



CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE



Issue 75
August/Sept 2012

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the Oxford Drinker

Oxford 2012 BEER FESTIVAL

Thursday 11th October - Saturday 13th October

See Page 12



CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE



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The Oxford Drinker is the newsletter of Oxford and White Horse branches of CAMRA, The Campaign for Real Ale.

5000 copies are distributed free of charge to pubs and other locations across the branch area; including Oxford, Abingdon, Witney, Faringdon, Eynsham, Kidlington, Bampton and Wantage.

This newsletter is also available electronically in PDF format at www.oxfordcamra.org.uk/drinker

Valuable contributions to this edition have been made by Matt Bullock, Neil Hoggarth, Richard Queral, John Mackie, Dave Richardson, Dave Cogdell, David Hill and others.

The next issue will be published in **October 2012**.

Deadline for the next issue is Monday 10th September 2012.

To advertise, contact Johanne Green on 07766-663215 or send an email to advertising@oxfordcamra.org.uk

Send news, information and articles to Steven and Johanne Green; editor@oxfordcamra.org.uk

Printed by Leachprint, Abingdon.
www.leachprint.co.uk

The views expressed in this publication are those of the individual contributors and not necessarily those of the Oxford or White Horse branches of CAMRA, or of CAMRA Limited.

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Welcome to the August 2012 issue of the Oxford Drinker.

We urge all members to visit the five nominated pubs for the Town and Village Pub of the Year Competition. It can be difficult to get round to them all, but we hope members are willing to give it a try. Voting forms (which can be found in the nominated pubs) need to be counted at the October branch meeting. This gives us another two months to make our way to the pubs and vote for them. The pubs are: **Brewery Tap**, Abingdon; **New Inn** and **Eagle Tavern**, Witney; **Cricketer's Arms**, Littleworth and **Morris Clown**, Bampton.

September always sees the Branch AGM to which all CAMRA members in the area are encouraged to attend. Branch committee members only serve for one year. There are some roles that have to be covered to have a viable branch and some extra posts that would be good to be covered as well. Some committee members are not going to stand again, so this is a chance for you to influence what happens in the branch. Please go to the AGM and see if there might be a position for you (see page 15). – **Steven & JoHanne**

Pub News



Correspondent *Seamus Leahy* is happy to report that **The Boat Inn** at Thrupp (just north of Kidlington and NOT to be confused with The Jolly Boatman) has reopened with a couple that are truly interested; they are Pete and Katherine. They previously ran a restaurant in Bourton-on-the-Water, but see beer as well as food as being important in this canal-side pub. There are three hand pump ales and they are going to get a fourth. I have seen The Boat rise and fall over 35 years, and am pleased that when my wife and I walked in after they had just reopened, to find the atmosphere so brilliantly changed and the beer well cared for and very drinkable. The future bodes well for The Boat, I am pleased to say. I hope this is of interest as at least this pub appears to have a brighter future

David Hill notes that "A couple of hundred yards away from the Boat Inn, Greene-King's other canalside establishment, the **Jolly Boatman** is also looking after its beers as well as doing food."

The Squire Bassett, on the main Oxford Road in Kidlington has been renamed the "**Gurkha Village**" and is advertising itself as a "Nepalese Restaurant and Bar". This imposing Art Deco construction was

originally opened as the "**Day Inn**" in 1936 and has had a number of name changes and make-overs since. The Nepalese restaurant has been there for some months but it has now been extended to occupy most of pub and a small separate bar has been partitioned off near the entrance. They intend to keep a real ale, which is presently **Wychwood**, **Hobgoblin** and will introduce a second one if there is the demand.

Ian Roberts sadly reports that "On a visit to Northway Estate (in Headington), I passed **The Cavalier**. Although never a haven of real ale, this pub, whose opening I attended in 1955, is now no more than a hole in the ground on which yet more student flats are to be erected."

The **Gloucester Arms**, Friars Entry, Oxford, has announced on their facebook page that they are going to close down some point in August. The Gloucester Arms opened under the management of Richard Daniels in 2009 as part of the Old Angel Pub Company. It has been Oxford's number one Rock pub. It is sad to see it close, we hope it will be opened again and thank the staff for all they have put into the pub over the years.



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Abingdon On Thames News

The Nags Head on Abingdon Bridge is to reopen under the management of Dushan Salwathura (aka Dusty), the present landlord of the **Broad Face**.

Dusty is planning to keep the pub as traditional as possible, with special attention to the quality of beer, food and friendly service. The Nags Head will be a Free House and the plan is to give people a really good choice of real ales.

In August Dusty will initially reopen the beer garden and serve beer, tea, coffee, soft drinks, ice cream, sandwiches and picnic hampers from the little serving kiosk in the garden, while the refurbishment of the pub is under way. Over the weekends there will also be a BBQ. With luck the pub will be ready to open its doors in the last weekend of September.

It is well known that Dusty revitalized the Broad Face when he took it over, adding great music evenings and the Sunday Jazz to well kept beers and superb food. He plans to continue this at the Nags Head with Friday night music and Jazz.

He will have a 23 year lease on the pub and there is scope to make the Nags Head a fine addition to Abingdon-on-Thames' pub scene. It is great that the pub will reopen in such competent hands as a Free

House, but Dusty will need all the support, we can give him in this venture. So please venture those extra yards to support this historic and scenic pub.

Wetherspoons have been granted planning permission to convert the vacant old post office building in Abingdon's High Street into a pub. The plans show circa 120 seater internal area and a fenced off external area with a further 30 seats. There are two planted areas and with space being a premium, the WC's are upstairs. We hope that this initiative will contribute to the improvement to Abingdon's town centre and help invigorate the area bringing more people to the town and perhaps filling the empty shops presently found there.

On a sadder note, Roland, landlord of the **Cross Keys** in Ock Street Abingdon, is leaving the trade. In his time at the Keys he introduced real ales into the pub and turned it into a thriving sport & music, locals venue, we wish him all the best in whatever he chooses to do next. Slightly better news is that his head barkeep David Arnott has taken over the reins, it will be Dave's first pub and he hopes to build on the previous success. The pub closed on the 19th July and reopened under the new tenancy on the 21st July




The Kings Head & Bell
 Abingdon-on-Thames
3rd Annual Summer Beer & Cider
Festival
28 Local Ales, 8 Ciders, English Wine & Bubbly
Live Music & Family Fun
24th-27th of August

Brewery News



Shotover Seasonal Wheat Beer

Ed Murray, brewer and owner of Shotover Brewery has brewed a cask only summer special named Trinity at 4.0% abv.

Trinity is a Kolsch style golden beer as brewed in the city of Cologne, Germany. The style is reminiscent of a lager but brewed using a top fermenting yeast and served warmer than lager but cooler than ale at around 8deg C.

This beer is gently hopped with Hallertauer Mittelfruh hops and carries a hint of elderflower to give a refreshing crisp, light easy drinking character.

As the beer contains a high proportion of wheat malt it may show a slight protein haze – this is normal with wheat beers and will eventually clear if left on the stillage for two or three days.

Look out for it in pubs such as Far From the Madding Crowd and The Cricketer's Arms in Littleworth before it runs out, though if the weather keeps up, we may be lucky to see another batch brewed.



