz offering ever changing weekly bargains, such as 2 pints of Wherry for a fiver and OAP lunches, the future is looking rosier... Even more so perhaps with the new planned beer garden?



On my visit there were 3 beers on offer. I went for a pint of

Woodforde's Wherry (3.8%) which perhaps is not the great beer it used to be but in The White Swan was as

good as any I have had in recent years.



My real reason for visiting was to attend a rather unique event. Watford FC occasionally organise an informal Q&A event known as “At Your Place.” This particular evening was organized by local Jerry Ladell on behalf of the East Anglia

Hornets.

I was initially disappointed to hear that Watford's current team manager and ex-Chelsea midfielder, Slavisa Jokanovic, would not be joining us. However, the club had sent out another big gun: club captain and goal machine



Troy Deeney. My brother Lance and I (part of the 50 or so fans gathered) were impressed with the way that Troy and the other club staff talked so

openly and humourously about their inside take on what happens at a professional football club. (Troy's pre-match tactic of giving the referee wine gums is usually effective, but the official was clearly not on Watford's side at the next home game where he made a succession of decisions in favour of Norwich City in a bewildering 0-3 reverse!)

In addition to the well kept beer, the pub provided a toothsome half time buffet – the sandwiches being made with particularly soft bread. For the second half I went for the Thwaite's Wainwright (4.1%) which was both fruity and chalky and very moreish, and a second soon followed.

The pub has a warm feel, a pool table and bar billiards. Its bookshelf also contains some super sports reading including biographies of Formula 1's Damon Hill and footballer Cyrille Regis. By the end of the evening, Nicola, this evening's driver and photographer (not a Watford fan) managed to read the first 92 pages of motorcycling legend Valentino Rossi's “*What If I Had Never Tried It?*”

All round it was a great night – well done to Jerry, all the staff at The White Swan Inn and of course to Watford Football Club.

Fred Laband

Red Cow for the chop?



Although never likely to find its way into the Good Beer Guide or win any CAMRA awards, I've always had a bit of a soft spot

for the (Red) Cow in Guildhall Street, because it was the first pub in Cambridge I ever went to. (It was on a school trip to see the Cambridge Greek Play at the Arts Theatre – it was that sort of school – and yes, I was 18 at the time.) I can't say I've been in even half a dozen times in the subsequent three decades, but it was always reassuring to know it was still there – and who knows, maybe it would improve one day.

When it closed suddenly back in November last year, many feared that it would be converted to shops and flats, but the new owners, Grand Arcade Partnership, gave some reassurance, declaring that they were “not seeking a change of use for the unit – and we will now be looking at re-letting options for the existing premises” (*Cambridge News*, 20 November 2014). A glimmer of hope, then, that a future business would follow the lead of, for example, the Cambridge Brew House or the Pint Shop, and tap into the growing market for cask ale and ‘hipster’ beers.

But now, contrary to the claims made a few months ago, an application has been put in to change use from A4 (public house) to A3 (restaurant). If this goes through, then it would mean that Cambridge loses not only another pub, but also a last link with a piece of ‘town’ history going back to the middle ages.

The Red Cow, you see, is the last survivor of around a dozen pubs in that small area around Butcher Row (now Guildhall Street) and Slaughterhouse Lane (now Corn Exchange Street). Like the street names, the names of some of the pubs also bore witness to the trade that was plied in this area: as well as the Red Cow, there was the Boar's Head, the Haunch of

Mutton and the Lamb.

Although the present building dates from the 1890s, suitably upmarket to attract the custom of the clerks from the newly built Guildhall, the pubs' history goes back to at least 1830, and very likely before that. It survived the threat of demolition when the Petty Cury/Lion Yard development was sweeping (almost) all before it, but was saved in order to leave one building ‘in scale’ with Fisher House (itself a former pub, the Black Swan). “Thus” says Henry Bosanquet (*Walks Round Vanished Cambridge: Lion Yard*) “a fine building in its own right, the best pub of its date in Cambridge, was saved because the New Lion Yard, on the planners' tacit admission, is ‘out of scale’ (i.e. ‘monstrous’), compared to older buildings.” (Not a lot changes, then.)

In CAMRA terms, it wasn't a great pub, but all the same, it would/will be a sad loss.

