

ale

Cambridge & District Branch Newsletter

Issue 374 August 2015



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**Let there be light! The St Radegund
gets a welcome refurbishment**



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Pub News

It's not in our branch area, I know, but I think we ought to applaud Wandsworth Council who have ordered the developers who demolished The Alchemist, without first gaining planning permission, to rebuild the pub.

This news, which was covered by a number of national newspapers, follows shortly after Westminster Council's edict that the (different) developers who demolished a local pub, The Carlton, will have to rebuild it "brick by brick". Most telling, I think was the statement of a local Wandsworth resident quoted by The Publican's Morning Advertiser: "It is shocking that a developer believes they can demolish a building with complete disregard for the proper planning process..." Does anyone remember The Osborne Arms? Formerly on Hills Road, it is lost to us now – demolished without planning permission (which was issued retrospectively by weak city planners) several years ago.

Meanwhile back in the Cambridge and District area we continue to hear both good and bad news about our pubs. Unfortunately quite a lot if it is bad.

The Zebra, Maids Causeway is lost to us. Planning permission for it to be converted to residential use was given on appeal. The appeal decision recognised little significance in the city council's plan to protect pubs. Given this outcome it is now even more important that we register pubs, both city and rural, as Assets of Community Value.



It looks like we may also lose The Exhibition, Over. An application for permission for it to be turned into a residential property went through

unopposed by the parish council. My understanding is that the landlord is still trying to make a go of the business which has been

Branch Diary

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

Tue 8 Sep: 8:00, Open Branch Meeting, Histon Beer Festival, Red Lion, Histon

Tue 13 Oct: 8:00, Queen Edith, Wulfstan Way

Fri 16 – Sat 17 October: Cambridge CAMRA Oktoberfest, University Social Club

Tue 10 Nov: 8:00, Open Branch Meeting, Live and Let Live, Mawson Road

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Pub News continued

struggling for some time, but it is a case of “use it or lose it” for the residents of Over.

Thankfully not all of our parish councils are so negligent with their community assets. Many have responded to our recommendation that they register their pubs as Assets of Community Value (ACV). These include the council in Sawston, which is looking to register all 4 of its remaining pubs and in Fowlmere, which is planning to protect The Queens Head and The Chequers with ACV status. Good for them!



The fate of The Tree, Stapleford is still not resolved. The pub, which has been

registered as an ACV by local campaigners, remains closed. We understand that the owner has appealed against the refusal for planning permission for it to be turned into a house. Locals tell us that a velux window to the rear of the pub has mysteriously been removed, leaving the building open to the elements.

Meanwhile, Punch continues to dispose of its pubs. The Publican and Morning Advertiser has reported that the struggling pubco is in talks with value retailer New River Retail, who may be looking to take 150 premises off their hands. New River Retail is not a stranger to this process, having successfully purchased 202 pubs from the Marston's estate in 2013. According to The Times, the company has submitted 45 planning applications to convert pubs into convenience stores, with 13 successes so far.

If I lived near a Punch pub I would be scurrying to register it as an ACV.

It is business as usual for the Golden Hind, Milton Road, and The Pickerel, Magdalene Street – at least for now. Both managers are expecting changes now that they are part of the



Greene King estate, after it's takeover of the Spirit Group, but at the moment they are both continuing to sell beers taken from the SIBA beer list. The Pickerel is still serving Woodfordes and Oakham beers.

The Golden Hind sported a couple of excellent examples

from Tydd Steam when I last visited. Both pubs continue to offer a 10% discount on real ale to CAMRA members.



I haven't heard from Hildersham for a while, so I



assume that the stand off between local campaigners and the owners of The Pear Tree has not been resolved. Rumour is that the

owners are appealing against the planning decision that prevents them from turning the pub, which is registered as an ACV, into a house.

Welcome news that a request to convert The



Railway Tavern, Great Shelford into flats has also been turned down. It is unlikely, however,

that the building will ever be returned to use as a pub. Permission was refused on grounds of ambition rather than past and future use.



We have also lost The Fountain, Regent Street which has emerged from closure as a

fully fledged, continental style café, cocktail bar and restaurant. Re-named Novi, it is in our opinion now just another bar and there isn't a real ale in sight!

Following so swiftly after the loss of another "pub with potential", The Red Cow, Peas Hill, it is a bitter blow to those of us who like our pubs to have a traditional feel.

And from our correspondents:



Ali has been on his bike again! He cycled to The Bull, Burrough Green, which, he reports, changed hands back in

May. He found a very busy pub. The Timmy Taylor's Landlord was extremely good – and good value for money at £3.30 a pint.

He then visited The Red Lion, Brinkley. This too



has re-opened and has new licensees whom Ali found to be very welcoming and chatty. The Adnam's Ghost

Ship was in excellent condition. This was swiftly followed by a very good pint of Earl Soham, Victoria Bitter.



Jethro, landlord of the Cambridge Blue, told us that work on The Royal Standard, Mill Road is just about completed, and the pub should be opening in early September.

Clive reports from Sawston that The Greyhound opened briefly under new management, but then shut rather suddenly due to "irregularities". We understand that pub owners Enterprise Inns

are looking to appoint a temporary manager.



Rachel, landlady of The Chestnut Tree, West Wrattling was very keen to join us in questioning why craft ales are sold at a premium to real

ale. She assured us that The Chestnut Tree stands firmly in the good value camp. She also asked that we tell you about their September beer festival (24th – 27th September). She promises 15 new beers that have never featured in the pub before – all of which will be served at £3 a pint, 50p of which will be donated to The East Anglian Children's Hospice. Thursday is quiz night, music on Friday and Saturday, and Sunday is a family day.

