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Vol 39
No 1

Feb/Mar
2017



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LOOKING AHEAD

I, for one, was not sad to see the back of 2016 and I suspect that I was not alone. But what might 2017 hold for us beer drinkers and pub-goers? Firstly, let me say that I am no expert but then again, we don't listen to them anymore, do we?

Around Greater London the number of small breweries continues to grow, many of them starting off by taking over equipment discarded by earlier breweries who are expanding and being supported by crowd-funding. I keep asking myself when the bubble will burst but I have been asking that for several years now and it hasn't. If they can sell their beer then best of luck to them. Let's be honest, not all of it is good and that is in itself a problem but one that the market ought to control.

Interestingly, in the *Evening Standard* on 3 January, their business analyst, Nick Goodway, predicted that in October, Young & Co and Fuller Smith & Turner will announce that their families have agreed a £1 billion merger to create a dominant London

brewer and pubco and that consequently CAMRA will have hysterics. This is, however, one of a number of somewhat tongue-in-cheek predictions which includes the Department for Transport reassigning the Southern Railway franchise to Ryanair. Trouble is, after 2016, who knows?

Although, as evidenced by our letters page, some see that market forces also should be allowed to prevail when it comes to pub closures, it is a very distorted market, mostly due to London property prices. As reported elsewhere in more detail, it is now clear that the way forward is to give pubs their own specific (*sui generis*) planning class that does not carry permitted development rights involving change of use and certainly not the right to demolish. CAMRA must continue to campaign for this.

Mind you, our original campaigning purpose still requires effort. One London CAMRA branch pubs officer recently found that a pub had stopped selling real ale and was told that 'too many other pubs in the area' were selling real ale.

I don't know if there is something in the water in the Borough of Bexley but they certainly lead the way when it comes to micropubs. It is interesting to see however that this phenomenon is now spreading to other outer London boroughs. It does, of course, depend on the attitude of the licensing authorities and shop rent levels. Closer

As reported in our October/November edition, the winner of the John Young Memorial Award for 2016 was London Assembly member Tom Copley. Tom holds the award, flanked by Torquil Sligo-Young (left) and CAMRA's Greater London Regional Director, Geoff Strawbridge (right). The presentation was made on 8 December at the Golden Lion in Camden, a pub that Tom helped to save. Geoff commented, "With the Capital still losing pubs hand over fist, we thought it was time to acknowledge someone who has been active in trying to do something about it. Tom has been a tower of strength both in the London Assembly and in local pub campaigns. This award is given in memory of John Young CBE who, as chairman of Young's Brewery, championed the cause of real ale and community pubs from the 1960s until his death in 2006. It is given to an individual or organisation that we believe has done the most for real ale and/or pubs within the Greater London area. We think John would approve of this year's winner and we have his nephew, Torquil Sligo-Young, once again to present it". With thanks to Christine Cryne for the photograph.

in, the many brewery taps that are now operating fulfil a similar role if not necessarily for the same sort of clientele.

'Brexit' will be much talked about but any real effect may be some way off. It must however be an uncertain time for the many Europeans who work behind London's bars. The one global brewer that was listed on the London stock exchange, SABMiller, has of course already gone but for different reasons. The fall in the value of the pound sterling and the consequent increase in the cost of holidays abroad is apparently encouraging 'staycations' and presumably many of those will be spent in London. Likewise, the UK is now a much cheaper destination for tourists from abroad and we know that our unique pubs are an attraction. In their 'Brexit manifesto', the British Beer and Pub Association specifically ask for there to be no changes to overseas visitor visa requirements for two years. Any additional money coming into the tills of our beleaguered pubs must be welcome if only to offset their increased business rates. It may be that companies like Fuller's and Young's who have invested heavily in adding hotel space to their pubs will find this literally paying dividends.

Heineken's unexpected take-over of Punch Taverns at first looked like an attempt to secure a bigger home market in the face of an unexpected future and possibly a welcome return to the old days of 'vertical integration' but the

involvement of a venture capital company is distinctly disturbing.

The notion of a 'deeper level of truth' appears to apply to the debate on alcohol and health. No-one disputes that the abuse of alcohol is a severe health risk but there is a world of difference between a furtively-consumed bottle of supermarket vodka and a few pints a couple of nights a week in company down the pub. I suspect that most readers of this magazine can see that. Indeed a warm comfortable pub where you can hear each other talk, a group of friends and some decent beer is my idea of 'hygge', a concept that pub-goers in these islands have known for generations even if they didn't know that that was what it was called.

Just after Christmas, Public Health England announced that 80% of the middle-aged are overweight because they don't exercise enough and drink too much alcohol so are susceptible to illnesses such as type two diabetes. This, alas, must encompass most of you reading (and writing) this magazine. Not for the first time I say stop lecturing us and give us some balanced, reasoned advice instead. I believe that most of you are sensible enough to manage your own health perfectly well so I wish you a happy and healthy 2017.

Tony Hedger



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Branch diaries

Welcome to our regular details of London CAMRA contacts and events, where branches say what is happening in their areas that might be of interest to drinkers across London. Events for February and March 2017 are listed below. Meetings, visits and socials are open to all – everyone is welcome to come along. A complete calendar listing of CAMRA events within Greater London is available at www.london.camra.org.uk.

LONDON REGIONAL EVENTS

Secretary: Roy Tunstall, roytunstall.camra@gmail.com

March – Wed 29 (7.30) London AGM and Liaison Committee (regional co-ordination mtg for London branch reps). Royal Oak, 44 Tabard St, Borough SE1.

Website: www.london.camra.org.uk

LONDON PUBS GROUP

Chair: Jane Jephcote, jane.jephcote@googlemail.com, 07813 739856

February – Sat 11 Kensal Green, Maida Hill, Maida Vale & St John's Wood: (12pm) Masons Arms, 665 Harrow Rd, Kensal Green, NW10 5NU; (1pm) Squirrel (formerly Skiddaw), 46 Chippenham Rd, Maida Hill, W9 2AF; (2.45) Prince Alfred, 5a Formosa St, Maida Vale, W9 1EE; (3.30) Warrington Hotel, 93 Warrington Cresc, Maida Vale, W9 1EH; (4.30) Richmond Arms, 1 Orchardson St, St John's Wood, NW8 8NG; (5.15) Crocker's Folly, 24 Aberdeen Pl, St John's Wood, NW8 8JR.

March – Wed 15 (7.15 for 7.30) Mtg. Royal Oak (upstairs), 44 Tabard St, SE1. All CAMRA branches and members interested in pub research and preservation welcome. Website: www.londonpubsgroup.camra.org.uk

LONDON CIDER GROUP

Ian White, london_cider@btinternet.com or text 07712 122402 (10-4 Mon-Fri)

Our next events will be in May 2017; please check then.

YOUNG MEMBERS GROUP

Email group: <http://groups.google.com/group/london-camra-ym>

BEXLEY

Rob Archer, camr@rcher.org.uk, contacts@camrabexleybranch.org.uk

February – Wed 8 (8.30) Mtg. Prince Albert, Bexleyheath DA6 7LE. - **Wed 15** Blackheath soc: meet (8pm) Prince of Wales, SE3 0RL. - **Wed 22** (7.45) GBG selection mtg. Furze Wren, Bexleyheath DA6 7DY. - **Sat 25** (12pm) Tonbridge soc: catch 11:30 train from London Bridge.

March – Wed 8 (8.30) Mtg. George Staples, Blackfen DA15 8PR. - **Wed 22** Crayford soc: meet (8pm) Penny Farthing, DA1 4JJ.

Website: www.bexley.camra.org.uk

BROMLEY

Barry Phillips, social.secretary@bromley.camra.org.uk

February – Fri 3 Dover White Cliffs Beer Fest soc. Maison Dieu (Town Hall), Biggin St, Dover, CT16 1DL: meet 11am Bromley South Stn. for 11:23 to Dover Priory. - **Wed 8**

Bromley soc: (7.30) White Horse, 64 Palace Rd, BR1 3JX; (9pm) Star & Garter, 227 High St, BR1 1NZ. - **Mon 13** Chislehurst soc: (8pm) Crown Inn, School Rd, BR7 5PQ; (9pm) Bull's Head, Royal Parade, BR7 6NR. - **Sat 18** Swanscombe, Dartford & Crayford soc: (12pm) George & Dragon, 1 London Rd, Swanscombe DA10 0LQ, dep. 1.25 for 1.37 train from Swanscombe to arr. Dartford 1.46; (2pm) Stage Door, 37 Hythe St, Dartford DA1 1BE; (3pm) Dartford Working Men's Club, Essex Rd, DA1 2AU; (5pm) Penny Farthing, 3 Waterside, Crayford DA1 4JJ. - **Wed 22** Tramlink soc: (7.15) Graces, 1-3 Witham Rd, Birkbeck SE20 7YA; (8.15) Claret, 5 Bingham Corner, Lower Addiscombe Rd, CR0 7AA; (9.30) Cronx Bar, Units 3 & 4, Boxpark Croydon, 99 George St, Croydon CR0 1LD. - **Tue 28** (7.30) Cttee mtg: Chancery, 90 Bromley Rd, Beckenham BR3 5NP.

March – Mon 6 Hayes soc: (7.30) George, 29 Hayes St, BR2 7LE; (8.30) New Inn, 59 Station App, BR2 7EA. - **Mon 13** Lunchtime soc: (12.20) Swan & Mitre, 260-262 High St, Bromley BR1 1PG; (1.30) Shortlands Tavern, 5 Station Rd., BR2 0EY. - **Wed 22** Anerley & Crystal Palace soc: (7.30) Douglas Fir, 144 Anerley Rd, Anerley SE20 8DL; (8.45) Alma, 95 Church Rd, Crystal Palace SE19 2TA; (9.45) Westow House, 79 Westow Hill, SE19 1TX. - **Tue 28** (7.30) Cttee mtg. Queens Head, 25 High St, Downe BR6 7US. Website: www.bromley.camra.org.uk

CROYDON & SUTTON

Soc sec: Robert King, 07593 538182, contact@croйдoncamra.org.uk

February – Thu 9 (8.30) Soc. Portland Arms, 152 Portland Rd, SE25 4PT. - **Wed 22** (8.30) Soc. Ye Olde Red Lion, 17 Park Rd, Cheam, SM3 8QB. - **Thu 28** (8.30) Mtg. Dog & Bull (upstairs), 24 Surrey St, Croydon CR0 1RG.

March – Thu 2 (8.30) Soc. Cricketers, 47 Shirley Rd, Croydon CR0 7ER. - **Tue 21** Purley soc: (8.30) Pear Tree, 908/912 Brighton Rd, CR8 2LN; (9.30) Foxley Hatch, 8/9 Russell Hill Parade, Russell Hill Rd, CR8 2LE. - **Thu 30** (8.30) London Drinker pick up. Hope, 38 West St, Carshalton SM5 2PR.

Website: www.croydon.camra.org.uk

EAST LONDON & CITY

Branch sec: John Pardoe, 07757 772564, elacbranch@mail.com

February – Tue 7 Ray's EC1 crawl: (7.30) Sutton Arms, 16 Great Sutton St, EC1V 5DH; (8pm) Slaughtered Lamb, 34-35 Great Sutton St, EC1V 0DY; (8.40) Brewdog Clerkenwell, 45-47 Clerkenwell Rd, EC1M 5RS; (9.10) Jerusalem Tavern, 55 Britton St, EC1M 5UQ; (9.50) Castle, 34-35 Cowcross St, EC1M 6DB; (10.30) Sutton Arms, 6 Carthusian St, EC1V 0DH. - **Tue 21** (8pm) CotY and PotY mtg. Bell, 617 Forest Rd, Walthamstow E17 4NE.

March – Fri 3 (8pm) Soc. Leyton Orient Supporters Club-Elusive Brewing take over (admission from 5pm). - **Sun 12** (2-6pm) Pig's Ear Beer Fest wash up mtg. Rose & Crown, 53 Hoe St, Walthamstow E17 4SA. - **Tue 14** (8pm) Mtg. White Hart, 1 Mile End Rd, E1 4TP. Website: www.pigsear.org.uk

Branch diaries

ENFIELD & BARNET

Peter Graham, 07946 383498,

branchcontact@camraenfieldandbarnet.org.uk

February – Sat 4 Hendon survey: (12pm) Greyhound, 52 Church End, NW4 4JT; (1.30) Moon under Water, 10 Valley Parade, Edgware Rd, Colindale NW9 6RR; (3.45) Three Hammers, Hammers La, Mill Hill NW7 4EA. - **Thu 9** Barnet survey: (8.30) Butchers Arms, 148 High St, EN5 5XP; (9.30) Lord Nelson, 14 West End La, EN5 2SA. - **Wed 15** (8.30) GBG final selection mtg. Old Mitre, 58 High St, Barnet EN5 5SJ. - **Thu 23** Visit to National Winter Festival at Norwich; meet Liverpool St Stn. for 10am train.

March – Wed 1 Enfield soc: (8.30) Jolly Butchers, 168 Baker St, EN1 3JS; (9.30) Kings Head, 9 Market Pl, EN2 6LL. - **Thu 9** (8.30) Soc. London Drinker Fest, Camden Centre (see page 11) - **Thu 16** (8.30) Soc. Railway Bell, 13 East Barnet Rd, EN4 8RR. - **Mon 27** (12pm) Soc. Orange Tree, Highfield Rd, Winchmore Hill N21 3HA
Website: www.camraenfieldandbarnet.org.uk

KINGSTON & LEATHERHEAD

Clive Taylor, 020 8949 2099, ctaylor2007@freeuk.com

February – Thu 16 (8pm) Branch AGM: Willoughby Arms (upstairs), Willoughby Rd, Kingston KT2 6LN. - **Thu 23** (8pm) GBG selection mtg. Fountain, Malden Rd, New Malden KT3 6DD.

March – Wed 1 (8.15) Mtg. Berrylands, Chiltern Dr, Berrylands KT5 8LS. - **Wed 8** New Malden Korean evening: (7pm) Bar Malden for (8pm) Ha Ru restaurant. - **Thu 23** Stoneleigh area crawl: meet (7.30) Queen Adelaide, 272 Kingston Rd, KT19 0SH; then Willow Tree, Vale Rd, KT4 7ED; Station, The Broadway, KT17 2JA.
Website: www.camrasurrey.org.uk

NORTH LONDON

John Wilson, 07840 111590, jgwnw3@hotmail.com;

Stephen Taylor, 07443 473746,

stephen.taylor500@gmail.com

February – Tue 7 (8pm) LDBF mtg. Old Red Lion, 72 High Holborn, WC1V 6LS. - **Tue 14** (8pm) Winter Pub of the Season presn. Mossy Well, 258 Muswell Hill Broadway, N10 3SH. - **Tue 21** Dartmouth Park soc: (7.30) Lord Palmerston, 33 Dartmouth Park Hill, NW5 1HU; (8.15) Bull & Last, 168 Highgate Rd, NW5 1QS; (9pm) Southampton Arms, 139 Highgate Rd, NW5 1LE; (9.45) Vine, 86 Highgate Rd, NW5 1PB; (10.30) Junction Tavern, 101 Fortress Rd, NW5 1AG. - **Tue 28** Angel soc: (7.30) Radicals & Victuallers, 59 Upper St, N1 0NY; (8.15) Camden Head, 2 Camden Walk, N1 8DY; (9pm) Nag's Head, 12 Upper St, N1 0PQ; (9.45) York, 82 Islington High St, N1 8EQ; (10.30) Angel, 3-5 Islington High St, N1 9LQ.

March – Tue 7. St Pancras soc: (7.30) Dolphin, 47 Tonbridge St, WC1H 9DW; (8.15) Skinners Arms, 114 Judd St, WC1H 9NT; (9pm) Boot, 116 Cromer St, WC1H 8BS; (9.45) Mabel's Tavern, 9 Mabledon Pl, WC1H 9AZ; (10.30) O'Neill's, 73-77 Euston Rd, NW1 2QS. - **Tue 14** Blackstock Road soc: (7.30) Highbury Barn Tavern, 26 Highbury Park, N5 2AB; (8.15) Bank of Friendship, 226 Blackstock Rd, N5 1EA; (9pm) Gunners, 204 Blackstock Rd, N5 1EN; (9.45)



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Woodbine, 215 Blackstock Rd, N5 2LL; (10.30) (optional) Arsenal Tavern, 175 Blackstock Rd, N4 2JS. - **Tue 21** Islington soc: (7.30) Narrow Boat, 119 St Peter's St, N1 8PZ; (8.15) Duke of Cambridge, 30 St Peter's St, N1 8JT; (9pm) Earl of Essex, 25 Danbury St, N1 8LE; (9.45) Charles Lamb, 16 Elia St, N1 8DE; (10.30) Island Queen, 87 Noel Rd, N1 8BD. - **Tue 28** (8pm) Mtg. Venue tbc
Website: www.northlondon.camra.org.uk

RICHMOND & HOUNSLOW

Roy Hurry, 020 8570 0643 (H),
rh014q5742@blueyonder.co.uk

February – Tue 7 Kew Green (all TW9) pub walk: (7.45) Cricketers, 79 Kew Grn, 3AH; (8.30) Greyhound, 82 Kew Grn, 3AP; (9.15) Coach & Horses Hotel, 8 Kew Grn, 3BH; (10pm) Botanist, 3/5 Kew Grn, 3AA. - **Wed 22** (8pm) Mtg. Hope, 115/117 Kew Rd, Richmond TW9 2PN.

