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Cambridge & District Branch Newsletter Issue 392 April 2019



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Pub News



The **Hopbine, Fair Street** closed its doors to customers on the 20th February. The shocking surprise came

as a result of on-going difficulties with the private owner of the pub.

Outgoing tenants, Hayley and Steve Pellegrini tweeted:

"It is with a heavy heart we must announce that The Hopbine on Fair Street will be closing on Wednesday the 20th February.

After prolonged negotiations with the landlady we have been unable to reach an agreement that would give us a longer, secure lease and let us invest in the business to develop its long-term future.

*We are very proud of what we have achieved over the last 7 ½ years, even with the difficulties and restrictions placed upon us during that time, we would like to thank all the staff for their hard work, dedication and understanding. Many of them will be taking positions in one of our sister pubs **The Portland Arms** and **The Alexandra Arms**.*

We would also like to say a massive thank you to all of our customers. The clubs, groups and regulars that have supported us, and made The Hopbine a vibrant community hub."

The couple are looking at other projects and opportunities and urge us all to "Watch this space".



Another surprising announcement of imminent closure came from **The Pint Shop**. Fortunately, on

Branch Diary

Don't forget that all Branch members are very welcome to attend the monthly business meetings, as well as our socials.

Tue 26-Mar: 08:00pm, Branch Gala Night. Invitation only.

Tue 9-Apr: 08:00pm. Open Branch Meeting, Hoops, Barton.

Sat 13-Apr: From noon. Branch Strolling Social along the No. 13 bus route. Contact alistair.cook@cambridge-camra.org.uk.

Sat 27-Apr: From 11am. Branch Campaigning Coach Tour. CAMRA members only. Contact social@cambridge-camra.org.uk.

Tue 14-May: 08:00pm. Open Branch Meeting, NCI, Holland Street.

Mon 20-Sat 25-May. Cambridge Beer Festival. Jesus Green.

Tue 11-June: 08:00pm. Open Branch Meeting, Wylde Sky Brewery Taproom, Linton

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To Advertise

To place an advert or enquire about our rate card please contact: Neil Richards - 01536 358670, n.richards@btinternet.com www.matelotmarketing.co.uk

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second reading, it is the Pint Shop in Oxford that is closing, not our own of 10, Peas Hill, which remains fully functioning and very busy.

A number of closed pubs in the Cambridge and District area await decisions from the planning authority before they will know their fate.



Let's hope they don't go the way of **The Volunteer**, Trumpington Road, where

permission has been given for it to be developed into flats.



Permission has also been given for a residential structure to be built to the rear of **The Six Bells**, Fulbourn, The

development will remove a large portion of the pub garden, and will go forward in spite of objections from the Parish Council.



Wren, St Kilda's Avenue, might open as a pub sooner than we thought: http://www.cambridge-news.co.uk/news/cambridge-news/what-happening-jenny-wren-pub-15779430#ICID=ios_cambridgenews_AppShare_Click_MailShare

Brighter news from The Cambridge News, suggests that **The Jenny**



The landlord of **The Queen's Head**, Newton has lengthened the pubs opening hours. Now open all day Saturday

and Sunday, the pub menu features Sunday Roast dinners. Be aware though that the Tweet making this announcement mentioned that dinners would be served on **some** Sundays. It may be a good idea to check social media before making your visit:

www.facebook.com/Brownsouppub/



The St Radegund, King Street, continues to supply good value ale at £2.00 a pint. A recent dark ale

event saw the pub, which is tied to Saffron Brewery, also introduce some quality guest porters.



It was nice to see beer from a local brewery in **The Golden Hind**, Milton Road, when I popped in the other day. It was

even nicer that the Turpin's Stout, which is a SIBA awarded champion beer, was in very good condition.



Michael from **The Regal**, St Andrews Street has contacted us asking to publicise a couple of events. The JD

Wetherspoon owned pub will be offering 20% off food for card-carrying CAMRA members during the week 20th to 25th May. The offer is planned to coincide with our own Cambridge Beer Festival, but is also to celebrate 20 years of the company running the pub. The management are, Michael continued, also in the initial stages of planning a "Beer Fair". Check out the The Regal Wetherspoon website for further details.

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The Grain and Hop Store, Regent Street, is holding Armed Forces

and Veterans Breakfast Club meetings on the first Saturday of every month. There are no subscriptions to join the club, which has a stated ethos of mutual support. <https://www.greeneking-pubs.co.uk/pubs/cambridgeshire/grain-hop-store/>

It is always nice to receive feedback from readers – even when they don't agree with us. Steve Capes wrote to comment on Jerry Ladell's recommendation in ALE 291, of the **Pitcher and Piano**, Newcastle, as a pub to visit on a football away day. Describing The P&P as "rather soulless". He went on to make his own recommendations:

*"**The Strawberry**, right opposite St James' is a great old pub and a must visit before matches, good ale too.*

*Plus down on the Tyne and Ouseburn banks is **The Tyne Bar**, again very characterful and great small brewery ales.*

*There's also **The Ship** a bit further up the Ouseburn and another essential visit is **The Crown Posada**, I think on Dean Street, the smallest pub in town, again great ale and an old retro auto changer vinyl player on the bar!"*

Thanks for the advice Steve. We will send Jerry on a voyage of discovery!