Carl has been in touch asking that I mention the beer festival being held at Bottisham Legion (18th-20th September). Jazz on Saturday night.

Other festivals in Carl's area include The Red Lion, Kirtling (28th-31st August), music Sunday evening; The White Swan, Quy (28th-31st August), music throughout, and The Boot Dullingham (21st-23rd August), music Saturday evening.

The landlord of The Plough, Duxford contacted



me. The Plough will be holding a summer cider and sausage festival in August and a beer festival over the

first weekend in October. He reported that their Spring festival, at which they served 19 beers over two days, was a great success.

Lauren from The Mill, Mill Lane, informed me



that they will be holding another Battle of the Brewers beer event throughout September, and that their

Pub News continued

Octoberfest, featuring a number of Bavarian beers, will run from 10th – 20th October,

Marcus Turpin, licensee of The Med, Perne



Road, and The Lord Byron, Trumpington, gave me a call. Turpin Brewery,

situated behind The Med is now up and running and producing

two beers, Meditation Pale Ale, and Cambridge



Black Stout. Unfortunately, due to the tie to pub owners Enterprise Inns, he can't sell his beers in either of his two pubs until the brewery is registered with SIBA.

No such worries for Sam Calverly, of Calverly's Brewery, Hooper Street. The brewery is now open to the public every Saturday between

11.00am and 4.00pm. Visitors are welcome to take in the brewery whilst tasting and buying Sam's excellent beer.

And finally, Hayley and Steve, licensees of The



Portland Arms, Mitcham's Corner asked if I could tell you about the Mitcham's and More beer festival and walking tour. 7

pubs, lots of beer, a Sunday market, family day, and music throughout the festival. If you'd like to know more than look for the article (Mitcham's and More) on page 22-23 in this issue of Ale.

The 2015 CAMRA Ale Trail T shirts are on their way! Thanks to everyone who took part in this years Ale Trail event. Please note that the T-shirts will be sent directly to your home address and should be with you by the end of August.

The Plough, Duxford



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Lost pubs of Cambridge(shire)

Surprisingly I only had one correct answer to last issue's mystery pub, from erstwhile Branch stalwart Robert Flood, who correctly identified the former Dog & Pheasant on Newmarket Road. He kindly provided this picture of it from 1986:



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He also adds: "The barn at the back was used for folk & jazz clubs and other functions. Older members muttered darkly about the barn being the home of the 451 Club, I have no idea what that was but it seemed to have some sort of reputation." (A quick internet search reveals that it was part of the then still underground gay scene.) If anyone knows more, get in touch.

Patrick Morgan had previously contacted us about the pub, which prompted its selection last issue. He remembers it as perhaps a Watneys pub. He's one of the volunteers who look after '100 Years of Coconuts', the virtual museum of Cambridge United history. The Dog & Pheasant was the headquarters of the club in its early days, when it was still Abbey United, and he would like more information about that and any old photographs. If you can help, get in touch at the address below and I'll forward it to him.



Patrick also sent this photo above, taken by

Frank Bird in 1974.

The earliest mention of the pub is in 1851. The licensee for the last third of the 19th century was one Henry Casey, who was also a (tobacco) pipe-maker. During the mid-1890s it acquired a dual identity, as the Dog & Pheasant and Railway Tavern, presumably in the hope of cashing in on its proximity to the old Barnwell Junction station, but it was a short-lived attempt, returning to the plain Dog & Pheasant by the turn of the century.

From the 1970s until the pub closed the lease was held by the father of Mark Turpin, now tenant of The Med and Lord Byron.

It closed in the early 1990s, becoming an Indian restaurant for a while. Now, perhaps ironically for a former pub, it is a hostel for people with alcohol issues.

Here's this issue's memory test, which I hope should be a bit easier:



As usual, 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 contact pub-history@cambridge-camra.org.uk

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

Cambridge CAMRA Pub Tour

Our latest coach tour took us in and around the south of our branch area although as it clashed with an air display at Duxford we opted to avoid the heavy traffic around there.



Our first stop wasn't a pub but instead was the BlackBar Brewery, Button End, Harston that is

open each Saturday from 10am to 2pm. As well as mini casks Joe, the brewer, had 4 bottled beers available. Some of us supped whilst looking around the brewery and bike workshop and others opted to enjoy the sun.

I selected BlackBar's newest beer, Dead Unicorn, a 5.6% maple, lemon and chilli wheat-beer brewed for a food & beer matching at Rhode Island (formerly the Unicorn) in Cherry Hinton. A refreshing beer, all the ingredients contributed to the taste without any overpowering the others. I then shared a DoveStep, a tasty 3.8% beer brewed with rosemary and bay. Major Blacklight and Theory 219 were also available.



The Little Rose in Haslingfield was our next stop. The pub itself was rebuilt in the 60's and therefore isn't

what you'd expect to find in a village. It has large windows and the front bar has a half vaulted ceiling making it bright and airy. 18 months ago The Little Rose was sold by Greene King to Cambridge developers, Wrenbridge. Fearing this might lead to the loss of their only pub, the villagers listed it as an Asset of Community Value, and effectively saved their pub. Wrenbridge hived off part of the large garden for housing, but there is still an ample garden

complete with a pétanque court, children's play equipment and outside seating. They are now in the process of selling the pub to licensees Sue & Neil who, having lived in the village for many years, are sure to have local support.

Free of tie, The Little Rose offered us a choice of Well's Eagle IPA, Sharp's Doom Bar and Wadworth Henry's Original IPA (3.6%). I had a half of the latter as it's not a beer I often see..