Loose Cannon Celebrates 2nd Birthday



It's amazing to think that August 2010 saw Loose Cannon Brewery launch **Abingdon Bridge** into the world. Even though owner Will Laithwaite was confident it was a great beer, even he could not have predicted just how popular it would be and it has continued through the rest of their beers too. They have been working very hard there at HQ and since 2010 the team has grown faster and bigger than imagined and now has 7 in total with 4 full-time and 3 part-time. Sales of Loose Cannon beer have taken off in a way that could only be dreamed of at the start and they are constantly striving to maintain the quality and consistency that makes them the first port of call for many pubs and members of the public alike.

Will Laithwaite says "We are also delighted to have revived the age-old tradition of brewing in Abingdon and have been thrilled by the response from our loyal supporters."

A new 'responsive website' at www.lcbeers.com has been developed with the help of local Abingdon communications agency BabelQuest.



Enjoy 1 or 2 or 3 or 4...

in the pub or from the brewery shop.

Brewery shop open Saturday mornings 9.30-12.30

XT Brewery, Notley Farm, Long Crendon, Bucks. HP18 9ER

01844 208 310

www.xtbrewing.com

Brewery News



Hook Norton

The visitors centre at Hook Norton Brewery is getting a facelift as part of a major rebranding project which will combine the brewery's Victorian heritage with a contemporary new feel. This will give the brewery, its famous Hooky ales and 44 pubs a makeover including new pub signage, fresh logos, pump clips, beer mats, bottle labels and a revamped website.

Work has already begun on the visitors centre, which remains open and is expected to be complete by December 2012. It currently receives 10,000 visitors per year and will be expanded to include a new conference facility, an extended shopping area and a cafe with a light food menu.

The Brewery is planning to buy more pubs within a 50 mile radius of Hook Norton. There is no fixed number, but plan to buy a couple of pubs each year.

Seasonals

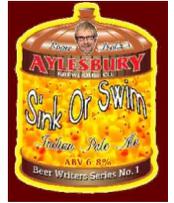
July/August: **Haymaker** 5.0% ABV: A strong pale ale of distinctive taste. Plenty of Goldings hops give it a taste like sunshine dancing on the tongue.

September/October/November: **Flagship** 5.3% ABV: Originally brewed to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Trafalgar, Flagship is an India Pale ale style of beer brewed with Admiral hops.

Roger Protz's - 'Sink or Swim' 6.8% Indian Pale Ale

On Thursday 18th July Aylesbury Brewery and Roger Protz's 'Sink or Swim' 6.8% Indian Pale Ale was launched.

'Sink or Swim' is the first in the Brewhouse beer writers series.



Roger was invited to choose the style and he joined the brewers for a very enjoyable brew day back in February and the brewing of this beer will feature in Roger's forthcoming book.

The recipe is an original Victorian recipe (from the Durden Park archive) with the bitterness tweaked down a little, this beer has been conditioned for 5 months, to simulate its journey to the sub-continent.

This is part of a very limited release of cask conditioned beer, as the remainder will be bottled and will go on sale at the end of the year. The beer was available exclusively at the Hop Pole from 21st July.

Brakspear Brewery



The Brakspear Old Boys (BOB's) were out and about in Henley for the Royal Regatta. On Friday 29th June the singing quartet dropped in to the renowned Barn Bar, The Angel on the Bridge, The Three Tunns, The Little Angel and the Henley Cricket Club. With high standards of gentlemanly conduct and a penchant for Brakspear beers the BOB's offered like minded fellows the opportunity of free membership to their exclusive club. New members even had the chance of winning a weekend break in an Oxfordshire hotel with a tour of Wychwood Brewery, home of Brakspear beers. For more information about becoming a BOB please email info@brakspear-beers.co.uk with your name and address.

Wychwood Seasonals

August: **Wychwood Bountiful** 4% ABV
An ale of great complexity with a rich fruity taste and a terrific chestnut colour.

September: **Wychwood Jester Jack** 4% ABV
A refreshing crisp beer with a fruity hop explosion.

The Wychwood Hobgoblin bar has had a makeover and will be busy bringing the legendary brew to music festivals around the country throughout the summer.



HOOKY
ALCOHOL 4.8% (BY VOLUME)
GOLDEN & WELL BALANCED
HANDCRAFTED IN THE COTSWOLD HILLS SINCE 1849

OLD HOOKY
ALCOHOL 5.3% (BY VOLUME)
FRUITY & FULL BODIED
HANDCRAFTED IN THE COTSWOLD HILLS SINCE 1849

HOOKY MILD
ALCOHOL 4.8% (BY VOLUME)
DARK RUBY & MALTY
HANDCRAFTED IN THE COTSWOLD HILLS SINCE 1849

COTSWOLD LION
ALCOHOL 5.3% (BY VOLUME)
FRUITY & FULL BODIED
HANDCRAFTED IN THE COTSWOLD HILLS SINCE 1849

HOOK NORTON
BREWERY

Visit www.hooky.co.uk for more information about the range of Hooky beers or to find your nearest Hook Norton pub.

Rural Mini Bus Trip



Culham, Clifton Hampden, The Baldons, Cuddesdon

The second minibus trip was in mid May and on this occasion our driver guide and mentor was Chris Hunter. Fewer participants than the inaugural one, but as a bonus we enjoyed the company of Terry and Roy of Victoria CAMRA, Vancouver Island British Columbia, Canada on holiday who saw the information about the trip on our website (www.oxfordcamra.org.uk/diary).

Our first stop was the **Waggon and Horses** in Culham, which had been closed but was now back in business. For my starter I chose a local beer **Loose Cannon Abingdon Bridge** 4.1% which went down well.

We then moved further up the road to the **Railway Inn**, Culham which had previously been in tandem with an Indian restaurant. This had now gone and traditional gastro pub food is now served. This was a surprise package, as there were four beers available all in top class condition. I had two of them; the reliable **West Berks Maggs Mild** 3.8% followed by **Box Steam Porter** 4.4%. I recommend you pay the Railway a visit.

Our next venue was the **Barley Mow** in Clifton Hampden, a famous pub with literary connections as it featured in Jerome K Jerome's *Three Men in a Boat*. However this proved to be the one disappointment of the day, as there were some grumbings about the quality of the three beers on tap. My **Marstons Cascade** 4.0% was passable, but too cold.

Our next stopover was the **Chequers** at Burcot, another gastropub where Terry and Roy had a bite to eat and of the three on offer, my choice was the **Hardy and Hanson bitter** 3.8% which was fine.

Moving on to the picturesque and secluded Baldons and our first call was the **Seven Stars** on the green at Marsh Baldon. Again a pub that had been closed for some time with an uncertain future; but thankfully given a facelift and again open for



Waggon and Horses, Culham



The Railway Inn, Culham



The Barley Mow, Clifton Hampden



The Chequers, Burcot



The Seven Stars, Marsh Baldon



The Mole Inn, Toot Baldon



The Bat and Ball, Cuddesdon

business. We were given a warm welcome and the **Adnams Ghostship** 4.6% was excellent.

A short trip on to the **Mole Inn** at Toot Baldon. This three hundred year old hostelry has been lovingly refurbished with a glass extension and leather sofas and the heavenly bodies in the toilet are uplifting. The **Oxfordshire Ales Churchill** 4.5% also passed muster.

The penultimate visit was the **Bat and Ball** at Cuddesdon, a former coaching inn with lots of exposed beams and a flagstone floor and as one would guess from the name it has a cricketing theme. A **Marstons Merrie Monk** 4.1% was savoured.

