



Cambridge & District Branch Newsletter Issue 404 August 2023



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Pub News

Welcome to Ale 404!

Before we begin Pub news, I would like to congratulate all of the pub landlords, licensees and managers whose excellent pubs have been recognised with a Cambridge CAMRA award for 2023. A celebration ceremony, hosted by Sam and his team at the Portland Arms, and compered by local celebrity Ali Warwood, took place on 27th June. A full list of award winners can be found later in this issue.



Let's start with further good news. The **Blue Lion**, Hardwick, has re-opened. We are yet to visit, but the revamped website

promises "a warm welcome at this uniquely traditional country pub and Italian Restaurant". **thebluelionhardwick.com**.



Two years after taking on the Hare and Hounds, Harlton, multiaward winning landlord Tom Canning has committed

himself to a further three years tenancy. **hareandhoundsharlton.co.uk**.



The **Black Horse** in
Rampton has
also re-opened.
New licensee,
Ella, is a former
manager of the
Three
Horseshoes.

Stapleford.

facebook.com/theblackhorserampton

Another Three Horseshoes ex manager, Adam, will be moving to the **Live and Let**

Branch Diary

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

Tue 8 Aug 20:00: Open Branch Meeting Square and Compasses, Great Shelford

Thu 10 Aug 19:30-22:30: Thursday Throng Social at the Alexandra Arms

Sat 12 Aug Minibus Tour of Rural Pubs, in and near the south east of the branch area

Tue 12 Sep 20:00: Open Branch Meeting - The Hoops. Barton (tbc)

Sat 23 Sep Strolling Social, visiting some of the

See branch website cambridge-camra.org.uk for more details.

For Consumer Advice:

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www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/

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n.richards@btinternet.com

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Pub News continued

Live, Mawson Road, Cambridge. This follows the announcement that the "shoes" tenant of four and a half years, Chris Diogenous has left the pub. We learned this with great sadness. Chris and his partner Nicola rescued what was an ailing pub and turned it into a great success. However, we are encouraged to hear that new licensees Justine and Duncan intend to keep the pub unchanged. facebook.com/3horseshoesstapleford.



Another welcome reopening in Heydon. The **King William IV**, parts of which date back to the 16th century, is now owned by Carole Ord-

Jackson and her son Alex. A community pub where "Muddy paws, Muddy children and Muddy boots" are welcomed, there is also a happy hour (or three) with drinks available at reduced prices from 4pm to 7pm every Friday. kingwilliamheydon.co.uk.

The **Plough** at Shepreth is now open. Currently limited to weekends, but this could change. For updates check the pub Facebook page

facebook.com/theploughshepreth.

Regular visitors to the **Shed**, Lode will be disappointed to learn that popular landlady Sarah Sturgess is leaving the pub after six years of success. Locals tell us that Sarah leaves without any definitive plans. We wish her well and hope to see her in charge of another pub soon.

Perhaps reflecting the economic strains that pub finances are currently facing there is a long list of pubs needing new tenants. Wells and Company owned the **Golden Ball**, Boxworth, is described by the company as "the perfect country pub". It has an estimated ingoing cost of £47,000 and an annual rent of £68,000. Also with Wells, details of costs for the **Rose**, Stapleford, have at the time of writing not yet been published, whilst the **Admiral Vernon**, Over is being offered with a first-year rent of £7,500.

wellsandco.com/pub-partners-search.

Stonegate is advertising the tenancies of the **Carlton Arms**, Carlton Way, Cambridge, and of the **Three Horseshoes**, Comberton. The former has an estimated turnover of £510,000 a year, whilst, according to the company, the Comberton pub should turnover £365.000.

stonegatepubpartners.co.uk/find-a-pub

The tenancy of Greene King's, **Duke of Wellington**, Willingham, is also up for grabs.

Better news, we hope, from Everards. It looks likely that both the **Rose and Crown**, Histon and the **Architect**, Castle Street, Cambridge have new or extended tenancies, though at the time of writing both are unconfirmed.