From Haslingfield we headed to the Green Man in Thriplow. This pub, owned by villagers, has



had a change of licensee since we last toured the area in 2014. Although a large area to the right of the

bar is primarily reserved for diners, the Green Man retains a rustic bar feeling, complete with hops on a clothes-drier hanging from the ceiling. Sharp's Doom Bar was again on offer (it seems to be as commonplace as Greene King IPA since Molson Coors bought the brewery) as was Bateman's XXXB, Thwaites Straw Poll and Crafty Beer Sauvignon Blonde. Most of us opted for the Sauvignon Blonde (4.4%) as it's from one of our LocAle breweries, and jolly good it was too! We weren't disappointed. For some reason the Sauvignon Blonde quickly ran out and Hook Norton Summertime took its place. I also had a taster of the Straw Poll that had been selling well though for me its aroma and taste was overpoweringly strawberry.

Next we headed south and uphill to Heydon to



visit the King William IV. Ed has been here now for 19 years since his memorable mother Liz, sadly no longer

with us, took it on alongside the Royal Oak in

11th July 2015

Barrington. The King William IV is an imposing 16th century inn with an unforgettable interior. It



has a low ceiling, exposed beams, subdued lighting and loads of religious and

rural paraphernalia. The bar is fronted with sculpted plaster panels. The garden offers long views across the highest part of the county. Although much of the pub is given over to fine dining and it frequently hosts wedding receptions and other events it retains a drinkers' area. Free of tie, on our visit its beer selection of Fuller's London Pride, Adnam's Southwold Bitter and Greene King IPA wasn't as exciting as its food menu or its décor.

We then crossed into Essex. The Axe, in a residential area of Saffron Walden, was deemed surplus to requirements and sold off by Greene King in 2014.



As with the Little Rose, part of the garden was sold for housing but a significant garden

remains. The Axe has been spruced up and, free of tie, now offers a much wider drink selection. Of its twelve hand pumps ten were in use, five for ciders and perries and five for real ales. The quality and quantity of ciders and perries was such that it was voted North West Essex branch's Cider Pub of the Year in 2014. The ales came from near and far. Rambler's Tipple from Saffron was their LocAle. Greene King IPA, Skinner's Pennycomequick, Nobby's Swift Nick and Harviestoun Bitter & Twisted had all had longer journeys. Sadly the last two were not potable but the Pennycomequick (4.5%), named after the site of the former Devonport

prison, was delicious and lived up to its "legendary Cornish stout" billing.

By now we had worked up quite an appetite so



the spread awaiting us at the Rose & Crown in Ashdon would have been welcomed

even if that was all they had to offer. A pleasant surprise was familiar faces behind the bar. Hans and Justine who used to run the Bell in Balsham took over at the Rose & Crown a few months ago. The pub itself is another delight. A grade II listed building dating from 1640, it is reputed to have been used as a prison by Cromwell's Parliamentary forces during the English civil war and graffiti, hidden behind removable panels, dates from this time. The visible wall decoration around the fireplace dates from a similar period. There is sadly no record of the ales quaffed by the Roundheads but on our visit we could choose from Woodforde's Wherry and Norfolk Nog, Hopback Summer Lightning, Black Sheep Bitter and Nethergate Suffolk County. The Nog (4.6%) was delicious, a dark old ale not often seen in summer. The Suffolk County (4.0% best bitter) was also in top form. This may have been my first visit to Ashdon's Rose & Crown but I doubt it will be my last.

Back in Cambridgeshire, our next stop was the Crown in Linton. In 2013 the Crown was our



branch rural LocAle pub of the year.

Although the award was on display it was disappointing that all this

freehouse could offer us was Woodforde's Wherry, Sharp's Doom Bar, (Greene King) Hardy's & Hanson's Bitter and Adnam's Broadside (4.7%), which was a bit pricey at £4.10 a pint.

Cambridge CAMRA Pub Tour



Our next stop was the Three Tuns in Great Abington where the beer selection was more interesting. Aside from Greene King IPA they offered us Woodforde's Norfolk Champion and Westerham Summer Perle. I had to consult the web to discover that Westerham are based in Kent and Summer Perle (3.8%), a golden ale, was first brewed in 2004 for the thirtieth (pearl) Canterbury Beer Festival.



We then moved on to the Chequers in Pampisford. This pub has a split-level floor that testifies to it having once been a row of cottages. As well as their regular Woodforde Wherry and Greene King IPA they also had Charles Wells Bombardier Burning Gold (4.1%) which was a reasonable but unexceptional golden ale.

Our tour's last stop was the Black Bull in Sawston. This pub likes to get in a selection of beers that usually includes an Oakham and so it proved on our visit. The Fuller's London Pride was the only one of their four ales that we had previously seen that day. The Oakham's Pint Please, Lacon's Falcon Ale and (Molson Coors) Hancock's HB were all appearing for the first



time. This took the number of ales we had seen on the trip to 31 in 10 venues and that could easily be raised to 33 in 11 if you popped next door to the White Lion, which had Woodforde's Sundew, Adnam's Southwold Bitter and (Charles Wells) Young's Blonde.


The vote for beer of the tour was very close, with BlackBar Dead Unicorn pipped at the post by Skinner's Pennycomequick. The venue of choice was the Rose & Crown in Ashdon.

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Let There Be Light

The St Radegund: Cambridge City Most Improved Pub 2015



We watched with anxiety as the builders moved in, but whilst the recent refurbishment may have given The St Radegund a roomier interior, it has not spoiled the traditional feel of the smallest pub in Cambridge.



The pub is a brewery tap for Saffron Brewery, which means that generally four beers are from that stable. Guest beers often include examples from local breweries, with Fuller's London Pride being the only main brand beer on offer

St Radegund was a 6th Century Frankish queen who fled a bullying husband to seek the protection of the church. When said husband died she used his wealth to found a monastery and then managed to convert large numbers of the nobility to her Christian beliefs. The pub is named after a Cambridge nunnery raised in her memory. When it fell in to ruin the materials and covenants were used to help found Jesus College.