Another reader, Harry Bowyer, wanted to tell us about his local pub, **The Crown** in Linton, which he describes as, "A splendid pub with friendly staff." Harry also sent this photo cum watercolour (IT wizardry!). Thanks Harry



Due to popular demand, **The Red Lion** in Swaffham Prior now have Batemans XXXB as one of their regular beers.

Landlord, Stephen King also reports that they will now be open for food on Tuesday lunchtimes. Other news is they are planning to host a beer, lager and gin festival to coincide with the Swaffham Prior Feast weekend on 24th and 25th May. Live music on the Friday will be from The Melody Beats, with The Judith Charmers Duo on Saturday evening.



Meanwhile, just down the road, **The Black Horse** in Swaffham Bulbeck are serving each

monthly beer from Charles Wells Wandering Brewer Project for £3 a pint. January saw Pilgrim Pale Ale brewed in collaboration with Thornbridge (Derbyshire). This beer was in sparkling form and went brilliantly with a bar snack of freshly prepared steak fajitas for only £3.50. February is set for Roamer Special Red Ale (4.3%) brewed with input from Tring Brewery (Herts). They also have a mini biography of Charles Wells painted on the wall of their lounge which I have not noticed before ...



A little further down the B1102, **The Dykes End** in Reach continue to provide regional ales and good home cooked food.

While delivering ALE magazine, they had ales from Adnams and Grainstore brewery.

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Pub News continued

Standouts include a seniors lunch special on Tuesdays and Wednesdays with 2 courses for £8.50, and Pie and a Pint night (£10) on Wednesdays.



News that Gladys Emmanuelle is soon to open her first micro-pub have yet to be confirmed. The Arbury area of Cambridge is rumoured to be the target area, but no specific location has been identified. When

asked, Gladys would only confirm that the pub would be human-friendly.

Brewery News

Whoop! Whoop and the sound of Klaxons echo through the office as we celebrate yet another glut of awards for our local brewers.

Congratulations to **Milton Brewery** for winning Silver (Nero, Stout) and Bronze (Pegasus, Best Bitter) awards in the recently held CAMRA Champion Beers of East Anglia tasting.

There is great kudos and lots of smiling emojis too for Sam and Matt of **Calverley's Brewery**. Their Porter was awarded Gold in its category, and then went on to win Silver overall. I for one hope this means we will see more real ale served in the predominantly craft ale outlet **Calverley's Brewery Tap**, Hooper Street.



Sam Calverley

Talking about Craft Ales, I read an article in The Telegraph the other day that suggested the craft beer bubble may be about to burst. This assumption seemed to be based on the fact that only 434 new breweries opened in 2017, down from 520 in the previous year.

Unperturbed by this thought, and following on from our introduction of Linton's **Wylde Sky Brewery** in Pub News, Ale 391, we have discovered two local and recently opened nano-breweries – though, in fact there is only one brewer – let me explain ... **Roughacre Brewery** is based in Castle Camps. The brewer, Mark



told us about two of the beers he brews, a 4.4% ABV amber ale, called Ashdon Amber, and a lighter 3.6% golden pale ale, brewed for the festival season called Zestival.



Cock, Castle Camps



Rose and Crown, Ashdon

It is very much a small set up and there is a high demand for his beer. It can occasionally be found in pubs local to Castle Camps, including **The Cock**, and **The Rose and Crown** at Ashdon.

The Cambridge Craft Beer Company is based in Great Eversden. Their head brewer is... Mark from Roughacre Brewery – where all of their beers are brewed.

Ollie and Josh, the owners of the Cambridge Craft Beer set up come up with ideas and then they call on Mark to work on the recipes with them.

Mark assured us that the recipes, the ingredients and the yeasts for each brand are kept separate from the other. You see, it all makes sense!

If you have have news to share, please email it to us pub-news@cambridge-camra.org.uk. We send out monthly news emails to our branch members. To receive them, ensure that CAMRA has your email address.

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A Disorderly House

by Nick Barraclough

A book review by Will Smith



to tell. The Flying Pig, formerly, The Crown, formerly The Engineer of 106 Hills Road Cambridge, has more than a few.