Pop up pub organiser Tony Kelly has announced that he is taking a rest from running the **Portable Pint**. In a recent post he stated that he has been running pop up pubs in villages without pubs for six years, but "all good things come to an end." The final event was held in Hadstock - the village where it all began. Tony thanked the people of Hadstock for their support as he invited them to his final event "at least for now..."

And finally, Don Kelly, the chair of the Histon Beer Festival Committee has asked us to mention the forthcoming festival: "We are delighted to announce that the 23rd Histon Beer Festival will take place in the familiar marquee in the (Histon) Red Lion garden from Monday 4th to Friday 8th September 2023." There will be 60 beers and 15 ciders on offer. The festival opens at 12 noon on Monday 4th and will be staying open each day until 11pm. The organisers are seeking volunteers to help - particularly in the set up and take down - so, if you'd like to get involved, enquire at the Red Lion or email andrew.h307@btinternet.com. The 2022 Festival gave record attendances and raised over £12,000 for local good causes and the aim is to match that figure in 2023. See you there!

Will Smith

The Blue Moon

So much more than a young person's pub

"What makes a successful young person's pub?" I asked Sophie Littlechild as she proudly displayed the framed CAMRA award certificates showing that the Blue Moon in Norfolk Street, the pub she has managed since 2016 had been voted the Cambridge CAMRA Young Members' Pub of the Year for the 2nd consecutive year.

"Firstly," she replied, "I don't think we are iust a young person's pub."

Taking a break from the photoshoot, I took a quick look around the room trying to define the demographic of her clientele. It was 7pm on a Thursday evening, and yes there were customers that I, being close to retirement, would describe as young; but some customers were easily the same age as me, possibly older too. There was more than one person looking after their children. Groups of all genders varied from 20s to 40s; friends meeting for an early evening drink - some were clearly looking forward to a pizza - and I must say that I had to agree.

"Our staff are amazing," Sophie went on to say, "they are young, but they are so enthusiastic and friendly. We try to be as inclusive as we can be. We hold regular drag, comedy, and music nights. Electronic music might appeal to a vounger audience."

"We also do a lot of events for the LGBTQ+ community, and specifically state we are a safe space which is so important for a lot of the younger members of the community."

"Friday and Saturday we close at 2am, so we have one of the latest pub opening hours going, so for those that don't fancy clubbing but still want to socialise we're there."

These explanations sound very apt. But, why I wondered, does the pub appeal specifically to younger members of the



Campaign for Real Ale? Her smile is hard to define, perhaps mischievous, perhaps knowing ... "Our selection of beers is (if I may say so myself) incredible." She said. Looking across at the array of interesting craft ales and the selection of four real ales that were on offer that evening, I once again had to agree. Sophie smiled once more. "I get very excited when ordering beers!!"



Music, Beer, Pizza, Gin

Mon-Wed 4-12 Thu 4-1 Fri 4-2 Sat 2-2

OpeningTimes;

The Blue Moon 2 Norfolk Street Cambridge CBI 2LF

Sun 2-10.30

(01223) 500238

cambridge.pub/blue-moon bluemooncambridge

Midlands Meanderings: Lye

Just before the bus from Birmingham gets to Stourbridge is a pub that I've long wanted to visit, but the stop is easy to miss and up to now I always have. But this time I made a special effort to pay attention and not miss it. And I didn't.

The **Windsor Castle** began life as the tap for the family-run Sadler's Brewery, whose original brewery buildings stand behind the pub. Depressingly, drinks giant Halewood bought a majority share in the business in 2017, and at the beginning of 2021 closed the new brewery and moved production to Cumbria. So both the Sadler's name and the successful 'Peaky Blinders' range have been ripped from their proper Black Country context.



Windsor Castle, Lye



All is not lost, though, as Emily Sadler has continued the family tradition, brewing in the old building, now under the name of Printworks Brewery, and the Windsor Castle is back as the brewery tap.

Being right on the main road at a busy junction, the pub is now accessed via the carpark and a side door. The main bar has a lovely stone flagged floor, and there are also many cosy little rooms and other little nooks to get settled in. Of several Printworks beers on offer at the bar, I went for the Bumblebees (£3.20), a very very delicious honey pale ale – so delicious, in fact, that I had to have two, the first went down far too quickly!