The saint was, by all accounts, all in favour of a simple life, and I can't help feeling that she would have approved of the pub that bears her name. Wooden benches and trestle tables are still a feature, as is the famous "rain check post" where regular drinkers often leave messages, and the odd beer, for their friends.



The bar has been moved to the rear of the pub, which not only offers more seating area, but also allows customers greater access to the fireplace. The greatest improvement though has to be the removal of the tobacco stained, graffiti strewn, false ceiling. As I bathed in the light coming in through the newly revealed arched windows I couldn't help thinking what a sacrilege it had been to cover them up in the first place.

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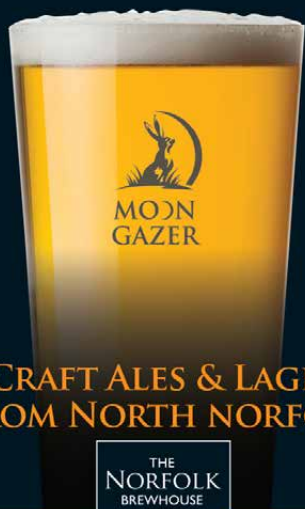
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Community Support.

Protecting Pubs in the City, Towns and Villages

I don't need to tell you how important our community pubs are but it is also clear that they are all too vulnerable. Despite three years of cuts in beer duty, across the country an average of 29 pubs a week are still being lost. Although some may no longer be viable, they wouldn't be profitable whoever ran them or whatever the business plan, the majority probably could be profitable but are being lost as their owners can make even more money by changing their use. The loss of a pub can have a huge effect on the community it once served. Without the pub acting as a meeting point communities can drift apart. Villages can become little more than a collection of houses. Anecdotal evidence suggests that people would prefer to live somewhere with facilities so the closure of your local could reduce the saleability of your home. The biggest short term profit to be made from pubs in our area is by converting them to housing but this requires planning permission. People can put in objections, local authority local plans apply and therefore this happens only rarely. It is changes that don't require planning permission that pubs and their communities are most at threat from.

The 2012 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) gave local authorities a duty to guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities with pubs being listed as one of these facilities. So that's clear then; if a pub is viable and valued the council will prevent it being lost. That's difficult when the change doesn't require planning permission. In most cases, unless a pub is in a conservation zone or is a listed building it can be demolished without the need for planning permission. We saw this happen to the Rosemary Branch in Cherry Hinton. Pubs can also be converted to some other uses without the need for planning permission. The Waggon & Horses in Milton turns away those just wanting a drink since it became a restaurant and who can forget the Pear Tree in Hildersham that became a quasi-furniture shop. But there

are now pubs that aren't in conservation zones and aren't listed buildings that can't be knocked down without planning permission and neither can they be converted to restaurants, shops or offices without planning permission. These are the pubs that have been listed as an Asset of Community Value (ACV). The 2011 Localism Act enabled community groups and parish councils to apply to have community facilities (including pubs) listed as ACVs. The community group would then have a "Right to Bid" for the ACV if it came on the market. But what if you felt that you could never raise the money to buy the ACV; why bother having it listed? In April this year things changed; pubs that are listed as ACVs now can't be demolished or undergo a change of use without planning permission. CAMRA firmly believes that these restrictions should apply to all pubs and will continue to campaign for this. Until we succeed, this protection applies only to ACV listed pubs. If you want to give your pub the protection it deserves, the protection CAMRA believes all pubs deserve, get it listed. Currently, across the country, there are around 700 pubs listed as ACVs. CAMRA would like to see this rise to 1,500 by the end of 2015 and continue to rise beyond then.

Are there any negatives for the pub owner if their pub is listed? If the owner wants the pub to remain a pub then the answer is no. In fact there are several positives from the pub being an ACV. Discussing the idea of listing the community pub can raise its profile locally. Listing can increase customer loyalty. Licensees can organise community events to celebrate the pub being recognised as a community asset. It can bring good publicity in the local media. CAMRA are also campaigning for ACV pubs to be given enhanced support by councils and government.

So how can you go about protecting your pub by getting it listed as an ACV? You can form a

group of at least 21 local residents and apply to the city or district council to have it listed. All our local authorities have on their websites a list of current ACVs as well as help and advice on applying to have facilities listed (see links below). Even without forming a group there are ways. If the pub is in a village then probably the easiest route is to get the parish council to apply to have it listed. If the pub is in the city then there isn't the equivalent of parish councils that have the statutory right to submit an application but you may still be able enlist the help of Residents' Associations and other such bodies. It has recently become clear that CAMRA branches can also apply to have pubs listed as ACVs. Our branch is ready and willing to do this but want to do it in collaboration with the communities and pub users. So if you want your pub protected why not get in touch with us and together we'll get your pub listed as an Asset of Community Value.

Alistair Cook

Pubs Officer, Cambridge & District CAMRA.

pubs@cambridge-camra.org.uk

CAMRA's List Your Local webpage.

<http://www.camra.org.uk/list-your-local>

Cambridge City Council's webpage.

<https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/community-right-to-bid-scheme>

South Cambridgeshire District Council's webpage.

<https://www.scambs.gov.uk/community-right-bid>

East Cambridgeshire District Council's webpage.

<http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/community/community-right-bid-assets-community-value>

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The Cricketers: Four Runs!



A pub that I have started to visit quite regularly is The Cricketers, in Melbourne Place, Cambridge. Tucked between the expanse of Parker's Piece

and the hubbub of the Grafton Centre, it is one of several hidden gems in the Kite area (including The Free Press and The Elm Tree).