Quirky? Yes, that's how I would describe this book. I especially love the artwork, most of it provided by friends of The Flying Pig pub, some taken from Cambridge archives – oh and the photographs, an eclectic mixture of Victorian portraits, juxtaposed with Pythonesque montage and modern day snaps of staff parties, solo musicians and bands, the hosting of which has justifiably brought the pub much fame.

As we are all aware every pub has at least one story



which, whilst it may not be as notorious as the activity of the Ms Bensons, Licensees in 1857 and after whom the book is named, looks to me to be so much more fun.

I enjoyed the book all the more knowing that all proceeds are in aid of Cancer Research UK.

A Disorderly House. Ninja Barmaid Publishing. Available from The Flying Pig, 106 Hill's Road Cambridge

Nick Barraclough, himself a musician and a local celebrity, has an easy-going writing style. His narrative takes us on a journey through 175 years of Flying Pig history. Along the way we are introduced in detail to each of the 18 or so previous licensees, before meeting up with present day incumbents, and sponsors of this book, Justine and Matt Hatfield. It is clear that they are enjoying their tenure. It seems to me that life in The Pig is very much a party,



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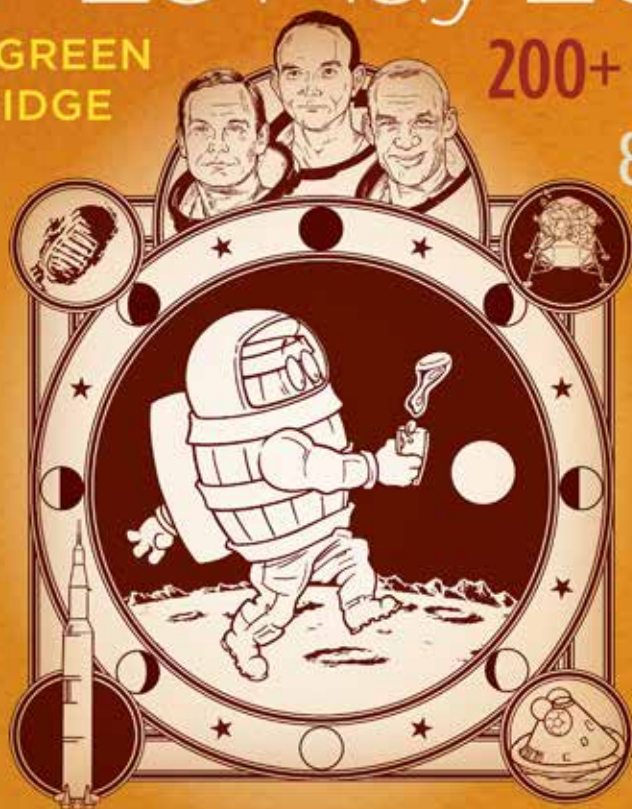
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'It tastes like blood'

Another (late) Festive Tour

Ale can be divisive, especially in an era where the boundaries of flavour and aroma are constantly being not so much pushed as rammed by an out-of-control freight train full of Cascade hops. It's not uncommon for, say, an 11% melon-infused porter to elicit disapproving shudders from the more traditional palate. Still, it came as a surprise during our idle discussion of session beers in the Free Press that Liam should have such a strong aversion to, of all things, Old Speckled Hen. The ensuing defence of the venerable bitter by some members of the party, and its corresponding savaging at the hands of others, led to tempers getting rather more frayed than they ought to be at two in the afternoon after only a pint and a half. Carry on at this rate and the crawl would have ended in a tea-time punch-up outside the Cambridge Blue in front of startled carol singers. And no-one wanted that, least of all those loyal readers of Ale who may (or, most likely, may not) remember from last year in Ale 386 our foursome's little jaunt round the Christmassy Pubs of Cambridge, and who might be anxious to read its sequel.

Well, here you have it at last, our verdict on the festive ales, decorations and overall levels of goodwill towards men to be found in seven of Cambridge's finest drinking establishments, written and published a healthy three months after Christmas itself. Given the delay, I can only hope reading it has a similar effect to that of discovering an unopened Christmas card with £20 from a distant aunt, rather than of finding a sludge of gangrenous mince pie remnants under the settee. With a few minor changes of personnel, the crawl was planned out along similar lines to last year – pubs recommended in the Good Beer Guide, all to be found within a twenty-minute walk of the station, and all with reputations to uphold.

