



CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE

# The Beer and Ragged Staff

Issue 72  
July — September 2011



Heart of Warwickshire

## Harbury Beer and Cider Festival 2011

Where did the last year go to?? I can't believe it is time to be telling you about the forthcoming Harbury Beer and Cider Festival again – but it is!

Friday and Saturday 2nd/3rd of September are the dates for the diary this time. As ever the venue is Harbury Village Hall. The Friday evening is 5.30pm – 11.30pm and the Saturday sessions are 11.30am – 4pm and then 6pm – 11.30pm. Please remember children are not allowed in the evening sessions. The entrance package is still £10.00 to include a festival glass programme and beer tokens. CAMRA members will receive additional beer tokens so why don't you all join and get some additional incentives!!

The ever present Hereburgh Morris troupe will be performing on the Saturday lunchtime but this year they have gone all calypso and will be accompanied



by a steel band - that's a cultural exchange that takes a bit of getting your head around. There will be live music from musicians new to Harbury on the Saturday evening.

Now the important bit – the beer!! This year we have three different themes running simultaneously – nothing like being ambitious!! Our

main theme is West Yorkshire with a beer from almost every brewery in that part of Yorkshire (a few won't let us have any!). Most won't have been seen in these parts but the exception will be Timothy Taylor's but just in case you think that will be Landlord then – it won't be!!

Our second theme will be the best porters from the West Midlands region. We are



Continued overleaf  
For LOCALE information please see page 18

To contact the Heart of Warwickshire Branch call 07855 644043

[www.camrahow.org.uk](http://www.camrahow.org.uk)

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hosting the competition for the CAMRA West Midlands Region Champion Porter. The winner from these six fine beers will be announced at the start of the festival and is likely to be drunk out on the Friday night so never mind the England match come and try the best Porter in the area. Some things are more important than football!!

Our third and final theme (are you still keeping up with this?) is our significant birthday! This is the 21st Harbury Beer Festival and we have been asking our Warwickshire breweries to produce a special beer to mark the occasion and I'm pleased to say that most have agreed so yet more new ales to sample. It is also important because after 21 years I have finally been given the key to the door so I can escape and stop doing the beer ordering after this time. But like so many things with this festival where the old saying "If it ain't broke don't fix it" applies, we have got another John to agree to pick up the baton, so I wish John Griffiths all the best for 2012.

If all that wasn't enough we will also have a range of ciders and perries some

local and some prize-winners from Somerset.

On the subject of continuity The Village Hall Committee and the Village GASS (Guides And ScoutS) will once again be providing all the food no doubt building on the popularity last year of vegetarian samosas and pork pies (no the pies are not vegetable ones!). Maybe there will be the odd Yorkshire delicacy on offer.

One important factor to keep an eye on over the next few weeks for those planning on catching the 64 bus to the festival is the timetable. Also check out the 67B which is now to be extended to Harbury. With the withdrawal of County Grants, evening bus services are under threat, but as we go to press we believe these buses will still be operating on Friday and Saturday evenings but again please check with Stagecoach.

The final ingredient that we will have to cross our fingers for will be some fine weather. If we are lucky with that I think we have everything in place for yet another fabulous festival. Hope to see you all there!

[John Crossling – Beer Festival Organiser]

### **Heart of Warwickshire Branch Committee**

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**Press day for next issue (October 2011) is Monday 5th September.**

## **The Beer and Ragged Staff** Issue No. 72 July 2011

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### **The Yorkshire Maid with a Mission - Another of the Tales of the Harbury Chronicles**

**Mary Jane** was issued a **Challenge** which if she had been on the cricket pitch. It was to take a message to the **Duke of Bronte** at the **Westgate Golden door** before the **Southern Cross** could be seen in the night sky.

This was no easy task it was a long way and time was short she would take her best horse **Excelsior** and take the route around the **Three Peaks** through farmer **Hebden's Wheat** field and on past the mysterious **Blackberry Cascade**.

Word of her mission had leaked out and **Callum**, who hated the Duke, set out to stop her and almost succeeded but he had misjudged our lady whose father had always wanted her to play cricket for **Yorks**. When **Mary** was waylaid she picked up a large stick and hit him so hard she would have scored a **Double Six** if she had been on the cricket pitch. It was not for nowt that she had been nicknamed **Hercules** as a lass and so despite **Callum's Best** efforts she was able to press on with her mission. She had lost time and in the gloomy distance she could see the **CamFel Flame**, she was nearly there. She was gradually losing the **Light but Dark** had not quite fallen. She galloped towards the Westgate and as she swung around the corner she saw the Duke wearing his **Golden Best** cape so she could identify him. She rushed up and handed him the message with minutes to spare. It had been close but the six pieces of **Gold Awarded** to her made all her efforts worthwhile.