March – Wed 22 (8pm) Richmond pub walk: (7.45) Victoria Inn, 78 Hill Rise, TW10 6UB; (8.30) Old Ship, 3 King St, TW9 1ND; (9.15) Watermans Arms, 12 Water La, TW9 1TJ; (10pm) Railway Tavern, 29 The Quadrant, TW9 1DN.
Website: www.rhcamra.org.uk

SOUTH EAST LONDON

Soc sec: Andrew Sewell social@sel.camra.org.uk. Contact: Neil Pettigrew contact@sel.camra.org.uk

February – Mon 5 (7.30) Cttee mtg & soc. Anspach & Hobday, 118 Druid St, SE1 2HH. - **Mon 13** Soc: (7pm) Elephant & Castle, 119 Newington Causeway, SE1 6BN; (8pm) Spit & Sawdust, 21 Bartholomew St, SE1 4AL. - **Wed 22** Soc: (7pm) Alleen's Head, Park Hall Rd, SE21 8E2; (8pm) Rosendale, 65 Rosendale Rd, SE21 8E2; (9pm) Knowles of Norwood, 296 Norwood Rd, SE27 9AF; (10pm) Great North Wood, 3 Knight's Hill, SE27 OHS. - **Tue 28** Soc: (7pm) Rising Sun, 120 Loampit Vale, SE13 7SN; (7.45) Fox & Firkin, 316 Lewisham High St, SE13 7HS; (8.30) Jolly Farmers, 354 Lewisham High St, SE13 6LE; (9.15) Ladywell Tavern, 80 Ladywell Rd, SE13 7HS; (10.30) London Beer Dispensary, 389 Brockley Rd, SE4 2PH.

March – Mon 6 (7.30) Cttee mtg & soc. Woolwich Equitable, General Gordon Sq, SE18 6AB. - **Tue 14** Soc: (7pm) Black Horse, 195 Evelyn St, Deptford SE8 5RE; (8pm) Dog & Bell, 116 Prince St, SE8 3JD; (9pm) Sail Loft, 11 Victoria Parade, SE10 9BL; (10pm) Gypsy Moth, 60 Greenwich Church St, SE10 9FR. - **Wed 22** Soc: (7pm) Gregorian, 96 Jamaica Rd, SE16 4SQ; (8pm) Winicott, 94 Bermondsey Wall, SE16 4TY; (8.45) Ship Aground, 33Wolsey St, SE1 2BD; (9.30) Marquis of Wellington, 21 Druid St, SE1 2HH; (10.30) Kings Arms, 251 Tooley St, SE1 2JX. - **Tue 28** (7.30) Quiz Night. Talbot, 1 Tyrwhitt Rd, Brockley SE4 1QG.

Website: <http://sel.camra.org.uk>

SOUTH WEST ESSEX

Branch Contact: Alan Barker
contact@swessex.camra.org.uk, 07711 971957 evenings or weekends only.

Bookings for any minibus trips to Graham Platt: 020 8220 0215 (H)

February – Wed 1 (8.30) Soc. White Horse, 173 Coxtie Green Rd, Coxtie Green CM14 5PX. - **Fri 3** (1pm) Soc. 24th White Cliffs Beer Fest, Maison Dieu (Town Hall), Biggin St, Dover CT16 1DL by 'Javelin' High-Speed Train at 11.44 from Stratford International in just 57 mins (take DLR from West Ham/Stratford to Stratford International). GroupSave: 3 or more travelling together get a third off. - **Wed 8** (8.30) Soc. Spread Eagle, 88 Queens Rd/Coptfold Rd, Brentwood CM14 4HD. - **15 Feb** (7.30) Soc. 18th Chelmsford Winter Beer & Cider Fest, King Edward VI Grammar School (KEGS), Broomfield Rd (not far from Chelmsford Rail Stn), CM1 3SX. - **21 Feb** (8.30) GBG selection mtg. Rising Sun, 144 Ongar Rd, Brentwood CM15 9DJ.

March – Sat 4 (12pm) Soc. 8th Chappel Winter Beer Fest, East Anglian Rly Museum, Chappel & Wakes Colne CO6 2DS (Free admission for CAMRA/EARM Members all day Sat). - **Wed 8** (7.30) Soc. 33rd London Drinker Beer Fest, Camden Centre, Bidborough St, WC1H 9AU. - **Tue 14** (8.30) Soc. Optimist Tavern, Little Gaynes La/Hacton La, Upminster RM14 2XY. - **Wed 22** (8.30) Soc. Brave Nelson, 138 Woodman Rd, Warley CM14 5AL. - **Wed 29** (8.30) Soc. Thatched House, 348 St Marys La, Cranham RM14 3LT.

Website: swessex.camra.org.uk

SOUTH WEST LONDON

Mike Flynn, 07751 231191, mike.flynn@camraswl.org.uk.

Cycling: Geoff Strawbridge, 07813 358863.

geoff@camraswl.org.uk

February – Thu 16 (7.30) Branch SGM & (7.45) Open cttee mtg. Trafalgar Arms, 148 Tooting High St, SW17 0RT (SGM to amend SWL branch area to cover whole of Merton as agreed with K&L and approved by LLC). - **Sun 26** (12.15) GBG 2018 final selection mtg. Sultan (upstairs) 78 Norman Rd, SW19 1BT. All SWL mbrs welcome; NB only those members present throughout the mtg for all the reports on the shortlisted pubs will be allowed to vote. **March – Mon 6** Balham soc: (7.15) Regent, 21 Chestnut Gro, SW12 8JB; (7.45) Moon under Water, 194 Balham High Rd, SW12 9BP; (8.20) Hagen & Hyde, 157 Balham High Rd, SW12 9AU; (9pm) Goose Island, 3 Ramsden Rd, SW12 8QX; (9.30) BBC Bar Restaurant, 7-9 Ramsden Rd, SW12 8QX; (10.15) Bedford, 77 Bedford Hill, SW12 9HD. - **Fri 24** Battersea Park Road (BPR) soc: (3pm) Nine Elms Tavern, Block D, Riverlight Quay, Nine Elms La, SW8 5BP; (3.45) Duchess, 101 BPR, SW8 4DS; (4.20) Flanagans, 21 Bradmead, 133 BPR, SW8 4AG; (5pm) Masons Arms, 169 BPR, SW8 4BT; (5.40) Magic Garden, 231 BPR, SW11 4LG; (6.15) Grove, 279 BPR, SW11 4NE; (6.50) Lighthouse, 441 BPR, SW11 4LR; (7.30) Latchmere, 503 BPR, SW11 3BW.
Website: camraswl.org.uk

WATFORD & DISTRICT

Andrew Vaughan, 01923 230104 (H),

branch@watford.camra.org.uk

February – Wed 1 Chorleywood soc: meet (8pm) White Horse, Rickmansworth Rd, WD3 5SD. - **Fri 3** (6pm) Annual 'Pre-Xmas' London pub crawl: meet (6pm) Mad Bishop &

Branch diaries

Bear, Paddington Stn. - **Thu 16** Rickmansworth soc: meet (8.30) Coach & Horses, 22 High St, WD3 1ER - **Mon 27** (8pm) Mtg. Southern Cross, 41-43 Langley Rd, Watford WD14 4PP.

March – Wed 8 (6pm) London Drinker Beer Fest soc. Camden Centre, Bidborough St (see page 11); meet hourly at Products Stand. - **Sat 11** (1.30) Hop & Vine, 18 High St, Ruislip HA4 7AN - **Thu 23** Annual Breweriana Auction. West Herts Sports Club, 8 Park Ave, Watford WD18 7HP: viewing from 7pm; auction from 8pm. - **Mon 27** (8pm) **Branch AGM.** Estcourt Arms, 2 St. John's Rd, Watford WD17 1PT.

Website: www.watfordcamra.org.uk

WEST LONDON

Paul Charlton, 07835 927357,
contact@westlondon.camra.org.uk. Soc sec: Alasdair Boyd:
020 7930 9871 x 143 (2.30-3.30 and 6-9.30 pm Mon-Fri),
banqueting@nlc.org.uk, fax 020 7839 4768

February – Wed 1 Westbourne Grove soc: (7.30) Cock & Bottle, 17 Needham Rd, W11 2RP; (8.45) Prince Bonaparte, 80 Chepstow Rd, W2 5BE. - **Tue 7** (7pm) Meet the brewer (Crate). Union Tavern, 45 Woodfield Rd, W9 2PA (must book with pub). - **Mon 13** (7 for 7.30) Mtg. Union Tavern. - **Tue 21** SW1 survey crawl: meet (7 for 7.30) St George's Tavern, 14 Belgrave Rd, SW1V 1QD.

March – Wed 1 Marylebone soc: (7.30) Thornbury Castle, 29a Enford St, W1H 1DN; (8.45) Metropolitan Bar, Baker Stn, NW1 5LA (bring JDW vchrs). - **Tue 7** Charing X soc: (7.30) Lord Moon of the Mall, 16-18 Whitehall, SW1A 2DY (bring JDW vchrs); (8.30) Harp, 47 Chandos Pl, WC2N 4HS. - **Tue 14** (7 for 7.30) Mtg. Star Tavern (upstairs), 6 Belgrave Mews West, SW1X 8HT. - **Thu 23** SW1 survey crawl: meet (7 for 7.30) Chequers Tavern, 16 Duke St, SW1Y 6DB. - **Tue 28** W2 soc: (7.30) Mitre, 24 Craven Terr, W2 3QH; (8.30) Mad Bishop and Bear, Upper Level, Paddington Stn, W2 1HB.

Advance notice: April – Tue 4 (7pm) Meet the brewer (Beavertown). Union Tavern (must book with pub).
Website: www.westlondon.camra.org.uk

WEST MIDDLESEX

Roy Tunstall, 020 8933 4934 / 07585 744533,
info@westmiddx-camra.org.uk
Website: www.westmiddx-camra.org.uk

February – Wed 1 Wetherspoon London BF: (8pm) Village Inn, 402 Rayners La, HA5 5DY; (9.30) Moon on the Hill, 373-375 Station Rd, Harrow, HA1 2AW. - **Thu 9** Soc: (8pm) Load of Hay, 33 Villiers St, UB8 2PU; (9.15) Vine, 121 Hillingdon Hill, UB10 0JQ; (10pm) Red Lion Hotel, Royal La, UB8 3QP. - **Wed 22** (8.30) Branch & GBG final selection mtg. West London Trades Union Club, 33 High St, Acton W3 6ND.

March – Wed 22 (8.30) Mtg. Castle, Victoria Rd, North Acton W3 6UL.

Electronic copy deadline for the April/May edition is no later than Monday 13 March.

Please send entries to ldnews.hedger@gmail.com.

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CAMRA beer festivals

PUNK PIGS PROMOTE PERFECT PINTS!

Held a week earlier than usual, the Pig's Ear beer and cider festival at the Round Chapel in Hackney toasted the spirit of punk at the end of 2016. Over the course of the week, more than 150 volunteers gave their time to set up the bars, pour in excess of 19,000 pints, keep people happy and then tidy everything away again! "This year two volunteers even travelled all the way from The Netherlands to join the team," disclosed Andy Kinch, the staffing officer. The festival committee thank all of those who came to work and to drink – without you there wouldn't be a festival for London to enjoy.



The East London and City Branch gives thanks to the event's main sponsors: Five Points Brewing Company and One Mile End Brewery, the latter showcasing at the festival several styles of ale rarely served from cask. "We are blessed to have so many interesting small breweries on our



doorstep, it makes choosing the beer line up a lot of fun," revealed Alan Perryman, the incoming Festival Organiser.

As is tradition, the public were polled for their favourite beer, cider and perry at the festival. This year's winners were Black Cherry Mild (en plus) by Kissingate, Burnard's Scrumpy cider and Raglan's Snowy Owl perry.

The Pig's Ear festival returns to the Round Chapel in its usual slot for 2017 which will be Tuesday 5 to Saturday 9 December.

Alan Perryman

LONDON DRINKER BEER FESTIVAL

It isn't just pub closures that we need to worry about. Camden Council's plans for the Camden Centre could see the end of LDBF's home for the last thirty-two years. Christine Cryne, now back as organiser, wrote to the *Evening Standard* as follows:

"After reading your piece on Camden Town Hall (Camden plans £44 million overhaul of town hall, December 8), I'm

sure that most people will be surprised to hear Camden Council believes it can rent out the Camden Centre next door for £400,000 a year. But what I find disturbing is the lack of consultation. The last time the Camden Centre was under threat of closure, the Council held discussions with interested parties but this time the decision seems to be taking place behind closed doors. Our event, the London Drinker Beer & Cider Festival, takes place at the centre every March and next year will be our 33rd festival. Venues of this type and low cost are rare. If the Camden cabinet agrees to the proposal, 2018 would be our last year and I have no doubt that other events would soon follow."

Please let me stress that there will be an event this year; see the advert opposite.

According to an *Observer* article (18 December) on the disposal of local authority assets, Ealing Town Hall, which, like the Camden Town Hall, is Grade II listed and was for many years the home of Ealing Beer Festival, is to be turned into a 'boutique hotel'.

BRINGING LONDON ORCHARDS TO CAMDEN

There are plenty of home brewing competitions but there has been a lack of similar opportunities for those who make cider or perry. The London Drinker Beer & Cider Festival is running a competition to find the best London amateur cider maker.

Festival Organiser Christine Cryne explains, "This year all of our draught beer is from London breweries but we believe there are only two commercial cider makers in London at the moment. We therefore thought it would be fun to raise the profile of cider by creating a competition to encourage the Capital's amateur cider makers to come forward and show their wares. The winner will then be given the first ever London Amateur Cider Maker of the Year Award".

To enter all you have to do is register your application at www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/CFCPM3W and supply four pints of your cider or perry to the festival before 12.15pm on Friday 10 March 2017. The produce must not be pasteurised or filtered and must use fruit from gardens, farms, parks, indeed anywhere apples or pears grow in Greater London!

The judging will take place that afternoon with the awards being handed out late afternoon. By entering, you agree to participating to any publicity, photos etc that might arise out of your entry.

For more information on the festival itself, go to <http://tinyurl.com/LDbbeerfest>

EALING BEER FESTIVAL 2017

Advance notice: this year's Ealing Beer Festival will be a week later than usual. Please put 12 to 15 July in your diary now. The venue will be Walpole Park, Mattock Lane, W5 5BG as before. See: ebf.camra.org.uk



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the Champion Beer of London • Thursday evening: Announcement of the Champion Beer of

Wednesday lunch: Formal opening • Wednesday evening: Free Pub Quiz • Thursday lunch: Taste the beers short listed for

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CLEARING THE WAY FORWARD

After many months of surveys and consultations, Michael Hardman and members of his Project Steering Group presented their findings to CAMRA's National Executive early in December. All CAMRA members have been encouraged to read the report, quoted from which are the following messages.

'We have set out a programme aimed at increasing the popularity and quality of real ale, recruiting and retaining more members, promoting pubs and clubs as the cornerstones of communities and emphasising their role in making real ale widely available. We want to see more emphasis on educating members, the public and the licensed trade about how beer is brewed, stored and served. We also envisage a challenge to the anti-alcohol lobby and advocate widening CAMRA's scope without campaigning for other kinds of beer or forsaking our view that well kept real ale is the pinnacle of the brewer's art.

There are two overarching imperatives that must be pursued if CAMRA is to be successful in realising its vision:

I. The development of committed campaigners

Concerns about the decrease in the number of active members and the lack of knowledge and understanding of both members and the wider public about real ale have been evident throughout the consultation. Indeed the loss of active members was one of the drivers for the strategic review. To address this,

- CAMRA should actively encourage all people who consider themselves to be discerning beer, cider or perry drinkers to join the Campaign.
- Information and activities should be provided to support all members in their learning about beer, cider and perry.
- CAMRA should engage with people by responding to their curiosity and interests, as well as asking them to support and contribute to specific campaigning activities.

II. Effective engagement and campaigning

To be effective CAMRA must not only speak for a large number of members but also demonstrate that it understands the sector in which it operates, and be viewed as credible by those it seeks to influence. To achieve this,

- The Campaign should seek to represent and influence

the wider beer, cider and perry-drinking community, and all people who favour drinking in social settings.

- CAMRA should develop and maintain appropriate relationships with commercial organisations operating in the sector – as well as with government at national and local level – to enable it to exert greater influence than if operating in isolation.

CAMRA's mission statement should be revised:

To act as the voice of pub and club-goers, in particular those who drink real ale, cider and perry; to play a leading role in informing and representing everyone with an interest in good beer of any type; and to promote the benefits of responsible social drinking.

CAMRA's strategic objectives should be redefined:

1. Increase the popularity and quality of real ale, and improve its provision by brewers and retailers.
2. Recruit and retain increasing numbers of beer, cider and perry drinkers – and pub/club-goers in general – as members and activists.
3. Maintain pubs and clubs as cornerstones of communities across the UK, while seeking to improve the range and quality of beer, cider and perry across the on-trade as a whole.
4. Position CAMRA as the representative of and spokesman for all UK beer, cider and perry drinkers and pub/club-goers.
5. Provide education and information for CAMRA members, the trade and the wider public about beer, cider and perry.
6. Enshrine CAMRA's future purpose within a revised constitutional and organisational structure.'