We began, as before, at the **Elm Tree**. The bar here is cosy, classy, unpretentious. Unfortunately, upon entering we realised that we had perhaps made a mistake in the scheduling of our crawl, in that we were only in



of Belgian Christmas Beers that had awaited us last time. Sighing at our incompetence, and hoping that those who came after us would be luckier, we divided our efforts between Orval (6.2%), Shefford's Dark Mild (3.8%) and Pheasantry's Best Bitter (also 3.8%). Above our heads in the back bar hung the Hallowe'en paraphernalia we had noticed this time a year ago, prompting us to wonder if they were a permanent fixture, or if ancient tradition dictates



with this wonderful establishment.

the second week of December and so too early for the extensive brochure

that Hallowe'en in Cambridge must last for a few weeks, like Lent. Unable to find answers to this, we were at least enlightened in our discussion of 'So what is a Porter, then?' by a handy copy of Michael Jackson's incomparable Beer Companion taken from the nearby shelf. Full of our first pints, and tales of 'Plain' and 'Entire', we departed, still smitten



Next came the **Free Press**, which got a slightly bad press last

time round. Back in the heady days of 2017, some had been dubious about Coldplay on the stereo and a certain Scrooginess in the décor. Well, what a transformation! A big wreath on the door, white fairy lights all along the back of the bar, and a generous helping of greenery and pine cones, all set against the Festive sounds of...Eric Clapton. This was the prospect that greeted our arrival, and a welcome one it was too. As we made our way through halves of Woodforde's Wherry (3.8%), Black Sheep (3.8%) and Otter Amber (4% and winning the first '8/10' of the crawl) we were joined by many other afternoon drinkers and, in the glow of the coal fire, readily forgave the lack of Christmassy Ales. Matt, a sceptic last year, even went so far as to ask: 'Is this the best Greene King pub in the world?' Which got us talking about Greene King which then got us talking about Old Speckled Hen and we don't need to get back into all that argy-bargy again. Onward!



The **Cambridge Blue** followed, well stocked as ever with Belgian beers and flaunting its magnificent array of hand pumps. At last – the festive ales we'd been searching for! Take your pick from Coastal Brewery's 'Frosty' (4.2%), Nene Valley's 'Lone Star' (3.7%) or the terrifically-named 'A Winter's T'Ale' (4.7%) from Turpin's Brewery, and, having chosen, why not book yourself in for the Christmas Buffet, 10 items for £19.95? We relished our wintry beers, with 'Frosty' having a certain, shall we say,



'agricultural', aroma that I for one tend to associate with the winter time, the powerful tang of the farmyard blowing across snowy fields. My companions demurred. Yet despite the healthy



beer selection, the ubiquitous yellow fairy lights and abundance of wreaths, we felt sad that

one part of the Cambridge Blue package had bitten the dust – the 'Real Ale Twats' cartoon had vanished from the Gents and so the pub is docked a festive point accordingly. Fair's fair.



A pub that seems to have perhaps an ambivalent attitude to Christmas is the excellent **Devonshire Arms**. To go with the Christmas tree and silver tinsel was black-and-orange Hallowe'en bunting, while the artificial frost sprayed at the bottom of the window panes jostled for position

with spooky cobwebs sprayed at the top. Further evidence of the 'Cambridge Hallowe'en Month', perhaps? Still, this was at least an acknowledgement of Christmas where last year there had been a flat-out denial of its existence. White fairy lights and Christmas cards adorned the bar, and the Devonshire put in a very strong showing on Yuletide drinks: Milton's Saturnalia (5.3%) was well-received by Liam, and Matt repeated his '10/10, a perfect beer' review of Minerva. The crowning glory, though, was a

'It tastes like blood' continued

glass of hot Mulled Mead, a drink I have never encountered anywhere else. Despite being a whopping 10% it slipped down with a medicinal ease, and having been passed round the group led Matt (now in quite an effusive mood) to declare it 'The Milk Of Paradise'. High praise indeed!

From this point onwards our crawl ventured into pastures new. First came **The Geldart**, a fresh take on the traditional pub, with hand-pumps topped by pieces of musical instruments, vintage rock and roll on the stereo and crisps served in a basket, circumventing the age-old ritual of 'trying to tear the packet open to be shared out on the table without spraying crisps all over the floor.' A lack of, well, any Christmas decoration met with little resentment. As Liam said: 'It's so exuberantly decorated anyway, it doesn't need it.' A varied selection of beers was tucked into: Laine's 'Broker Pale Ale' (4.1%), Oakham 'Citra' (4.2%) and Adnam's 'Ghost Ship' (4.5%) and we concluded our visit by asking the bar staff how the pub acquired its unusual name. 'Not a clue' came the reply. 'We don't even know what it means.'



The penultimate pub was, shall we say, not exactly primed for our party. A Cambridge pub of impeccable standing, the **Live And Let Live** marked a change of pace from the silly jumpers and Jerry Lee Lewis of the Geldart. Here was a quieter atmosphere, a few serious-minded locals supping non-Christmassy ales at the bar. Being a Good Beer Guide staple, the refreshments were excellent – Oakham Citra, Titanic's 'Last Call Porter' (4.9%) and a brilliantly adventurous coriander beer: Nethergate's 'Umbrel Ale' (3.8%). Not wishing to upset the

contemplative ambiance we confined ourselves to completing the crossword from a 2014 edition of Skipton and Craven CAMRA's magazine: 'Alesman', and having gotten stuck on one clue were helped out by a gentleman at the bar. 'Tydd Steam's what you're after!' he said, and we learned that maybe there's more to festive spirit than just tinsel and Slade. Sometimes a bit of human fellowship's all you need.