[John Crossling]

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# David Leafe's Annual London Outing

Mr Leafe's annual outing to London was in fact to Birmingham this year, meaning that the citizens of Battersea do not have to listen to our ringing for at least another year. The reason for the late change of plan was that both the railway lines between Banbury and Oxford and Banbury and Wycombe were undergoing repairs on the chosen Saturday; and we are very grateful to Alan Burbidge at St Chad's in Birmingham for accommodating our quarter peal attempt at such short notice.



St Chad's Cathedral

So it was that seven of us congregated on Warwick station ready to catch the 9.20 to

Birmingham on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> March. Having reached Snow Hill punctually we wandered off to find a coffee shop opposite the Cathedral, where we were joined by Ray who had come on the train from Coventry. After a leisurely coffee we went to St Chad's where Philip saw us successfully through a good quarter of Stedman Triples.

Next came the serious business of the day – a selection of beers and pubs chosen after some considerable research by David. Our first stop was preceded by a 15 minute walk up Constitution Hill north of the city towards the Jewellery Quarter. Here we came across the Lord Clifden. This is an unassuming looking pub but is in the Good Beer Guide and is the Birmingham CAMRA silver award winner for the last two years. Here we came across a new brewery for all of us – Blue Monkey from

Giltbrook, Nottinghamshire. We enjoyed two beers from this brewery – Amarillo (voted by some as the beer of the day), a light 3.9 beer, and 99 Red Baboons a red beer at 4.2.

We also enjoyed a good meal and admired some of the artwork on the walls – many of the pictures having been created by Banksy, perhaps better known as a graffiti artist. His pictures contain many contrasts e.g. the two old ladies knitting sweaters with “Punks Forever” on them; and the African tribesmen, spears raised, cautiously approaching supermarket trolleys.

A short walk then took us to the Drop Forge in Hockley Street. This is a pub that was once the site of a factory, so in refurbishing the building the owners have kept as much of the industrial character as possible, including a display area still housing the original ‘Drop Forge’ machinery. Charles described it as “the trendiest pub I’ve been in on these trips”, a fair comment as the furniture was a mix of settees and high stools. There were a few hand pumped ales on, mainly nationally known beers, but it was a chance for me to have Brakspear’s Oxford Gold (a fairly bland 4.0) for the first time.

Another short walk and we were at the Red Lion in Warstone Lane. This, like the Lord Clifden, is an Urban Arts Bar, and is a mix of the traditional and the trendy. There are the usual brass, wood and leather fittings you



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expect to find in an old fashioned watering-hole as well as well-appointed eccentricities such as work from artists such as the aforementioned Banksy. Here we drank Bathams Best Bitter, which did not disappoint; and North Yorkshire's White Lady, a light organic very tasty 4.7 beer. We also watched Birmingham being knocked out of the F.A Cup, and Jane had a wander round the Jewellery Quarter (and didn't spend anything – phew!) before re-joining us.

Our next stop was a tram journey from the Jewellery Quarter station to Snow Hill then a short walk to the Old Contemptibles on the corner of Livery Street and Edmund Street. This is a pub in the Nicholson's chain and contains mementos commemorating World War One military campaigns of the British Expeditionary Force, after whom the pub is named. There is a wide variety of beer to choose from here and I enjoyed two beers from Thornbridge Brewery – Ashford (a brown ale at 4.2) and Kipling (a very pleasant

slightly fruity 5.2 pale bitter). Philip, Charles and Jane disappeared for a coffee before joining us here, then Jane was puzzled as to what was “ultimate” about the “Ultimate Gin and Tonic”.

We then decided that we could catch the 17:12 train home if we moved fairly sharply, and Philip duly took us up six flights of stairs in Snow Hill car park before arriving at the station just in time for our departure. So ended another of David's well researched and arranged days – a good piece of ringing and an interesting selection of pubs and beers. Thank you David and we look forward to the next one.