The Cricketers has not had an innings in ALE magazine for a while so it is about time to pad up and deliver a new ball...

Owned by Greene King, this pub has been through a few changes in recent years, even



changing name a few times (The First and Last?!); since April 2014 it is reassuringly back to being The Cricketers. On passing, (a year or so ago) I am attracted by the sign advertising Thai lunches from £5.95...

The beer is good, Woodforde's Nelson's Revenge (4.5%) at £3.60 has a robust malt backbone. The food cooked by Noi is outstanding value and the people in the whole place are friendly and fun. The public bar has a slight cricketing theme, whereas to the right the seated area is light with high ceilings, yet is still



quite warm and relaxing. There is a distinct Thai theme here with flowers, statues of elephants, giant fish and carved wood with

hanging shells on the approach to the toilets. In my opinion, a good pub leaves you with a buzz. The Cricketers certainly gives me that, and I know that I will be back.



On another visit, Timothy Taylor Landlord is the guest beer. A true classic balance of bitter and sweet; at 4.3% it is a familiar session ale.

For my third lunchtime treat in June, there are 3 beers on hand pump. Greene King IPA is the ever-present, with another GK beer on tap, Abbot Ale. The third tends to be a rotating guest beer, this time Belhaven Golden Bay (3.8%). My drink is brought to me by the excellent Kurt, who is calming and courteous. The beer is bright with a foamy head, tasting very dry and with hints of raisins. This is a very good pint indeed.

I order the Pad Ka Pao with beef. Amazingly the food is with us within 5 minutes! The plate is a riot of colour, with a crunchy and beautifully crafted floral salad. The jasmine rice is light and



dry and the steam is wonderful. The beef is tender and accompanied by peppers, onion, green beans and of course chilli, all cooked delightfully. There is not as much holy basil in this dish as usual, but

it is still excellent.



Nicola (diet Coke, 0%) has chicken Pad Thai, with bean sprouts, crunchy carrot, spring

onion and her favourite ingredient – crushed peanut which is on the side of the plate. She loves this and adds it throughout the meal. Every time I go to The Cricketers the food is rarely the same; it is nevertheless consistently high quality.

Chef Noi originally introduced me to the wonders of Thai food back at The Railway Tavern, Great Shelford over ten years ago. It is perhaps poignant to describe such a lovely beer/food experience when, in stark contrast, the Pub News section in ALE magazine 372 reports that the Railway Tavern is now up for residential redevelopment. While one pub seems to be caught mid wicket, the other is hitting boundaries!

My fourth run to The Cricketers is in early July. There are 2 beers on today – GK IPA and Skinners Betty Stogs. Occasionally, in my experience, there are only 2 beers available at The Cricketers. I would rather embrace a choice of 2 well kept beers as opposed to other pubs where there may be more beer selection but



lack the same quality. Of course, I would prefer more beer choice too! The 4% guest (£3.90) from Truro is tremendous, fresh and grassy and with hints of

violet. It is a balmy cloudless day, but I decide not go out into the rear garden which is quite the suntrap!

Regular ALE magazine readers will already be aware that my articles are often not just about beer and pubs, having a tendency to go off at tangents into the worlds of table tennis, bikes, cheese or even Rod Stewart! In this sense, I am no beer expert, more a “generalist.” The Cricketers is probably not a pub for beer experts. But for those that like a good pint, a bright, friendly atmosphere, great service and outstanding food, I highly recommend.

Fred Laband



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Ale of Man

Mike Andrews and Ryan Donaldson report on beer and pubs they discovered at the 2015 Isle of Man TT races.

Having left our local airport on a Citywing and a prayer, we arrived at Ronaldsway twenty minutes later for a three day celebration of petrol and pints. A taxi sped us to Bray Hill and the jaw-dropping spectacle of bikes scorching downhill at 190mph. After about 6 hours riveting racing



we descended to the Mereside Hotel prior to a prolonged evening of supping in the area around

North Quay and the Marina.

Fortified by Paparazzi special pizzas, we ventured to a cluster of backstreet boozers between Lord Street and the Market Hall. The Albert Hotel and the Old Market Tavern sit cheek by jowl on Chapel Row.

Unashamedly basic in décor and oozing testosterone, they both featured red leather banquette seating, wood panelling and walls abundant in racing prints. The Albert had an excellent dartboard and pool table –

commonplace in Manx grog shops – and served quaffable pints of Bushy's Ruby Mild and Hooded Ram Brewery's Pale Rider, both luscious local libations. The Market Tavern, with attractive planished copper tabletops and an ultra loud jukebox, offered Bushy's light and mildly spiced Shuttleworth Snap IPA and the exceedingly smooth old Masham favourite, Theakston's Best Bitter. It is also the only pub on the island to provide Old Market Grog. Serendipitously, we relaxed to Sir Van's Moondance before decamping to the nearby Rover's Return.



Set in a partly cobbled street, this CAMRA favourite was bustling. It had the full range of Bushy's – Jo3y's (in homage to Ballymoney's finest), Manx Bitter, the aforementioned Shuttleworth Snap and Piston Brew – as well as an excellent dark ale from Newark's Pheasantry Brewery. Warming to our evening's enterprise, we sauntered along the quay to the Railway Hotel for relaxed halves of the indigenous Okell's MPA and Bitter. A large, modern space with pounding live music, it afforded a sharp contrast to the earlier trio of taverns, but, in our humble view, not a contrast in its favour.