And human fellowship was in plentiful supply at our final calling point, **The Flying Pig**. Being older men now, we had flirted with halves for a lot of the afternoon, but here full pints of Adnam's 'Sloe Storm' (4%) were raised as our crawl came to an end in the busy hubbub of 'A Disorderly House.' This merry moniker was the title of a history of the Flying Pig by Nick Barraclough, a book purchased at the bar by Raph as a souvenir of the whole affair. The look of the pub is one that suits this season well – dark red lamps illuminating the glamour of theatrical posters from floor to ceiling, dark red candles burning in old bottles of Jack Daniel's, though sadly not a speck of tinsel was to be found. Perhaps we were, once again, just a bit too early.

Meandering to the station under fenland stars, we reflected on all the day had brought and we thought it good. Before the dangerous topic of a certain wildfowl-themed ale could be brought up again, Matt intervened with one of his characteristic rhetorical questions: 'What other city in the country, nay, the world, has this many good pubs in such concentration?' Of answer came there none.

Matthew Fraser

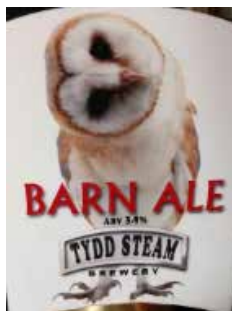
Bringing in the Reserves by Fred Laband

Two recent beer festivals have seen significant sales of reserve beers. "Reserves" are beers that are not initially available, and are only brought in when the first beers begin to sell out.



At Bedford beer festival in October one such reserve was Batemans XXXB (4.8%) which only appeared on the 4th day (Saturday). As soon as it was tapped, many beer tickers pounced, a number of which

commented that this ale was a rarity to be found in pubs these days. (I personally have never seen any Batemans ale at a beer festival...) More significantly, quite a few younger drinkers were choosing it as Batemans was a name that they had not come across before and they had assumed that it was a one-off from some recently created microbrewery. The XXXB (actually CAMRA Supreme Champion in 1986!) was in top form, both fruity and biscuity.



At Ely festival at the end of January, the Tydd Steam Barn Ale appeared around 1pm on the Saturday. By 5.30pm it had already sold out! Another well balanced bitter at 3.9%, this light grassy ale is a big favourite of mine. This beer can be reasonably found

around the area, as it comes from Tydd St Giles, just north west of Wisbech.



Also at Ely, two others stood out: festival volunteers Wendy, Dominic and Fred all had different favourites but Dominic could not be tempted away from the Heritage Brewing

Charrington IPA (4.5%). This classic London IPA is now brewed in Burton-upon-Trent to the same



original recipe (using only English hops). We did all agree that it had a pleasant hoppy spruce bite – with floral and fruity notes. Wendy loved the citrusy Milton's Orestes (5.4%), which should easily be found in and around Cambridge.

A few beers possibly to look out for...



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The following local pubs offer a discount to CAMRA members on production of a signed and up to date CAMRA membership card: Please ask at the bar for further details.

The Alexandra Arms, 10% off a pint.
 The Brook, Brookfields, 10% off a pint
 The Cambridge Brewhouse, King Street, 10% off Cambridge Brewing Company Beers.
 The Emperor pub and Latin Tapas bar, Hills Road, 20p off a pint.
 The Golden Hind, Milton Road, 10% off a pint.
 The Hopbine, Fair Street, 10% off a pint.
 The Kingston Arms, Kingston Street, 20p off a pint.
 The Maypole, Portugal Place, 20p off a pint.
 The Mill, Mill Lane, 10% off a pint.

The Old Ticket Office, Station Square, 10 % off real ales
 The Pickerel, Magdalene Street, 10% off a pint.
 The Portland Arms, Chesterton Road, 10% off a pint.
 The Station Tavern, Station Square, 10% off real ales
 The Red Lion, Brinkley, offers 40p off a pint.
 The Red Lion, Grantchester, 10% off a pint
 The Red Lion, Histon, offers 40p off a pint.
 The Plough & Fleece, Horningsea, 10% off a pint.
 The Crown, Linton, Happy Hour at all times for CAMRA members.
 The Black Horse, Swaffham Bulbeck, 10% off food and real ale.
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**CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE**

Wandering in Bedford by Fred Laband

It is December 27th. I find myself needing to spend a couple of nights in Bedford with considerable time on my hands. I arrive on the X5, attend to the business of the day and go to **The Wellington Arms** just north of the town centre. The L-shaped bar affords about 10 real ales, usually including several Banks and Taylor beers and Adnams Bitter. This pub is my most regular drinking hole in Bedford, and I find that it never seems to change. It has a real drinkers feel to it, bedecked with hundreds of pump clips, mirrors, jugs, bottles, etc. It also has copies of *The Firkin*, the CAMRA magazine of North Bedfordshire which is of course a sister to ALE from Cambridge.