[Simon Rogers]



The Old Contemptibles

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## Cider and Perry News

**Some interesting news this month -- in April it was reported that a cider producer near Alcester has scooped three gold medals and a Best in Show for its cider and perry at the Great Lakes Cider and Perry competition held in Grand Rapids, in the United States. Hogan's Cider in Haselor won with its Bottled Medium Cider, Dry Cider, And Vintage Perry 2009, which were all deemed worthy of a top spot in the competition earlier this month.**



Hogan's Dry Cider was also awarded Best in Show from a total of 130 entrants in the standard, speciality, and unrestricted cider categories. All judging was conducted with blind panels consisting of a combination of professional and amateur cider and perry makers, and academic and other professionals tied to the beverage industry. Cider maker Alan Hogan said "I am delighted that the cider and perry have been recognised with gold medals at this impressive event, and to be judged Best in show by one's fellow cider aficionados is a true accolade".

Also in April I received a report from Alcohol Concern regarding the serious impact of super-strength white ciders on the health of the homeless. The simplest solution would be to introduce a minimum unit price per unit of alcohol of 50p. This would mean that, at a stroke, a three litre bottle of Frosty Jack's would jump to at least £11.50.

Alcohol Concern sees a clear need to introduce a new tax band for any ciders above 5% abv, which needs to be at a considerably higher rate if it is to impact on the price of white ciders.

Cider gets significant tax breaks to protect the cider industry for investment in lengthy cider apple production. However, Alcohol Concern states that

it sees no reason why producers who use imported culinary concentrates should benefit from these tax breaks, particularly if this is one of the factors that keeps white cider so cheap. Clearly this "culinary concentrate" concoction is not real cider and should be singled out in such a way as to protect bona fide producers from punitive taxes.

On May bank holiday Saturday I visited the first Southam Beer and Cider Festival. My first port of call was the Olde Mint, where the cider and perry was all from Weston's, Much Marcle in Herefordshire. Ben Barrett the landlord was very welcoming and enthusiastic about all the Festival and gave myself and my friend tastings of all the cider and perry. We decided we enjoyed the Organic Vintage the most. The next stop was the Market Tavern, which only had one cider from Boscombe Farm, Evesham:- Kneeknocker Dry and Sweet cider 6.5%. I liked the sweet the best. We went to the Black Dog where we tasted Thatcher's from Somerset:-Traditional 6%, Heritage 5%, and Cheddar Valley Dry 6%. We liked their Heritage best. Olive and John who run the pub said what a great idea it had been, to join forces and run a Beer and Cider Festival, and hoped it would happen again. The other pubs were:-Southam Sports and Social Club, the Breeze Bar, the Bowling Green, the Bull Inn, and the Coffee Cup Cafe.

Lastly please remember -- our own Beer and Cider Festival at Harbury on the 2nd/3rd September, where there will be selection of ale and a wide range of ciders. If you are a CAMRA member please volunteer to help even if for a couple of hours -- it would be most appreciated. Any cider news please phone (01926) 408886, thank you.

[Pauline Brooks]

## Champion Beer of Warwickshire 2011



**The Champion Beer of Warwickshire Competition will run for three weeks from the 1st to the 21st August, with prize giving on Monday 22nd August, at the Merchants Inn, 5 Little Church Street, Rugby, Warwickshire, CV21 3AN.**

## CAMRA Club of the Year 2011

A real ale haven in Kinver, Staffordshire, claiming to have served over 250 different beers to its members in the last 2 years, has today been named as CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale's National Club of the Year for 2011. Winner of local CAMRA Club of the Year awards every year



since 2007, Kinver Constitutional Club has been awarded CAMRA's highest Club accolade after a panel of judges were bowled over by the attention to detail and beer knowledge shown by the Club's stewards, and the sheer range of real ales served at the bar.

A regular in CAMRA's Good Beer Guide, the Club is a converted hotel with three main areas, a restaurant, large snooker room, and a bar dispensing up to 18 real ales. The Club is revered for its support of breweries from the local area, including Hobsons, Kinver and Enville.

Besides enjoying an enviable sporting reputation, the Club is a valued community outlet, with most of

the village of Kinver making up its 1,400-strong membership. The Club is also nationally renowned for its beer quality, with some members travelling as far as Scotland to enjoy a pint!

Peter Mathews CMG, Kinver Constitutional Club President, spoke of his delight at the Club

winning the national title. He said: *'There has been a lot of work gone into the Club for many years, with many members working tirelessly to keep the Club up to date and to keep ourselves challenged. With this in mind we are delighted to receive this national award, as we put on many guest beers, changing them on a regular basis, to the great satisfaction of our members. It's always a pleasure to go into a place where you have a good choice of interesting beers from around the UK, and this is something we strive to do. This recognition is not only for the Kinver Constitutional Club and its members but also for our village, a dynamic and historic place mentioned in the Domesday Book.'*

[From CAMRA Website]

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## Beer Duty Increase In Budget

In the Budget in March, the Government put beer prices up by another 7.2% - or 10p on a pint. This takes the typical duty and VAT bill on a pub pint of a standard bitter to 90p. In many parts of the country and for stronger beers the combined duty and VAT bill is



well over £1 per pub pint. The total VAT and duty cost varies depending on the strength of the beer and the price at which it is being sold.