This is a really lovely pub, very much a 'local' despite being on the main road, and I'm glad I finally made it.

[Breaking news: As I put the finishing touches to this I learn that the whole site is about to be put up for auction.]

My initial plan had been to carry on into Stourbridge itself as I hadn't been for a while, but I thought I ought to see if there were any other pubs nearby I ought to check out as well while I was here. Thanks to WhatPub I found two, handily just round the corner.

First is the **Railway**, more or less next door. This is a large pub with an even larger garden, again accessed via a side door from the carpark.



Railway, Lye

Being Saturday afternoon, TV sport dominated much of the inside so I went outside with my pint of Wye Valley Butty Bach (not the best I've ever had). Aside

from the liquid refreshment, the pub also offers 'quaffable' (sic) burgers from Hangry Moose. I was happy with peanuts, thanks.





Then a little further along is the **Shovel**, another large pub, with room for both a sports TV area and a plusher

lounge area with many cosy little booths. I went for the latter, and a very enjoyable pint of Enville Ale (£3.80) helped wash down my cheese and onion cob. Many of the walls are decorated with completed comic jigsaw puzzles, a marvellous idea which I think more pubs ought to copy. The garden also boasts the 'Real Ale Wall, featuring more than 1000 pump clips.

From there it wasn't actually too much of a walk (albeit a bit hilly) down to Stourbridge Junction station and the newly reopened **Seven Stars**, somewhere else I'd been itching to visit for a while. So that's where I went.

Built by Mitchell & Butler in 1907, shortly after the opening of Stourbridge Junction, it was a flagship fancy railway inn. It had been shut for quite a while, but last year it was lovingly brought back to life and something of its former Edwardian glory by Black Country Ales, and this was my first chance to try it out.



Seven Stars, Old Swinford

CAMRA's Real Heritage Pubs of the Midlands says this of it:

[T]he Seven Stars has an outstanding collection of M&B etched and painted windows. The entrance hall has lots of light blue and cream dado tiling, which extends up the stairs and into the public bar. That room has its original counter and a superb four-bay, mirrored bar back with a clock-adorned pediment.





Like many other places in and around Stourbridge, the pub also has a notable place in rock history, being one of the venues where such later legends as Stan Webb. Christine Perfect (later McVie), Chris Wood and Robert Plant first developed their craft.

I plonked myself in the very plush lounge, though

if your taste is for something more basic there is another bar on the other side of the

Midlands Meanderings: Lye

entrance, which includes a screen showing live train times from Stourbridge Junction.

A pint of Pig on the Wall (£3.95) refreshed me after my walk and helped fortify me for the walk up the hill and into Stourbridge at last. It was, however, a bit late by now to embark on my usual stroll along the Enville Road and its collection of excellent pubs. so that will have to wait for another time.

A good trip, that: four fine pubs I've never been to before, two of which I hadn't even heard of until I headed out!

Next time: venturing north from Stourbridge. And no, I haven't forgotten about part 2 of Shrewsbury: watch this space.

Steve Linley



The Cambridge Blue

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Food Service Sun-Thu 12-9.30pm **Fri/Sat 12-10pm**



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Apples & Pears

The Royal Standard: Cambridge CAMRA Cider Pub of the Year

A brief read of the CAMRA WhatPub app tells us that the original Royal Standard was built before most of the Victorian housing that surrounds it.

On my one visit in the early 1990s - a works party being held on the first floor- I found a very tired looking pub being run by an enthusiastic but pragmatic landlord. Eventually it closed, becoming a restaurant and then a charity shop before in 2015, a major development reduced the pub to its now manageable size and with a much smaller garden.

The tenancy was taken up by Jethro Scotcher- Littlechild, and is now managed by Jethro's stepson, Martin Read.

Martin previously managed the Blue Moon, Norfolk Street and before that the Carlton Arms, Carlton Way, and altogether has looked after pubs for over 20 years.

When he took over the Standard in 2017 it had already made an impact on the Cambridge pub scene. It then had a Belgium theme. Customers were attracted by a strong offering of both bottled and keg Belgium beers, including the very popular range from Duchesse de Bourgogne. It also offered a changing selection of traditional British beers, four handpumps in all.