Steve Linley

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Cambridge Blue Winter Beer Festival 2015

Only 2 months into 2015, and we have already had 2 CAMRA beer festivals, The Cambridge Winter Ale Festival in Mill Lane followed a week later, by Ely's Festival at the Maltings. But CAMRA are not the only ones to organize festivals, pubs do too! The latest celebration of all that is good was held by the Cambridge Blue in Gwydir Street. Fred Laband reports...

I attend with my brother Derek visiting from the USA and we have much to catch up on. Over the years a great deal has been written about "The Blue" in ALE magazine, so let's get straight into the beers!

Derek is keen to reacquaint himself with one of his big favourites: Woodforde's Wherry (3.8%). It is pretty good for a first tippie with hints of its old raspberry nose. Stu from Three Blind Mice Brewery pops in with a pump clip for their newest creation: "Faintest Idea" which totals 3 different beers from this local brewery mentioned elsewhere in this issue.



Next up is Cambridge Moonshine 2nd Moon (4.1%) which is very sharp and winey. We get chatting to landlord Jethro, who explains that there is no marquee this year as it simply isn't needed, being more suited to their Summer festival. As we chat, cellar guru Ben is also flying around adding more pump clips to those on show. Most of the 30 or so beers advertised are already on. Our next choice is Nene Valley's new "Release The Chimps!" (4.4%) which is excellent.

We are now developing a hunger so both opt for venison hotpot and a side of fries at a total cost of £21...



It is rich and dark and the potato topping slightly caramel – awesome! We wash down the rest of the chips with Dark Star American Red

(5.8%). A true balance of malt and hops, this is one of my favourite brewers, producing beers of the highest quality and delivered in top condition too. Derek says it is blood red!

A little exercise and fresh air is needed, so we wander along Mill Road to the beer take-out heaven which is the Bacchanalia off licence, where we find Founders Breakfast Stout from Michigan USA (Thanks guys!) and then further along Mill Road for a jar of Junior Stik – O wafers from the Winfield Chinese supermarket.

The Devonshire Arms, Devonshire Road, calls and we must pop in, and I am happy that we do, as we bump into old pal Simon. My Milton's Mammon 7% (so popular at the Ely beer



festival) is dark and lethal, while Derek enjoys the light but hoppy Dionysus. We also cannot pass the Kingston Arms, Kingston Street. We stay for a superb half of Dark Star Revelation. It is so very hoppy at 5.7% and has a strong influence of violets.



We head back, as we must, to The Blue and carry on the Dark Star journey with a half of their Critical Mass (7.4%). Ben is still behind the bar. He is

knowledgeable and chatty and says that this is a

great choice. Personally, I find it very hard to stomach the riot of sharp bitterness of this pitch-black brew, but each to their own!

To finish we need something a little lighter so we choose a bottle of Founder's Backwoods Bastard (10.2%) from the impressive range of

bottled beers. What a beer! Rich vanilla and oaky caramel – a king of a bottled beers!

The Blue has put on an enviable line up of tip-top beers. The people, the food and nearby pubs have been part of a very enjoyable day.

Selected forthcoming beer festivals in Cambridge area:

"The Easter Aperitif" at The Red Lion in Histon	1st - 6th April	Superb Beer festival in relaxed atmosphere. Why not go by bus?
East Anglia Beer Festival at The Apex, Bury St Edmunds	22nd - 25th April	Swish venue, with plenty of other places for good beer, eg. The Old Cannon Brewery
"Heroes Beer Festival" at The Half Moon (Hitchin)	23rd - 26th April	Town centre pub with 18 beers as voted for by you! 10 minute walk from rail station.
4th Annual Beer Festival at The Six Bells, Fulbourn	30th April - 4th May	A particularly good pub to quaff Adnams Bitter.
The 42nd Cambridge Beer Festival on Jesus Green	18th - 23rd May	The UK's longest running beer festival...



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**2nd Winter Beer Festival
27th February - 1st March**

The Cambridge & District



CAMRA Ale Trails

What They Are

Our four Ale Trails aim to encourage local drinkers to visit local pubs, especially ones they might not know. The Trails connect to our April Community Pubs Month, though they don't need to be completed until the end of May.