Seeking a quieter ambience, we traipsed up Prospect Hill to the Prospect Hotel, which was hosting a well-attended quiz. In respect of ale choice, this was definitely the best so far. We sampled halves of Ilkley's Mary Jane, Fernandes' Pane in the Glass, My Generation's eponymous brew and Lotus IPA. This was a fine, spacious pub with an impressive tiled floor, stained glass, wainscoted walls and well-conditioned ales.

Hurrying on, we trekked further uphill to the Woodbourne on Alexander Drive. Red brick and neo-gothic, it has a stunning exterior and the inside is equally elegant, boasting an anachronistic gentlemen's restroom. Once again, we had hit ale platinum and we cheerfully imbibed Jules' Slumbering Monk, Cameron's FMPA and Castle Rock's Black Gold before the



long walk downhill to the sweeping promenade and Sir Norman's at the Sefton Hotel where we finished our first evening with Okell's 1907 (the first year of the TT) and Sharp's Doom Bar surrounded by theatre posters and plentiful photographs of Sir Norman Wisdom

with his celebrity chums.

The next day was a TT sabbatical but, before heading for picturesque Peel, we again hiked up Broadway to the grandstand and the pits to get a flavour of TT central command. It was satisfying to walk down gasoline alley in the shadow of the legendary race board, to meet riders, to see bikes close up and to browse in the merchandising village. Peel, an immaculate old fishing port, was reached in 25 minutes by public transport. Our short journey had the massive benefit of enabling us to travel the TT course from Quarterbridge to Ballacraire allowing us to experience the terrifying corner at Ballagarey, albeit at a pleasingly inauthentic moped's pace. Peel offered three pubs with commendable reputations for ale: the Creek Inn, the Marine Hotel and, our favourite, the Whitehouse. The Creek is a picture postcard, white and red harbourside gem. Specialising in seafood, it surprised us by being the only pub to stock Copper Dragon's Anstey's Obsession. A thirst quenching golden potion, we eased it down alfresco before visiting the Ulster's TT Heroes exhibition at the House of Manannan, literally a



couple of exhaust pipes away. Featuring memorabilia from Ulster's racing legends and a compelling super8 footage of their past triumphs our time spent there was an exceptional treat. Along the prom we eschewed the lure of ice cream outlets to down halves of Robinson's Trooper, an Iron Maiden ale, at the Marine. Departing the seafront and the oxyacetylene intensity of the afternoon sun, we rocketed to the Whitehouse, a multi-roomed local near the bus terminus. Here, we played pool and sipped halves of Moorhouse's Pride of Pendle, Franklin's Pale from Sussex and Elland's IPA. This was a restful and reviving resolution to our rest day's excursion.

Friday was big race day and there was a palpable buzz during breakfast in anticipation of the Senior. It was a mandatory early rise and an



early start for Braddan, our chosen spectating spot. Seven pounds for a wooden bench seat for the

day with a panoramic view across a serpentine bend seemed a steal. The day's racing was record breaking in terms of lap and race times, but, to our chagrin, failed to yield an Ulster podium. Still, hats off to John McGuinness for his 23rd victory and to Mickey D. for courageously lapping at 132mph with a severely damaged shoulder. With racing concluded we rounded off our trip with an outstanding last supper at L'Experience at the end of Queens Promenade and three pubs: the Terminus Tavern, the Queen's and our own hotel's HQ bar on Empire Terrace. All served the ubiquitous Okell's, but the Terminus provided a tick with Tom Wood's



Father's Pride and the Queen's supplemented Okell's with Old Speckled Hen. After enjoying the spectacular pyrotechnic display on the promenade that traditionally concludes TT fortnight, we ended our trip with a nip of Joey Dunlop whiskey and a Pale Rider chaser in the HQ bar.

For beer and bikes this is a brilliant trip. We added to our lexicon of bikerspeak. Incident, moment, furniture, lid and chip fat all acquired new meanings. Three legs are good but two wheels are better. To quote Yer Maun Joey, "keep 'er lit".

Incident is a euphemism for a motorcycle accident, frequently serious. Lid is a helmet. Chip fat is sun cream. Moment - a near incident Furniture - obstacles on the course e.g. telegraph poles, walls etc

The New Breweries of Bermondsey

Whilst we continue campaigning to stem the number of pub closures across the country we should also be celebrating Britain's flourishing brewing industry. In 2002 the then Labour government introduced "Small Breweries' Relief" (a reduced rate of duty paid by small brewers who didn't benefit from the economies of scale) for brewers producing less than 30,000 hectolitres (just over 5 million pints) annually. In 2004 the limit was raised to 60,000 hl. This is undoubtedly one of the reasons behind the increasing number of breweries popping up across the country.

In 2012 it went through the 1,000 mark and is now over 1,300. In some cities the availability of small industrial units, high population densities and good public transport has triggered not just more small breweries but ones that opened for on-sales on Saturdays. In the Cambridge area, BlackBar in Harston has been opening for a couple of years and Calverley's on Hooper Street has recently started doing the same for off-sales. In some bigger cities small clusters of microbreweries have appeared and now, as well as pub crawls, you can also go on brewery crawls.

It was a sunny Saturday at the end of June when I lead a group of 17 friends and family on an afternoon tour taking in six new breweries that have sprung up in Bermondsey, South London. A short trip from Kings Cross via Northern and Jubilee lines took us to Bermondsey.

A 10 minute walk from the underground station, and by midday we were at the Kernel Brewery (<http://www.thekernelbrewery.com> open 9am to 2pm) which occupies two railway arches off Dockley Road. Kernel was the first new brewery to flourish in the Bermondsey area and is one of the best known. Its bottled beers can be found in several pubs and bars in the Cambridge area. As you enter the brewery you are faced with their bottle sales counter, but go through the busy drinking area and you come to the bar. The variety of strength, colour and flavours on offer



was very wide. I opted for the 5.4% Cascade Pale Ale. The citrus flavour of cascade hops set me up for the tour. Adjacent to Kernel, other arches are open selling cheese, ham and bread so it's a great place to go for brunch.