I settle down with my Nethergates Red Poll (4.2%) and raise my glass to absent friends. The beer has a lovely dark amber hue, tasting quite woody. It has some caramel sweetness and a little bitterness. To some, this beer would be unexceptional, but I find the gentle balance very satisfying. A visit to "The Welly" is not complete without a short trip to the lavatories, an experience where one has to step over the cellar hatch to access the gents and the ladies. On other trips I have seen this hazard in use and have had to take a more circuitous route, but today there is no obstacle.



I decide to move on, and only a few minutes away is **The Burnaby Arms** on the corner of Stanley Street and Palmerston Street. A Charles Wells pub, this has seen great investment in what is actually quite a small back street boozer. As I enter through the corner door, I am almost on top of the bar. I have a



choice of 3 real ales tonight and I go for Red Robin Special Ale (4.3%). This has been brewed by Charles Wells in Bedford in collaboration with Adnams of Suffolk.

Since the brewery was bought up by Marstons, Charles Wells has started several initiatives including the planning and building of its own new brewery near Clapham, just to the north of Bedford. This new site will be 1/30th of the size of their current home, and will focus on brewing their core ales plus at least one further seasonal. In what has become known as The Wandering Brewer Project, as I understand it, in the interim period before the new brewery is in place, Charles Wells are experimenting with a different ale each month. They invite feedback and ideas which they plan to inform their future brewing. Red Robin is the 15th new "Wandering" beer to appear so far, and is a good example of a red ale, which I find quite peppery. I raise my glass again to absent friends and can't help but feel a little Scottish as I empty my glass. The Burnaby Arms has a bubbling holiday atmosphere, and although tempted to stay, I cannot settle.



Another short walk finds me in the recently re-opened **Foresters Arms** in Union Street. I have often driven past this derelict shell, but am delighted to say that this pub has had some serious

money pumped into it, again by Charles Wells. The interior benefits from lots of soft lighting beneath its high ceiling and the most impressive Christmas tree I have ever seen in a pub (possibly 10 feet high?!). Round the back there are several side rooms and alternative seating along a conservatory that has lots of reading material and a wide choice of games/puzzles. I enjoy the variety of high and low tables. Also the outside area boasts a sheltered and heated enclosed terrace, which occasionally hosts... craft fairs! There are 4 pumps, offering today 3 real ales. Youngs and Wells beers are the regulars, but I opt for a pint of Adnams Ghost Ship (4.5%). I find this quite cloudy and am not too happy. A fellow drinker has the same issue and he frogmarches me to the bar insisting that we will be well looked after. I am not one for complaining, but am impressed when I am instantly offered a pint (with no quibbles) from the fresh barrel. This pub could not have impressed me more, although paying over £4 a pint did startle me...

The next day finds me in The White Horse in Newnham Avenue on the outskirts of Bedford. This pub has 4 or 5 real ales on, and again is a good example of where Charles Wells have ploughed in considerable funds to refurbish what is a very large pub. There is a large bar and lounge area, booths, low and high tables and in common with The Foresters an attractive garden area. Again I go for a pint of Red Robin which has by now become my Christmas beer of choice.

When Charles Wells was initially sold (in May 2017), like many others I was aghast that a family that has been brewing for over 140 years could so easily sell up. I feared for its future. However, 1 ½ years on and I now reflect on how Charles Wells name seems to be in a good place at the moment and look forward to the coming years with a new brewery, more brilliantly refurbished pubs and, of course, more traditionally brewed fine ales from Bedfordshire.



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The Orchard Project - Apples & Pears - by Jerry Ladell

I was having a look around to see what I could write about for this issue and hot on the heels of my recent report regarding London's first Cider at Hawkes, I came across some information regarding a Heritage Lottery funded project that celebrates and supports community orchards, as well as producing cider from the surplus.

What is The Orchard Project? It is the only national charity dedicated to the creation, restoration and celebration of community orchards.

The Orchard Project works closely with community groups around England and Scotland helping to create new orchards and train people on the skills needed to ensure they will last for decades to come. The charity also restores neglected, heritage orchards.