We ended the crawl at the **Masons Arms** at Headington Quarry in Oxford. This was to give Terry and Roy a chance to visit the **Old Bog Brewery**. Unfortunately no brewery beers were on, and my day ended with a superb pint of **Rudgate Ruby Mild** 4.4%. We took our two Canadian chums back to their hotel on the Iffley road.

Rural minibus trips take place monthly on a Saturday to visit pubs in the remoter country parts of our area, which are not easily accessible by public transport.

For information about upcoming trips and how to book a place, see the branch diary on Page 16.

The Masons Arms



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2004,2005 & 2010

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Over 45 Real Ales & 15 Ciders
Pig Roast and Live Music

The city centre pubs do not need introductions and we have a dozen that all serve good quality and varying ranges of beer and cider. For those of your not so informed you can be sure that the following are worth a visit.

- **Royal Oak** - on Woodstock Road
- **Lamb And Flag** - Free House in St Giles
- **Eagle And Child** - in St Giles
- **Far From The Madding Crowd** - Free House in Friars Entry
- **The Grapes** - Bath Ales (new brews for Oxford) in George Street
- **The White Horse** - in Broad Street
- **The Kings Arms** - Young's Corner of Holywell Street
- **The Turf Tavern** - Greene King (You wouldn't think so with the range of beers, a dozen) Bath Place
- **The Crown** - in Cornmarket Street.
- **The Royal Blenheim** - White Horse Brewery owned, down St. Ebbes
- **The Chequers** - down an entry at the top of The High Street
- **The Bear** - Fullers in Alfred Street, off the High Street .
- Both the City Wetherspoons (**Four Candles** in George Street, **Swan & Castle** on Castle Street) offer a good choice of tasty beers.

Mention must be made of the vast improvement over recent years of the **Chequers** now serving up to 8 beers and ciders in top form. One recent visit found unusual **Sam Brookes**, **Lavender Hill** and **Swaton**, **Dozy Bull Bitter**. He is certainly not dozy maybe a tad surly and miserable.

The **Lamb & Flag** is always worth a visit, being for many years one of the towns top pubs. The two guests have been too numerous to list but it may be of interest to cider drinkers that two or three differing ciders are served every week and I can still vouch for the quality of the **Old Peculier**. Across the road the **Eagle and Child** is again always worth a visit, on one occasion **St Peters Mild** and **Broughton Merlins** Ale were both in top condition .

Regular visits to the **Gardeners Arms** in North Parade have found this super locals local to

always serve good beer and now that Greene King offer a little more choice on the guest list you could find the likes of **Taylor Golden Best**, until recently rare on the local scene. Dave and Jenny will soon have run this pub for 20 years. Talking of long standing landlords Andrew from across the road at **The Rose and Crown**, now his own pub, has been serving pints for almost 30 years. **Old Hooky**, **Adnams Bitter**, **Shotover Scholar** and one guest, **Dorset Brewery Queen Of Diamonds** at the time I visited, are served always in top form. Along with good food cooked by that young man from Nepal, and that wonderful old club atmosphere; this is another top pub. One of my favourites the Rose and Crown also serves up to 25 Malt Whiskeys, I've had them all, I don't spend time at home waiting for more interest on the bank account .

Another 30 year landlord Barry, from **Dewdrop** amongst the shops in Summertown, still remembers his days working for Courage Brewery and his busy pub serves **Courage Best** and **Taylor Landlord** in good condition . Always worth a visit; this is the only pub on the Banbury Road .

I have reported before on another of my regular walks that the Jericho area is always worth a visit particularly the north end. **The Anchor**, a Wadsworth house, is a fine looking building with two separate bars serving top quality food in pub surroundings along with a range of **Wadworth** beers plus a guest. A pleasant walk will have you at the **Victoria**, a Marstons house, they have always served **Banks bitter** for countless years. Good simple and very popular food (Pies are a speciality) is served along with 2 beers from the Marstons range. The **Gardeners** in Plantation Road needs no introduction, this very popular regular GBG pub, that serves 4 beers from the Marstons range always in top form and I notice half a dozen Malts along with one British brewed lager. A good selection of Vegetarian food is served.

If you are out there enjoying your drinking far and wide let the editor know! Any story is always interesting to readers.

Rural Survey Trip - Wild West



Tony Goulding

A rural survey trip to the wild west saw the four pubs in Bampton visited. The **Horseshoe**, a Greene King pub, was serving **Robinsons Dizzy Blonde**, **Taylor's Golden Best**, **Morland Original**, **Greene King Celebration Pale Ale**, **Greene King London Glory** and **Broad Oak Pheasant Plucker Cider**. This former Morland pub does not serve food and the landlord has been here for 20 years. Across the road is the **Romany**, once the top pub in Bampton but now seems to struggle to stay on the real ale scene. The landlord is trying hard and **Tring Side Pocket For A Toad** was in good condition. Next door the **Talbot**, a free house, was serving **London Pride** and **Greene King IPA** in good condition. Down the road is the ever popular **Morris Clown**, another free house. This regular GBG entry was serving **West Berkshire Good Old Boy** and **White Horse bitter** along with **Cotswold Lager**, a dozen Belgian Beers and several Malt Whiskeys. This pub was once described by a top newspaper as a dark mysterious boozier from the bad lands.

A visit to the **Red Lion** at Aston, formerly closed for a short time, found this Enterprise Inns house was serving in good condition **London Pride** and **Sharps Doom Bar**. Along the road the village of

Standlake presents the **Black Horse** another popular and regular GBG pub, serving **Hook Norton Hooky bitter** and **Gold** along with **Sharps Doom Bar**. Down the road is the **Bell**, formerly Greene King now a free house, serving **Skinners Pint of Two Halves**, **Otter Bitter** and **Woodfores Wherry** in good condition. High quality food is served which makes the Bell more of a restaurant.

Near the Thames is the **Ferryman Inn**, a Wadworths pub, serving **6X**, **Henrys IPA**, **Boundary** (a new brew) and **Red, White & Brew**. This large pub deals with a busy holiday trade from the camp and the Thames. The **Red Lion** at NorthMoor was just closing but we spoke to the landlord who informed us trade could improve and that he was serving **Morland Original** and a **Greene King Seasonal**.

In Stanton Harcourt the **Harcourt Arms** was closed for the Village carnival but we spoke to the landlord who informed us that they were serving **Tribute**, **Doom Bar**, **Adams Bitter** and **Brakspear Oxford Gold** and that despite rumours of closure the pub was very much alive. Further down the road was the **Fox**, a former Morrells house, now run by a temporary landlord and serving **Doom Bar**.



We sell polypins and bottles direct from the brewery, Mon-Fri.

For any enquiries please call:

01367 718700

or email

fiona@whitehorsebrewery.com

WHITE HORSE BREWERY

3 Ware Road, White Horse Business Park,
Stanford in the Vale, Oxfordshire, SN7 8NY



www.whitehorsebrewery.com

Oxford Beer Festival 2012

October 11th-13th



Festival Logo Competition Results Sponsored by Brakspear, the oxfordshire beer

The Oxford Branch of CAMRA organize the Oxford Beer Festival every year and each year a logo competition is run to find the logo of the year. This competition is sponsored by Brakspear, the Oxfordshire Beer, brewed in Witney. The 1st prize is 10 cases of beer chosen from Wychwood Brewery shop, second prize is 3 cases of beer and the 3rd prize is 2 cases of beer.