On a recent visit I discovered to my delight that in most respects nothing has changed. The bar has four handpumps, and on my visit three of them were in use, displaying beers from Nene Valley and Buntingford breweries. There is also an exciting selection of foreign and craft ales.

But Martin has introduced two main changes which in my view have vastly improved the pub. Firstly, the kitchen now offers a very appetizing Greek menu provided by Tzatziki. Secondly, there are now up to 11 real ciders available. Did I try them all? Well, no, but I can highly recommend Simon's Cox, which at 8.5% was enough for me on one visit.

The Royal Standard is an amazing pub. It fully deserves the title of Cambridge CAMRA Cider Pub of the Year. I shall return.

Will Smith



Lost pubs of Cambridge(shire)

(A guest column from Mark Tinkler on last issue's mystery lost pub, the Brookfield House Inn / Grasshopper, Mill Road)



Mike Pittock. Lost Pubs project

In 1889 three gentlemen applied to the Bottisham licensing authority to sell alcohol. Brookfields, their chosen location, was at the eastern extreme of Cambridge's Mill Road. It was part of the city's everexpanding push beyond its old boundaries, before it was decided where Cherry Hinton ended and Cambridge/Romsey Town began, and before Brookfields was claimed as the eastern end of Mill Road. Two of the three applicants were successful and were granted victualling licenses for two properties. Initially (and confusingly) the public houses were named 'The Brookfield Tayern' and 'Brookfield House'. The first of these later changed its name to 'The Brook' (still operating) and, in around 1950. 'Brookfield House' became 'The Grasshopper'.

William Hogg (1842-1909) was the first landlord. The house was tied to Alexander Tooth's Castle Brewery on Castle Hill before it was bought by J. & J. E. Phillips' Royston brewery.

William Hogg also worked as a carpenter. As such, he was a union man and during a strike in 1891 got himself into serious trouble whilst on a picket line. Labelled by the press



The earliest photo we have of the Brookfield House Inn/Grasshopper, taken sometime after 1899 when Phillips' Royston Brewery took over.

as an 'obstructionist', he was sent to prison for two months after being found guilty of intimidating and assaulting a non-striker.

Subsequent landlords made positive contributions to the community more peacefully, organising share-out clubs, hosting The Royal and Ancient Order of Buffaloes, running skittles and darts teams, and supporting the British Legion.

The name 'above the door' is 'S. Bell'. Samuel Bell



and his wife Emma ran the pub between c.1901 to 1911. There is a strong likelihood that it is them standing in the doorway in this photo.

Music was always a feature of the pub, with nearly all landlords taking out music licenses. Graham Marshall is still remembered for his Saturday night piano sessions and sing-a-longs during the 1950s. Landlord Ron Reynolds was a professional guitarist, pianist and singer. For several

years Cambridge Comhaltas - the organisation for the preservation and promotion of Irish traditional music - met at the Grasshopper before moving to its present home at the Rathmore Club in 1997.

But, as any landlord will confirm, you cannot please everyone all the time. A succession of Grasshopper landlords, from before WW2. learned this lesson when they came up against one particular neighbour and serial complainant: the redoubtable Mrs Annie Miller. Even landlord Albert Arnold (1902-80), who had won several regional prizes for his pub custodianship, was unable to mollify her. In the 1970s, when the Grasshopper's license came up for renewal before the local magistrates, the extent and persistence of her complaints became a matter of public record. Despite choosing to live next door to the pub, she described its existence as 'objectionable'. And boy, did she object! She regaled the court with a litany of complaints. She had, she explained, already informed the police of: the 'noises' and 'nuisances' emanating from the men's conveniences; the stacking of crates against the boundary wall; of her having to come 'face to face' with anyone 'to do with the public house' (whilst agreeing that there was nothing objectionable in what she saw); vehicles parked on the public highway outside her house; the debris and ash from the pub's dustbins blowing onto her garden; and the fanlight over the pub's front door occasionally being left open allowing her to hear what was happening in the bar. She claimed to have 'been held to ridicule' by people living nearby for tolerating the noise - although a succession of immediate neighbours testified to the court as to the how well run and quiet the pub was.