Herefordshire Redstreak

Their eventual aim is for every home in urban areas to be within easy reach of productive, well cared for, community-run orchards. Their belief is that green spaces maintained by local communities have the

ability to build stronger relationships, bring neighbourhoods together and improves wellbeing.



Alexandra Park planting

The charity runs and awards the UK's first Certificate in Community Orchard, a certified, comprehensive course in which you can learn everything you need to know about managing an orchard, from pest control and botanical hormone cycles, to community engagement and orchard design. The 12-day course runs over a 6 to 12 month period to enable students to learn a wide range of seasonally-appropriate skills.

For those wanting a lower level of commitment, The Orchard Project also runs one-off workshops in fruit tree care, such as pruning and grafting, and volunteer days at their cider press in Walthamstow. See their website for event listings (below).

In their 2017 – 2018 year alone, the organisation planted and restored over 70 community orchards in urban areas. This included planting over 2,000 fruit trees; not just common apple and pear trees, but also including other fruit varieties and rare cultivars of apples in a effort to preserve them.



Orchards have been disappearing from our landscapes for decades – over 60% of traditional

orchards have vanished since the 1950's – mainly due to development pressures, commercial orchards and foreign fruit imports. The charity wants to halt this decline, preserve what we have left and engage the public in these magical, precious spaces.

In 2016 the charity opened the doors of their cider press. Since then they have rescued over 13 tonnes of unwanted fruit across the capital and turned them into delicious drinks; Local Fox Cider is made entirely from apples grown in London. All proceeds from sales are fed back into helping volunteers continue to maintain and rejuvenate the UK's forgotten orchards. Local Fox is a dry, bottle-conditioned cider, its taste determined by the apples donated in each particular small batch.

If you wish to find out more The Orchard Project email address is

orchard@theorchardproject.org.uk

You can even sponsor a tree if you so wish! The charity is of course dependant on funding and welcomes donations to continue their valuable work. Further details:

<https://www.theorchardproject.org.uk>

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Paws for thought. The wonderings of

I love my Sunday morning walk. We often go to Fen Ditton to walk along the bank of the river Cam. We aim for 10 o'clock because that's when the Fen Ditton bell ringers welcome the parishioners to the proud little church. My human companions say that the peal of the bells makes the walk quite magical. I just chase my ball, go for a swim, and sometimes sit and stare at the other humans racing by in their long boats – that's what I call magical!

Sometimes, if we go for a long walk, we stop off



in the Fen Ditton pub called the Ancient Shepherds. It is a dog friendly pub. My humans say that the food is very good. In the winter the landlord lights a fire, though unfortunately not on this visit.

Our friends Michelle Teng and Alan Tang asked me to meet their daughter Sophia in The Green Man, Trumpington, for a New Year's celebration meal. I love children so we had a woofing good time and there was much tail wagging and fun. It wasn't long before Sophia and her daddy had



joined me in playing on the floor.

I'd also like to introduce you to another of my friends. She is called Ruby and she is 2 years old. Here she is after she has tasted some coal she found in my human's coalscuttle. I think you'll agree there is a remarkable resemblance to me.



There is nothing I like better than visiting pubs with my friends from CAMRA, so I was pleased when my male human suggested we joined Ali, Helge and John and lots of other friends as they strolled around the pubs in the Chesterton



Road, Mitcham's Corner area of Cambridge. It was great to find so many dog friendly pubs which, according to the humans, sold a good variety of beers. Elaina in The Boathouse, Mitcham's Corner, gave me a lovely cuddle.

a pub going dog

We then went on, to rub noses (well I did, my male human was too embarrassed - he is very shy) with the regular customers of The NCI Club, Holland Street, which has just opened to the public, and was, when we visited, specialising in beers from northern breweries.



And finally, for us, on to The Portland Arms where we met Hayley and Steve who told us that they had been forced to give up the lease on The Hopbine, Fair Street.



I was very sorry to hear this. The Hopbine was one of my favourite pubs to visit – I do hope it opens again soon, and when it does I hope it continues to welcome dogs. I had to be consoled with some treats from The Portland Arms doggy treat jar whilst my male human drowned his sorrows in a pint of delicious Greene King XX Mild.

We left our CAMRA pack in The Portland because my human said that he needed to go home to edit the next edition of ALE, but we still had time to walk to The Castle, Castle Street, where I received another warm welcome and my human enjoyed The Adnams Ghost Ship beer



A poster for the 'Community Pubs A Perfect Fit' campaign. It features a central green puzzle piece with the text 'Community PUBS A Perfect Fit'. Surrounding it are several red puzzle pieces with various pub-related activities: 'SPORT', 'PUB GAMES', 'SOCIALISING', 'LIVE MUSIC', 'MEETING FRIENDS', 'EATING & DRINKING', 'SPECIAL OCCASIONS', 'PUB GARDENS', 'PUB CHARITY', and 'MEETING FRIENDS'. Below the puzzle pieces, the text reads: 'Please support your local pub, or your community might end up missing a vital piece.' At the bottom, there are logos for 'WHAT PUB' and 'COMMUNITY PUBS CAMPAIGN'.