This year we had many fantastic logo sent to us and the winner was voted on at a branch meeting.

The winning logo was sent by
Keith Rigley



The 2nd prize went to last years
winner Alan Studholme



The 3rd prize went to
Stuart Smith



Oxford CAMRA thanks Brakspear for supporting our Beer Festival.

Festival Opening Times

The Festival will be held from Thursday 11th October to Saturday 13th October.

The opening times will be:

- Thursday 11th October: 5pm-11pm
- Friday 12th October : 11am-11pm
- Saturday 13th October ; 11am-late

Last years Festival had plenty of beer available on the Saturday and this year the organisers aim to do the same again. A separate Saturday bar consisting of 40 barrels and an extended cider bar will only be opened on Saturday morning.

Festival Volunteer Staffing

Every Beer Festival is organized and staffed by volunteers and it couldn't be run without the support of the branch members and CAMRA members from other branches, who give up their time and work very hard to make the Oxford Beer Festival what it is.

If you want to volunteer to help out please send an email to:

staffing@oxfordcamra.org.uk.

For insurance purposes we can only accept CAMRA members (or EBCU equivalent) to volunteer at the Festival.

THE BEAR INN

The Bear Inn is the oldest pub in Oxford and is a hidden gem, just off the hustle and bustle of the busy High Street.

The pub is popular with students, locals and tourists alike, who enjoy a warm welcome, a range of real ales and bottled conditioned beers and traditional, home-cooked food by the fire.

The pub is most famous for its collection of ties - dating back to the early 1900's and representing clubs in the Oxford area and, more recently, around the globe.

A great place to unwind, take off your own tie, and enjoy looking at everyone else's!



6 Alfred Street, Oxford, Oxfordshire OX1 4EH
 Telephone: 01865 728164
 Email: bearinn@fullers.co.uk

Oxford Brewers Taste & Swap



The Oxford Brewers Group's Annual taste and swap event was held on the 16th June, at the now customary Marston Scout Hut Hall.

This year's speaker was Mattias Sjoberg, group member and founder / owner of the **Compass Brewery**. Mattias told us all about the journey of setting up his brewery and his beers.



Mattias Sjoberg,
Compass Brewery

Mattias took the decision with his brewery to pursue the bottled beer market. Cask ale predominates in the UK, and he got some strange looks from people that heard that he wasn't going to supply pubs with casks, just bottles. But as the pub scene is changing quite noticeably in the UK (with many closing on a weekly basis) this opens up a lot of food establishments that do beer, rather than just pubs that do food.

By producing bottled beer it also allowed him to make use of underutilised brewery equipment in other breweries to produce his beer, and allowed him to store his beer, in bottles, that are much more portable and require a lot less capital investment (no need for lots of costly kegs).

Mattias then took us through some of his beers, with samples of them all to try. Additionally he also brought along a trial beer that will be introduced to his range later in the year that we all had a chance to try. A very nice Belgian based ale that will compliment his range well.



Oxford Brewers sample each other's beers.

An ancient city. A modern beer.



Complex, distinctive and richly satisfying
– Prospect is the full-bodied session ale
from Oxford's Shotover Brewery

www.shotoverbrewing.com

As his business expands, Mattias is now in the process of establishing his own business premises that will allow him to bottle, store and eventually brew all under one roof.

We then moved on to the tasting of our own beers.

The group challenge of brewing a kit beer, and seeing what you could make of it produced some quite different beer styles, but everyone that took part certainly looked at what they could do to add or enhance the kit base. The general consensus was that although the beers were better than their original beer kits, they proved to be much more expensive to produce (double was not an uncommon increase) but also lacked a maltness that fresh pale malt produces. There is a belief that the malt extract contains high levels of barley syrup with added enzymes, rather than just pure malted extracts, this may account for it. Also a questions as to whether the process of removing the water from the malt extract to condense it may also drive off some of the malt flavours and aromas.

A number of other beers were also brought along to be tried, from soured ales through to beers produced to be clones of popular ales like Kipling.

Another great event, and thanks to Peter for organising this year's event.

Oxford CAMRA Branch AGM



The Annual General Meeting of the Oxford CAMRA branch will be held at 7.30pm on Monday 17th September, at the **Folly Bridge Inn**, Abingdon Road, Oxford.

The principal business of the AGM consists of short reports by the various branch officers, including presentation of the financial accounts, and the election of the branch committee for the coming year.

All branch officers serve a one-year term, from AGM to AGM, and all the posts are re-elected afresh each year. The required members of the committee are: Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Secretary, and the Pubs Officer. The committee typically also includes a number of other posts, which while not essential, we need to fill if at all possible: Newsletter Editor, Branch Younger Members Contact, Social Secretary, Public Affairs Officer, and a Publicity Officer. Several existing committee members have indicated that they do not intend to stand for re-election

this year, so we are keen to get additional members involved in the running of the branch. Feel free to get in touch if you want to find out more about what is involved in any of the roles.

Anyone wishing to stand for any of these posts should make themselves known to the branch secretary:

Steve Lawrence
email: contact@oxfordcamra.org.uk
telephone: 01235 525436

Nominations for posts should be made in writing, indicating willingness of the nominee to stand, and signed by a proposer and seconder (who should both be branch members).



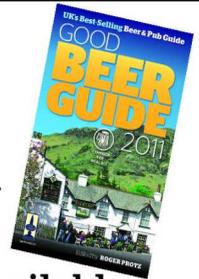
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- 1/3 pints always available.
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- Quiz Night Wednesday 9pm.



Only pub in Oxford run by an Oxford brewery.
Nominated for CAMRA Oxford Pub of the Year 2010.
10% off food/drink for CAMRA members 3pm-7pm.

www.royalblenheim.co.uk

Oxford CAMRA Branch Diary



Sat 4th August, 3pm-5pm

Social and new members' get together

Company of Weavers, Market Square, Witney

Meet the people running the new Wetherspoon in Witney and see what they have to offer. Then on to other Witney hostelrys til you've had enough.

Tue 7th August, 7:30pm-10pm

Oxford CAMRA Branch Meeting.

Royal Sun, Begbroke

Sat 25th August, 11am-7pm

Rural Minibus Trip

See next page

Sat 1st September

CAMRA Super Regional Conference

Questors Club, 12 Mattock Lane, Ealing, W5 5BQ

All branch members are very welcome. If you are interested in attending you should register at www.eventsbot.com/events/eb444052986

Wed 5th September, 7:30pm-

9:30pm

Branch Meeting

Chequers, High Street, Oxford

Mon 10th September

Oxford Drinker Deadline

Sat 15th September, 11am-7pm

Rural Minibus Trip

See next page

Mon 17th September, 7:30pm-

9:30pm

Branch AGM

Folly Bridge Inn, Abingdon Road, Oxford, OX1 4PQ

Annual meeting. Reports and accounts, election of officers.

Come along and have your say.

See page 15.

Thu 11th October to Sat 13th

October

Oxford Beer Festival

Oxford Town Hall

See page 12

Sat 17th November, 11am-7pm

Rural Minibus Trip

See below

Sat 15th December, 11am-7pm

Rural Minibus Trip and

Presentation of Town & Village Pub of the Year

Rural Minibus Pub Survey Trips

To enable the branch to monitor the country parts of our area we run a programme of Saturday mini-bus trips aiming to visit 7-8 pubs per trip.