The Chancellor has refused to remove the damaging beer duty escalator introduced by the last Government, so beer duty is set to continue increasing 2% above inflation each year. The duty escalator remains in place despite 3200 CAMRA members contacting their MPs through an email lobbying campaign calling for no further increases in beer duty.

Supermarkets can afford to and are willing to absorb beer duty increases so they can continue selling alcohol at rock bottom prices. However,

this option is not open to struggling community pubs meaning continual price rises for pub goers. The difference in prices between pubs and supermarkets continues to widen, which will encourage drinkers to stay at home rather than enjoy a pint with friends in their local.

It was also recently announced that beer duty will be halved for beers at 2.8% ABV or below. CAMRA will be calling on the Government to push the EU to increase the 2.8% threshold for beers eligible for the lower duty rate to 3.5% ABV so a wider range of beers can benefit. The good news on a duty cut at or below 2.8% is heavily tempered by tax increases for beers above 7.5%. CAMRA campaigned against higher tax on strong beers due to the potential harm to speciality beers and traditional beer styles.

To find out more, please see CAMRA's tax briefing at [www.camra.org.uk/taxbriefing](http://www.camra.org.uk/taxbriefing)



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## Amateur Cider Making

It's always the same when you have had a few drinks with friends or family. We should do such and such some time we say. Next morning the enthusiasm for "such and such" has evaporated. So it was with our daughter and her family. Many times we have talked about cider making with no result. For some reason that this time it was different for not long after I was invited to view a new "toy" or which turned out to be a basket press obtained on eBay. Made by Vigo Ltd of Honiton it was all a gleaming green painted steel with a varnished beechwood basket to hold the fruit. There was no going back now.

First job was to read out how to make cider and then to obtain some apples. Being just after Christmas there was adequate time to learn some skills from our book Real Cidermaking On A Small Scale by Pooley and Lomax.

June came and on a visit to the first Cheltenham Food Festival we met Kevin Minchew of Minchew's Cider in Gloucestershire who

turned out to be just the chap we were looking for. Yes, said Kevin, come Autumn I can get you some cider apples. We needed about 150 lb for our first attempt. Towards the end of summer we obtained from our own gardens a supply of mixed desserts and cooking apples to make apple juice just to get us used to the press and its scrapper or which sat on top to mince the apples before pressing.

So in October the big day arrived or when we went to Aston Cross near Tewkesbury and Minchew's Cider Mill (well more of an open sided shed really) to collect the raw materials. The secret of good cider, we had read, was to get apples with a balance of sugar, tannin, and acid. Kevin being the master cider maker that he is supplied all three ingredients in equal parts by providing Stoke Red, Kingston Black, and Somerset Redstreak. Now cider apples are divided into four main groups (there are sub-groups too) of Sharp, Bitter Sharp, Bitter Sweet, and Sweet. Ours came from the middle two. We

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were fortunate that our varieties were also described as vintage apples. In a later article I will do my best to explain why some apples are vintage and others not. It is nothing to do with the year of making, by the way.

So back home and to work washing, cutting up, mincing, and then pressing (pressing twice to increase the juice). In all this process absolute cleanliness had to be observed with a generous supply of sulphite to sterilise the equipment. After that, fermenting under air lock.

Now many cider makers leave the wild yeasts present on the fruit to do the work whilst others (Ross Cider for example) do not leave it to nature because of the risk of a rogue strain of yeast taking over. They prefer to use a cultured variety as used in white wine or champagne. Not being confident to deal with problems of infection we did the same by first inhibiting the natural yeast with sulphite, then adding a cultured variety after 24 to 36 hours. The fermentation went like a bomb. Wine yeasts tend to foment quite quickly but prefer a warmer atmosphere (not more than 70°F), whereas cider yeast is much slower and will work at lower temperatures.

The cider was racked three times to dryness before being sweetened slightly to suit everyone's taste. Natural sugar was used as artificial sweeteners impart a taste of their own. However, since this would have set off the fermentation process again a little sulphite was added. However it did not overcome the yeast com-

pletely and a further fermentation took place resulting in an unexpected bonus of sparkling cider. It was however an anxious time as storage vessels required daily venting to prevent explosions.