How It Works

1. Order a pint or half of real ale (a LocAle if available) in a participating pub and ask to have your form stamped.
2. Collect at least twelve stamps on a Trail to qualify for the prize of a T-shirt. There are different coloured shirts for each Trail, so you can enter one, two, three or four forms as you wish.
3. Send your entry, by 31 May, to Ale Trails, 32 Lovell Road, Cambridge, CB4 2QR or hand your form(s) in at the Membership Stand at the Cambridge Beer Festival.
4. Anyone visiting all the pubs on all the Trails will go into a draw for a very special prize.
5. In addition to taking part in these trails, CAMRA members might wish to score your beers using the National Beer Scoring System. Go to www.whatpub.com.

Public Transport

Most pubs on the Trails are accessible by public transport, though buses are few and far between to some of the rural pubs.

For details, visit our website at
www.cambridge-camra.org.uk

**Please don't
drink and drive.**



Cider/Perry Trail

Green Man, Grantchester.
CB3 9NF.

☐

Cambridge Blue, Cambridge.
CB1 2LG.

☐

Red Lion, Histon.
CB24 9JD.

☐

Kingston Arms, Cambridge.
CB1 2NU.

☐

Bank, Willingham.
CB24 5ES.

☐

Carlton Arms, Cambridge.
CB4 2BY.

☐

Chestnut Tree, West Wratting.
CB21 5LT.

☐

Golden Hind, Cambridge.
CB4 1SP.

☐

Jolly Brewers, Milton.
CB24 6AD.

☐

Live & Let Live, Cambridge.
CB1 2EA.

☐

White Swan, Conington.
CB23 4LN.

☐

Haymakers, Cambridge.
CB4 1NG.

☐

Three Horseshoes,
Stapleford. CB22 5DS.

☐

Maypole, Cambridge. CB5
8AF.

☐

Plough, Duxford.
CB22 4RP

☐

Mill, Cambridge.
CB2 1RX.

☐

My favourite beer/cider was in

My Name

Address & Postcode

..... Email

T-Shirt Size (Please circle) XXL XL L M S

I would like to collect my T-Shirt from (name of pub)

Red Trail (South)

Bees in the Wall,
Whittlesford. CB22 4NZ.

☐

Wheatsheaf, Duxford.
CB22 4RP.

☐

Queen's Head, Newton.
CB22 7PG.

☐

Chequers, Orwell.
SG8 5QL.

☐

Chequers, Fowlmere. SG8
7SR.

☐

British Queen, Meldreth.
SG8 6LB.

☐

Pheasant, Great Chishill.
SG8 8SR.

☐

Plough, Shepreth.
SG8 6PP.

☐

Ickleton Lion, Ickleton.
CB10 1SS.

☐

Black Bull, Sawston.
CB22 3HJ.

☐

Three Horseshoes,
Stapleford. CB22 5DS.

☐

Elm Tree, Cambridge.
CB1 1JT.

☐

Navigator, Little Shelford.
CB22 5ES.

☐

Champion of the Thames,
Cambridge. CB1 1LN.

☐

Plough, Duxford.
CB22 4RP.

☐

Castle Inn, Cambridge.
CB3 0AJ.

☐

My favourite beer/cider was in

My Name

Address & Postcode

..... Email

T-Shirt Size (Please circle) XXL XL L M S

I would like to collect my T-Shirt from (name of pub)

Blue Trail (North West)

Chequers, Cottenham.
CB24 8QP.

☐

Green Man, Grantchester.
CB3 9NF.

☐

Black Horse, Rampton.
CB24 8QE.

☐

Blue Ball, Grantchester.
CB3 9NQ.

☐

Jolly Brewers, Milton.
CB24 6AD.

☐

White Horse, Barton.
CB23 7BG.

☐

Red Lion, Histon.
CB24 9JD.

☐

Hare & Hounds, Harlton.
CB23 1ES.

☐

King William IV, Histon.
CB24 9EP.

☐

Little Rose, Haslingfield.
CB23 1JT.

☐

White Swan, Conington.
CB23 4LN.

☐

Flying Pig, Cambridge.
CB2 1LQ.

☐

Bank, Willingham.
CB24 5ES.

☐

Hopbine, Cambridge.
CB1 1HA.