The next trips will be Saturday 25th August going north of the city via Yarnton and Cassington ending at the **Rose & Crown** in Charlbury. Saturday 15th September will be a second look at best choices from earlier trips finishing in Witney.

The cost per trip is £5. Pickup times are 11am in Abingdon, 11:30am at the Lamb & Flag in Oxford. Depending on the route, other pickups may be arranged.

For more details and to reserve a seat (the first 15 will travel), contact Tony Goulding:
anthony4177@btinternet.com
 phone: 01865-461196
 Mob 07588-181313 .

Notes From Branch Meetings

June meeting

14 branch members met in the **King's Head & Bell** in Abingdon on Wednesday 6 June and had some very nice **Sadler's Red House** and **Adnam's Ghost Ship**.

The list of the latest beer scores was distributed. Some high entries that need more scores are **Royal Sun**, Begbroke; **Anchor** in Hayfield Road; **Duke's Cut** in Park End Street and **Bell Inn**, Langford. Some of our top pubs are falling below the 10 scores level we use to select for GBG. Don't think that you needn't put scores in for the popular pubs because 'someone else will'.

Some city centre pubs have complained that they do not get enough, (or any!), copies of The Oxford Drinker. If you are aware of shortages, email Tony Goulding at anthony4177@btinternet.com so he can follow up with the usual

deliverer. If you deliver please check back after a couple of weeks to see if they need more.

We looked at the entries for the Oxford Beer Festival logo design competition and chose a 1st, 2nd, and 3rd. The standard was very high again. Obviously several cases of **Brakspear** & **Wychwood** beer provides quite an incentive.

In Pub and Brewery news we heard of signs of activity in the **Nag's Head** in Abingdon. A community group is trying to save the **Otmoor Lodge** in Horton-cum-Studley and we will do what we can to help. It's up for sale (£1.6m!) with a proposal to develop the site for housing. **Wetherspoon** had put in a planning application for the old post office in Abingdon which has been closed for some time. The branch formally supported this as a welcome addition to the pub scene in Abingdon.

July meeting

11 branch members met on a very dreary evening weatherwise in the **White Hart** in Headington on Monday 2 July and had some very nice **Everard's Elixir** and **Bath Ales' Summer's Hare**

High scoring pubs that need more scores are **Royal Sun**, Begbroke; **Bell Inn**, Langford; **Duke's Cut** in Park End Street and **Trout Inn**, Wolvercote.

In Pub and Brewery news we heard that **The Swan** at Islip is staggering on and the **Boat** at Thrupp has now got a permanent tenant with high hopes. The **Chester Arms** in Chester Street has been sold and the new owners plan to reopen as a pub.

Steve Lawrence,
 Secretary Oxford Branch CAMRA

Beer Festival Diary – www.oxfordcamra.org.uk/festivals



Tuesday 7 - Saturday 11 August

Great British Beer Festival

Olympia, London
(note change of venue)
800+ beers, ciders, perries & foreign beers
www.gbbf.org.uk

Saturday 11 August

Bicester Round Table Beer Festival

Garth Park, Launton Road, Bicester
www.bicesterroundtable.org.uk

Thursday 16 - Sat 18 August

13th Worcester Beer, Cider & Perry Festival

Worcester Racecourse, Pitchcroft, Worcester
200 beers plus 100 ciders & perries
www.worcesterbeerfest.org.uk

Friday 17 – Sunday 19 August

Hanneyfest

Black Horse, Main Street, East Hanney, nr Wantage
01235 868212
www.theblackhorseateasthanney.co.uk

Friday 24 – Monday 27 August

4th Summer Beer Festival

Crown Inn
(home of the Halfpenny Brewery)
High Street, Lechlade
30 beers & ciders
01367 252198
www.crownlechlade.co.uk

Friday 24 - Monday 27 August

Summer Beer Festival

Kings Head & Bell, East St. Helens St, Abingdon
28 beers & ciders
01235 525362
www.kingsheadandbell-abingdon.com

Friday 24 - Monday 27 August

Woodman Inn Beer Festival

New Yatt Road, North Leigh, nr Witney
14 beers plus 6 ciders
01993 881790

Friday 24 - Sunday 26 August

The Three Horseshoes Beer Festival

78 Corn St. Witney, OX28 6BS
4th Anniversary Beer Festival

Saturday 25 August (2-7pm)

Chinnor Summer Beer Festival
Playing Fields, Chinnor, nr Thame
www.chinnorbeerfest.org.uk

Saturday 25 - Sunday 26 August

9th Brill Beerfest

Brill Sports & Social Club, Church Street, Brill, nr Thame
www.brillbeerfestival.co.uk

Saturday 25 - Monday 27 August

Trigger Pond Beer

Trigger Pond, Bicester Road, Bucknell, nr Bicester
01869 252817
www.thetriggerpond.com

Friday 31 August - Sat 1 Sept

22nd Harbury Beer Festival

Village Hall, South Parade, Harbury, nr Leamington Spa
60+ beers, ciders & perries
www.camrahow.org.uk

Friday 31 August - Sun 2 Sept

Wallingford Bunkfest

“music, dance, steam & beer...”
07743 330494
www.bunkfest.co.uk

Friday 7 - Sunday 9 September

11th Headington Beer Festival

Masons Arms, Quarry School Place, Headington, Oxford
45+ beers plus 15 ciders & perries
01865 764579
www.themasonsarmshq.co.uk

Saturday 15 September

Evesham Pie and Ale Festival

Market Place, Evesham
www.eveshamtown.co.uk

Saturday 15 - Sun 16 September

Autumn Ale & Steam Weekend

Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway, Winchcombe Station, off Becketts Lane, Greet, nr Cheltenham, Gloucestershire
24 beers
www.northcotswoldcamra.org.uk or
www.gwsr.com

Tuesday 18 - Saturday 22 Sept

Autumn Ale Festival

Far From the Madding Crowd
Friars Entry, Oxford
01865 240900
www.maddingcrowd.co.uk

Friday 21 – Sun 23 September

Autumn Beer & Sausage Festival

Cricketers Arms, Littleworth, nr Wheatley
01865 872738
www.cricketers-arms.co.uk

Thursday 27th - Sat 29 Sept

Lamb & Flag XT Beer Festival

Lamb & Flag, 12 St Giles, Oxford, OX1 3JS
01865 515787
All 9 XT beers

Friday 28 – Sun 30 September

Moreton-in-Marsh Beer Festival

Moreton-in-Marsh Cricket Club, Batsford Road, Moreton-in-Marsh
www.northcotswoldcamra.org.uk

Friday 28 - Sun 30 September

Prince of Wales 3rd Beer & Cider Festival

Prince of Wales, Shippon, 66 Barrow Rd, OX13 6JQ
01235 538546

Friday 28 - Sunday 30 September

Bletchington Sports & Social Club Beer Festival

Bletchington Sports & Social Club, Oxford Road, Bletchington, nr Kidlington
10 beers plus 2 ciders
Starts 6pm Friday. Live music
Friday & Saturday
07879 464143 or 01869 351866

Friday 5 - Saturday 6 October

Solihull Beer Festival

The Royal British Legion, Union Road, Solihull
35+ beers plus cider
www.solihullcamra.org.uk

Thursday 11 - Saturday 13

October

Oxford Beer Festival

Town Hall, St Aldates, Oxford
www.oxfordcamra.org.uk

Wednesday 17 - Saturday 20

October

Concrete Pint Beer Festival

Buszy, opp. Milton Keynes Central rail station, Elder Gate, Central Milton Keynes
90 beers, ciders & perries
www.mkcamra.org.uk

Friday 19 - Saturday 20 October

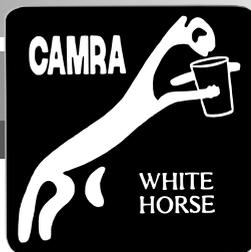
Bath Beer Festival

The Pavilion, North Parade Road, Bath
80 beers plus 30 ciders
www.bathpavilion.org

To add a festival to the diary, please email details to festivals@oxfordcamra.org.uk

White Horse Branch of CAMRA

www.whitehorsecamra.org.uk



The White Horse Branch was established in December 2007 with a small committee who did not want to see the old Vale of White Horse Branch disappear and merge back into the Oxford Branch.