So early next summer was the time to taste. The resulting cider at somewhere around 8.4% as calculated on the hydrometer exceeded our wildest dreams for flavour and clarity. But the real test was to see Kevin Minchew thought. He declared that he liked it very much but that we should avoid using sulphite at the final stages. Well that was all in 2008/9 since when we have made larger quantities in the subsequent two years, also obtaining ready pressed juice from Ross Cider.

We now store the cider quite dry preferring to sweeten later at the drinking stage (although nobody any longer does so). Sugar to assist fermentation has been used once following a sunless summer when the natural sugar was low and the alcohol struggled to reach 5%. We have lost one full vessel due to allowing the fermentation juice to get above 70°F thus permitting ethanol acetate (pear drop flavours) to develop, but apart from that it has been an absolute joy and privilege to be part of a centuries old tradition.

### ***Beer and Ragged Staff*** ***Advertising Rates***

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But do you know the greatest satisfaction was to wean son-in-law Chris off Stella Artois such that he will now only drink cider and of the type made with 100% fresh pressed apples.

[Bob Holden]



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## Derbyshire Trip - Overview

Friday March the 28th was a bright sunny day As the Branch set off on its expedition to Derbyshire and the Yorkshire Dales. Our first stop was Bakewell, famous for its Bakewell pudding, but our sights were set on liquid refreshment and we found



*View from Monsal Head*

two very nice pubs, the Wheatsheaf and the Queen's Arms. After this it was off to the ThornBridge Brewery, which is being described elsewhere.

We then struck out into the Dales, and stopped for afternoon refreshment at the Monsal Head, with its magnificent view

over the Monsal Dale. As a Southerner I tend to forget what magnificent scenery we do have in parts of this country. Then on to Chesterfield, famous for its twisted spire, to check into the Sandpiper Hotel where we spent a comfortable two nights.

The next day our first port of call was the Elland Brewery, which once again is being described elsewhere. The weather had turned noticeably colder, but as we intended to spend most of our time indoors it did not matter too much. After Elland we went on the first to the Riverhead Brewery Tap

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in Marsden, then that the Sair Inn in Linthwaite, before going on to Huddersfield to try The Grove, The Rat and Ratchett, and The Star Inn. Then it was back to Chesterfield for an evening in the town centre.

Sunday meant making our way home, with a pleasant stop off for Sunday lunch in the Red Lion in Kegworth. John Crossling



*Sair Inn, Linthwaite*

led us on an expedition to find a pub called the Cap and Stocking, and I believe he eventually found it but by then the rest of us had given up.

All in all a very enjoyable weekend, and thanks very much for organising it Steve.

[Ian Bayliss]



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## Derbyshire Trip - Thornbridge Brewery

As part of the branch's three day branch trip to Chesterfield, we were lucky enough to visit Thornbridge Brewery.

We made our way to Bakewell on Friday morning, stopping off in the town for quick refreshment or two, before heading out to the brewery.

Once at the brewery, we were brought into the brewery tap, and to be honest didn't need asking twice to partake in the two brews on offer, these being Kipling, described as 'a golden blonde beer with an exquisite passion-fruit, gooseberry and mango aroma. An initial sweetness and full body are balanced by a lasting grapefruit-like bitter finish'. The other was St Petersburg, an imperial Russian stout,



*The Riverside Brewery, current home of Thornbridge Brewery*

described as 'rich and dark with smoke, subtle peatiness and the power of dark malts. Molasses and liquorice and chocolate goodness all wrapped up in a smooth and warming liquid. Finishes with a distinct humming bitterness carried well by the hop and malt combo'.

The brewery was installed and commissioned in 2009, the brewery being of Italian manufacture. The water supply is the same for both the breweries, and in Derbyshire it is relatively soft. With a range of up to 18 malts and 60 hops and the blending that goes with it, each beer has its own distinctive flavour. The plant is capable of brewing up to 25 times a week, although five times is more the average at the moment.

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*Be there ..!*

Even though the brewery is on an industrial scale, with state of the art equipment, it does not appear to have lost its craft feel. Indeed, the passion for beer remains and is conveyed in



*A sampling in Thornbridge Brewery*

those you talk to.

That brings us to the second of these two breweries, the smaller being up at Thornbridge Hall. This is all about the experimental and unusual. In 2004 some second hand equipment was installed in an old stone mason's workshop, with two brewers being recruited. Their first brew was Jaipur, well known for its many, many awards. It was the success of Jaipur and growth in the business that sparked the move to Riverside.