Thanking Michael and his colleagues, CAMRA Chairman Colin Valentine said, "The Revitalisation Project has helped us to understand what our members want for the organisation in the future and the direction they believe we should take to respond to the changes in the pub and beer world. While the work of the Revitalisation Project is now finished, this is really only the start of the process for the National Executive and CAMRA members. We need to make sure that members continue to be at the heart of the decisions we take and we will ensure they get a full opportunity to discuss the proposals at our Conference in April and then have the final vote on any changes to CAMRA's purpose at the Members' Weekend and AGM in 2018."

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CHANGE OF CHAIR FOR SAVE THE PUB GROUP

Greg Mulholland has stood down as the chairman of the All Party Parliamentary Save the Pub Group. He has been succeeded by Toby Perkins, the MP for Chesterfield. Caroline Lucas, Charlotte Leslie and Louise Haigh were all re-elected as vice chairs.

Mr Mulholland commented to the *Morning Advertiser*, "I congratulate Toby on being elected to this important role and hope he can ensure the Save the Pub Group continues to be just as successful in campaigning for British pubs and publicans as it has been for the last seven years. I am now able to concentrate on the important role of chairing the British Pub Confederation which is currently engaged in the serious issues and problems relating to the pubs code. This and the ongoing lack of protection for pubs against predatory purchasing need to be key issues for all pub campaigners going forward."

CAMRA's national chairman, Colin Valentine, welcomed the appointment, saying, "We would like to extend our congratulations to Toby Perkins MP for being voted in as chair of the All Party Parliamentary Save the Pubs Group. We are confident that Toby will excel in the new role, given his previous experience as shadow pubs minister and his proven track record supporting UK pubs on a number of issues facing the industry. We would also like to extend our thanks to outgoing chair Greg Mulholland for all his hard work campaigning for pubs on issues ranging from pubco reform to strengthening planning laws to protect pubs from closure."

Mr Perkins thanked Mr Mulholland for his hard work over the last seven years and said that the group would be looking at issues as varied as planning, supermarkets, community ownership and satellite television provision.

On the subject of matters Parliamentary, since the influx of Scottish Nationalist MPs at the last election, sales of Irn-Bru in Parliament's bars and restaurants have increased by 60%. According to the *Guardian*, Scotland is the only country where Coca-Cola is not the best selling soft drink.

BUSINESS RATES

Mr Perkins is immediately in demand. The Association of Licensed Multiple Retailers (ALMR) and the British Institute of Innkeeping (BII) have called on him to give his support in bringing business rates under control. Despite current trading results being good, Rooney Anand, chief executive of Greene King, singled out increased business rates as one of the factors likely to affect profitability in the coming year. Young's also said much the same thing with chief executive Patrick Dardis saying that there might have to be price rises. Enterprise Inns have promised to support any of their tenants who contest their assessments which, given that their pre-tax profits to 30 September were reported as 'flat', might be enlightened self-interest. Marston's however say that the geographical spread of their pubs should limit the effect on their finances. The increases are highest in London and the South East, leading Fuller's chief executive to tell the *Evening Standard*, "This is a significant blow to my firm and the wider pub industry. Effectively, companies like mine are being punished for ploughing money into London and the South East."

PILE IT HIGH. . .

And, in the words of Jack Cohen, the founder of Tesco, sell it cheap. In the run up to Christmas, Morrison's were selling 40 cans of Carling for £20, approximately 65p a pint with ASDA and Tesco's having offers coming in around 70p and 71p per pint. This once again highlights the unfair competition faced by the licenced trade. It is way below what publicans can buy in beer for. Tim Martin, the chairman of J D Wetherspoon complained to the *Metro*, "The pub industry has an extraordinarily strong moral case for tax equality. This is a classic example of an industry being treated unequally."

It is hardly surprising then that in 2015, of the 7.74 billion pints of beer and lager sold in Britain, 51% were sold by supermarkets and off-licences and only 49% by the nation's 145,000 pubs. For the first time, the ratio favours the off-trade. In the year 2000 this was 65% in favour of pubs and in 1990, 80%. The British Beer and Pub Association

has called on the Chancellor of the Exchequer to reduce beer duty in the forthcoming budget but I suspect that the problem goes deeper than that. The business practices of some of their members do not help.

According to the *Grocer* magazine, draught Guinness has overtaken John Smith's Extra Smooth as the UK's biggest selling ale and stout brand. Sales of Guinness last year were worth £69.1 million.

MAKES BEER EXCITING?

Congratulations to Keith Bott, the co-owner of the Titanic Brewery and former SIBA chairman, who was awarded an MBE in the Queen's New Year's Honours list. The citation is for 'services to the brewing industry and the economy of Staffordshire' but I'm sure that plenty of readers would say that brewing their Plum Porter alone deserves a medal. Of his services to the trade, Mr Bott said, "We pride ourselves in giving a new lease of life to neglected pubs which have been closed or need to be rescued. I have always believed in the great British pub. It was our country's first social network and a good, well run pub is at the beating heart of any community."

GERRY'S FIDDLE

The redoubtable Gerry O'Brien, who has run the Churchill Arms (Fuller's) in Kensington Church Street for some thirty two years now, has added to his collection of memorabilia of the great man. It is a violin made in 1956 from Sir Winston's old Havana cigar boxes. It has been in private ownership since it was made and when it came up for auction, Gerry had to have it. As he told the *Evening Standard*, he was prepared to go to £5,000 but, "Well, we had a bit of time to kill before our lot so the lads took me for a couple of pints of Guinness and that helped settle the nerves. We ended up paying £6,500 plus fees and VAT but I'm glad we did. It's great to have it here." On the most recent anniversary of Churchill's birth, Gerry invited Brendan Mulkere, Professor of Music at the University of Limerick, to give a recital at the pub.

WELL PRESERVED

Belgium's beer brewing heritage has been added to UNESCO's list of

News round-up (general)

Intangible Cultural Heritages of Humanity. Sven Gatz, the cultural minister for the Flanders region said that it was comparable to winning the World Cup. How about cask conditioned beer then?

A BIT OF TRADITION

At the prompting of the Society for the Preservation of Beers from the Wood (SPBW), Nick Boulter, the landlord of the Old House in Ightham Common, Kent, has clubbed together with some of his locals to buy sixteen wooden casks which they will send out to local breweries for filling. Some will be used for gravity service in the bar and others in the cellar. With thanks to CAMRA's Pub Heritage bulletin for the information.

A PRIME SITE

The pub where David Cameron took the Chinese Premier Xi Jinping for a drink and also memorably left his daughter behind has been sold to Chinese investors. The 16th century Plough at Cadsden, Buckinghamshire, has been sold for an undisclosed sum by its private owners who have retired after 18 years in the trade. It is fully expected that the pub will remain unchanged because the new owners have bought it for what it is. Interesting, one of the staff, quoted in the *Guardian*, said that Mr Cameron had used the pub a lot more in the last months that he was Prime Minister. Make of that what you will.

THE BLACK STUFF

Another new fad, perhaps. Coffee chains Costa and Starbucks will be giving a trial to a draught 'nitro' version of coffee. This is cold-brewed coffee served very cold on tap on nitrogen pressure. Apparently it has a velvety texture and a head that makes it look like a pint of Guinness. The Costa chain is, of course, owned by Whitbread who, once upon a time, brewed some reasonable beers.

Compiled by Tony Hedger

You can keep up to date with these and other stories via the CAMRA London Region Facebook page at www.facebook.com/GreaterLondonCAMRA (login not required) and on the news page of the regional website <http://london.camra.org.uk/viewnode.php?id=1253>

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CAMRA's Club of the Year competition

Congratulations to the Leyton Orient Supporters Club who have reached the final round of the above, which is run in conjunction with the *Club Mirror* magazine and has the simple aim of finding the best clubs most committed to serving quality real ale. LOSC have, of course, won the award before.

John Holland, CAMRA's National Club of the Year coordinator says, "It is a fantastic achievement to be considered one of the top four real ale clubs in the country. We are seeing more and more clubs making quality real ale a priority, which makes the competition stronger than ever. Clubs play a huge role in many local communities across the

UK. They provide a safe, social environment in which to enjoy a pint with people who you know and trust. They can help people build and strengthen social networks and can be a lifeline in times of need. To be a part of a club is to be part of a family."

The last four were each presented with a commemorative plate at the Club Mirror Awards at the end of November. The other three finalists are the Albatross Club (RAFA) in Bexhill, the Cheltenham Motor Club in Cheltenham and the Dartford Working Men's Club. The winner will be announced in the spring.

From a CAMRA press release

Champion Bottled Beer of Britain

CAMRA's Champion Bottled Beer of Britain competition, now in its 25th year, was for the first time held at the BBC Good Food Show at the NEC Birmingham in November. The winner was Stringer's Mutiny stout (9.3% ABV) from Ulverston in Cumbria. It is described as a 'rich sumptuous double stout with coffee, chocolate and liquorice flavours'.

The runner up was Flipside Brewery from Nottingham with their Russian Rouble (7.3% ABV), a strong dark Russian Imperial stout, brewed with traditional English hops and rich chocolate and malt flavours. Chelmsford based Crouch Vale took the bronze for their Yakima Gold (4.2% ABV).

Nick Boley, CAMRA's National Director responsible for the competition, said, "Congratulations to Stringers Brewery for

winning the Champion Bottled Beer of Britain award for its Mutiny stout, which is one of the highest achievements in the beer world. To win the award demonstrates a significant level of creativity and ingenuity in the brewing process. We were particularly impressed with Mutiny this year because it consistently secured high scores from all the judges for its taste, aroma and appearance. It is a clear winner."

Jon Kyme and Becky Stringer, from Stringers brewery said, "We are a very small brewery in Cumbria. We started in 2008 and have been making the Mutiny for five years. We are surprised and pleased; it was a terrific competition this year."

From a CAMRA press release



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BRIXTON: A SERIOUS APPROACH TO INGREDIENTS

If the ingredients you use in a beer aren't up to scratch, then neither will your beer be. So what do you do?

Brixton Brewery was set up in 2013 by Jez and Mike after escaping from IT and accounting respectively. Jez takes a really serious approach to his ingredients, smelling and examining every single batch of malt and hops that enters the brewery and woe betide if it doesn't come up to scratch. Jez has an ethos of switching suppliers or ingredients to ensure that Brixton's beers are of the quality he wants.

The ethos of quality isn't just around the ingredients; they swab the tanks after cleaning to ensure all organic matter has been removed and, like a lot of brewers, they will keep back a sample of each batch of their bottled beer to ensure it's up to standard, sending a sample off for external analysis every so often.

Brixton is yet another brewery in a railway archway. It was funded by Jez and Mike with help from family and friends. Jez said, "We saw an opportunity and thought, if we didn't do it, somebody else would."

Their brew length is 6.5 barrels and they started with two fermenters which has now expanded to eleven, three of which are eleven barrels in capacity. There is also a small automatic bottler from Mehenn to cope with the growth in the demand for bottles after they realised that they couldn't keep up with demand by bottling by hand. This, and the new fermenters, were funded by retaining and reinvesting the brewery's profits. Brewing is now up to five days a week and they are contemplating starting double brewing. The growth has meant more staff and there are now four brewers, one driver and one office person, Libby, Jez's wife, who also looks after product development and sales. The brewery and its small bar take up one arch but they have a further two arches for storage. Jez feels that it is likely to be space that will be the limiting factor for the future.



There are five beers in their core range which the London Tasting Panel tried. The beers are named after local landmarks and the designs on the bottles reflect the local Caribbean influence, all being brightly coloured. Effra is named after the underground river, Reliance after the smallest of Brixton's covered markets and Atlantic is the local street market. They use American dried yeast for all the beers except the stout, for which they use a dried English ale yeast. The water for the stout is adjusted to pH7 and the rest to pH6. The spent malt is picked up by pig farmers and local allotment owners use some of the used hops.

The beers are heavily influenced by the United States, mostly golden and refreshing. Tasting notes for the beers tried can be found on the London Breweries page on the regional website: www.london.camra.org.uk. But why not pop along and try the beers yourself at the brewery? They open their bar on Saturday afternoons; see their website for details: www.brixtonbrewery.com.

A COMPLICATED HOWLING

The history of the Howling Hops brewery is one of the more complicated. It was set up by Peter Holt, owner of the Southampton Arms in Kentish Town, famous for its 'Ale, Cider, Meat' signage. Four years ago he bought the Cock in Mare Street, Hackney. Camden Brewery's old Hampstead brewery, situated in the Horseshoe, was purchased at the same time and the six hectolitre plant moved from one pub cellar to another.

The Cock had been closed for a time and the future looked doubtful, so the purchase by Peter was warmly welcome. Installing the brewery was however not plain sailing. Tim, Howling Hops' current head brewer, said, "It was a bit of a challenge to get it in. We only had a width of 2.2 metres but it all fitted albeit with only millimetres to spare."

Since setting up, the brewery has gone through a number of brewers. The first one was ex-Redemption, who then left to set up a soda company. Mario then took over but he then left to join Orbit. He was followed by another Italian whose main role was to set up a new, state-of-the-art brewery when they moved to Hackney Wick. But this is where Tim's brewing story starts. Australian by birth, Tim had worked at the Southampton Arms before moving to the Cock. His background was in engineering, specifically processing, and he was asked to give a hand setting up the new brewery and he has never looked back, taking over when the last brewer left. Today, he is assisted by three brewers, although Tim said his job now seems to be mainly paperwork! They brew about three times a week and are hoping to increase that to five in the next six months.

The new brewery is German in style and was purchased from Bavarian Brewing Services in Hungary and took about six months to install. It is

a lot bigger with a 25 hectolitres brew length and 14 conical fermenters. They also have a whirlpool, which means they only use hop pellets, and they ferment and condition in the same tanks. They do produce cask as well as keg but the majority of the cask is distributed northwards.

The London Tasting Panel tried a selection of beers including two in the Kolsch style. Tim explained that this beer had come about because



What a beard! Tim the brewer



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production of lager: "We have been producing a Pilsner for a while and conditioning it for eight weeks after fermentation. Often, six of the 14 fermenters are taken up with the Pilsner. In comparison, a Kolsch style beer will only take three weeks in total to produce so we are considering moving more to this style." A Kolsch uses a top fermenting yeast rather than a bottom fermenting one as is used in Pilsners.

Howling Hops like experimenting with different styles. A Biere de Garde was also tried; it's a 7.2% ABV beer using Saison yeast and there are plans to try some barrel aged beer soon; red wine and Bourbon were mentioned.

The old Howling Hops brewery kit, with its four open fermenters and three Grundy tanks, still remains in the basement in the Cock. It is now leased by Ian, an ex BBC employee who lived in Denmark for a while. He has renamed the brewery Maregade, which simply means Mare Street, the address of the Cock. The Cock is still owned by Peter and so don't be surprised to see both Maregade and Howling Hop beers there. It just goes to show what a vibrant beer market London is and the changes in just four years. Who knows what might happen next!

For the tasting notes of the beers tried, visit the London breweries page of the London region website as above.

REUNION – BREWERY TO LOCK HORNS WITH!

With a logo like this, you can tell that Reunion are not kidding around. When the London Tasting Panel visited the brewery before Christmas, they were intrigued by the logo, which was of two goats and a mountain. Francis, the brewer and founder explained it was the creative idea of the designer, "Well, the goats are having a bit of a reunion and we just liked the design". The name is simpler. It came from Francis meeting an old friend who provided the major help in financing the brewery. There are also several smaller shareholders, friends who have also pitched in.



Francis with some of his bottles

Francis studied Life Sciences at university but ended up working in the finance industry. Having done various roles at a major insurance company, he realised that he wanted to do something more 'hands on'. He explained, "I had been home brewing for a while and I seriously thought about setting up a brewery about 12 years ago but shelved it because I couldn't find enough information on setting up a

brewery to do a proper business plan. Over the years, things have improved and I eventually found the details I needed and decided to take a risk'.

Francis took a course at BrewLab but the hardest thing, he said, was finding suitable premises: "There is a lack of industrial units in West London but eventually we found somewhere and the landlord was quite amenable. He let us assess the site, bringing in tradesmen, before signing the lease. We were also fortunate that the premises had previously been offices so it was quite clean."

The kit was purchased from Peak Ales in Derbyshire, who were expanding. It's a ten barrel kit with four ten barrel fermenters and some five barrel conditioning tanks in which they condition their beers for seven days. One remarkable piece of kit is a wooden grist case, which was made especially for them by a Derbyshire carpenter.

Francis is a bit of a jack of all trades. The majority of the installation work was done with his own fair hands including doing stuff in the roof using a cherry picker. But his friends also pitched in, and got their reward in beer.

Their first beer was brewed just before Christmas 2015. It was a Christmas beer (4.5% ABV) using Northdown and Cascade hops, pale malt, crystal and oats. Said Francis, "It was originally called Frost Fayre but it was so popular that we renamed it Beard Tongue and now brew it all year round. Our Christmas version has added orange and spices to make it more Christmassy."

Production is weighted towards cask with some bottles. The bottling is done in Staffordshire and the bottled beers are microfiltered. Unlike many small Brewers, Reunion uses a wet yeast from a brewer in North Yorkshire. Francis and his assistant brewer are currently brewing one day a week with an increase around Christmas. In addition, there is one full time sales person (ex Clarkshaws) and an occasional delivery driver.

They currently have a range of four regular beers with a few seasonal and occasionals. Their biggest seller is a traditional bitter called Opening Gambit (3.8% ABV). It uses all English hops. Their most unusual beer is Talwar, named after an Indian sword. The design on the bottle labels reflects this and, not surprisingly, the beer was designed to go with Indian food; it has a little spicy character from added coriander.