☐

Duke of Wellington,
Willingham. CB24 5HS.

☐

Geldart, Cambridge. CB1
2PF.

☐

My favourite beer/cider was in

My Name

Address & Postcode

..... Email

T-Shirt Size (Please circle) XXL XL L M S

I would like to collect my T-Shirt from (name of pub)

Green Trail (East)

Boot, Dullingham.
CB8 9UW.

☐

Bull, Burrough Green.
CB8 9NH.

☐

Red Lion, Kirtling.
CB8 9PD.

☐

Six Bells, Fulbourn.
CB21 5DH.

☐

Reindeer, Saxon Street.
CB8 9RS.

☐

Three Hills, Bartlow.
CB21 4PW.

☐

Carpenters' Arms, Great
Wilbraham. CB21 5JD.

☐

Ancient Shepherds, Fen
Ditton. CB5 8ST.

☐

Chestnut Tree, West Wrating.
CB21 5LT.

☐

Free Press, Cambridge.
CB1 1DU.

☐

Crown, Ashley.
CB8 9DR.

☐

Carpenters Arms, Cambridge.
CB4 3DZ.

☐

Red Lion, Swaffham Prior.
CB25 0LD.

☐

Architect, Cambridge.
CB3 0AH.

☐

Cock, Castle Camps.
CB21 4SN.

☐

Devonshire Arms,
Cambridge. CB1 2BH.

☐

My favourite beer/cider was in

My Name

Address & Postcode

..... Email

T-Shirt Size (Please circle) XXL XL L M S

I would like to collect my T-Shirt from (name of pub)

Mill: Pub of the Year

Cambridge Branch Pub Of The Year 2015



When I asked Andy Pierce how he felt about The Mill being named Cambridge CAMRA's pub of the year, he told me he was surprised – he shouldn't be. The Mill, Mill Lane is one of those very rare things, a pub that attracts a very healthy tourist

trade but at the same time manages to keep its identity as a typical British pub.

The story began in 2011 when The City Pub Company acquired the lease from premises owner Cambridge University. The pub was then given an extensive refurbishment, rumoured to have cost £250,000 and it re-opened to many accolades in June 2012.

We at CAMRA were so impressed that we awarded The Mill our Most Improved City Pub award for 2013, stating that we enjoyed the "real pub" atmosphere, and welcomed the steady flow of locally brewed guest ales that were on offer.

It soon became obvious to pub managers Andy and his assistant (and real ale expert) Lauren Hodges that providing an outlet for beers from smaller breweries was a way to attract attention, and therefore increase beer sales.



In October 2012 the number of hand pumps had risen from 4 to 8, a move which, together with their continuing commitment to promote locally

brewed ales, earned the pub another CAMRA award: Locale Pub of the Year 2014.

Whilst Adnams Southwold Bitter is ever present, possibly to cater for the less adventurous drinkers, and one or two of the pumps usually provide an

example from the City Pub Company's own Brew House Brewery, brewed in sister pub The Brew House, Andy and Lauren remain committed to small brewery beer. The only difference being, they are now prepared to go a little further to source it. "When we first started out we tried to buy our local guest ales from breweries found within a 10 mile radius of the pub," Lauren told me. "We have extended that to within 30 miles, simply because we were missing out on some very good beers."

Drinkers, many of them regulars, are welcome to sit at the bar – and they do! More often than not they will be discussing the qualities and faults of a particular beer or cider with a member of the very knowledgeable staff. Sometimes the tourists join in these discussions, and it is quite interesting to see how staff patiently attempt to describe the experience of real ale to visitors who probably have no idea what they are about to taste.



So no, Andy, don't be surprised. Not only are you running an excellent pub, which provides invariably

excellent beers, but also you are providing a service to the Cambridge tourist industry in helping to educate the uninitiated to the wonderful world of real ale.

Tucking Inn (Will's Foodie Page)

Creamy Mushroom, Barley and Thwaites Old Dan Soup

There are many versions of this creamy, fulfilling soup. Some recipes use stout, others include sherry rather than beer, and I have also made it with white wine. On this occasion I've elected to use Thwaites Old Dan, a rich 7.4% bottle conditioned old ale. Pearl barley can be used rather than pot barley, but I like the extra nutty chewiness that pot barley offers.