The White Horse Branch covers an area of Oxfordshire countryside stretching from Coleshill, Shrivenham and Ashbury in the West, along the south bank of the Thames to Shippon, Steventon and East Hendred in the East. Taking in the larger towns of Faringdon and Wantage and Grove, the area is predominantly rural and dotted with numerous villages and hamlets. The rural nature of our branch provides us with a wealth of picturesque village inns and quaint "gems" to enjoy but also presents us with a problem in our attempts to galvanise efforts in campaigning issues. Many of our remote village pubs are those most at risk from closure or assimilation by a Pub Co, who may be less than sensitive to the wishes of locals or CAMRA aims in promoting real ales.

We hold our regular branch meetings at a different pub each month but there are still plenty left to visit. If your cherished local would welcome a branch visit, pop along to one of our meetings and let us know about it.

Royal Oak named as Central Southern CAMRA Cider Pub of the Year, 2012

The **Royal Oak** in Wantage, has retained its last-year's crown as the Central Southern CAMRA Cider Pub of the Year. As visitors to the Royal Oak will know, there are commonly twelve or so ciders and perrys on offer from throughout the UK. The Southern Region competition is open to all pubs in Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire, and awarded on the basis of the range and quality of draught cider and perry on sale. Congratulations once again to landlord Paul Hexter and his helpers; there will be an award ceremony in due course, so watch this space.

White Horse Branch Social Diary



Tuesday 7th August
Branch Social at GBBF Trade day
GBBF, Olympia
5pm

Tuesday 21st August
Branch Meeting
The Swan, Wantage
7.45pm

Saturday 8th September
Beer Festival & Regional social
Masons Arms, Headington
12 noon

Tuesday 18th September
Branch Meeting
The Greyhound, Letcombe Regis
7.45pm (TBC)

Saturday 6th October
Social to Ascot BF
Ascot racecourse
Pick up time TBC

Thursday 18th October
Branch Meeting
The Eight Bells, Eaton
7.45pm (TBC)

Branch Contacts

For more information please contact:

- Neil Crook: Chairman
contact@whitehorsecamra.org.uk
- Peter Fowler: Membership Secretary
membership@whitehorsecamra.org.uk
- Ian Winfield: Social Secretary
social@whitehorsecamra.org.uk

Our Website

For more information about breweries, pubs, events and news in our area, Visit our website:

www.whitehorsecamra.org.uk

Social Events

As well as organising the beer festival, the branch has an active social programme. This includes visits to beer festivals, breweries, hop farms, maltings and of course public houses; often two or three of these elements are included on the same day.



5th WANTAGE BEER FESTIVAL



CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE

WANTAGE CIVIC HALL

Portway, Wantage OX12 9BY

Fri 9th & Sat 10th November 2012

Opening Times: Friday 11.00am - 11.00pm

Saturday 11.00am - 11.00pm

28 Real Ales

Beers from throughout the country

Cider & Perry

Glass hire £2.00

Festival glasses available

Food and soft drinks served

Admission prices:

Friday 11am - 6pm: CAMRA members Free, Others £2.00

Friday 6pm - 11pm: CAMRA members £1.00, Others £3.00

Saturday 11am - 11pm: CAMRA members Free, Others £2.00

(Under 21's need ID)

Parking at Venue

Further details: <http://www.whitehorsecamra.org.uk>

Enquiries: beerfestival12@whitehorsecamra.org.uk

Five go mad in Wadworthshire (aka Phew! What a scorcher!)

Dick Bosley



The hottest weekend of the year saw Tim, John, Jane, new recruit Laura, and I setting off to complete the walk along the Kennet and Avon Canal. The temperature was already in the high 20's by the time our train got to Pewsey and so we wasted no time before heading off in what we hoped was a westerly direction at what we hoped was a brisk pace.

Reaching the **Barge** at Honeystreet before it opened was annoying as it stocked **Honeystreet Ales**; a beer I've not yet tried – but another five miles got us to the **Bridge Inn** at Horton for lunch. Both the **Red, White & Brew** and the **6X**, from a wooden cask, were in good nick reviving and rehydrating us. The girls reported that the lime & soda was good too but I have neither the experience nor the expertise to comment on that. Following Noel Cowards' advice we returned to the mid-day sun going through Devizes, where we were surprised to find no pubs on the towpath, and then past the magnificent Caen Hill locks.

In the afternoon we were heading straight into the sun but we did get the chance to appreciate and quality control the ales at two more Waddies pubs, the **Three Magpies** at Sells Green (**Horizon & Swordfish** - excellent) and the **Barge Inn** at Seend Cleeve (**Farmers Glory** – perhaps a little strong for such a hot day,) before we left the canal to call into the **Lamb on the Strand**. As planned Laura left us here and so after 8 hours of walking and drinking four very hot and very dusty walkers reach the B&B. A quick shower and we retraced our steps to the LotS to double check on the **Tunnel Vision** and **Bath Gem** ...oh yes and have an excellent supper as well.

After a good sleep and a better breakfast we were back on the road – well towpath – by 8.30 the next morning, hoping to get a few miles done before it got too hot. We were foiled in this cunning plan as it was already boiling when we set off. We reached Bradford-on-Avon before the pubs were open (damn Sunday opening hours!) but I was able to show my support for the K&A Trust by buying a chilled bottle of **Spitfire** which I was generously forced to share with John.

Three more brisk miles saw us arrive at the **Hop Pole** at Limpley Stoke a couple of minutes before opening time. After very little debate we decided to wait which turned out to be an inspired decision as this is an excellent pub - dating from the 15th century and wood panelled there was a lot of old brewery bits and pieces on display as well as the landlady's jugs. We all chose the excellent **Butcombe** which we drank in the thankfully shady garden while admiring the view across the Avon valley. We sadly pushed on to the **George** at Bathampton, which made us even sadder



The Hop Pole at Limpley Stoke

as the **Bombadier** and **Doombar** were both ordinary at best. But at least it gave us some shade and the rest John needed to get his heartbeat back to something resembling a rhythm. At least we were now only a couple of miles from the end of the canal in Bath.

Summoning our last reserves of energy we walked into town and, as usual, our road crossing technique terrified Jane as both John and I failed our entrance exam to the Tufty Club. Firstly to the **Volunteer Rifleman** for another good **Butcombe**, and then the **Coer de Lyon**, between us trying the **Abbey Bellringer & White Friar**. Tempting as it was to try more of the Bath pubs we sensibly but reluctantly made our way towards the station, sneaking in another quick **Bellringer** in the **Huntsman**, before we caught our train home.