Reunion's beers can be found around Feltham, Staines and Twickenham but they are beginning to go further afield and outside the M25, using Ecasks to supply wholesalers. Their bottled beers tend to be mainly in independently owned bottle shops. The brewery also have a very nice reception area and bar so, you never know, open days may be on the cards one day. Live north of the Thames and these beers tend to be a bit of a rarity but they are making an appearance at beer festivals. Try them at the forthcoming London Drinker Beer and Cider Festival in March.

For details on their beers and the notes from the London Tasting Panel, see <http://www.london.camra.org.uk/viewnode.php?id=1972>.

For further information on the brewery, see <http://reunionales.com/>

Christine Cryne



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PUNCH UP

Heineken, working with Patron Capital Advisers, a real estate fund, have put in an offer to buy Punch Taverns, owners of some 3,000 pubs. They bid 174p a share, valuing Punch at around £390 million, but the bid immediately caused the share price to rise to 177p. The bid was then increased to 180p and the valuation to £403 million. The structure of the deal was that all of the pubs would pass into Patron's ownership, through a company called Vine Acquisitions with them immediately selling on some 1,900 for £305 million to Heineken, leaving Patron with 1,300 pubs. The deal has the backing of a number of Punch's larger shareholders, three venture capital companies. I'm tempted to say, well, it would have, wouldn't it. It has been recommended to all shareholders by Punch's board. The deal is, of course, subject to regulatory approval.

Punch's chairman, Stephen Billingham said that the bid was unsolicited although it was "a good outcome for shareholders as the offer provides cash certainty at a significant premium." A rival bid had been made by Emerald Investment Partners, led by Punch founder Alan McIntosh, but that bid was not pursued. The deal is however not done yet.

Presumably the 1,900 pubs will be added to the estate of Heineken's existing pub company, Star Pubs & Bars, which would put them third in the pubco ranking after Enterprise and Greene King, who of course, boosted their estate by buying the Spirit Group from Punch.

At face value, this looks like good news. It shows faith in the UK economy although the fall in the value of the pound sterling will have helped. It is also some sort of a return to 'vertical integration', whereby a brewer sells its beers in pubs that it owns, hopefully giving it a commitment to those pubs. It won't however do much for beer choice in the pubs that Heineken have acquired and it hardly widens up the ownership of our pubs. Most seriously of all, you have to ask what fate awaits the pubs that will be owned by a real estate fund. I have a nasty feeling that we know the answer to that. It can't have been a good Christmas for the 1,300 licensees and managers

concerned, together with some Punch head office staff, and it may not be a happy new year.

On the other hand, the bankers, lawyers and public relations people who will become involved will be licking their lips. They earned a staggering \$1.5 billion in fees for the AB InBev/SABMiller deal. Ker-ching!

ETM GROUP

Apologies; in the October/November edition I said that the Royal London House hotel is in Finsbury Park when it is actually in Finsbury Square EC2. Thanks to John Paul Adams for spotting this.

ASAHI EXPAND FURTHER

In a further knock-on from the AB InBev take-over of SABMiller, the Japanese company has acquired five eastern European brands, including Pilsner Urquell and Tyskie. The *Evening Standard* reported the price paid to be £6.1 billion. The deal requires the approval of the European Commission's competition authorities but that is expected to be given.

On the subject of matters Japanese, a company called Dojima, which has been making sake (rice wine) for some 300 years, is setting up business in Cambridgeshire. It will be brewed with imported rice to their traditional recipe but, unlike in Japan, where it can only be brewed in the winter, here the climate allows for production all year round. The new site will include a bar and visitors' centre. Noriko Tomioka, the project manager, told *the Times* that we have a lot to learn; for example it doesn't have to be strong and it shouldn't necessarily be served warm. Could this be the next trend?

BREWDOG

The ever-growing company continues to expand. They have now opened up in Homerton High Street, bringing their products direct to the heartland of the Hackney hipsters.

MORE ANTICS

My colleagues in CAMRA's Croydon and Sutton branch report that Antic have opened two more pubs in their branch area. Firstly is the Shinner & Sudtone in Sutton High Street. Apparently Shinnars was once a local

department store and Sudtone was the original name for Sutton. Then in South Norwood High Street you will find the Sheldervine Goathouse. It replaces a Wetherspoon's pub, the William Stanley which closed last March. The William Stanley's inn sign has been donated by 'Spoons' to the nearby Stanley Halls, venue for the branch's recent beer festival.

GRAND UNION UP FOR GRABS

According to a report in *City AM*, the owners of the Grand Union chain of eight bars, Adam Marshall and Luke Johnson have put the business on the market for around £5 million. No reason was given and the business is a going concern.

STONEGATE GO WALKABOUT

The private equity group Better Capital has agreed to sell Intertain, the company that operates the 30 strong Walkabout chain, to the Stonegate Pub Company. According to the *Evening Standard*, the price was £39.5 million. It brings Stonegate's estate to nearly 700 sites. The Walkabout chain started life as Outback Bars in 1994. Indications are that Stonegate will run them as are, as sports pubs.

CHICKENING OUT

We are constantly saying that turning the upper floors of pubs into flats won't work and I'm not sure about this either. Mitchells and Butlers are planning to expand their Chicken Society brand serving spit roast meat across London. The concept uses what they describe as 'unloved function rooms and basements' to house the restaurants while the pub remains open for business as usual. Unloved by whom, I ask? Have they tried promoting these function rooms to the likes of bands and darts teams?

HOPE RENEWED

Further to his article in the last edition, Colin Price is pleased to report, "The Hope reopened in December after a refurbishment and has three real ales on offer from a rotating range. Fuller's London Pride and Deuchars IPA were available on my

recent visit. The upstairs restaurant has been converted into a gin bar although that was closed when I visited it. Food is available in the downstairs bar with a menu featuring specialist pies and they advertise live acoustic music on Wednesday nights. However, they have stopped using the early morning licence at 6.30am and opening hours are 11-11 Monday to Friday, 12-11 Saturday and 12-10.30 Sunday although weekend closing may be earlier depending on the amount of trade they get."

Colin added that London Drinker readers who also frequent nightclubs

may like to note the Hope is the nearest pub to the recently reopened Fabric night club in Charterhouse Street.

GOOSE ISLAND COMES TO TOWN

One of the better known American brewers, owned by AB InBev, has opened its first Goose Island Vintage Ale House in the slightly unlikely surrounds of Balham, the Gateway to the South. Despite the name the outlet will be food oriented, along the lines of an American smoke house. There is, as you would guess, no real ale but some of the beers, including

the 765ml bottles of barrel-aged beers, sound interesting. Further details are in our WhatPub Update column.

... AND FINALLY

I get really fed up with pigeons roosting on my balcony but this might be the answer. Faced with a £1,000 bill for repairs to his pub's thatched roof after visits from jackdaws and crows, John Desmond, the landlord of the Horseshoe Inn near Marlborough in Wiltshire, is spraying vindaloo curry powder on it as a deterrent. Could be interesting when it rains...

Cobbled together by Tony Hedger

INNside Track

Readers may remember that a couple of years ago I mentioned the blog INNside Track written by reader and CAMRA member Sam Cullen. Sam has now finished his project of visiting all of the tube stations and adjacent pubs and has moved on to a bigger task: all the National Rail stations in Greater London. Sam would be interested to hear from readers with suggestions as to pubs worth visiting. He is currently covering South West London and has already dropped in on a few CAMRA favourites, including the Bricklayer's Arms in Putney.

The web address is <http://innsidetrack.wordpress.com> and @innsidetrack on Twitter.

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CAMRA's National Winter Ale Festival

This year's festival will run from 22 to 25 February and is the first to be held at The Halls in Norwich. It will feature more than 300 real ales plus ciders, perries and international beers. A highlight will be the judging and announcement of CAMRA's Champion Winter Beer of Britain at the start of the event on 21 February.

Several local brewers, Woodforde, Norfolk Brewhouse, Lacons and Green Jack will have brewery bars.

Woodforde's has been brewing in Norfolk for over 35 years and was one of the pioneers of the new wave of artisan brewers in the 1980s. Their range is underpinned by the flagship Wherry bitter which is still recognised as one of the UK's greatest ales.

Norfolk Brewhouse, like many other brewers, uses Maris Otter, the world's premium malting barley, which is exported to over 20 countries around the world. The beers on offer at their Maris Otter Bar will include collaboration brews with growers and maltsters, as well as an imported ale to demonstrate the global appeal of the malt.

Lacons brewery dates back to 1760 and has recently returned after a 45 year break from brewing to much critical acclaim. Festival goers can expect a varied range of beautiful ales including Norfolk CAMRA champions Encore and Affinity, plus some excellent winter brews.

Green Jack is a multi-award winning traditional real ale brewery based in Lowestoft in Suffolk. They have won over

100 awards at independent CAMRA and SIBA beer festivals. Green Jack beers are known for their subtle balance of sugars, malt and hops and are produced with a unique and contemporary take on traditional English beer styles.

The festival will also feature local catering from Pandora's Kitchen and a selection of live music from talented musicians and bands on Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings and a special musical attraction on Saturday afternoon. In addition, a selection of local pubs will be extending the Festival to the city centre of Norwich with the 'fringe' hosting a wider selection of festival beers and events from 18 to 25 February. Festival goers will be able to track the beers available by using an online beer list and can find the pubs in a fringe guide.

The festival organiser, Rob Whitmore, says, "This is the first year that the National Winter Ale Festival is taking place in Norwich and we are really pleased to be able to use the event to promote the fantastic local breweries in East Anglia as well as the rest of the UK and give people an opportunity to meet with brewers directly. We hope the Festival with the exciting addition of the fringe and its associated events will help to boost tourism for the city of Norwich and encourage more people to make a weekend or even a week long trip to Norwich."

From a CAMRA press release



The poster features the CAMRA logo (a circular emblem with 'CAMRA' inside) and the text 'CAMRA 2017 AGM MEMBERS' WEEKEND'. Below this, it says 'Bournemouth International Centre 7th - 9th April 2017'. The central illustration shows a white goose standing next to a yellow beer box, with a small black and white dog sitting nearby. In the background, there is a detailed blue-toned illustration of a historic town with a castle and a bridge.

Please register online at: www.camraagm.org.uk
or return form to 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL1 4LW

Membership # _____	Joint Membership # (if applicable) _____
First Name _____	First Name _____
Surname _____	Surname _____
Email _____	(Closing date for postal & online registration is Friday 17th March 2017)

If you would like to volunteer, please circle below to indicate when you would like to work. Your details will be passed on to the staffing officer and you will be contacted closer to the event.

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WISE MEN

In the run-up to Christmas, Fuller, Smith & Turner, launched Wise Men, a seasonal beer that also raised money for Prostate Cancer UK. The beer, available in cask only, was on sale during December in Fuller's managed and tenanted pubs and independent free trade outlets. It was a 4.0% ABV golden ale and the tasting notes were: *malty, tropical and citrus notes and a hint of blackberry on the palate*. It was brewed with American Mosaic hops, giving it a bold finish and officially launched on 6 December at the Red Lion, Whitehall. Fuller's donated 50p for every pint sold in its 196 managed pubs and £10 for every firkin sold to its tenants and free trade customers.

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men in the UK with 11,000 men dying from the disease each year. By 2030, it is set to become the most commonly diagnosed cancer of all in the UK. Money raised through Fuller's pubs and their customers will help fund research into the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of prostate cancer, as well as supporting men and their families who are affected by the disease.



From left to right Matthew Hobbs, Deputy Director of Research PCUK, Colin George, the manager of the Red Lion and Guy Stewart of Fuller's Brewery

James Beeby, Prostate Cancer UK's Director of Fundraising said, "We are thrilled that Fuller's is supporting us through brewing and selling Wise Men. As well as raising funds this initiative will also raise awareness of a disease which affects 1 in 8 men in the UK and will hopefully get across an important health message. Our aim is to reach as many men as possible, and encourage them to take responsibility of their health. To do this we need to be engaging with them in areas they already exist, such as the pub. We thank the team at Fuller's for creating Wise Men and helping us in the fight against prostate cancer."

Nick Corden, Fuller's Retail Marketing Manager, said, "When we were approached by Prostate Cancer UK to support them during the Christmas period, it made sense to combine the two things Fuller's is best at: brewing great beer and serving it in fantastic pubs. The new beer is already proving to be a big hit with our customers and it's great to

be raising awareness of, and money for, such an important cause."

Why Wise Men? Because wise men, especially those of a certain age, have their PSA levels checked regularly. For more information go to www.prostatecanceruk.org. Incidentally, PCUK say that 'while alcohol can be a risk to health and should only be drunk in moderation, there's no clear evidence that it increases your risk of prostate cancer.'

NICE LIMITS

Although the limit recommended by the Chief Medical Officer is 14 units per week, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) is proposing that the consumption levels at which GPs should regard patients as being 'harmful drinkers' and instigate checks for disease such as cirrhosis of the liver and liver cancer is 50 units per week for men and 35 for women. This should not however be taken as any sort of new limit.

THE BENEFITS OF SOCIAL DRINKING

New research, which shows that moderate alcohol consumption with friends at a local pub may be linked to improved wellbeing, has been published in the journal *Adaptive Human Behaviour and Physiology*. While most studies warn of the health risks of alcohol consumption, researchers at the University of Oxford have looked at whether having a drink may play a role in improving social cohesion, given its long association with human social activities.

Combining data from three separate studies: a questionnaire-based study of pub clientele, observing conversational behaviour in pubs and a national survey by the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA), the researchers looked at whether the frequency of alcohol consumption or the type of venue affected people's social experiences and wellbeing. They found that people who have a 'local' that they visit regularly tend to feel more socially engaged and contented, and are more likely to trust other members of their community. They also observed that those without a local pub had significantly smaller social networks and felt less engaged with, and trusting of, their local communities. The study also showed that those who drank at local pubs tended to socialise in smaller groups, which encouraged whole-group conversation, while those drinking in city-centre bars tended to be in much larger groups, and participated much less in group conversation.

Professor Robin Dunbar of the University of Oxford's Experimental Psychology department, said, "This study showed that frequenting a local pub can directly affect people's social network size and how engaged they are with their local community, which in turn can affect how satisfied they feel in life. Our social networks provide us with the single most important buffer against mental and physical illness. While pubs traditionally have a role as a place for community socialising, alcohol's role appears to be in triggering the endorphin system, which promotes social bonding. Like other complex bonding systems such as dancing, singing and storytelling, it has often been adopted



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HARVEY'S
BREWERY

by large social communities as a ritual associated with bonding."

CAMRA's national chairman, Colin Valentine, commented, "Personal wellbeing and happiness have a massive impact not only on individual lives, but on communities as whole. It will be of no surprise to CAMRA members that pubs play such a pivotal role in a person's wellbeing but it is fantastic news to hear that this wisdom has now been confirmed by research. Pubs play a unique role in offering a social environment to enjoy a drink with friends in a responsible, supervised community setting. For this reason, we all need to do what we can to ensure that everyone has a 'local' near to where they live or work - the first step to which is strengthening planning protection for pubs to stem the 21 pubs closing across this country each week."

The full paper, 'Functional benefits of (modest) alcohol consumption', can be read in the journal *Adaptive Human Behaviour and Physiology*: <http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s40750-016-0058-4>

AND IN PRACTICE. . .

An interesting experiment in putting this theory into action was made by CAMRA's Oxford branch in partnership with local social enterprise group Ami. They ran a public event on 13 December called 'Ale with Ami' at the Chequers Inn in High Street, Oxford, to help people make new friends. From 7 to 9pm people were invited to take part in a social 'speed-dating' style event with the intention of making a few new friends. The first thirty thirty people who registered received a complimentary half pint.

Steve Lawrence from CAMRA's Oxford branch explained, "Our branch was keen to get involved in this event because bringing people to the pub is a huge step towards combating social isolation. Simply put, a good local pub can be like family. We need to encourage more people who are lonely to visit their local and reach out to others in their community - you never know who you may meet!"

Lois Muddiman from Ami added, "Ami is a new on-line platform that helps people connect to others in their local community and offers them help and support. We're only working in Oxfordshire at the moment but plan to be national in 2017. We're delighted to be working with CAMRA to run this event and hope people will use the opportunity to make some new connections." For more information, please visit <https://blog.withami.co.uk/ale-ami-camra-partners-ami-tackle-loneliness-oxford/>

From a CAMRA press release

CHRISTMAS CHEER

In a similar vein, Young's house, the Alexandra in Wimbledon offered a free Christmas dinner to anyone who was on their own at Christmas. General manager Mick Dore said, "We just thought it would be a nice thing to do. We will make sure that they are well fed and sit and have a chat and a drink with them". He added that they had been overwhelmed with support for the idea and customers and suppliers made enough contributions to cover the cost

with some customers even volunteering to help out on the day.