The brewery (Flowers), offered (not for the first time) to make any alterations the magistrates might think helpful in keeping the peace. The brewery's patience was commendable because, as was pointed out, they had already installed double glazing, erected a six-foot wall between Mrs Miller's house and the pub, enclosed the gents'

toilets, installed soundproofing coverings on the floors and put rubber stops on all the doors.

To their credit, the City licensing magistrates recognised the obvious vexatious nature of the complaints and decided that there was no reason why a full licence should not be reissued to the licensee of the Grasshopper – especially after it was revealed that Mrs Miller had been complaining since 1939!

Sadly, all the work the brewery and a long line of landlords had carried out, was not enough to help ensure the future of the pub. The pub called last orders in 1997, was demolished in 2001 and is now flats.

Mark Tinkler

184 11

Hope you enjoyed Mark's guest column. I'll try to persuade him to do some more in the future.

Back to me next issue – sorry! Here's a nice easy one for you:



Please send any reminiscences, gossip or old photos to me at pub-history@cambridge-camra.org.uk let's flesh out the characters of yesteryear!

Steve Linley

Paws for thought

Thank you to those kind people who wrote to me saving that I had make a couple of mistakes in Ale 403, though I think we all know it's not really me that makes the mistakes... Anyway, I am aware that I have a small fan club, and I am always pleased to hear from vou.

In Ale 403 I named Mark Donachy's daughter Amy. Amy is a lovely name and I do have a friend called Amy, but the person I mentioned in Ale 403 is called Jessica.



Jessica at the Kingston Arms

Here we are back in the Kingston Arms which is in Kinaston Street, not Gwydir Street, as someone kindly wrote to sav. I only have little legs, and whilst I auite often bless the around

beneath street signs, I can't always read them.

Thank you to everyone who came to have their photo taken with me at the Cambridge Beer Festival membership stand. There



were so many good photos, but my male human savs there isn't enough room to include them in

this issue, so I have chosen two. The first is



The Beer Birds from Peterborough

Rirds from Peterborough. Towards the end of the week, we started to ask for donations and raised around £50.00 for EACH, the beer festival charity.

If you had your photo taken and haven't yet received an electronic version of your photo could you email the Ale editor (details on Page 1).



I was really pleased to once again be invited to the Awards Evening, and to be asked to present this year's

with a

group of

caught up with me

Saturday,

and the

second

with my

friends.

The Beer

people

on the

who

Cambridge CAMRA Dog Friendly Pub of the Year award. Here I am taking centre stage with event host and comedian Ali Warwood. Congratulations to The Dolphin, Melbourn who won the award for the second year running.

At the end of June my male human and his friend, my uncle Roger, took me on the number 2 bus to Mill Road so that we could visit some of the seven pubs taking part in

The wonderings of a pub going dog

the annual Beer Quarter Festival pub run. We started off in The Kingston Arm - ves in



Kingston Street where I met David and Simon. two important looking

humans who said they were from Ossett brewery in Wakefield. My human spent a lot of time talking to them. He said that he liked Ossett beers, especially the White Rat. which is regularly available in the Kingston.

We then went on to the Petersfield, where I



met Eppie who is the dua landlady and manager. **Eppie**

back of

the pub

garden.

returned

to find

We

him chatting

with

fuss of me and gave me a few treats whilst we waited for my human to set up his camera.

By now I needed a walk, if you know what I mean, so we headed towards the Cambridge Blue, which is in Gwydir Street. Uncle Roger and I left my male human talking and taking pictures around the beer tent whilst we explored the footpath at the



Harry from Singapore, and his friend Dan, who lives in Histon Road.



Our last pub on this trip was the Geldart. Ainsworth Street. CAMRA Pubs Officer Ali Cook was servina Simon's Cider from a small bar he had set up in the dua garden.



Moonshine Brewerv owner Mark Watch was set up in a bar next to him. These are two of

my best friends and I wanted to spend a lot of time with them. My human and uncle Roger didn't mind - they love Moonshine beers.