Returning to Steventon I had to take the dog for a walk on my return before a much needed bath and it seemed only sensible to call into the **Cherry Tree** for a final **Horizon** – I think the best pint I had all weekend.



Kennet and Avon Canal

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NORTHGATE
TRADE MARK
DEVIZES

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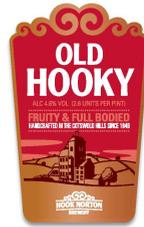
Currently training for the Olympics
in Darts, Crib and Aunt Sally

Full and frank exchanges of views most evenings.

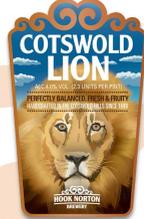
Dog friendly.

Quite friendly generally.

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Facebook: New Inn Witney



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Cotswold Hills since 1849



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A family run freehouse with its own on-site microbrewery producing Real Ales

4th Annual
Summer Beer Festival
24th - 27th August 2012



30 Real Ales & Ciders
Live Music
BBQ & Pig Roast

For more details go to: www.crownlechlade.co.uk

The Crown Inn, High Street, Lechlade-on-Thames, Glos, GL7 3AE
01367 252 198

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Pub Walk 7: Newbridge, Northmoor, and Standlake



Like several previous pub walks, this one uses a short section of the Thames Path National Trail as a part of the route. Originally this walk was advertised to be around 5 miles, but I changed the route slightly after doing a reconnaissance: some of the meadow and field paths that I planned to use turned out to be rather flooded and muddy back in April. The revised route is more like 6 miles long, but has the advantage of following the Thames path a bit further and visiting Northmoor Lock. The footpaths that are used now are dry.

The start point for this walk, the **Rose Revived** at Newbridge, is a bit more remote than many of the previous walks that we have done. It is however served by the X15 bus which shuttles back and forth between Abingdon and Witney (note: Monday-Saturday daytime service only, no Sunday service). Due perhaps to the journey involved to the start point, and also that several other event of interest took place that weekend (including a weekend away in Belgium by some members of the branch), the turn out this time was relatively small - but I was pleased to be joined by four intrepid members from the western side of our branch area.

It was a fine Saturday in late May when we met up outside the **Rose Revived**. It is a large, riverside pub sitting at one end of a attractive historic stone bridge over the Thames (this bridge was apparently the "new" bridge at some point in the 14th century, but the name has stuck!). At the other end of the bridge stands another pub, **the Maybush**. The Rose Revived is one of Greene King's "Old English Inns", with a strong emphasis on its restaurant and accommodation. But on a nice day the riverbank pub garden, with its shady willow trees, makes a fine place to sit and enjoy a pint or two. The pub was busy when we arrived and we had to queue for a while to get served at the bar, but soon enough we were able to head outside with our beers. The beer range is standard Greene King fare: **Greene King**



The Rose Revived, Newbridge

IPA, Old Speckled Hen, Abbot, and a Greene King seasonal beer. I plumped for the Speckled Hen and thought that it was okay, though I do have to note that it isn't the same beer as when Morland brewed it in Abingdon!

After our first pint we took a short walk over the bridge to have a quick look at the **Maybush**. The pub (which has been through a succession of licensees recently) was closed, and the interior has been stripped bare. Hopefully someone is planning to refurbish it?

Continued on Page 24



Newbridge (Maybush pub on the left)



The Thames Path towards Northmoor

Pub Walk 7, continued

We then crossed back over the bridge and started our walk along the river - this is a very attractive and peaceful stretch of the Thames, and the path is very easy to follow - hugging the river bank for the most part, and well waymarked at gates and turns with the acorn symbol that denotes a National Trail. We walked past Northmoor lock, stayed with the river through another couple of fields, then turned left away from the Thames Path along a footpath following a farm track to Northmoor.

The pub at Northmoor is the **Red Lion**, another Greene King pub. It's a nice one-bar village local, serving **Morland Original** and a guest beer - the guest was from **Batemans** on the occasion of our visit. We again elected to sit in the garden after collecting our drinks. I went for the Morland Original, and thought that it was in good condition, and the rest of the party enjoyed their Batemans.

From Northmoor we headed north along a residential road that eventually turns into a bridleway and winds its way between the lakes that make up Linch Hill leisure Park, and then comes out onto the road to Stanton Harcourt. Turning right we cautiously walked up the road for a few hundred yards, then turned left onto the bridleway that would take us to Standlake.

There are two pubs in Standlake, both on the High Street. The first that we came to was the **Bell**, a free house with an interesting and frequently changing range of four different ales. I went for the **Otter Bitter** (a personal favorite of mine) and found it to be good. Finally we walked briskly up the road to the **Black Horse**, where we rounded off the walk with a pleasant pint of **Hook Norton Bitter** - unfortunately I was in a hurry by this point, trying to make sure that I could catch the next X15 to Abingdon.

My thanks to those who came along, and I hope you enjoyed the walk.



Northmoor Lock



Beer Garden at the Red Lion, Northmoor



The Bell, Standlake



The Red Lion, Northmoor

If anyone else wants to follow in our footsteps then the branch web site has a full route description and maps for the walk: <http://oxfordcamra.org.uk/pub-walk-07>

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Meet The Brewer

Limestone Brewery



Dave Richardson

I've heard some funny tales at beer tastings, but none more so than when Ian "Brad" Bradford of Limestone Brewery regaled us about his bee outfit during an event at **Oxford University Club** in July. "Lenny the Limestone Bee" is the brewery's mascot, but when Brad rang up to order a costume, they couldn't understand why the bee's mouth had to open so he could sup beer. "And as I will be supping beer, the costume needs another hole as well," he told them. They just didn't get it.

The bee is a good choice of mascot, as six hives have been set up on the brewery roof and the honey is used in an annual brew called **Stoney Brood**, available in cask and bottle. Brad kept us entertained for well over an hour as we sampled three of his brews, all of which have the word "stone" in their name as the brewery is situated in Stone, Staffordshire. We tried the original **Foundation Stone** (a pale and hoppy IPA-style, 4.5% ABV), **Seven Stone Weakling** (named after bodybuilder Charles Atlas, a copper coloured seasonal beer at 4.7% ABV) and finally **Stone the Crows** (a rich dark beer at 5.2% ABV). Apart from five beers that are permanently available, a new brew is produced every month and you can win a t-shirt by suggesting a name. Beware, though – all the best names are already taken. They include **Stone Faced**, **Stone Cutter**, **Gaul Stone**, **Heart of Stone**, **Flag Stone**, **Cobble Stone**, **Stone Cold**, **Stone Dead**, **Standing Stone**, **Sharon Stone**, **Stoney Broke** and the infamous **Limestone Cowboy**, which is presumably popular at Country & Western events. The only exception to the "stone" rule is the Continental-style **Ein Stein**, but stein is German for stone. A beer including beetroot is promised for later this year – **Blood From A Stone!** Stoney Broke is "a reasonable attempt at political satire", said Brad – noting that we are now in a double dip recession.