Another walk, 20 minutes, brought us to the Fourpure Brewery (<http://www.fourpure.com>



open 11am to 5pm) in an industrial estate off the Rotherhithe Road. No one will be selling postcards of the building but the beers are well worth tracking down. A short queue in their tap-room and we were faced with a choice of seven beers. I opted for the 5.1% Oatmeal Stout that had bags of body.

Outside I was tempted by the Sausologist stall that was selling rare breed hotdogs. The street food available at Fourpure changes weekly.

A third walk, this time only 10 minutes, took us back to the Partizan Brewery (<http://www>.

partizanbrewing.co.uk 11am to 5pm) which can be found in a railway arch on Almond Road.



The sun had really brought the crowds out and we had a significant queue before we were served. I opted for a medium strength Belgian style blonde though as with all the breweries an ample range of beers was available.

Retracing our steps we walked past the, by now, closed Kernel Brewery on our way to Brew By Numbers (<http://www.brewbynumbers.com> 11am to 5pm) on Enid Street.



From the seven beers on offer here I opted for the 5.6% hoppy US style Red Ale brewed with Amarillo, Simco and Citra hops. The other beers on offer included a wheat-beer and a "Berliner Sour". Brew By Numbers is very close to the Maltby Street Market (<http://www.maltby.st> open until 4pm) which has several food stalls to chose from.

More railway arches in Druid Street house the Southwark Brewery (<http://www.southwarkbrewing.co.uk> 11am to 5pm). The most notable beer on offer here was the 8.9% Russian Imperial Stout.

A few arches along Druid Street is the sixth and final brewery of the day, Anspach & Hobday (<http://anspachandhobday.com> 11am to 6pm). If

you were at The Cambridge Summer Beer Festival on Jesus Green in May you might recognise the name (even if you might struggle to pronounce it). Two Anspach & Hobday beers were on offer at the festival, The Smoked Brown (6.0%) and The Porter (6.7%). The Porter was voted the volunteers beer of the festival and it also featured strongly in the public vote. Our brewery trip gave me the opportunity to try the bottled version of The Smoked Brown. It was as tasty as I



remembered.

When they called time at Anspach & Hobday we thought the tour was over – until we chanced upon the Bottle Shop, which was hard to miss as it is in the next arch along (<http://www.bottle-shop.co.uk>)

Although I had previously been to Kernel, all the other breweries were new to me. All were easy to find and apart from Fourpure all were in railway arches. This did make them a bit noisy especially given their popularity. The atmosphere was certainly different from what you'd find in a South Cambridgeshire village local. Perhaps the customers were a little different too. Drinking these beers is now hip and trendy though not elitist. It was good to see the number of people in their twenties for these are the CAMRA members and beer festival volunteers for many years to come. But there were many others a lot closer to my own age and some beyond. The popularity of these breweries stood in stark contrast to the boarded up Enterprise Inns, Marquis of Wellington that stands across the street from Anspach & Hobday. The brewery hopes to be able to take the Marquis on and open it as their brewery tap. Then we'll see if the hipsters know how to run a pub better than the pubcos. I suspect that I already know the answer.

Alistair Cook

Mitcham's and More

The Mitcham's Triangle beer festival is an annual trail of the pubs based in the Mitcham's Corner area of Cambridge. Based very much along the lines of the Cambridge CAMRA Ale Trails, the idea is that customers collect a stamp from each of the pubs. When completed, the forms, which are available from the pubs, are entered into a prize draw.

This year the newly named Mitcham's and More trail has grown to include 7 pubs, all within cycling distance of Mitcham's Corner. As well as a beer festival, which runs over the weekend beginning on the 5th September, the pubs are organising other community activities including "a family fun day, a food market, a film festival... and much more". But being editor of ALE magazine, I'm sure you'd forgive me for being more interested in the pubs and the beer. So, on a sunny August afternoon, I got on my bike and undertook an investigatory pre-tour of The Mitcham's and More Ale Trail.

According to Hayley, tenant and Landlady of the Portland Arm's (Mitcham's Corner and the first stop on my 7 pub tour), the 2015 Mitcham's and More beer festival should be both a celebration of beer and a family event. She and her partner



Steve will be organising a Portland Arms beer festival, which, unusually for a pub tied to Greene King,

features beer from local breweries, but they are also organising the family fun day and the Saturday food market, which will be set up in Barclay's bank car park. The Portland, which is an example of an unspoilt Greene King pub, tends to have a better selection of guest ales than other GK tied establishments, but on this occasion I chose my favourite Greene King XX mild (3%). I wasn't disappointed. It was an auspicious start to the tour!

A short cycle ride westwards and along Victoria Road and I came to The Carpenter's Arms, pub number 2 on the tour. What a transformation this

pub has undergone in the last few years! It was busy. So busy that I found it hard to believe that we had once had it listed as a pub under threat of closure. The Carpenter's Arms is a comfortable pub. The large covered outdoor



area is furnished with "shabby chic" sofas, and the furniture in the bar and dining areas could be described as "fashionably

distressed". The bar itself is gleaming and is adorned with ancient woodworking tools. This is a Locale pub. On my visit two of the 4 beers on offer were from local breweries, Milton Dionysus (3.6%) and Crafty Ales, Wilbraham Bitter (4.3%) The latter slipped down nicely thank you! The Carpenters Beer festival will begin on 5th September and they will feature 12 new ales over the 3 days.