One final picture. I met this young lady in the Cambridge beer festival. I didn't catch her

name, but it was such a nice picture, I thought you'd like to see it.

> Woof for now. **Gladys Emmanuelle**

Cambridge CAMRA Awards Night

The great and the good from Cambridge CAMRA gathered on the 27th June 2023 with winning publicans and local brewers in The Portland Arms, Chesterton Road, Cambridge to recognise and celebrate some of our best Cambridge pubs. Excellent Beers on offer included examples from locals Moonshine Brewery and Lord Conrad Brewery and Roughacre from Essex. Hosted by talented local comedian and founder of Cambridge Comedy Fringe Ali Warwood. The awards were presented to:

Dark Beer Pub of The Year: Haymakers, Chesterton

Refurbished in 2013 after being closed for two years it became Milton Brewery's second pub in the city. It is popular both with locals and employees from the nearby science park. It has won several CAMRA awards including Community Pub of the Year, and in 2021 was awarded the title of Branch Pub of the Year. This award has been given for licensee Bob's commitment to dark ales. There is always at least one example of the dark stuff on offer, very frequently award - winning beers Milton Nero or the luscious Marcus Auralius.

Locale Pub of the Year (City): Elm Tree, Orchard Street

The Locale award is CAMRA's way of recognising pubs that consistently sell beers produced by local small breweries. Some are tied to the brewery, while others have built up lasting relationships with one or more local brewers. This year's winner has long been a CAMRA favourite. Last year's winner of the City Community Pub award, landlady Jess has been recognised by pub owners Wells and Co for her cellar skills, winning a trophy last year. There are seven handpumps, four of which are guest ales. Most notably, the pub has a lasting relationship with local Roughacre Brewery.

Locale Pub of the Year (Rural): Black Horse, Dry Drayton

Our next pub is a quintessential village pub, tucked away in a side road of Dry Drayton. After being closed for over 18 months the Black Horse reopened on 19th May 2018 and won the Cambridge & District CAMRA New/Most Improved (Rural) Pub of the Year award in 2019. Licensees Colin and Amanda O'Neill pride themselves on providing locally sourced food and drink. They have had a long working relationship with Dry Drayton's own Lord Conrad Brewery.

Most Improved Pub of the Year (City): Pickerel, Magdalene Street

This award goes to the pubs tenants, owners or managers who have worked hard to develop and change a pub for the better. In some cases the improvement is a change in décor. Other times it could be the introduction of real ales into a previously ale bereft pub, or, as in this case, it could be an improvement in the quality of beer that is offered. Pub Licensee. Karl. became manager of this Greene King pub in 2021. There followed an immediate change in the quality and variety of its real ale. He replaced the tired ale lines and additional lines were introduced, giving the potential to sell up to nine different ales. A change in Greene King policies has allowed him to rebuild relationships with local and guest brewers, usually using the SIBA beer list. This is a well-deserved award and reflects. Karl's enthusiasm both for the variety and the quality of his beer.

Most Improved Pub of the Year (Rural): Dykes End, Reach

This picturesque village pub was one of the first pubs in the Cambridge and District area that was saved from closure by a group of villagers. New licensee's Ruth and Dan Marsh have improved the quality of the beer which was voted Beer of the Tour during a recent branch minibus outing. The couple have reintroduced a Sunday menu –

reports say that the Yorkshire puddings are an experience not to be missed.

Community Pub of the Year (City): Grapes, Histon Road

Landlord Sandy has been running the pub for 13 years. Over this time, he has developed a relationship with a community which supports a Division 1 Pool team, but which also caters for less sporty members of the community. He was joined in 2018 by his partner Tara, who introduced a party atmosphere to the pub. Whatever the occasion, Christmas and Halloween get togethers, community BBQs or, Sunday roasts, it is always accompanied by wellmaintained beer. Sandy and Tara both work hard for local causes. Their Summer beer festival raised funds donated to the East Anglian Children's Hospice and Tara's daughter, Shania, had her hair cut very short to raise sponsorship for the Little Princesses Trust, a charity which makes wigs for children suffering with cancer.