Ingredients:

125g pot barley
600ml chicken stock
1 large onion, diced
50g unsalted butter
1 tablespoon olive oil
380g White Mushrooms, sliced
50g Shiitake Mushrooms, sliced
2 teaspoons fresh, or one teaspoon dried sage
2 stalks celery, sliced
2 tablespoons plain flour
200ml Thwaites Old Dan beer
Salt and pepper
Cream, single, double or soured, to taste

- Place the barley in 150ml of the stock, bring to the boil, cover and simmer until the barley has softened and is cooked through (about 30 minutes).
- Fry the onion in the butter and oil in a large saucepan until golden and soft.
- Add the white and shiitake mushrooms and fry gently, stirring frequently, until the mushrooms have browned and have started to soften.
- Add the celery and sage and continue to cook slowly until the celery has softened.
- Remove the saucepan from the heat and then sprinkle the flour over the vegetables, stirring it into the mixture until it is completely mixed in. Add the Old Dan and return the saucepan to the heat, stirring frequently as you bring the mixture to the boil. Add the remainder of the stock, bring back to the boil and simmer for another 10 minutes or so.
- When the soup has reduced a little stir in the pearl barley together with the stock it has been cooked in.
- Season to taste
- Before serving, stir in a dollop of whichever cream you've decided to use



Meet the Three Blind Mice!

The Three Blind Mice Brewery officially launched at the 5th Elysian Beer Festival on February 7th 2014 with four casks of their Pale Ale No. 1. Such was the excitement surrounding their debut that the first cask had “evaporated” before lunchtime on the first day!

Twelve months later, Three Blind Mice supplied 3 beers for the recent Cambridge Winter Beer Festival. The Three Blind Mice Brewery hosted its own bar at this year’s Elysian Winter Festival, providing seven different beers... One of the region’s fastest rising microbreweries from Little Downham just west of Ely, it has certainly started 2015 with a bang!



Fred Laband catches up with them at their first “Meet The Brewer” evening hosted by The Townhouse, Market Street, Ely, a pub that has supported its local brewer from the very start.

Dan, Stu and Alex are amiable and honest chaps, and don’t have the swagger that you might expect from people who are living the dream of making their own beer! They are relaxed, yet seem to be slightly awkward to be in the limelight, for doing what they still regard almost as a hobby.

So, how did they get started? “It can only be the love of drinking beer, talking about beer and making beer that made the three of us stand in a shed for hours, usually freezing cold, every Friday night,” chuckles Dan. “My wife had had enough of the smell and the sticky floor, so off to the shed we went. We would drink our own creations (however bad) as we made the next brew. At some point one of us would always say “I’ve got a good feeling about this one.””

Alex continues: “From starting out with a home brew kit from Wilko’s, we gradually added more of our own thoughts, and tried new recipes especially with different hops. We wanted to make beer for ourselves, and to make it as cheaply as we could. Then we started trying to

make good beer. After complimentary feedback from friends and family, we decided that we may as well go for it.”

“Plans began in early 2013 to start our own microbrewery, and as it was a case of the blind leading the blind, Three Blind Mice seemed like the perfect name!”

“We had no idea what we were doing, but we



managed to figure out how to work with environmental health, VAT, HMRC, legislation and accounting, etc.”

Dan, an engineer by trade, worked with Alex and Stu to design the brewing equipment they needed, some 40 times bigger than the kit in their shed! They put their faith in the internet and sent money off to a company in China and, after a nervous wait, in October 2013, a container arrived with pumps and lots of shiny stainless steel. They found the right location in Little Downham and began the lengthy task of fitting all the plumbing and electrical equipment to bring the whole thing to life.

Stu recalls, “It was daunting to be making a batch of 720 pints, even more so when we had to supply the beer festival that already had our name printed on the side of their glasses! We decided to make a pale ale using the Amarillo hop that we had used before in the shed. Brew day started at 9am on Saturday and we finished at 3am on Sunday morning. Everything took longer than we expected. We were shattered. The wort was in the fermenter, the yeast was pitched and our fingers were crossed, but when we checked the following day nothing was happening! No fermentation. With the festival only a few weeks away we began to panic, but gave it one more day and were so relieved to find it was alive! Pale Ale No. 1 was born.”