What is most striking is the difference of the settings for the two breweries. One is industrial, it is modern and vibrant and it screams 21st century. The second is small, traditional and the workplace for those lucky enough to go there everyday to do what they do best, is stunning. The hall is magnificent and the views breathtakingly beautiful, how could anyone not be inspired!

To be able to see the two breweries on the same day was a privilege, it gave us the chance to compare and contrast. There is very little to be said that can really do justice to the day.



*Outside Thornbridge Hall, original home of Thornbridge Brewery*

[Lorraine Atkins]

# Derbyshire Trip - Elland Brewery

The Saturday commenced for some of us with a quick dash into Chesterfield to Weatherspoon's for breakfast. Generally that meant pots of tea and full English - much cheaper than the hotel however the slices of black pudding would have made better frisbees than foodstuffs. We did check out the likely range of beers that might be available that evening should we return. For someone, who will remain nameless, the temptation became too much and the liquid lunch became a liquid breakfast.

Soon it was time to jump on the minibus and head off to Yorkshire for our first stop



Presentation of Harbury 'Beer of the Festival' Award

of the day. This was Elland brewery which was slightly hard to find and totally anonymous when we did get there - if it hadn't been for the bag of spent malt outside the door we would never have found it. Once inside we were shown where the glasses were and where the beer was and told to help ourselves! Now that's what I call a brewery visit. There were five beers available on gravity ranging from the Elland Bitter and Nettlethresher through a seasonal beer and up to their wonderful 1872 Porter. Talking of which, that was why we were there, and we presented the owner with a framed certificate to mark the Porter being

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Food will be served 12noon - 2.30pm

and 6pm - 9pm.

Saturday 11.30am - 11.30pm.

Food served from 12pm - 9pm

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voted as ‘Beer of the Festival’ at last year’s Harbury Beer Festival. We also took the opportunity to leave our wooden pin (4.5 gallon cask) to be filled with said beer and to be returned as staff beer at this coming year’s event! Can’t come too soon! It was good to meet with two of the local branch while we were there and it came as surprise to find that visits to the brewery were the only chance they got to drink the beer locally due to lack of outlets.

Reluctantly we had to take our leave as more delights were lined up for us – next stop was Marsden and the brewery tap of Riverhead Brewery. This fine Victorian pub is set next to the river in the centre of the town. A fine



Riverhead Brewery Tap, Marsden

range of about seven or eight of their beers were available in the rambling split level pub and the brewery kit was visible at the rear. Upstairs was a restaurant with some interesting items on the menu. While looking at the pub from the outside I noticed that two rivers joined just behind the pub but when I told the others that there was an unusual chance to see a confluence I was met with a combination of bewilderment

and disinterest. There is no pleasing some folk – they could even have taken their beer with them but they were not for moving!!

Eventually move they did but only when told that the bus was leaving for yet another brewery. Three in one day is something of a record even for our branch trips! But soon enough after only one wrong turn we climbed the right steep hill to arrive at the Sair Inn home of the Linfit brewery which sells only their beers. It is an old low ceiling pub with lots of character, characters and small rooms. Another five or six beers were available ranging from low gravity pale hoppy beers right up to their strong ale Leadboiler which weighs in at 6.5ABV.

All too soon it was back on the bus returning to Chesterfield for the overnight stay. On arrival food was the first priority. The group became split at this time with requests for different types of food resulting in no consensus. Some went looking for far eastern delights while the group I was with went looking for Italian and after a disappointing start eventually hit the jackpot having been directed to a fantastic restaurant that was easily missed called Pinocchio’s – this is strongly recommended if you are ever in Chesterfield - but don’t eat for a week before going!

We did try to go for a few beers afterwards but none of us had much room left, so after a couple of halves we caught the bus back to the hotel.

[John Crossling]



*Leamington's Best Kept Secret*

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# Warwickshire LocAle

The Heart of Warwickshire LocAle scheme recognises pubs which regularly stock at least one real ale which is brewed by a local brewery, one that is within 25 miles' driving distance. The geographical shape of the Heart of Warwickshire Branch area, means that some breweries are within 25 miles of parts of the branch area and others not. Landlords who wish to be included in LocAle should contact the editor.