YOUNG'S HOUSE OF HAPPINESS

Young's had a similar idea only they targeted 16 January, said to be 'Blue Monday' when, as their press release puts it, 'Christmas has become a distant memory, the credit card statements begin to arrive and the temptation to abandon New Year's resolutions reaches crisis point'. On that day they were planning to turn Finch's at Finsbury Square, Moorgate into a 'House of Happiness', offering small and simple pleasures. To continue the press release's description, "On arrival, guests will have coats and bags whisked away by happiness hosts, before being handed a kit containing an eye mask and slippers to leave all traces of the outside world at the doors of the pub. As well as House of Happiness escapism pods designed to disconnect mind, body and soul from the boundaries of everyday life, there will be complimentary massages, pop-up chatter corners, letter writing stations, thought-provoking wellbeing talks and 'happiness bursts' hosted by Laughology. Other activities include tea blending, beard grooming, shoe shining, making energy balls, whisky tasting, cake decoration, thank you card writing, swap shops, yoga, a Young's bookshop, snuggle spaces with hot water bottles and blankets, curated talks by happiness and mindfulness and lifestyle coaches." Unfortunately we went to press before the date itself so I haven't heard from anyone who participated but I would very much like to. It all sounds a bit hectic for 'British hygge' although I'm sure that it was possible to get a beer in somewhere along the line.

CAMRA AND THE RAMBLERS ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO GO ON A PUB WALK

Unfortunately this arrived much too late to go into our December/January edition but to paraphrase another slogan, walks are for life, not just Christmas and hopefully spring is on its way.

Many CAMRA branches feature pub walks in the calendar and there are already a number of 'RambALE' groups in existence. CAMRA's Bromley Branch certainly has one. CAMRA centrally and the Ramblers have now joined forces to celebrate the role that pubs play for walking groups. As well as providing a place to drink, many pubs are the hub of their community, acting as meeting places for walking or cycling groups, as well as hosting a variety of teams and community events.

This initiative is inspired by recent research undertaken by Professor Robin Dunbar of Oxford University which reveals pubs help to improve social cohesion and individual happiness. The report 'Friends on Tap' found that people who have a local pub are happier, have more friends and are better connected to their community.

The Ramblers and CAMRA have compiled a set of guided pub walks, complete with safety information, which will be published on their respective websites. CAMRA branches across the country helped to find local information and provide links to the real ale pubs featured. These supplement Bob Steel's very successful walks guides which

CAMRA publishes. For the more adventurous walker, keep an eye out for CAMRA's 'Wild Pub Walks', a set of mountaineering walks by Alan Hicks to be published in May this year.

CAMRA's national chairman, Colin Valentine, a notable bagger of Munros himself, said, "Pubs play a huge role in improving people's sense of enjoyment, relaxation and wellbeing. Particularly at this time of year, issues around loneliness come to the fore and going for group walks and visiting your local pub is a great way to reach out to your local community and make friends. These excellent pub walks combine gentle exercise with an opportunity to relax and socialise in pubs serving some superb beers."

Eleanor Bullimore, Engagement Manager at the Ramblers added, "There's nothing like a good walk over Christmas to blow away the cobwebs and enjoy amazing winter landscapes. We hope lots of people will step out on one of our special CAMRA Ramblers Routes and enjoy the walking and the chance to warm up afterwards in the pub."

The full list of pub walks can be accessed at www.camra.org.uk/pub-walks.

From a CAMRA press release

LEGGING IT

According to a study published in the *Journal of Sports Medicine*, gentle exercise such as a brisk walk for 25 minutes a day can reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease and some cancers associated with alcohol consumption.

DOG WALKING AWARD FOR THE HAND IN HAND

If you are one of those who gets their exercise by taking the dog for a walk (or vice-versa) and somehow always ends up in the pub, you might like to know that the Hand in Hand, the award winning Young's house on Wimbledon Common has been voted the UK's most dog-friendly pub by the dog-sitting organisers DogBuddy. They supply complimentary dog biscuits and have a prize for Dog of the Day.

Compiled by Tony Hedger

A complete collection of London Drinker magazines is available on our website: www.london.camra.org.uk. You can use the website version to read London Drinker in larger print.



The Roebuck

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Terry Himpfen and the girls welcome you to his distinctive community pub with a veritable treasure trove of memorabilia on show.

The small award winning walled garden has a summer house and a new gazebo for smokers. Four Bed & Breakfast rooms also available. all En-Suite with TV. Pub open 11am to 11pm (11:30 Fri & Sat) Noon to 4pm, 7pm to 10:30pm Sun. Buses R68 and 285 stop close by.

Voted Pub of the Year 2008 by CAMRA's Richmond & Hounslow Branch.

Low and no alcohol beers

For anyone who did decide to participate in 'Dry January', Brentwood Brewery's beer of the month was BBC1 at 1.5% ABV.

On the subject of methods of production, regular correspondent Richard Larkin says, "There are two ways of producing very low or zero alcohol beers: using a particular strain of yeast, with close temperature control or removal of the alcohol after brewing. This removal is usually by reverse osmosis. I would guess that the latter is more expensive than the former but might deliver a product more closely resembling beer in taste".

He goes on to say that in Germany and the Netherlands, you can find 'radler', literally, 'cyclist', which is a lager/lemonade shandy at 0% ABV. Several companies produce these, including Amstel, Bavaria and various types by Heineken. None of these have been spotted in the UK however.

Another regular, Ben Nunn, says, "I received some samples of St Peters Without a couple of months ago. My view is that while the name is very clever, the 'beer', if indeed one can call it a beer, is deeply unpleasant unless you like the taste of unfermented wort. It's more of a 'supermalt' type drink, sickly, malty and unbalanced, and completely lacking in body. I would however strongly recommend Brewdog Nanny State which, whatever we think of the brewery, is by far the most drinkable non-alcoholic beer I've ever tasted. Without alcohol, beer will always be on the thin side, but Nanny State makes up for that with large quantities of spicy, resinous hops. It smells and tastes like a beer and

you don't feel cheated drinking it, which is possibly the most important quality".

Meanwhile, the DePrael brewery in Amsterdam have come up with what they claim is a hangover-free beer. Amsterdams Heider, a 4.5% ABV Pilsner style beer, includes vitamin B12, ginger and sea salt in its recipe.

Thanks to all for their contributions. Although they are not the same thing, this might also be a good point at which to give some consideration to gluten-free beers.

Tony Hedger

ANTWERP ARMS TASTES GLUTEN-FREE BEERS

With more people falling prey to celiac disease or avoiding gluten for other reasons, it seemed time to find some gluten-free beers to stock at North London's first community-owned pub, the Antwerp Arms in Tottenham. A new process has been discovered (apparently by accident) by Westerham Brewery in Kent that uses an enzyme to break down the protein chain and thus avoid the allergic effect of gluten. The brewery claims that the beer tastes identical to their normal production (they brew several beers both with and without gluten). Several other breweries are using this technique, so on 12 December one of our shareholders, Martin Burrows, put together a set of eleven bottled beers for us to taste, including nine samples from Westerham, to which he added two beers bought at the local Tesco (some branches also stock Daura and St Peter's gluten free).

We started by comparing two pilsners: Westerham Bohemian Rhapsody (5.0% ABV) and a gluten-free version of Peroni (5.1% ABV). The Westerham had a solid Czech taste while the Peroni was lighter and appealed generally. Neither showed any sign that they were different from standard lagers in taste.

The next set of comparisons were between Westerham pale beers (4.0% to 5.5% ABV) and Brewdog Vagabond (4.5% ABV). To me, the Westerham beers all had a delicate character and showed English hop aromas (Westerham only use Kent hops). My favourite was the Viceroy IPA (5.0% ABV). The Brewdog had a fuller, American IPA style with citric hopping. Again, we had no reason to distinguish any of these beers from normal ones.

We ended with two darker beers from Westerham: Audit Ale (6.2% ABV amber), a lightly hopped, slightly sweet ale and Double Stout (5.1% ABV), full of chocolate.

As the technique spreads, we are likely to see more experimentation and a wider range of beers that can be enjoyed by everybody.

By the way, we have opened our share offer again, to pay for some rebuilding work in the summer. Please see our website www.antwerparms.co.uk for details.

Ian McLaren

Secretary, Antwerp Arms Association Ltd

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The anti-alcohol lobby reorganises

Editor's note: this article was originally published in *Propel Info News* and is reproduced here with the author's permission. Although not specifically about beer or pubs, I thought that readers would find it interesting. The views expressed in it are, of course, the author's own and do not necessarily reflect those of CAMRA at Greater London or national level. Many thanks to Tim Page, CAMRA's chief executive, who drew it to our attention. If any of the organisations or individuals mentioned wish to exercise a right of reply in these pages, they are more than welcome. **TH**

RIP Alcohol Concern. It may have escaped your attention but Alcohol Concern (AC) and Alcohol Research UK (ARUK), the UK's two leading anti-alcohol sock puppet charities, are to merge. This merger has consequences for the way in which anti-alcohol advocacy will be conducted going forward, but first, a little bit of history:

Alcohol Concern and the International Order of Good Templars: the International Order of Good Templars, or 'IOGT International' as it now refers to itself was the most zealous of the clutch of anti-alcohol groups that sprang up in the 1850s. Despite the repeal of prohibition in America in 1933, it remained in existence as a hard-line anti-alcohol sect until the 1970s, when its leader Derek Rutherford, recognising campaigning for the outright prohibition of alcohol was a lost cause, moved IOGT to an apparently softer line of campaigning to reduce alcohol-related harms. Initially, in the UK, IOGT worked with the National Council on Alcoholism, which later evolved into the anti-alcohol advocacy group Alcohol Concern (AC).


The two groups parted company in 1982 after a row with the new chairman who said he had no time for 'a bunch of Methodist teetotalers'. IOGT walked out and Rutherford, along with Andrew McNeill, set up the Institute of Alcohol Studies as an alcohol research organisation. So, whilst the National Council on Alcoholism and IOGT parted company, the legacy organisations they spawned have their roots deeply embedded in historical temperance.

Alcohol Research UK (ARUK): ARUK is another organisation with its roots in historical temperance. Indeed, today 70% of its income is derived from returns on an investment fund that arose out of the Licensing Act 1904! The government of Conservative Prime Minister Arthur Balfour established the 'Licensing Compensation Scheme' to compensate licensees who lost their licences through no fault of their own but as a result of action by local justices to close down premises in areas where they deemed there was overprovision. The scheme was funded by a levy on all licensed property, from £1 on small beer houses to £150 on large hotels. The scheme was not popular with either side in the alcohol/society debate, with temperance campaigners dubbing it the 'Brewers Endowment Fund' and brewers calling it the 'Mutual Burial Fund'. The scheme didn't last for long but the money collected was not returned to the trade from whose pockets it had been picked. The fund was left in abeyance and it wasn't until the 1981 act that half of the residual funds were transferred via a liquidator to establish the Alcohol Education and Research Council (AERC). In 2011 the AERC was wound up and the investment fund was transferred to a new charity, Alcohol Research UK.

The merger: on 7 December 2016 there was a joint press release announcing AC and ARUK are to 'merge' by April 2017. Why has this happened? If you look at the published accounts of both organisations this gives you a clue. AC has struggled to fund itself since it lost core funding from the UK government in 2012. It still received taxpayers' money from the Welsh Assembly government totalling £185,108 in 2016, with its second biggest funder being the Big Lottery – Pembrokeshire, which contributed £62,459 in the same year. In the recent past AC has received money from the pharmaceutical industry for its support for a treatment for 'mild alcoholism' that was marketed as Selincro. However, in 2016 its expenditure exceeded its income by some £72,330 and it is apparent AC struggles to make ends meet and if the UK government isn't going to finance its sock puppet activities using public funds to lobby for public policy change then its long-term future looked uncertain at best.

ARUK, on the other hand, is losing even more money with its expenditure exceeding its income in 2015 by £317,701. Whilst this is a much bigger budget deficit than AC's, ARUK does have a dependable source of income from its historical investment fund of £15.7 million, which delivered £548,855 in 2015, with just £51,972 from voluntary donations and an income of just £17,864 from 'charitable activities'.


So when is a merger not really a merger? Well, the chief executive of the newly merged organisation will be Dave Roberts, who currently heads up ARUK. AC's current chief executive Joanna Simons was appointed with the specific remit of looking at options for its future strategy and she will leave in April 2017 when the merger is accomplished. Emily Robinson, AC's deputy chief executive has already left. So, it appears that ARUK will gain AC's income of about £950,000 a year, lose the cost of the two biggest earners from its payroll




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The anti-alcohol lobby reorganises

and, presumably merge the two offices and save even more cost. All very sensible.

But what will really remain of AC's campaigning efforts in the future? 'Dry January' will presumably still go ahead in January 2017 but after that will it be retained, rather like Fidel Castro's cigar, as the signature symbol of a dead icon or will it be dispensed with? I guess that will depend on whether AC's funders are prepared to fund the AC part of the merged charity.

And what will be the position of those key figures in ARUK who insist theirs is an objective, independent research organisation, now they are about to acquire an organisation dedicated to advocacy and campaigning? ARUK states its aim is to "reduce levels of alcohol-related harm by ensuring policy and practice can always be developed on the basis of research-based evidence" whereas AC states it "works throughout England and Wales towards our vision of a world where alcohol does no harm".

There is a big difference between reducing levels of harm and creating a world where alcohol does no harm, which, given the mantra of 'there is no safe level of alcohol consumption', can only mean a world without alcohol. Whose vision will prevail? Given the tendency of anti-alcohol groups to undergo Trotskyite-like splits, will this marriage of financial convenience last, or might the Institute of Alcohol Studies and LOGT win-out in the neo-temperance merger stakes? We'll have to wait and see.

Paul Chase

Paul is a director of CPL Training and a leading commentator

on on-trade health and alcohol policy. CPL Training is one of the UK's leading providers of training courses to the licensed trade.

TIMES ADJUDICATION

On 30 May 2016, the *Times* ran an article headed "Anti-drink lobby drew up official safety limits". It claimed that the panel of experts who recommended the most recent reduction in alcohol limits to the UK's four chief medical officers included several 'anti-alcohol lobbyists' from the Institute of Alcohol Studies (IAS) and went on to report the comments of one scientist said to have a knowledge of the panel's workings who said that there had been a "determined effort by 'temperance activists' to 'demonise alcohol in the same way as cigarettes but without the justification'" and that their links to the IAS were not given in the biographical notes for the panel. One of them complained to the Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO) that the *Times* breached Clause 1 (Accuracy) of the Editors' Code of Practice because the CMOs had taken the decision themselves and that the IAS was not an anti-alcohol organisation, did not have a view on whether individuals should drink or not, does not 'seek to eradicate alcohol', had never published any work promoting total abstinence from alcohol and did not share the aim of its funding body (the Alliance House Foundation) in promoting total abstinence. The complaint was not upheld. If you wish to see the full adjudication, go to www.ipso.co.uk/rulings-and-resolution-statements/ruling/?id=04923-16.

Tony Hedger

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When was the last time you heard somebody at the bar asking for 'a pint of bitter, please', other than in a TV soap opera? Trends come and go, in language as much as in brewing, but the B-word may be in some danger of dying out. Just a couple of decades ago the opposite was true and the term 'bitter' was senselessly overused. Indiscriminate drinkers and landlords alike used it to describe pretty much everything that wasn't 'lager' or Guinness. I was once amused by a conversation in the Prince of Wales in Wimbledon which went something along the lines of 'What bitters have they got, John?' to which the reply came something like 'Tetley Mild, Fuller's London Porter and Old Peculier'!

But nowadays 'bitter' is seldom uttered and, when it is, it is often in a slightly disparaging fashion, sometimes preceded by the qualifier 'boring brown' to describe only the darker, maltier varieties that haven't gone overboard on New World hops. Now, I happen to agree that some of the mass-market BBBs are fairly poor beers but there is some eminently drinkable stuff out there that should rightly be called 'bitter' and we shouldn't shy away from using the term. Moreover it's absolutely nonsensical that 'bitter' should now be used solely to describe the *less* bitter bitters.

In 2016 it's all about 'pale ale', of course, but historically this was usually just the name used for the bottled version of beers that were called 'bitter' on draught and if they were the very same beers, how can bitter and pale ale possibly

be different styles? CAMRA too must shoulder some of the blame with their confusing introduction of a 'golden ales' category to the Champion Beer of Britain competition. Years of judging, writing about and drinking beer have led me to the conclusion that 'golden' is a colour, not a style. Indeed one can make a far stronger historical case that brown ale and red ale are legitimate, unique styles, neither of which CAMRA has separate categories for. Many of us remember Boddingtons and Stones bitters and the earlier offerings from the first wave of micros like Hop Back and Roosters. Bitter? Yep. Golden? Very. And this was some years before 'golden ales' officially became a concept and everyone stopped using the b-word.

Even if one goes down the American route of separating out beers into literally hundreds of different categories, we shouldn't lose sight of the fact that pale ales, golden ales, APAs, IPAs, DIPAs, QIPAs, best bitters, boys' bitters, strong bitters, premium bitters, are *all* essentially sub-styles of bitter.

People are more educated than ever about beer these days and the ignorance of calling a porter or old ale 'bitter' seems to be a thing of the past. But it would be equally pig-headed to deny the importance of a beer style that has served us well for at least a century under any name.

So, I'll have a pint of bitter please!

Ben Nunn

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Down the Bethnal Green Road

In November, with new GBG pubs to visit, I took myself off to the far side of London (for me anyway) to Bethnal Green, the object being the King's Arms but also any other pubs that might be worth a visit. Leaving the tube station I first came across the Salmon & Ball on the corner, a smart enough looking pub but no real ale. Further down the road should have been the Ship but it seemed to be business premises now. Further was the Shakespeare, a small fronted pub with some nice original Truman, Hanbury and Buxton signage advertising Stout, Mild Ale and Porter. It was a quite basic locals' pub going back some way with the bar to one side. The horse racing seemed popular, especially with a bookies right opposite. Two ales were on at the bar, London Pride and Caledonian Trick or Treat, which at £3 was quite alright. Talking to the barmaid and manageress I gathered that along Bethnal Green Road most of the pubs were still operating, which compared to some areas made it seem quite good.