Staffordshire might be a long way to go for Oxford members, but Limestone brews are periodically available at White Horse pubs including **the Royal Blenheim**, at **University Club** and at the **Turf Tavern**. Brad said he was an admirer of White Horse and of Midlands breweries Kinver, Salopian, Townhouse and Offbeat. With these and other great brews available in the far from middling Midlands, could a branch visit be in order?

Limestone is a family firm with Brad and wife Vivienne doing most of the work. It was set up in 2008 in a former brewery operated by Bent's, bringing brewing back to Stone for the first time in nearly 40 years. Brad was no novice as he worked for 18 years at the Titanic brewery in Stoke-on-Trent, latterly as head brewer. Four types of hops are used plus varieties from Germany, the US and

New Zealand. The natural ingredients used in brewing change constantly, and with the wet summer affecting English hops, more might be imported.

Limestone's story is one of success in difficult economic times, and we can only hope that its products will be more regularly available around Oxford. The branch might head to Staffordshire to tour the brewery and sample the beers in local pubs, including its own Limestone Vaults due to open in Newcastle-under-Lyme later this year. A fancy dress ball is also planned when we might finally catch up with Lenny the Limestone Bee – let's just hope the costume turns out right in the end!

Future beer tastings at University Club – a great sports and social venue in Mansfield Road – will be publicised to CAMRA members.

Beer Prices

Tony Goulding

The price of beer has certainly seen a lot of comments and lots of money required for a night out .

Some surprises are out there. On a recent visit to East Anglia in the village of Earsham is The Queens Head. The Waveney Brewery sits in the pub car park and being served in fine condition were:

- Waveney East Coast Mild £2.40 a pint
- Waveney Lightweight Bitter £2.50 a pint
- Colchester Brewery Diesel £2.60 a pint
- And far from home West Berks Good Old Boy at a staggering £2.60 a pint

A visit to the two Good Beer Guide pubs in Gorleston On Sea (Memories of family holidays in the 60s!) found two different community locals. With beers from local and not so local breweries, 14 between them a very enjoyable evening was had with prices varying again from £2.40 to £2.85 and a 7% cider at £2.80 .

The Old Anchor Beer Festival

1st-3rd June 2012

ABINGDON
On Thames 

Chris Hunter

The Old Anchor in Abingdon held its first beer and cider festival over the jubilee weekend under new ownership of Jamie and Dan and it proved to be a great success. There have been festivals held here in the past so it is nice to see them being continued in such a fashion.

There were 17 ales and 5 ciders on offer and the selection was varied ranging from golden summer ales through to porter, and imperial stout. It was nice to see the majority of the ales and ciders were sourced from local micro breweries. There were the Greene King regulars such as *Morland Original*, *IPA Reserve* and *Bellhaven*.

The *Bellhaven Colden Bay*, Bellingers Summer *Celebration*, *Loose Cannon 1952 Jubilee* and *Robinson Dizzy Blonde* were all excellent session beers with their own distinct flavours. The *Oxfordshire Ales Churchill* and *Loose Cannon Dark Horse* at 4.5% and 4.3% were particularly good with nice malt flavour.

Rebellion Diamond Porter and *Bellingers Moonlight* were excellent porters and not too overpowering even with the moonlight being 5.7%. The *Wessex Russian Stout* again was excellent but not for the faint hearted at 9%.

The festival featured some excellent live music during the daytime and evenings over the weekend period, there was also a session from the local Morris Dancers on Sunday evening which always goes down well. Visitors to the festival enjoyed great ales and ciders, good live music and an excellent BBQ, congratulation to Jamie, Dan and the hardworking staff for a great jubilee weekend we look forward to the next festival.



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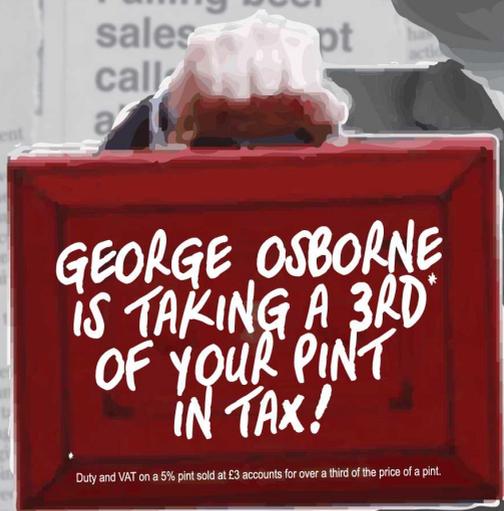
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Highlands Visit



As a recent visitor to the Highlands I wanted to take the opportunity to provide you with a short report in regard to the local pubs I visited. I trust it will be of interest and benefit to you.

Staying in Inverness, on my first evening I set out on foot and decided to sample a few of the local pubs. I visited **Blackfriars**, **The King's Highway** and **The Castle Tavern**. Whilst the former two were very enjoyable and, atmosphere-wise, typically traditional pubs with a good selection of real ale, my stay at the Castle Tavern was short as the TV's gave it a rather fake aura. I should make a point of acknowledging the bar lady at Blackfriars who was particularly friendly.

On the second evening I ventured further afield to Nairn, visiting **The Bandstand**. In truth it was this visit which provided me with the inspiration to send this report.

I was warmly welcomed and spent a thoroughly enjoyable evening drinking great beer (**Orkney Pale Ale**), enjoying wonderful food (fillet steak, locally sourced) and, like Blackfriars and The King's Highway, no noisy TV screens. The Bandstand was exactly what I expect of a good pub and had a lovely mix of clientele which made the experience all the better. I am not in the habit of "scoring" pubs but feel on this occasion it is merited. The Bandstand deserves 4.7 out of 5 (I was tempted to give it full marks but want to keep them on their toes!).

On the final evening, I paid a visit to **The Benleva** in Drumnadrochit. Though I found the beer OK, it did not compare with that I enjoyed the previous evening. I have to also say the toilets weren't particularly pleasant!

I hope this short submission is of use to you and I hope that my comments will be positively embraced by all the establishments I visited.

Local Beer at Farmer's Markets

Dermot Dobson

Whenever drinking at home (or anywhere else outside licensed premises) I prefer to buy my beer at pubs, small local outlets or, best of all, the brewery themselves, since I think the brewer and small trader need my money more than the huge supermarkets do.

While I've walked over Shotover Hill to buy some beer from **Shotover Brewery** (and the small general store in Horspath too) and cycled to Witney to buy beer from **Wychwood**, I see that more breweries are selling direct at local Farmers Markets.

Deddington Market, one of the largest and most popular around, is on the 4th Saturday of the month and **Headington** on the 2nd and 4th Friday of the month (9am to midday or 1:30pm for Headington) are the two we frequent and we routinely buy beer from **Cotswold**, **Compass**, **Oxfordshire Ales** and **Appleford breweries**. There are often vendors of local wines and cordials - both still and sparkling - and ciders/perrys too.

Quite apart from putting my money where I feel it is

most useful (at least from a Real Ale perspective) there is often time for an informative chat with one of your friendly local brewers - and the opportunity to browse some excellent locally produced food as well. for more info:

<http://www.headington.org.uk/market/>

<http://www.deddington.org.uk/community/farmersmarket/>

Though I'm sure there are other markets at which beer is also sold.

Local Historian Needed

I have an earthenware ginger beer bottle dated 1860. It was a company based in Cowley or very nearby and run by my great grandmother.

Do you or any of your readers know anything about its precise location and its history???

Many thanks,
Andy Polley
07789 713428

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