Community Pub of the Year (Rural): White Swan, Conington

Tucked away in the village of Conington, the White Swan is a pub you go out of your way to visit. Half of the greensward that fronts the pub is given over to a children's play area. Annual activities for both young and old include conker competitions. The pub runs an excellent beer and music festival. It is well supported by Conington residents, many of whom contributed towards buying the pub when it was under threat of closure several years ago. Beers are served from the cask and are always in good condition.

Young Members Pub of the Year: Blue Moon, Norfolk Street

Presented by John Lockwood, Cambridge CAMRA Young Members Officer. One of only a few pubs to win the same award two years running, the Blue Moon was awarded this title in 2022. It prides itself in its inclusivity. As well as four changing real ales from smaller breweries, there are up to twenty craft keg beers. The pub has a tap

takeover on the first Thursday each month. There are also 90+ gins available, and a good selection of rum. Lots of young people's activities include quiz nights, comedy nights, live music. Being a young person's pub, all events are regularly posted on social media. Turn to page 5 for an interview with landlady Sophie Littlechild.

Dog Friendly Pub of the Year: Dolphin, Melbourn

Presented by Gladys Emmanuelle, Cambridge CAMRA Canine Officer. Our next pub is in our opinion by far the most dog friendly pub in the Cambridge area. It is a community pub with a large garden area which is perfect for entertaining our canine friends. Dogs are allowed inside too. They are sure of a great welcome and a treat or two from landlady Jaquie and her dog loving staff. Every Tuesday morning there is a doggy get together, where the humans chat and drink coffee whilst their canine companions say hello to each other. This pub hosts charity events in support of Heathlands animal shelter, including an annual GRUFTS dog show, which Gladys Emmanuelle promises to enter next year, and new for 2023, a Doggy Disco!

Lifetime Achievement Award: Ian and Donna Wilson, Bell Inn, Bottisham

Presented by Steve Maycock, Cambridge CAMRA Branch Secretary. After 40 years in the business, Ian and Donna, currently landlord and landlady of the Bell Inn Bottisham are fully deserving of this prestigious award. Ian told us that he took Donna on their first date to the Castle Inn. Castle Street Cambridge in 1983. They ran the Hopbine, Fair Street between 1985 and 1989, moving to the nearby Cricketers, Melbourne Place in 1989. In 1993 they took over the White Horse Barton which they ran for three years, moving to the White Horse Waterbeach in 1996. In 2005 they were resident in the Tree in Stapleford, finally moving to their current pub, The Bell Inn, Bottisham in 2010. In an emotional speech

Cambridge CAMRA Awards Night

lan and Donna thanked all their loyal customers whom they had enjoyed serving for so many years. Cambridge CAMRA would like to thank them both for their dedication to the industry, and to congratulate them on having such a long and distinguished career in the local pub scene.

Cider Pub of the Year: Royal Standard, Mill Road

Presented by Jerry Ladell, Cambridge CAMRA Cider Officer. It was an encounter with the late Simon Gibson of Simon's Cider that persuaded Martin, the manager of the Royal Standard that he should venture into the world of stocking real cider. Before then, the Royal Standard was mainly a Belgium themed Pub, with the emphasis being on a Belgium beer and gin list. Both remain, but now the pub provides eight or more ciders at any one time, with many examples unusual to our area, including one from Hereford's Checkley Brook.

Rural Branch Pub of the Year: Chestnut Tree, West Wratting.

Our next pub is another multi - award winning pub. Winning both the Cambridge CAMRA Branch Pub of the Year and the Rural Community Pub of the Year titles in 2019. It was also recognised with CAMRA Lockdown Community Award in 2020, and the Rural Community Pub of the year in 2022. Owners Rachel and Pete have long championed real ale - there is always a dark beer on offer - but they also serve as a hub for the community. Food is purchased from local suppliers, and quest ales are generally from local breweries. Annual beer festivals raise funds for local causes, and the Parish Council has been known to meet in the lounge. It is guite simply the best rural pub in our area.