This meant that I wasn't going to visit them all today. So passing the Misty Moon, and across the road the Sun I headed on to the Antic owned pub, the Old George which sits on a corner. Inside it's a good size opened out into one area. There is a nice original wood bar to one side with the rest of the pub done out in the usual quirky distressed Antic style. At the bar there were five ales available, Otter Bitter, Old Peculier, Summer Lightning, Five Points Pale and Southwark LPA, which I went for but it was £4.30 and rather cold.



Next, passing several other pubs, I heading for the GBG entry, the King's Arms, tucked away just off the main road in Buckfast Street. This is a Victorian corner pub of a good size. Inside there is a square island bar with six unbadged hand pumps, which at first was a bit disconcerting until one realises that the beer list is on a chalk board and also on a beer menu on the bar. It's all generally upmarket in a dark greeny style with a wood floor and wall panelling. The beers on were Gypsy Hill Beatnik, Thornbridge Lord Marples, Siren Soundway and Five Points Railway Porter, which I went for at £4 and it was rather good.

Regaining the main road I carried on to my other objective, the Phoenix in Throgmorton St, the other side of Liverpool St Station, and again I noticed more pubs that were open. The Phoenix is a Greene King corner bank conversion with a large main bar area, all very woody and green, and very busy and noisy. It is generally smart and impressive but a shame about the industrial air ducts along the ceiling. Besides the Greene King beers there were others from the likes of Caledonian, Redemption, Hop Stuff and the beer of my choice, By The Horns Mayor of Garratt, was good at £4.20.

Reflecting on today's little sortie I was quite impressed with Bethnal Green Road still having a good number of pubs open, unlike some areas where most have closed. With this thought in mind, I decided to make a return visit to call in the pubs that I had missed out. On the following Wednesday I started in the corner pub opposite the Shakespeare, the Sun. Unfortunately only 'craft keg' beers were on, so I didn't stop. Crossing over the road I went into the Misty Moon, a single story fronted building that was a Wetherspoon's and the Camden Head before that. There is one open bar area inside, comfortable enough with carpeted floor and seating bays around. There was only one ale on at the time, which was Caledonian Autumn Red at £3.45. Unfortunately it was past its best. The landlord did offer me his various 'craft keg' beers but I stuck with it.

Moving on from here I carried on past the Old George to another impressive large Victorian corner pub, the Star of Bethnal Green (ex White Hart), painted black around the lower bar area which makes it look rather austere. Inside it is all quite Spartan in a dark woody style with mostly scattered chairs and tables, plus some of the usual soft furnishings. In the centre of the bar is a rather impressive staircase. There were two beers available and I went for the East London beer but on pulling it the bar lady found it had reached its end so I went for the Purity UBU. Now this beer was not exactly on yet; it was ready in the cellar but had not been pulled through, so if I cared to wait the lady would put it on so I waited. I noticed behind the bar a loyalty scheme for regulars giving 20% off on Wednesdays. I enquired about any discount for CAMRA members but no, but since I had been kept waiting she gave me the discount anyway. Nice lady, especially when I found out the full price was £4.50. I thought this was Bethnal Green, not Mayfair!

Leaving here I carried along the main road to the Marquis of Cornwallis, another good size Victorian pub. Inside yet again it had the modern Spartan feel about it and no real ale. The barman did offer me the John Smith's keg but I declined and carried on with my journey.



Now I was finding some pubs that had gone; the Earl Grey is an Indian dress shop, or at least where it had been and the Green Gate a fruit and veg shop. I'm sure I came here many years ago and there were young ladies removing their clothes in the pub, no more though. The Blade Bone? Demolished. Around a corner in Chiltern Street is the Chilterns, not open but still there on a corner with its fully dark green tiled exterior proudly proclaiming Truman's Burton Brewed Pale, Stout, Mild and Porter ales. A truly excellent looking back street pub looking in good condition, but sadly not open. I wonder if it has any future.

The Star

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Back to the main road and to the Well & Bucket, latterly the Stick of Rock, an old pub in a parade of buildings. Once more the interior was all rather dark and woody in the modern style but it still had retained its island bar. It was busy and very noisy. The side wall was still covered with some nice original tile work, albeit with some large quirky pictures filling the spaces, and there was also a large impressive Well & Bucket Oyster House mirror. Of the ales that were on, one was an unbadged First Chop beer from Manchester but I went for the 5% ABV Tiny Rebel Altered Beast, again at £4.50.

I couldn't find the location of the Dolphin and passed by the Brew Dog pub to turn left into Shoreditch High Street for my last port of call, a GBG entry the Crown & Shuttle, so I hoped it should be good. It was busy inside in what seemed to be the trendy hipster style with lots of dark wood, exposed brickwork and the random collection of seating. The music was quite loud but rather interesting,

while at the bar there were ales from Hackney, Harbour and the one I went for, Five Points Railway Porter, again at £4.50. It seems almost to be the standard price around here, but at least it was good, the best beer of the day in fact.

From here I headed home, quite content. Overall the Bethnal Green Road certainly has something to offer, with a good varied selection of pubs. Even though over the years some have gone, enough remain to make it worth a visit.

Clive Taylor

The print run for this issue of *London Drinker* is 26,000. It is distributed by CAMRA volunteers to some 1,200 pubs and clubs in and around Greater London.

London brewery news

AERONAUT, ACTON

I'm sad to report that just after the turn of the New Year, a fire started at this unique pub, brewery and venue. Customers and performers who were enjoying a 'Circus Spectacular' had to be evacuated. Six people had to be rescued from a first floor flat. The two upper floors and part of the ground floor have been destroyed. Officers from the nearby police station rushed to help with three of them having to be treated for smoke inhalation. It took the fire brigade some four hours to bring the blaze under control. The Metropolitan Police said that the cause was not believed to be suspicious.

The pub is part of the Laine's group and Director, Dan Mills told the Acton W3 website, "It's been a very difficult time for the General Manager and his team but they did an incredible job to evacuate 300 people in such a short space of time. Everyone is still feeling shocked but recovering well. The Aeronaut holds a very dear place in all of our hearts so we're deeply determined to restore it. 'As for the cause of the fire, we're working with the fire service and other authorities to complete the investigation but we don't believe it was caused intentionally. 'The damage to the building is extremely severe but we're already working with our insurers to try and move things along as quickly as we can, we fully intend to repair and reopen as soon as we're able and we'll share news with you and the community as soon as we have updates. We're all feeling deeply touched by the messages of support we've had from the local community and the support we've had from the press and we'll make sure we keep everyone informed of our progress."

I know that from time to time we all get exasperated by health and safety requirements but in this case let us say 'well done' to the pub's management for having a robust evacuation plan in place and to the staff for putting it into effect so well.

AFFINITY

On 21 October 2016, Affinity became the fourth commercial brewery in Tottenham when it produced its

first batch of beer. The brewery is currently located in a pair of shipping containers in Markfield Road, N15, one of which contains a 2.5 barrel brewing kit. The company is run by a group of six enthusiasts who are making two batches of beer a week, all of them different. The first three were Blanche de Londres (4.4% ABV – a wheat beer), Cajolery (5.4% ABV – a red IPA) and Dark Gravity (5.1% ABV – stout). These are only available in key keg at the brewery tap (which will soon have a large club room attached) and a few other pubs. They intend to put the beers into cask and bottle later in the year. The Taproom is currently open on Saturdays from 11am to 9pm. More details from www.affinitybrewco.com.

Ian McLaren

BEAVERTOWN DIVERSIFY

Owner Logan Plant has told the *Morning Advertiser* that he hopes to open the company's first bar somewhere in east London in the spring. Eventually however he hopes to create 'Beavertown World' a 'forward facing customer experience' that will incorporate a much larger brewery, a bar a restaurant and a gin distillery.

Meanwhile, in an echo of Meantime and Camden breweries, Sipsmiths, one of the earliest of London's new wave of artisan distilleries, have been bought out by Japanese-owned Beam Suntory, the third largest spirits company in the world. A price of £50 million was mentioned in the *Guardian*. The company will stay in its Chiswick premises.

BREWHEADZ

Is Tottenham becoming the new Hackney Wick? Joining Affinity is Brewheadz Ltd who are based on the Rosebery Industrial Estate in N17. It is a four barrel brewery system and they have four eight barrel fermenters that they fill by brewing twice each brewing day. Brewing is reported to have started.

HAMMERTON

I didn't know that there was a pub, called the Understudy, at the National Theatre. It has commissioned a beer from



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Hammerton's called Tink's Tiny Batch Pale Ale to celebrate their new production of Peter Pan. The beer, which takes its name from Peter's fairy companion, Tinkerbell, will only be on sale at the theatre. It is based on Hammerton's recipe for their session American pale N1 (4.1% ABV) but, according to the press release, has benefited from the addition of Tinkerbell's 'Fairy Dust' in the form of US Citra hops, which contributes a 'musky floral and citrus-like aroma that cuts through the strong malt base of the beer.' The beer is the first of a series that the NT are planning to match their various productions. Could be interesting...

HOP STUFF

Hop Stuff, based in Woolwich, have raised over £625,000 through crowdfunding from some 500 investors who will be given equity in the company. The funds will be used to expand the brewery and acquire two further taprooms in south east London where they will serve pizzas alongside their beers.

INTELLIGENTX BREWING CO

I really don't know what to make of this. This company, based near Liverpool Street, brewed four bottle-conditioned beers (Amber, Black, Golden and Pale) on which customers are invited to submit feedback through Facebook. The comments, as regards maltness, bitterness, etc are then fed through 'complex machine learning algorithms' which adjust the recipe accordingly for the next batch. The beers, not surprisingly, are brewed in very small batches and the bottles are labelled with the version number. Could this be the ultimate in customer feedback?

MARKO PAULO

As the Aeronaut is forced to close, hopefully only temporarily, not too far away this brewery opens in the new Owl and Pussycat micropub near Northfields station. It was opened on 2 December by two former teachers and is equipped with a 1.25 barrel (200 litre) brewing kit. The intention was to brew all the beer for the pub in house but demand outstripped supply so initially at least in-house beers have had to be supplemented by beers mostly from Rebellion. The beers are available in both cask and keg (different ones). More details, including the official opening, will be given in the next issue. With thanks to Roy Tunstall for the information.

PARK BREWERY

The Park Porter (4.1% ABV), a black milk porter brewed with Galena and Cascade hops is available again and a nut brown ale is being trialled for a second year. A further collaboration with Kew Brewery is planned for early this year. Brewery open days will resume in March by which time a further fermenter will be in place. Thanks to David Morgan for the information.

PRINCE

To clarify an entry in the WhatPub Update from our October/November edition, the Prince pub in N22 does currently stock Bohem Brewery beers but has only chosen to do so because they are situated nearby. The onsite microbrewery is being installed and developed by the owners themselves to brew beer for both the Prince and their other pub, the Duke's Head in N6. They hope to start brewing in April. Apologies for any confusion.

TANKLEYS

Not content with their clutch of micropubs, Bexley now has a second brewery, Tankleys, in Sidcup. Their first beer, Golden Ale, a hoppy session beer, was launched at the Broken Drum in Blackfen on 9 January.

WIMBLEDON

Copper Leaf Ale, originally brewed as an autumn seasonal, has proved so successful that it has been added to the core range. Phoenix Smoked Porter has returned as the winter seasonal. To celebrate the 200th anniversary of the famous windmill on Wimbledon Common, Wimbledon have collaborated with Greene King to produce something which sounds very interesting, Windmill Oatmeal Pale Ale (3.7% ABV). Oatmeal is frequently used in stouts and porters but

this is the first time that I have come across it being used in a pale beer. No tasting notes were available at the time of going to press and so you are going to have to find out for yourself.

AND FINALLY . . .

The equipment from the former Watney's Brewery at Mortlake which was sold last year by AB InBev to a Singaporean development company for £158 million, is to be auctioned off. It won't be much use to any new microbrewery however. The equipment is large scale, including 2,000 litre vats, and was last used to concoct the Budweiser and Michelob brands.

Compiled by Tony Hedger

London LocAle scheme

The following pub has joined the London LocAle scheme since the last issue of *London Drinker* went to press.

Greystoke 7 Queen's Drive, Ealing W5 3HU

Truman, Twickenham, Wimbledon

The complete list is maintained at www.london.camra.org.uk

News from the Continent

VIVE LA DIFFERENCE!

Is there any difference between the youth of yesteryear (me) and the youth of today? Probably not! Essentially, (we) used to 'up the ante' and explore alternatives and, probably, that has always been the case; otherwise expressions such as 'buck the trend' may never have been invented? That is actually a financial market term, but I am sure that you get the gist.

What on earth does this have to do with beer, then? Possibly a lot; as that is why young people in 2016 are challenging every little concept of brewing possible and coming up with 'brave new world' recipe ideas; some very tasty. In the case of 'craft' brewers today, it is a matter of what more is there to explore and try? Perhaps the concept, then, is to challenge the 'rules' of beer styles, combine and experiment and come up with new recipes that may bring out the best of new combinations. There are more hops, malts, yeasts and liquors readily available now than ever before, so why not experiment? The downside, possibly, may be the clouding of historical definitions of beer styles and I set out one example below.

I have been reading a little more about 'Saison', a beer that was brewed in the 'off season' in readiness for the end of the next 'on season' in Wallonia, the southern, French speaking, half of Belgium. Traditionally it was brewed during the colder months, when stray airborne yeasts were less likely to turn it acetic. It was then kept for the following year's growing season, for the workers (saisonniers). Allegedly, they were allowed a daily ration of five litres per workday, so, you may have guessed, it was quite low in alcohol, probably around 3% ABV. Obviously, it was meant to be a refreshing fortifier, specifically intended to keep workers hydrated and working, rather than falling over in giggling fits or having unnecessary accidents. It would also appear that wild airborne yeasts of the *Brettanomyces* family

were avoided unless the Saison, in some cases, was mixed with Lambic beer to produce a sour beer, perhaps along the lines of 'Make mine a light and bitter, please, landlord'?

As it was brewed on many different farms, it is likely to have varied to quite a large extent in style and ingredients. It was based on Pilsner malt, with the addition of malts such as, or akin to, Vienna and Munich up to around 10% of the grain bill, for colour and taste. It ranged from pale yellow to reddish brown, depending on ingredient choice. The malts of yesteryear were not so easily converted from starch to sugars as modern malts, so that modern attempts to replicate old recipes are not always accurate because ingredients have altered. (For more information on malt conversion research see the interesting 'BEER' magazine Autumn 2016 article about Sir Geoff Palmer OBE, who was the first to attribute poor malting to the asymmetric conversion of grain to malted grain.)

Essentially, Saison was relatively highly hopped to assist preservation. Being bottle conditioned and most likely moved around farms whilst working, the beer would, more than likely, have been consumed cloudy. If fermented in a warm autumn, the yeast(s) would form fruity esters in the alcohol giving fruity flavours as a result. If the autumn had been cooler, perhaps a beer with similarities to a lager may have been produced.

Today, Saison is typically in the region of 7% ABV (farm workers rations of five litres a day!) and may be clear or cloudy, bottle conditioned or not, contain herbs and/or spices and, frequently, have the most intriguing tasting notes. It may also have been brewed using *Brettanomyces* yeast to make a sour beer. That's a long way from the southern Belgian farm, is it not?

So, is it acceptable to alter definitions to this extent? I'd say why not, unless we lose sight of the original. Long live the difference!

Richard Dakin



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BEST BOCKBIER IN THE NETHERLANDS, 2016

What is Dutch bokbier? It is the traditional winter brew, directly equivalent to our English 'old ale', typically 6.0 to 6.5% ABV, dark, malty and warming. Just the thing when you have come in out of the cold. Some are bottled and others on draught. The Dutch do not bother to pasteurise their beers; they rely on a quick turnover. Who needs a winter beer to keep until the following autumn or winter?

The usual Dutch spelling is 'bok', and the German 'bock'. These days, the Dutch use either and draw no distinction between them. In my limited experience, the Dutch and German styles are only loosely related.

Dutch draught beers are served under high pressure, but as the bar staff leave a long drop to the glass and do not tilt it, the excess gas is shed in the turbulence so the beer appears with sufficient head and not too much fizz. This is exactly the way we used to serve Guinness, before the marketing people invented the tilt and pour, rest, tilt and pour some more technique. That said, when Guinness's brewery at Park Royal did a comparison blindfold taste testing of the one against the other, no one could detect any difference. My favourite Dutch licensee taught me that the correct way to present a glass of draught beer is with two fingers of head on it.

These were the results from the competition held at the 39th PINT Bokbierfestival, Amsterdam

Best bockbier in Nederland

1. Muifelbrouwerij – D'n Ossebock 7%, brown, top fermented; #
2. Brouwerij 't IJ – IJbok, 6.5%, dark brown, top fermented;
3. Lindeboom Bierbrouwerij – Herfstbock 6.5%, red-brown, bottom fermented;

Best Dubbelbock in Nederland

1. De Lepelaer – Dubbelbock 8%, dark brown, top fermented; #
2. Brouwerij Scheveningen – Provenier Dubbelbock 7.8%, dark brown, top fermented;
3. SNAB – Ezelenbok 7.5%, red-brown, top fermented; #

Best special bock in Nederland

1. Brouwerij Mommeriete – Rookbock 6.7%, red-brown; smokey, bottom fermented;
2. DAVO – Weizenbock 6%, copper-coloured, wheat-bock, top fermented; #
3. Berging Brouwerij – BB16 Oak Aged Bock, 6.5%, dark copper-brown (60 EBC), top fermented.

denotes a so-called 'gypsy brewer': one which uses another's plant.