Since then they have made nearly 30 different beers and they are always looking to make improvements. They can now brew and clean all

the equipment in under 9 hours. "The paperwork has become a "doddle" and everything just seems a bit easier," adds Dan. "We still have lots to learn, but we look forward to every brew day and we always "Have a good feeling about this one."



Some critics are unhappy that Three Blind Mice don't have a core beer. "We like to continue to

experiment and have ever changing recipes. It suits most of the pubs and festivals that we supply. We did try to make Pale Ale No. 1 again, but the hops were slightly different and we couldn't get it to be the same."



After producing an amazing 7 beers for the Ely Winter Festival how did they fare? "Our fastest sellers were their Dirty Goulash

Imperial Stout (8.2%) rich in chocolate and coffee infused with rum, and the Table Liquor which was incredibly dry and hoppy at only 2.8%."



What is next for the Three Blind Mice? "We all still work full time and that will not change for the foreseeable future. However,

we do have our eyes on bigger premises, and who knows what lies ahead? We do know that our next beer will have coriander in it!"

The evening is rounded off with a tasting or two. The Odds & Sods (5.2%) packs the piney punch of a West Coast American IPA which is well received by all.

The boys still love drinking beer, talking about beer and making beer. See how they run!

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Planning Law Changes Give Some

In my article, on South Cambs DC's public consultation on the use of Article 4 Directions to protect pubs, in the last edition of ALE I stated that I couldn't see the Government giving pubs more protection under planning law this side of the general election and maybe not for years after that. ALE hadn't even made it to your locals before I was proved wrong. Having been lobbied by CAMRA, in January the cross-party Save the Pub Group of MPs proposed a new clause 16 to the Infrastructure Bill. Had it been passed it would have meant that before any pub could be demolished or before it could be converted to a restaurant, office or shop planning consent would have to be obtained. The voting was close with 245 MPs, including Cambridge City MP Julian Huppert voting in favour. 293 MPs including the two other MPs in our branch area, Andrew Lansley and Jim Paice, voted against and the motion was lost. In order to head off support for the proposal the Government had stated that it would introduce secondary legislation at the earliest opportunity that would give this protection to pubs but only if the pub was listed as an Asset of Community Value (ACV). This is in the process of happening and we have been assured that it will be in place before the general election.

So where will this leave your pub? If your pub has been listed as an ACV and for as long as it remains an ACV then, once the planning change takes effect, it can't be demolished or converted without going through the planning system. But ACV listing doesn't last forever. Also if a community bid doesn't succeed or fails to happen then ACV listing can be lost. All non-listed pubs remain vulnerable to unregulated demolition (unless in a conservation area or a listed building) or conversion.

Clearly CAMRA will be pushing, both before and after the election, for all pubs to be given the protection that those listed as ACVs will have. In the meantime it is clear that more pubs should be listed as ACVs. Of the over 200 pubs in our branch area there are currently only 19 pubs listed as ACVs. Two are in our part of East

Cambridgeshire. Seventeen are in our part of South Cambridgeshire although one of those is the Pear Tree, Hildersham that is currently nominally a furniture shop. Another is the Tree in Stapleford which is currently closed. None of the pubs in the city of Cambridge are listed. In recent years Cambridge City Council has been very progressive with its pub protection policies and has used Article 4 Directions to protect all pubs, that aren't in listed buildings or conservation zones, from unregulated demolition. That still leaves them vulnerable to change use. In recent months the Brunswick (formerly the Bird in Hand) on Newmarket Road has been converted into the Navadhanya Indian Restaurant.

The impending new legislation gives you even more reason to get the pubs you regularly visit listed. The process really isn't that difficult. All it takes is to get together a group of at least 21 people and submit your case to the relevant local authority, the city or district council. Parish councils can also make submissions. There is plenty of advice to help you on CAMRA's website <http://www.camra.org.uk/list-your-local> If you contact our branch pub-news@cambridge-camra.org.uk we will help too and maybe be able to put you in touch with others interested in listing your pub. Across the country many communities have seen their pubs converted to other uses. Involving the planning system won't stop all pub losses but it will regulate it and allow communities to put their views to their elected representatives.