Cambridge CAMRA Pub of The Year 2023: Geldart, Ainsworth Street

Presented by Ali Cook Cambridge CAMRA Pubs Officer. The award for this pub is long overdue. Before landlord Elvis took it on in 2008 it was notable for only selling one Greene King beer - and not a lot of it. 15 years later it now serves three regular beers and up to five changing guest beers, which always includes one, sometimes two dark beers. The beers are mostly from the Punch list, but also include examples from local breweries, notably Cambridge Moonshine Brewery, and also ales from the SIBA list. Local ciders are also showcased - Simon's Cider being a regular. Elvis is a great supporter of local brewers and cider makers. For Ali, it has the added advantage of being close to his home. There is a full article about the Geldart in ALE 403 cambridge-camra.org.uk/ale-magazine.





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On The Piste... in Oakington



It's another sultry Summer evening in June, and I am out for a cooling drink at the **White Horse** in Oakington. Tucked just around the corner from the main crossroads in the village, it's a pretty white brick building set within quite large grounds.

There is a busy hubbub about the pub; a good mix of people, some clutching what appear to be small attaché cases. One man looks like he's carrying a first aid kit, and I wonder if we are expecting bloodshed! We are served swiftly and with a smile; 2 of the 3 handpumps have real ale on offer tonight and I go for a 3.6% Greene King IPA. I think it is odd that my beer is poured from a very frothy glass jug and naturally ask where it came from. I am told it is from the barrel. My beer is a good temperature but doesn't really taste of much at all.

We venture out into the garden and there are more people with little cases; a group all smartly attired in British racing green polo shirts are assembling and we soon discover that a petanque match is about to start.

The White Horse B team are playing tonight and will host the **King William IV** of Histon. I attach myself to the green-kitted mob from The King Bill. They have a few practice swings, settle on their formation and are set to start. Not knowing anything about this French pastime, we are drawn to this most English of spectacles. The away team win the toss and battle commences.



The eight players from Histon pose for a team photo, and embark on a match of triples. As there are two lanes to play on,

hilariously known as pistes, six players are in action for each team. It is actually quite crowded. Steve, who recently incurred a chainsaw injury to his hand, explains how the thickness of the gravel can affect the bounce, and how in other venues at other pubs it can be very different. The White Horses' pistes apparently also have a soft undulation, meaning that when the boule lands it will kick on and run, but not as much as for example when playing away at the **Red Lion**, their bitter Histon rivals.



Sam, playing with highly polished boules, sets the early standard with some fine, accurate shooting. He manages to get so close to the coche (I thought it

was a jack, but I was wrong) that it cannot be seen. The first to 13 points wins the end. Mario, playing with pitch black boules, keeps the attack going and the King Bill race into a 1.11 lead.

It is time for another beer, and the £4.75 Greene King Hopping Special is excellent. At 4.2%, it has a tangy, tangerine bite. Marketed as an amber ale, but in my opinion really more of a copper or tan, it is quite resinous, with a lovely freshness to the

hops. Late hopping using Galaxy and Citra hops will no doubt have added to the fresh aromas, without adding too much dryness. A really very good pint indeed. Team captain Neil indulges in some negative tactics, killing the coche (knocking it out) to force a new end.



Plav continues and thev manage to win the first triples match. Little would they know that this would be their only success of the evening. The home team win the other triples match to

score, then win the remaining three doubles games to win the match 4-1.



I take a moment to explore the spacious garden and particularly enjoy the pond area. Very attractive.

level the

populated with a rich variety of plants, including orange lilies, it is a real feature of the pub.

One of the King Bill's team (Tom) is very generous with his time. As we watch on, he explains many of the rules and intricacies of this gentle mannered game. Both teams have been very impressive with their approach to what appears a very simple sport, and I reflect that they are really quite professional, yet also very approachable

and keen to share with new faces.



Despite being very tempted to have a go myself, I am happy to sit back in the diminishing heat and watch. According to Neil.

petanque runs throughout the Summer. Other teams in the league are the **Plough** and **Fleece** (Horningsea) and the **George** in Girton. Matches take place pretty well every Wednesday evening. If the good weather continues this Summer, then it is highly likely that I will stumble upon more clinking metal spheres. Next time though, it will hopefully not seem quite so alien, and who knows. maybe I will have a go?

Fred Laband



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