There are other festivals in Alkmaar, Amersfoort, Enkhuizen and Utrecht although, as far as I can tell, none are competitions. Next year's Bokbierfestival will be the 40th: put it in the diary!

Translation and notes by Richard Larkin

**At 31 December 2016, CAMRA
had 184,871 members, of
whom 18,437 live in the
Greater London area.**

ASSETS OF COMMUNITY VALUE

According to CAMRA some 2,000 pubs have now been nominated as ACVs, which demonstrates that there is a huge call for permanent plans to protect pubs and these need to be introduced now. Any building that has a proven strong community focus can be registered as an ACV but pubs have had by far the biggest take up from local communities. Out of just under 4,000 buildings registered as ACVs, including libraries, community centres and post offices, half of that total are pubs.

CAMRA is now calling on the Government to relieve the burden on local communities and Councils who grapple with this often lengthy and awkward procedure. CAMRA's National Chairman Colin Valentine explains, "It is heartening that so many communities across England have spent so much time going through the process of nominating their pub as an Asset of Community Value. This shows a huge appetite for protecting pubs, which are more than just businesses; they are invaluable landmarks in our communities. Unfortunately, the ACV process can be time-consuming, fraught with difficulties and at the end of the day is only a temporary measure (because) listings must be renewed every five years to maintain protection. It simply doesn't make sense that pub-goers have to jump through these extra hoops when it is clear that so many communities overwhelmingly want a say on the future of their much-loved pub. All we are asking for a level playing field where a planning application on a pub has to go through the full planning process."

From a CAMRA press release

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING BILL

CAMRA's Pubs Matter campaign is therefore our priority. London has lost more than a quarter of its pubs since 'permitted development rights' allowed freestanding unlisted pubs to be demolished, or any pub to be converted to various other uses, without planning permission. Although half the former pubs have ended up in residential use, which always has, and still does, require planning permission, the permitted development loophole is often used as a stepping stone by developers lawfully to erase pub use at a site, removing any means of complaint or protest against their subsequent move towards residential conversion. Two pubs in England turned into convenience stores every week during 2014 and 2015. Many ordinary folk remain aghast that a pub that has stood for 100 or 200 years can turn into a shop or office overnight without the need for even a nod from the local planning authority and without any consultation whatsoever with local people, some of whom might have drunk there for their entire lives! Likewise, pubs can be demolished with just 28 days notice to the Council, for the purposes of agreeing a safe method of demolition, not for any planning consideration.

There is nothing Councils can do to stop this. For these reasons, Pubs Matter urged Ministers to make the very simple change to the General Permitted Development Order, a regularly tweaked piece of legislation, that would bring the demolition and change of use of pubs under planning control. This straightforward move would give Councils and local communities a say if somebody wanted to change their local pub into something different, or knock

it down. Let's be clear, it would not mean that all pubs must remain pubs forever, only that any change of use would need planning permission. We all know that, in a good many cases, planning permission in the absence of any local protest is a very straightforward and easily-achieved proposition. We also know that on occasions when permission is not readily granted, developers have another bite of the cherry with the Planning Inspectorate via the appeals process. It is hard enough trying to save pubs where planning permission is already required, so Pubs Matter was about giving us a leg up so that at least Councils could no longer shrug their shoulders and blame the government.

In April 2015, following a feared rebellion in the House of Commons over the Infrastructure Bill, the then Communities Minister Stephen Williams threw us an olive branch and closed the loophole for all pubs nominated or registered as ACVs. I originally suggested the idea to Stephen in the doorway of the Red Lion on 18 November 2014 as the (then) Liberal Democrat Chief Whip was attempting to bundle him into a taxi and whisk him off for dinner. Not disappointed with what we got, we did not stop there and Pubs Matter continued with the next government. Just before Christmas, pro-pub MPs from the Save the Pub Group, led by Caroline Lucas (Brighton Pavilion) and Greg Mulholland (Leeds North West) tabled an amendment to the Neighbourhood Planning Bill that would close the planning loophole for ALL pubs – well at least all pubs in England and Wales, planning being a devolved matter in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

The amendment, known as New Clause 9, was debated briefly on 13 December, followed by a vote in which it was rejected by 274 to 161. To be fair, the late tabling of the amendment did not give the Save the Pub Group or anyone else much time for campaigning. However members of several campaigning CAMRA branches were busy banging away on their Twitter accounts and writing to their MPs.

One of the key factors behind the loss of this vote was a highly dubious briefing sent to all MPs by the publicity team at the British Beer and Pub Association (BBPA), a body claiming to represent the brewing and pub trade. The BBPA is financed by the pubcos, the major national and international breweries and some of the small family brewers. These are the very people who have a less than admirable track record in churning tenants, asset stripping their pub estate, and running pubs into the ground to be sold off to developers. Not surprisingly they would want to retain a loophole that makes their unwanted pubs very attractive to well financed supermarkets. We do not object to them contacting MPs to make their case on behalf of their members. After all, that is what lobbying organisations are for.

However we are quite outraged by their briefing, which contained blatant and obvious untruths! For example they claimed that the adoption of the amendment outlined in New Clause 9 would result in simple internal alterations such as redecoration or a kitchen upgrade, or a garden fence, would no longer be permitted development and this would restrict proper investment in pubs. They went on to claim that pub owners would suffer undue red tape and bureaucracy as a result and that protections already existed under the Localism Act. While the latter is true for those

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pubs which are ACV registered, this is around 2% of all the pubs in the country. The New Clause 9 would have extended the planning protections to the other 98%. Sadly we know some MPs fell for this claim, judging by Tweets we saw after the debate.

The BBPA briefing made some wild claims about pubs being put in the same category as betting shops and pay day loan shops and demolition of a pub being made a 'malpractice' akin to 'sabotage'. It was desperate scaremongering at its finest and, in the words of Greg Mulholland MP, it "*corrupts the legislative process*". Indeed it is quite a travesty that the Planning Minister, the Rt Hon Gavin Barwell MP chose to read out an extract from the BBPA briefing in the chamber! Many of us were choking on our mild. How was this allowed to happen without DCLG planning experts checking over the Minister's speech beforehand? If the Planning Minister is taking at face value fundamental untruths from the mouths of a biased lobbying organisation representing those disposing of pubs, some serious questions need to be asked. Mr Mulholland raised a point of order with the Deputy Speaker on 15 December and has written to the Minister pointing out the misleading nature of the briefing. Many pub campaigners have also complained to their MPs about the fact that this erroneous planning information was read out to MPs as if it was official government policy and a statement of legal fact. Worrying times indeed.

Where now for *Pubs Matter*? CAMRA's National Chairman, Colin Valentine, has written to all branches restating our firm commitment to the planning reform campaign (see above). The Neighbourhood Planning Bill will shortly be debated in the House of Lords and there will be an opportunity for peers to table amendments along the lines previously defeated. How successful this will be remains to be seen but CAMRA recently renewed its calls for meaningful planning protection for all pubs, based on over 2,000 pub ACVs and counting. While ACVs are the only game in town, we keep playing the hand that we have been dealt. Nevertheless, this year we will be ramping up the pressure on Ministers to deliver on *Pubs Matter*. It was done for ACV pubs with little fuss and protest, now let's extend this to cover the other 98% and, as Colin says, relieve the administrative burden on Councils and their communities.

JW


ACORN, HAGGERSTON

The Truman's boozier which featured in the film, *A Place to Go* resembles the house that time forgot, abandoned in the hinterland between Hoxton and London Fields on Queensbridge Road, a Hackney cut-through that once boasted six pubs and is now left with just one still open (the Dalston Victoria). The Acorn closed its doors in September 2016 with a monumental 'drink the bar dry' party following the expiry of a lease. A planning application to demolish it and replace with nine luxury flats and a new A4 use of an unspecified nature was under consideration with Hackney Council when the developer appeared to lose patience and issued a demolition notice. As readers will know, this does not require planning permission as it is permitted development. That is unless an ACV nomination is made.

CAMRA's East London and City Branch hastily put together an ACV nomination when it became clear from the Hackney Society and others that there was a lot of local interest in saving the pub.



Hackney Council registered the Acorn in record time and the demolition was halted. We think this might be the first instance of an ACV nomination actually preventing the demolition of a pub. The nomination arrived with just days to spare before the bulldozers were due to move in. The application for the new flats has since been withdrawn and we are aware of at least four local pub operators who are keen to get their hands on the Acorn. The owning company, MacNeil UB40 Ltd, does not have a great track record in pub estate care with fourteen pub closures or conversions to their name to date. The fifteenth might just have been



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averted, we hope. Amazingly when we are up against the wire, the system can sometimes work.

JW

GROSVENOR, STOCKWELL

In the last issue, we reported that the January 2015 application for residential conversion of the upper floors of the Grosvenor (15/00481/FUL) would be considered by Lambeth's Planning Applications Committee at its meeting on 29 November. The officers' report, recommending approval subject to conditions, gave repeated assurances that pub use of the ground floor and basement would continue. Chairman of the Brixton Society, Bill Linskey and I were each given two minutes to speak as objectors.

Bill explained what we meant by a 'Trojan horse' application, showing the Committee the contrasting photographs of the bar that had been there when the pub was open and the empty space where it had been since being ripped out after closure. He cited the Beehive, Crossford Street, where upstairs conversion had been allowed on condition that pub use should continue below but where in the event an application had since been submitted (and rejected) to convert to residential.

The case officer had submitted a late (same day) amendment to the proposal, which she'd been working on with the applicants, to the effect that live music would not be prohibited after all, and so Bill emphasised the threat to the viability of the pub through loss of the ancillary accommodation that had not only enabled food to be prepared but also provided somewhere the publican could afford to live.

I then reported the stance of the owners at the First-tier Tribunal hearing in May, when they had appealed against the ACV registration on the grounds, *inter alia*, that there was no realistic prospect of the site, for which they then had had a Co-op supermarket in view, returning to pub use and who, by submitting in evidence the signed draft decision from 10 March and Section 106 Agreement as pending imminent signature, had misled Judge Lane to conclude that approval of the planning application was a done deal such that the upper floors should no longer benefit from ACV protection.

Councillors understood the threat to the reopening of the pub. Reasons for refusal of permission, formally notified on 8 December, included the following:

- 1 The applicant has failed to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority that the loss of upper floor ancillary Class A4 accommodation would not render the retained public house use at ground and basement levels unviable. The application is therefore contrary to Policy ED8(d) of the Lambeth Local Plan (2015).
- 2 The applicant has failed to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority that the proposed autonomous residential accommodation (Class C3) on the upper floors could co-exist with the use of the building as public house at ground and basement floor levels without:
 - (a) compromising the amenity of prospective occupiers of the new dwellings and/or;
 - (b) compromising the future viability and operation of a public house use on the site.

(b) compromising the future viability and operation of a public house use on the site.

As such the proposal is contrary to the aims and objectives of Policies ED8(d) and Q2 of the Lambeth Local Plan (2015).'

In the light of Lambeth's decision, I asked the General Regulatory Chamber Secretariat if there could in these circumstances be just reason to review those paragraphs of the First-tier Tribunal's decision that might have been predicated on a different outcome. Judge Lane issued a notice of decision the next day, concluding, 'It is not possible to revisit judicial decisions of the present kind on the basis of subsequent events. The scheme of the 2011 Act may be such as to permit the local authority to revisit a listing (such as in response to a new nomination); but that is not a matter on which it would be appropriate for the Tribunal to opine in the context of the present application.'

CAMRA South West London Branch Pub Protection Officer, Rex Ward has now submitted a new nomination to re-include the upper floors of the Grosvenor within its ACV registration.

Geoff Strawbridge

DUKE OF WELLINGTON, E1

According to the *Evening Standard*, owners Mendoza, a name not unfamiliar to readers of this column, have lodged an objection to Tower Hamlets Council's refusal of planning permission to turn the pub into a hotel. Campaigning starts again accordingly. Revised plans have been submitted which keep a pub on the ground floor and have hotel rooms on the first and second floor and in an extension. It has all the appearance of a classic 'Trojan horse'; when they can't let the pub and no-one wants to stay in the hotel, it ends up as a housing development. Borough mayor John Biggs urged Mendoza to save the pub, adding, "It's only right any appeal is heard in public. What nobody wants is a culture of pub predators, where locally valued pubs are seen as easy pickings for development and where council decisions to prevent them are overturned."

TH

HOPE, EC1

Further to my article about Smithfield pubs in the December *London Drinker* I am pleased to advise that the Hope reopened in December. It has three handpumps serving a rotating range of beers from about a dozen breweries, with Deuchars IPA and Adnams Broadside on when I visited. Various bottled and keg craft beers are also available. The upstairs restaurant is now a gin bar called the Juniper Room although that was closed when I visited. Food is available in the main bar downstairs and the menu features various specialist pies. Opening hours are now 11-11 Mon Fri, 12-11 Sat and 12-10.30 Sun. Weekend closing time may be earlier depending on how much trade they get. I did mention to the bar staff that the pub used to open at 6am but they are not interested in that.

The Young's livery has been removed. It was never a Young's pub but it did buy its beer through Young's and bought sufficient to qualify for Young's to pay for some decoration/renovation work. In my spells as a night shift postman I drank in there regularly and the then landlord did

tell me about this and he was never dishonest with people about it being a Young's pub if they asked him directly. There were several free houses that operated in the same way.

Incidentally, there is a street sign attached to the pub for Cowcross Street: a Borough of Finsbury one so before 1965 when the borough became part of the Borough of Islington with the reorganisation of London local government and the creation of the GLC. There are several old Borough of Finsbury signs in the area; near Liverpool Street there are also old Borough of Shoreditch signs, again pre-1965.

Colin Price

KING OF DENMARK, WIMBLEDON

Here is an example of how chaotic the current system can become. This pub, a fine building, was demolished and replaced by a nondescript block of flats with a bar or restaurant space on the ground floor. The plans were refused initially by Merton Council but upheld by a planning inspector. Plans to turn it into a restaurant have failed – not helped by the Council's refusal to grant an alcohol licence – and it is now to become a Co-op local store.

TH

PROVENANCE, COLLIER'S WOOD

And here's another one. The half-promised lock-up pub is soon going to be a Sainsbury's Local. Apart from a superstore at Abbey Mills there will shortly be five Sainsbury's Locals within ten minutes' walk of where I live. How much bread and milk do people need? This is why we

refer to these mixed developments as 'Trojan horses'. They seem like a good compromise but almost inevitably end up as a 'lose-lose'.

TH

ROYAL OAK, HARLESDEN

This is a worrying story. According to the *Brent and Kilburn Times*, Urban Pubs and Bars Ltd spent £500,000 on refurbishing this pub but despite some initial success they have decided to close it after only eleven months. The company's Nick Pring told the paper, "We are gutted to have to close the Royal Oak but the losses were becoming unsustainable. We have successfully converted dozens of pubs in up and coming areas all over London over the past 15 years and this is the first time we have had to close one due to it losing money; it makes more sense to keep it closed than to continue to operate it. Effecting issues around service is within our control but dealing with the anti-social behaviour that some of our customers have experienced in the surrounding streets is beyond our control and until the Council can address these issues the likelihood is that we will continue to remain shut, other like-minded businesses will struggle and Harlesden's high street will struggle to attract investment." The paper also quoted one local resident as saying that the pub was "possibly a little expensive for its offer, bearing in mind many folk locally have young families and need to pick and choose their evenings out and cannot justify several evenings out in a month. Plus there are not a great deal of high income singles in Harlesden to prop things up." The company has made it clear that the pub is still



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available for private hire so would not appear to be under any immediate threat.

TH

SHIP, SOUTH NORWOOD

Sadly, this one has not gone our way. The planning inspector saw more merit in legitimising what had been an illegal conversion than preserving a locally listed pub in a conservation area. Not for the first time the phrase 'much needed housing' crops up. Rachel Lawrence led a long and brave campaign against a determined and ruthless developer, not helped by the heel dragging of Croydon Council. The loss of the Ship is a major blow but Rachel and her neighbours continue to campaign for pubs in the Croydon area and they are active on ACV nominations and planning battles, including the Portmanor in Crystal Palace. We say all power to her elbow!

TH & JW

STAR, ST JOHNS WOOD

A company called DrunchSW3 has applied for a premises licence so, as John Cryne, chairman of CAMRA's North London Branch says, "Early days as yet but let us hope..."

TH

STILL & STAR

The City of London has listed this pub, threatened by development, as an Asset of Community Value following a tedious and drawn out process in which CAMRA East London and City (ELAC) Branch's Pub Protection Officer found himself negotiating the ACV nomination remotely from a holiday in Italy! After the officers initially recommended registration, one committee voted not to recommend while another deferred the decision. After a month's deferral in which ELAC provided yet more germane evidence and a local pro-pub councillor pledged his firm support, the Policy and Resources Committee resolved to grant the registration. We think the City of London Corporation might need to streamline its ACV process just a little to avoid future complications. We have a few more pubs in our sights. Congratulations to ELAC Branch, The Victorian Society, the Hackney Society and everyone else who contributed.