Cider & Perry Production Threatened

Cider makers who produce less than 70hl (12,000 pints) are currently exempt from paying duty. This has resulted in an increasing number of cider producers and more choice for cider drinkers. The European Union (EU) is pushing the British Government to scrap the duty exemption. If this were to happen cider producers would have to pay up to £2,700 per year from sales that earn many of them just

Pubs Much Needed Protection

£10,000. It could result in many going out of business and would certainly deter others from starting up. It would also push up the price of real ciders and perries. CAMRA's Cider & Perry Committee Chairman, Andrea Briers, has set up an on-line petition calling on the government to support small cider producers and resist the pressure from the EU. <https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/protect-small-cider-producers-1>

The 2015 General Election.

The 42nd Cambridge CAMRA Beer Festival isn't the only big event in May. On 7th May there will be a general election. CAMRA and its members have been successful in recent years in ensuring that pubs, real ales, ciders and perries and their production is an issue for national as well as local government. In preparation for the general election CAMRA has again produced a "Manifesto for Real Ale and Pubs".

Parliamentary candidates who support this manifesto are committing themselves to support its three key principles if elected in May.

- Back action to support well-run community pubs.
- Celebrate and promote Britain's 1,300+ real ale breweries.
- Represent the interests of pub goers and beer drinkers.

CAMRA's goal is to secure the support of at least 1,000 candidates. Already over 500 candidates have done so including at least one in each of the three constituencies in our branch area. You can help us reach our target by lobbying the candidates in the constituency where you will vote. CAMRA has set up a website to help you do so http://ge2015.camra.org.uk/get_involved It also has a link to a list of the candidates who have already given their support. You can also ask questions at hustings or when party representatives visit your home.



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42nd Cambridge Beer Festival

The 42nd Cambridge Beer Festival is just around the corner. On the 18th of May at 5pm the doors will open to the public on Jesus Green. Within those doors we'll have everything you've come to expect. There'll be around 200 British real ales and 50 ciders and perries from near and far, along with the foreign bar, mead and wine. Cambridge CAMRA's cheese counter will be in its usual spot, with cheese from around Britain accompanied by pork pies, scotch eggs, olives, breads and more.

Being the 42nd festival we had little choice on the theme. For those of you familiar with Douglas Adams' most famous work, 42 is the answer to the Ultimate Question of Life, the Universe and Everything. The exact nature of the question to which 42 is the answer is unfortunately less clear. Douglas Adams was born and educated in Cambridge. He sadly died at too young an age, in 2001 - hopefully the beer festival will be a fitting tribute.

As ever, the festival supports a charity every year. This year it's SERV Suffolk & Cambridgeshire. SERV stands for Service by Emergency Response Volunteers. They transport urgently needed medical items to hospitals, providing a much needed service. You can find out more about them at www.servsc.org.uk. Please support them when you visit the festival.

Finally, the festival is organised and run entirely by volunteers. Without those volunteers the festival wouldn't run. We always need more volunteers, whether you want to put in a few hours, many weeks or something in between. If you'd like to volunteer, visit www.cambridgebeerfestival.com/volunteer or email volunteering@cambridgebeerfestival.com.

For more information visit www.cambridgebeerfestival.com or email enquiries@cambridgebeerfestival.com. You

can also see us on twitter ([cambeerfest](https://twitter.com/cambeerfest)) or facebook ([CambridgeBeerFestival](https://facebook.com/CambridgeBeerFestival)).

The festival is open:

- Monday 18th May : 5pm-10:30pm (£4 entry)
- Tuesday 19th-Friday 22nd May : midday-3pm (free entry) and 5pm-10:30pm (£4 entry on Tuesday & Wednesday, £5 entry on Thursday & Friday)
- Saturday 23rd May : midday-10:30pm (£3 entry)

CAMRA and CURAS members get free admission at all times.

Bert Kenward
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The Cambridge Brewhouse, King Street, 10% off Cambridge Brewing Company Beers.

The Hopbine, Fair Street, 10% off a pint.

The Kingston Arms, Kingston Street, 20p off a

pint.

The Pickerel, Magdalene Street, 10% off a pint.

The Portland Arms, Chesterton Road 10% off a pint.

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