Back on my bike, freewheeling at times down the incline of Victoria Road, I retraced the trail back to Mitcham's Corner, and to The Boat House. This is a managed pub and it looks like



one. In typically modern Greene King style, it has one large dining area with a few high tables and stools situated near the bar for

those of us who only need a drink. Of the 5 beers on offer, 3 were Greene King. But don't despair, because the Boat House does have one great thing going for it. Walking to the rear of the pub and through the patio door, I discovered the wooden terrace that overlooks the river Cam. I spent a pleasant 20 minutes sipping my Brentwood Brewing Company Golden Galaxy (4%) as I watched the passers by wandering along the opposite towpath.

I didn't really need to get on my bike to get to the next pub, so I pushed it further along Chesterton Road to The Waterman. The first thing you notice when



you enter The Waterman through the Chesterton Road entrance is that the TV is on. On this occasion it was showing the first Premier League match of the season and the bar was full of customers wearing football kit. Fortunately, the pub is separated into two distinct areas and, unlike in some pubs, the commentary was not turned up unbearably loud, so I was able to find a quiet corner to sit and write my notes. The Waterman is a very friendly pub. The small bar is tucked into a corner of the public bar, which has a sofa and comfortable seating. The Waterman has large windows; a great benefit to a writer's failing sight, but also perfectly placed if you want to idly watch the bustle of Mitcham's Corner traffic. There were 4 beers on offer; 2 from the Sharps stable, Truman's Zephyr and my favourite, Crouch Vale Brewer's Gold (4%).

Crossing Victoria Avenue, I then pushed my bike to The Old Spring, The Ferry Path,



Cambridge. There is no doubt that this is a foodie pub, and I have got to say that the food looked very good. A pity then that the beer

choice, with the exception of a rather mediocre pint of Skinners Betty Stoggs (4%) was restricted to an unimaginative selection of Greene King ales, including a rather misleading and not attributed to any brewer, Cambridge Ale

Cycling along Ferry Path towards the river, I'll admit I was not looking forward to yet another managed Greene King pub, The Fort St George, Midsummer Common. But I was to be



pleasantly surprised! Not by the selection of beers - though the Betty Stoggs was livelier than it had been in The Old Spring - but by the enthusiasm and friendly

attitude of the very busy staff, and by the pub itself. The Fort St George is a comfortable traditional pub. The dining area, where I was lucky enough to be offered a seat, is especially pleasant and comes complete with a view of the river.

Slightly weary now, I headed along the river to The Haymakers, Chesterton High Street. This



pub is quite a long way from Mitcham's Corner. Those on foot might consider taking the bus. The number 2 can be caught outside the co-

op on Chesterton Road and stops almost directly opposite the pub.

The Haymakers belongs to Milton Brewery, which means of course that there are a lot of Milton brewery beers on view. On this occasion, perhaps because it was the end of what had been quite a long trail, it seemed to me that all of the Milton range was available. These were accompanied by beers from Oak leaf Brewery, Edwin Taylors Extra Stout and a rather delicious Milestone New World Bitter.

Add to this 4 real ciders and a lager made in Derbyshire and you have what some pub landlords would consider to be a full-scale beer festival every day. I spoke to Jo, the Haymakers Deputy Manager, who told me how pleased they were to be a part of the Mitcham's and More Ale Trails. The Haymakers will be arranging music events for the Friday and Saturday evenings.

Finally, it was time to go home. Fortunately I live in the Chesterton area so I didn't have far to go, but as I cycled along I did have time to reflect on the pubs I'd visited.

I was struck by the diversity of pubs on the tour. Perhaps I liked some rather more than others, but they all – even the Greene King pubs – were slightly, sometimes strikingly, different from each other, and I could see why those that don't appeal to me, might appeal to someone else.

Would I do the trail again? Yes, I would. Maybe not all of the pubs or all at one time, but I'd give it a go.

The Mitcham's and More Ale Trails run from 5th September to 20th September 2015 so don't try to do it all at once!

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Cider and Perry Appeal

Apple & Pears – Cockney rhyming slang for stairs – well real Cider and Perry could well be the stairway to heaven!

Whilst CAMRA is widely recognised as the leading campaigner for real ale, it is also heavily involved in the promoting of real Cider and Perry. We want to know if your local pub (whether you're the landlord, a patron or even a brewer) offers real Cider and Perry on a regular basis.

The definition of Real cider is a simple concept to understand - Real Cider is a long-established traditional drink which is produced naturally from apples and is neither carbonated nor pasteurised. Perry is the equivalent drink made from Perry pears.

For a while Real Cider and Perry has been on the decline – even in the heartlands of Western England, local producers have been diminishing but the tide is hopefully starting to turn and we are seeing a new breed of Cider and Perry producers putting their heads above the parapet.

We want to understand more fully what our region has to offer.

The information we are after is:

- How many real Ciders and Perries are regularly available at your local pub
- Are they locally supplied or do they come from further afield
- How popular are they with customers
- If your pub doesn't currently stock real Cider or Perry, would you would like to see them offer it to their customers
- If you are a local supplier we would also like to hear from you, telling us who you supply – and a brief history of your organisation

The Cambridge branch of CAMRA has not had a Cider and Perry Officer for a few months now

and we are looking to fill this vacancy. To help us we need to establish good contacts within our pub community, so your input would be welcomed with open arms.

At the latest Cambridge beer festival, attendees were presented with near on 100 variations of Ciders and Perries to sample. I have to admit to trying quite a few and very nice they were too.

In the next few months we are going to be upping the profile of Cider and Perry in our region, so your contributions will be extremely useful. Future editions of the ALE magazine will contain in-depth articles dedicated to leading you to the stairway to heaven.

Please email any comments you have to cider@cambridge-camra.org.uk

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