Existing



Pubs and Clubs

Pubs and Clubs	Local Beer	Beer Miles
Village Club, Harbury	Warwickshire	8
	Hook Norton	25
Antelope, Warwick	Slaughterhouse	2
The Wharf, Fenny Compton	Hook Norton	18
Fox & Hen, Bascote Heath	Hook Norton	22
Case is Altered, Fiveways	Slaughterhouse	7
	Warwickshire	12
	Church End	19
Cape of Good Hope, Warwick	Weatheroak	20
	Church End	25
	Hook Norton	24
Woodland Tavern, Leamington Spa	Slaughterhouse	1
The Anchor, Leek Wootton	Purity	16
	Slaughterhouse	3
	Church End	23

Pubs and Clubs	Local Beer	Beer Miles
Harvester, Long Itchington	Hook Norton	24
Gamecock, Harbury	Hook Norton	25
Olde Mint, Southam	Purity	22
Market Tavern, Southam	Warwickshire	6
The Cricketers, Leamington Spa	Slaughterhouse	1.5
Newbold Comyn Arms, Leamington Spa	Slaughterhouse	2.5
	Warwickshire	4.0
	Purity	18.0
The Gaydon Inn, Gaydon	Warwickshire	11
The Stag, Offchurch	Warwickshire	1.5
	Purity	17.9
The Rose and Crown, Warwick	Purity	13.2
The Oak, Warwick	Hook Norton	23.6

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## Leamington's Hidden Gem – The Somerville Arms.

'Wow, what a lovely little pub!' This was my first thought some twenty years ago when I first visited the Somerville Arms. It had been a long day at work, and a colleague suggested we relax and unwind that evening over a welcome pint. He would pick me up at 9.00pm.

I had lived and worked in Leamington for some years, and thought that I knew most of the pubs in the town. Not so. We arrived at the Somerville, and I was lost! 'Where on earth are we?' I enquired. Graham, my colleague, explained that he had found this pub in the 'Good Beer Guide', and thought it would be well worth a try. He was right! We walked in the side door, and into the back 'Smoke Room'. It was like walking into someone's little lounge; cosy and homely. A smiling barmaid greeted us, and we were soon



years in the Good Beer Guide'. The 'Burton Ale' I was enjoying certainly confirmed the reputation.

A few nights later, I managed to find the Somerville for myself. I was greeted by the same barmaid, who not only remembered me, but also what I drank. I was made to feel most welcome, and that was it, I had found my new 'Local'.

For me, here was the perfect pub; a typical, unspoilt, back-street local with a warm and friendly atmosphere, no loud music or TV, and no fruit machines or pool tables, just great beer and conversation. The Somerville soon became my second home. After a long day, I could relax over a pint (or two), and enjoy the company of regular customers, who before long became friends.

I was a customer of the Somerville Arms for nearly twelve years. For the last two I even worked behind the bar a few evenings a week to help out. Then, one Saturday night, the landlord, who had become a good friend, asked 'if I would be interested'? He wanted to 'move on', and was looking for potential buyers. At that time, my full time job was coming to a natural end, I was rattling around alone in a large property at the other end of town, and my children had all 'flown the nest'. It was the perfect opportunity. I should have known, my first ever job as a teenager, was in a Brewery.

After a month or two of legal to-ing and fro-ing, I was at last the proud owner of the Somerville Arms.

To Be Continued...

[Paul Blatchly]



both settled with a perfect pint of 'Burton Ale'. Sure enough, proudly displayed on the wall, was a CAMRA certificate, 'Twenty Five consecutive

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## Local Pub and Brewery News

Do you have any interesting news about local pubs. If so please send it to our pub news coordinator Dave Shurrock at [pubsofficer@camrahow.org.uk](mailto:pubsofficer@camrahow.org.uk)

### The Red House, Leamington Spa

The Red House has a new manager, Jason Giles, since the beginning of May. He now has five hand pulls, the regulars are Purity UBU and Mad Goose, and Bass. There are also two guest beers, when I went in they were Broadside and Hobgoblin. He was previously the manager of the Jolly Brewers in Rugby when it was voted most improved pub of 2010 by Rugby CAMRA. He is also hoping to organise a Brewery trip to Purity on 23 August.

### The Antelope, Lighthornrne

The Antelope reopened on 15th April, and a warm welcome to Zac the new licensee who was previously at the Oxford Retreat in Oxford. The Antelope is now leased to the Ox-

ford Pub and Leisure Leisure Co. Zac and his team have created a warm, welcoming atmosphere with a minimum of alterations other than the introduction of a couple of settees and a real fire on cold days. The new menu provides a good variety of reasonably priced, locally sourced food.

There are still five real ales on the bar. Greene King IPA, Whychwood Hobgoblin and St. Austell Tribute are regulars with the other two pumps changing periodically: on a recent visit they served Charles Wells Bombadier and Brakespear Oxford Gold, although Zac says that he plans to introduce a local beer soon, initially from the Warwickshire Beer Co.