On Your Bike by Ali Cook

Pubs Officer Ali Cook continues his cycling tour of Cambridge and District Branch Pubs

It was a Sunday at the tail end of January, the festive season was long gone and it was high time for another of my cycling tours. The first



pub on my tour was the **Black Horse in Dry Drayton**. It was my first visit since it had opened under new

management and it certainly is more welcoming than I remembered it being. Being so close to the brewery, the pub features at least one Lord Conrad beer. On this occasion it was the Hedgerow Hop. I tried the guest ale, Adnams Broadside, which was very good.



Cycling by the **Blue Lion, Hardwick**, I noticed that there were lights on. I tried the door and caught the new

licensees up ladders with paintbrushes in hand. They said the pub should be opening towards the end of February (note to self: go visit! Ed). ALE deliverer Pete Webb, later told me that the new licensees would be placing a strong focus on beer, and that the food menu would feature pub classics, rather than the fine dining preferred by the previous licensees.

I then called in at the **Caldecote Social Club**.



No real ale, I'm afraid, just keg. I opted for the Greene King East Coast IPA in preference to

the GK IPA or one of their lagers.

Whilst in Caldecote I spotted a roadside sign

saying "cake, coffee, ales". I investigated and discovered the **Sidewalk Coffee shop**.

Unfortunately it wasn't open at the time but I have since exchanged Facebook messages with them. They do have a license but at the moment they are "refocusing the business" and may not stay licensed. The owners also run a micropub in Papworth that serves cask ales from **Papworth Brewery**, which is now based in Earith. They have considered doing something similar in Caldecote, probably introducing KeyKeg beer to the area.

On the following Sunday, having dropped off



ALEs in Harston, I ventured on to the **Plough in Shepreth**. The Bishop Nick Heresy was very good and

the Grain Redwood delicious. They also had Tring Ridgeway and Adnams Ghost Ship on offer. I opted instead for the Cloudwater DDH which was one of their five craft keg beers. It was lovely. I then moved on to their real ciders & perries. They had 20 on offer, all but 4 of them from Cambridgeshire. I started with a Cambridge Cider Co Angry Wasp and then Simon's Cider East Meets West and COX!!!. All were very enjoyable.

I love to cycle, but I am also not averse to being given a lift, so when Simon Gibson of Simon's Ciders offered to drive me around a few pubs I couldn't really refuse. Our first stop was at



Bottisham Community Sports and Social Club.

They offered Elm Tree Best Bitter, Severn Late Hopped Pale Ale, Crafty

Beers Sauvignon Blonde and Greene King IPA. I enjoyed halves of the first three. Their Beer

Festival this year will be on the early May bank holiday weekend and will include a Race Night on the Saturday, karaoke on the Sunday and a Family Fun Day on the Monday.



We then headed to the **Crown Inn in Ashley** to check out their ciders.



Next we called in at the **Reindeer, Saxon Street**. They had one ale on. It was their house beer, Reindeer ale. It was quite tasty if a little lifeless.

We called in at the **Chestnut Tree, West Wrating**. The Harvey's Sussex Best Bitter and Church End Vicar's Ruin were both very enjoyable.



The Cock, Castle Camps was our next stop. We were trying to track down some

Roughacre Brewery beer on cask. Unfortunately it wasn't available but the pub does usually sell Roughacre beer and we were told that the cask should be on in a few days time. We settled for a few bottles to take home and a half pint of cask conditioned Woodforde's Wherry – which was fine.



We finally tracked down some Roughacre Hawker Gold at the **Rose & Crown in**

Ashdon. It was pretty hazy as it is unfinned. It was well balanced: biscuit malt and hops. Licensee Hans, who gave us three more bottles of the Roughacre beers, spoke highly of the brewer and of his beers.

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A - - - -	N - - - V - - - -	E - - - - -
G - - - - S - - -	B - - B - - T - - - -	C - - - - - B - - - - -
		
B - - - - & T - - - -	M - - - -	T - - - - -
S - - - - - B - - - - -	M - - - - -	T - - - B - - -
		
B - - - - -	C - - - - -	G - - - - K - - -
- - - - -	B - - - - - C - - - - & V - - - - P - - - -	- - - - -
<p>Answers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adnams Ghost Ship Nene Volley Big Rang Theory; Elgoads Cambridge Bitter; Banks & Taylor Sheffield Bitter; Milton Minotaur; Turpins True Blue; Batemans XXXXB; Colchester Brazilian Coffee & Vanilla Porter; Greene King XX Mild 		

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