*Brian & Sandra  
welcome you*



*Farm Street,  
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## The Old New Inn

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**The Green Man, Leamington** Their first of what is hoped to be an annual free Christmas meal for local OAP's, was successfully held last December, providing a three course meal for over 50 people. Funds were raised during the Wednesday bingo nights, and the licensee provided free wine, port and sherry. They even managed to get Father Christmas to hand out free presents.

Staff and customers gave up their time to help make the day special, and Lynne expresses special thanks to all who gave of their time.

Their second event will be on 21<sup>st</sup> December 2011.

## **The PunchBowl, Warwick**

On 30th April 2011 the PunchBowl organised a very successful coach trip to the Oakwell Brewery in Barnsley. A very interesting and informative time was had by all, particularly as it included free tastings, and as an added bonus we also got to visit the Barnsley branch beer festival in Elsecar.

## **The Black Dog, Southam**

The Black Dog are putting their current beers on Twitter, the name is @Black2Dog

## **The Dun Cow, Hornton**

Adrian & Lisa Segens, the new owners of the Dun Cow, are holding the next Hornton Beer Festival on 15th – 17th July. The theme is “The Beers of Kent & Sussex”.

## **Forthcoming CAMRA Beer Festivals**

8 - 10 July	Beer on the Wye, Hereford
28 - 30 July	Stafford Beer Festival
2- 6 August	Great British Beer Festival, Earl's Court, London
11 - 13 August	Worcester Beer Festival
<b>2 - 3 September</b>	<b>Harbury Beer Festival</b>
8 - 10 September	Tamworth Beer Festival
15 - 17 September	Bridgnorth Beer Festival
30 September - 1 October	Solihull Beer Festival
13 - 15 October	Stoke Beer Festival
27 - 29 October	Birmingham Beer Festival

Don't forget to do your Beer Scoring. For information on how visit website <http://www.beerscoring.org.uk/>

## Diary of events: July - September 2011

Everyone is welcome to join us at any of these events, you don't have to be a CAMRA member. Most Tuesday evenings we visit one or more pubs in the area to check out the real ale. We operate a lift sharing arrangement to avoid drinking and driving, just call 07855 644043 to arrange your lift. Events shown in italics are not organised by Heart of Warwickshire CAMRA, Note: All meetings and events start at 20:30 unless otherwise indicated. Events shown in italics are not organised by Heart of Warwickshire CAMRA.

### **NOTE: All meetings start at 20:30 unless otherwise indicated.**

5th Jul	B&RS Warwick Distribution	Meet Racehorse, Finish Thomas Lloyd
12th Jul	B&RS Leamington Distribution	Meet Newbold Comyn Arms, Finish Benjamin Satchwell
19th Jul	Country Crawl	Rugby Tavern, King's Head, Queen's Head Cubbington, Red Lion Hunningham
26th Jul	Warwick crawl	Anchor Inn, Leek Wootton. Porridge Pot, Tudor House, Vine Inn Warwick
2nd Aug	Leamington crawl	Town House, New Inn, Red House, Talbot Inn
9th Aug	Branch Meeting	Fox & Hen, Bascote Heath. Start 20:00
16th Aug	Country Crawl	Montgomery of Alamein, Hampton Magma. Case Is Altered, Five Ways. Falcon Inn, Haseley. Waterman, Hatton
23rd Aug	Warwick Crawl	Saxon Mill, Woodloes Tavern, Forester's Arms, The Lazy Cow
30th Aug	Harbury Crawl	Crown Inn, The Dog, Gamecock, Shakespeare, Old New Inn
2nd - 3rd Sept	Harbury Beer Festival	Village Hall, Harbury
6th Sept	No Meeting	
13th Sept	Leamington Crawl	The Windmill, Kelsey's, Railway Inn, The Gristmill
20th Sept	Country Crawl	The Inn at Farnborough, Wobley Wheel, Warmington. Antelope Inn, Lighthorne. Granville, Joseph Arch Barford
27th Sep	B&RS Warwick Distribution	Start Rose & Crown, Finish Wild Boar
4th Oct	B&RS Leamington Distribution	Start Coventry Arms, Finish Somerville Arms
8th Oct	Green Hop Festival	Coach leaves Warwick 10am for opening time of 11:30. For further details please contact:- Steve Bolton on 07790323822 or 01926 651768. (Book your place early to avoid disappointment).

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