TH & JW

WASHINGTON, BELSIZE PARK

Despite being opened out, this pub still retains many of its very fine late Victorian fittings. Consequently it has been added to CAMRA's National Inventory of historic pub interiors. The points to look out for are the mosaic and ornamental tilework in the lobby off the side road, the screenwork and the back-painted mirrors in the rear area depicting flora and fauna. The most extraordinary item however is the high screen set forward from one side of the service. For full details see the CAMRA Heritage Pubs website.

From a CAMRA Pub Heritage bulletin

WILLIAM JOLLE, NORTHWOOD HILLS

This was one of the pubs that JD Wetherspoon put up for sale in the summer of 2015. It traded well, had a loyal local community following and even had a dartboard. It is

however a leased property and it is thought locally that the rent, rumoured to be £75,000 per annum with a review due next year, was too much. A local group had it listed as an ACV by Hillingdon Council but were not able to put in a bid. Planning permission has already been obtained for the offices on the upper floors to be converted to flats and so the owners appear to want to avoid the ground floor continuing as a pub. It looks as if another supermarket conversion is inevitable, leaving the area without a pub.

Looking at the JDW website, I see that it says that there are three other pubs 'local' to Northwood, 2.4 miles away (Hatch End), 2.6 miles away (Ruislip Manor) and 2.7 miles away (Rickmansworth). I'm not quite clear as to how this squares with Tim Martin's statements that they are only disposing of 'duplicate' pubs.

With thanks to Roy Tunstall for the information.

TH

HEATHROW CASUALTIES

If a third runway does eventually get built at Heathrow, the damage to local communities will inevitably involve a number of pubs. According to the *Morning Advertiser*, those affected will include the White Horse in Longford and the Five Bells in Harmondsworth. In some ways it must be a relief that a decision has been taken although the end result is still some way off. Brigid Simmonds, chief executive of the British Beer and Pub Association welcomed the decision, telling the *Morning Advertiser*, "British beer and pubs are right at the heart of our national tourism offer, which stands to benefit from the additional capacity promised in the announcement today. British beer is world renowned for tradition and quality and visiting a pub is third on the list of things to do when tourists come to the UK, with seven out of 10 overseas visitors coming to a pub while they are here. More capacity means more opportunity for tourists to visit Britain, and this decision represents a great chance for our pubs to benefit economically from this announcement." I don't see how you can visit a pub that has been flattened to make way for the runway that you have just landed on. How much effort it might be worth putting into trying to save these pubs is unclear. Presumably the compulsory purchase legislation that will be invoked will override any normal planning rules and the owners may prefer the compensation to trying to keep a business going amid the chaos of the building works.

TH

SOUNDS FAMILIAR. . .

Here is another instance of an event we know only too well in London. In October the Battle of Britain pub in Gravesend, Kent, a popular and thriving community pub, was demolished by owners Brakspear in anticipation of a planning application to replace it with a block of flats. The work was stopped by the local council when they were alerted to it but they had to allow it to be finished because the site was already unsafe. The council are now considering what to do next.

TH

JW = James Watson; TH = Tony Hedger, unless otherwise credited

WhatPub? Update publishes news items collated by Greater London branches, often from information supplied through the 'Submit Update' button on **WhatPub**. We aim to report all openings and closures of places that satisfy the CAMRA definition of a pub (including those selling draught but not cask beer); all pubs that add or remove cask beer; and changes of name, ownership or beer policy. Readers are encouraged to visit **WhatPub?** for pub details, and to 'Submit Update' when they find incomplete or out-of-date information.

The 'micropub revolution' has reached Ruislip and W13, and there is a possible new brewpub in Fitzrovia. There are new outlets for Brewdog in E9, City Glen Pub Co in SE25, Craft Beer Co in E14, and Laine's in both SE13 and SE23.

Among the many pubs sold by large pubcos to private investors and operators, in some cases the 'investment' seems to involve closing the pub, e.g. in Hainault, Enfield, Ponders End, SE1 and W12. We also mark the end of a cider bar in NW1 and a Wetherspoon in Northwood.

NEW & REOPENED PUBS & PUBS CONVERTED TO CASK BEER

CENTRAL

EC1, HOLBORN COLONY, 33-35 Brooke St. Having closed late 2000s to become a bar with no draught beer, reopened as **LOUNGE 33**. No cask beer.

EC1, HOPE (Enterprise), 94 Cowcross St. Having closed earlier in 2016, transferred to Bermondsey Pub Co managed

division and reopened. Adnams Broadside, Caledonian Deuchars IPA and Harveys Sussex Bitter.

EC4, SMITHS OF SMITHFIELD, 25 Walbrook (entrance on Cannon St). Opened in November in new office development, offshoot of the one in EC1. No cask beer.

WC2, ALL BAR ONE (M&B), 48 Leicester Sq. Having closed in 2014, extensively rebuilt behind original façade and now reopened. No cask beer. Keg beers include Meantime. Some interesting bottled beers.



WC2, VILLIERS, 31a Villiers St. Small bar & restaurant opened by younger members of the Gordon family, who run a very long established wine bar a few doors away. No cask beer. Keg beers include Meantime.


EAST

E3, MILESTONE (ex-Punch), 588 Mile End Rd. Was CORNUCOPIA, HORN OF PLENTY, FLAUTIST & FIRKIN, MATTER OF TIME, VIRTUE. Having closed c.2009 and served for a while as a restaurant, now reopened as **RUSTY BIKE**, a sports bar with Thai food. No cask beer.

E9, PLOUGH, 23 Homerton High St. Having closed earlier in 2016, reopened in December and renamed **BREWDOG HOMERTON**. Cask beer discontinued, but there are twelve keg beers from BrewDog and others, including local keykeg beers.


HORNCHURCH (RM11), FATLING (Stonegate), 109 High St. Was BULL INN, FATLING & FIRKIN. Cask beer restored c.2009 but not previously reported, e.g. Brentwood, Sharp's.









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NORTH

N1, BACKPACKERS BAR, 6-8 Caledonian Rd. Having closed in 2015, reopened as **WINE STORES**, now with a connecting door to the Scottish Stores. No cask beer. Three keg beers.

N8, ST JAMES, 4 Topsfield Parade. Having closed earlier this year and operated for a few months as a Porky's restaurant, repositioned by the same operator as the more drinks-orientated **ONE BOURBON TAVERN**. No cask beer. Keg beers from Fuller's and Wildman, plus bottled beers including Gypsy Hill.

N15, MANNIONS PRINCE ARTHUR, 158 Broad La. Cask beer introduced, Sharp's Doom Bar.

NORTH WEST

NW1, CIDER TAP (Bloomsbury Leisure Group), East Lodge, 190 Euston Rd. Renamed **OTHER EUSTON TAP**, now similar to the Euston Tap opposite. Eight cask beers introduced, and twelve keg beers, instead of ciders.

NW4, CLADDAGH RING, 10 Church Rd. Was LONDON, MIDLAND & SCOTTISH. Cask beer restored, one such as Fuller's London Pride, Sharp's Doom Bar, Wychwood Hobgoblin.

RUISLIP (HA4), HOP & VINE, 18 High St. New micropub in former café premises, also specialising in wine and gin. Malt the Brewery Missenden Pale plus three guests.

SOUTH EAST

SE1, BOROUGH BAR (Kornicis), 10-18 London Bridge St. Was HITCHCOCKS. Renamed **JAMIES** a few years ago. Cask beer introduced, Sambrook's Wandle and Sharp's Doom Bar.

SE1, MARQUIS OF WELLINGTON (Enterprise), 21 Druid St. Having closed in January 2015, transferred to Bermondsey Pub Co and reopened in November 2016. Three cask beers e.g. By the Horns, Clarkshaw's, Southwark. Many keg and bottled beers.

SE15, DUKE, 57 Nunhead La. Was EDINBURGH CASTLE, PAGE 2. Having closed in 2009 while upstairs was converted to residential, reopened in November as **BABETTE**. No cask beer. Two keg beers and three bottles from London breweries.

SE25, OCEANS APART (Enterprise), 152 Portland Rd. Was PRINCE OF DENMARK. Having closed in 2009, at last reopened as **PORTLAND ARMS**, by City Glen Pub Co (who also run the Gipsy Hill Tavern SE19, Brookmill SE8, Great North Wood SE27). Four cask beers introduced, e.g. Bexley, Brockley, Wimbledon.

SE26, BELL (Enterprise), 59 Bell Green. Cask beer restored a while back. Fuller's London Pride and two guests.

CROYDON (CR0), BOXBAR, Units 22-26, Boxpark Croydon, 99 George St. New outlet at opposite end of East Croydon's Boxpark development from the Cronx Bar reported last issue. No cask beer. Limited keg and bottled beers.

NORTHUMBERLAND HEATH (DA8), DUKE (Wellington), 322 Bexley Rd. Was DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND. Having closed earlier in 2016, now reopened.

SOUTH WEST

SW6, SIMMONS, 374 North End Rd. Chain bar opened March 2016. No cask beer. Keg beers from Meantime.

SW12, GOOSE ISLAND (AB InBev), 3 Ramsden Rd. Opened late December in former 'Be At One' bar, the first of a 'brand experience division' of 'Vintage Ale House' bars. No cask beer. Four keg beers below 5% ABV, plus six barrel-aged strong sour beers in 765ml bottles (£18 to £23 each, or three third-pint samples for £10) from Chicago's Goose Island brewery, which was taken over in 2011 by the global corporation.

SW14, HALFWAY HOUSE (Enterprise), 24 Priests Bridge. Having closed earlier in 2016, now reopened.

SW18, GROSVENOR ARMS (Enterprise), 204 Garratt La. Sambrook's Wandle. Cask beer introduced in October, after cellar improvements following a refurbishment.

SW19, WANDLE PIRATES, Unit 4, The Long Shop, Merton Abbey Mills, Watemill Way. Opened in August. No cask beer. Four keg beers and a range of bottles.

MITCHAM (CR4), RAVENSBURY, Croydon Rd. Having closed in 2015, reopened in December as a shiny restaurant and lounge. No cask beer.

MORDEN (SM4), GEORGE INN (HARVESTER) (M&B), Epsom Rd. Cask beer restored, Fuller's London Pride and Sharp's Doom Bar.

WEST

W2, LOCKHOUSE (Redcomb), Units 31/33, 3 Merchant Sq. Opened in December, a bar & restaurant on the north side of the Paddington Basin development. No cask beer. 'Craft beer' advertised.

W2, ROB ROY (ex-Punch), 8 Sale Pl. Having closed in 2013 for residential conversion upstairs, reopened in October and reverted to **ROYAL STANDARD**. Drinking and dining areas on the ground floor, and a basement bar. No cask beer.

W7, INN ON THE GREEN (Wellington), 13 Lower Boston Rd. Was DOLPHIN. Having closed earlier in 2016, reopened and now believed to be operated by MC Bars. Still has Timothy Taylor Landlord.

W11, GROUND FLOOR, 186 Portobello Rd. Was COLVILLE. Having closed in 2015, taken over by Leelex Ltd and reopened in December as the **DISTILLERY**, incorporating a gin distillery and several cocktail bars. No cask beer. Keg beers served in halves only.

W13, OWL & PUSSYCAT, 106 Northfield Ave. New micropub, with 200-litre Marko Paulo brewery. Four cask beers, their own and Rebellion, plus two keg beers.

HOUNSLOW (TW4), EARL HAIG (Greene King), 286 Bath Rd. Cask beer restored, Greene King IPA and one other.

UXBRIDGE (UB8), PRINCE OF WALES (ex-Fuller), 1 Harlington Rd. Having closed in 2014, reopened by Sahara City. Mainly a Mediterranean restaurant, with no cask beer, but it is possible to buy a pint of Fosters or San Miguel.

PUBS CLOSED, CONVERTED, DEMOLISHED OR CEASED SELLING CASK BEER

CENTRAL

EC1, BEST MANGAL. Was LIFTHOUSE, MEET, RADUNO. Now operating purely as a Turkish restaurant.

WC1, ONYX. Was LA BODEGA, CENTRO. Closed, now a restaurant.

WC1, SPORTSMAN BAR (Imperial London Hotel Group). Closed, incorporated into President Hotel.

WC2, LA TASCA (Bay Restaurant Group). Closed in 2016, becoming a 'Ping Pong' Chinese restaurant.

W1 (Fitzrovia), FAT LORENZO'S. Closed, now a restaurant.

W1 (Fitzrovia), NEWMAN STREET TAVERN (Affinity Bars & Restaurants). Was CAMBRIDGE. Closed, since early 2016 it's been 'Dickie Fitz' restaurant.

W1 (Marylebone), VICTORY (Enterprise). Closed summer 2016, now '500 Degrees' pizza restaurant.

EAST

CHADWELL HEATH (RM6), NEUVO BAR & GRILL (Enterprise). Was CHADWELL ARMS, RENDEZVOUS. Having closed in 2015, now being demolished to make way for a new development.

HAINAULT (IG7), HYNEHOLT (Enterprise). Was ALFRED'S HEAD. Closed, now a builders' merchant.

UPMINSTER (RM14), PLATFORM 7. Having closed in 2014, now a Duddle parcel collection office.

NORTH

N3, DIGNITY (M&B). Was OLD KING OF PRUSSIA, TAYLOR'S CAFÉ BAR. Having closed in October, not in fact incorporated into a Travelodge, but reopened by M&B as 'Chicken Society', a new restaurant brand (diners only).

N19, CENTURION (Centrepont Taverns). Was PICKLED NEWT, NEW BRUNSWICK. Reported closed, sign in the window from Highfield Investment (who auctioned off the Torriano), future uncertain.

ENFIELD (EN3), BLACK HORSE (Enterprise). Closed, sold to White Gold Properties, permission to demolish approved by Enfield Council on 1 December.

PONDERS END (EN3), FALCON (Admiral). Closed, sold to MacNeil Ltd, planning application to demolish currently held up by ACV application.

NORTH WEST

NW2, MCGOWANS, 88 Walm La. Was CEILI ON THE GREEN. Changed hands and renamed **BEER + BURGER**. Cask beer discontinued. Twenty changing keg beers and a large bottled selection.

NW2, OX & GATE (Greene King leased). Taken over in November by Whelan Inns as a part of a growing chain of 'new Irish' pubs, renamed **WHELAN'S**. Cask beer discontinued.

NW7, TGI FRIDAYS. Closed, plans to redevelop entire retail park.

NW10, ROYAL OAK (Enterprise). Closed, future uncertain.

HARROW (HA2), RAYNERS (ex-Spirit). Having been sold and closed in 2006, now a religious teaching establishment.

HARROW WEALD (HA3), CASE IS ALTERED (M&B lease). Cask beer discontinued.

NORTHWOOD (HA6), WILLIAM JOLLE (Wetherspoon). Closed in November, planning application to convert to retail.

SOUTH EAST

SE1, LYE TORNG (Wellington). Was GIBRALTAR. Closed, demolished in 2013.



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SE1, SLUG & LETTUCE (Stonegate), 32-34 Borough High St. Cask beer discontinued.

SE1, UXBRIDGE ARMS (Wellington). Sold to City Estates. Closed and demolished during 2016 to make way for flats with pub on ground floor.

SE10, BELUSHI'S (Interpub). Was PRINCE OF ORANGE, ST CHRISTOPHER'S INN. Cask ale discontinued, handpumps removed.

SE18, APNI HAVELI. Was WOODMAN. No longer licensed to sell alcohol without food.

BELVEDERE (DA17), BELVEDERE (Admiral). Closed, lease on the market.

BEXLEYHEATH (DA6), CROOK LOG (M&B). Cask beer discontinued.

CROYDON (CR0), DERBY. Was DERBY ARMS, PADDOCK. Was renamed **G'S BAR** but not previously reported. Closed, converted to residential use.

CROYDON (CR0), GLAMORGAN (Punch). Was HORSE & GROOM, GROUSE & CLARET. Closed in November, lease reverted to Punch, future uncertain.

SOUTH WEST

SW4, MONGOLIAN GRILL HOTPOT RESTAURANT & BAR (Enterprise). Was NORTH POLE, MISTRESS P's, TRADERS. Closed in October 2016, future uncertain.

SW6, MCGETTIGANS. Was BROGANS. Cask beer discontinued, handpumps will be removed.

SW7, SWAG & TAILS (Wellington). Was PRINCE OF WALES. Having closed in 2009, permission granted in 2013 for residential development, now complete.

SW8, NEW PORTLAND ARMS (ex-Punch). After sale and closure in 2010, permission now granted for residential conversion.

SW11, LOST ANGEL. Was PRINCE OF WALES, LEGLESS LADDER, GEORGE II, DUSK. Renamed **LOST & CO**. Cask beer discontinued.

SW19, POD. Was JJ'S BAR CAFÉ, BAR SIA. The bar no longer has draught beer.

HAM (TW10), ROYAL OAK (ex-Enterprise). Having closed in 2011, purchased this year from proceeds of the sale of the Ham Institute, for use as a community centre.

WALLINGTON (SM6), WINDMILL. Having closed in 2014, now a Portuguese restaurant.

WEST

W3, AERONAUT (Laine). Was WHITE HART, REDBACK. Closed after a fire in the early hours of New Year's Day.

W12, ASKEW PUB & KITCHEN (Greene King leased). Was ASKEW ARMS, BAR ROOM BAR, ANGEL & ASKEW, TOMMY FLYNN'S. Cask beer discontinued, handpumps no longer in use.

W12, RAVING BUDDHA (Greene King leased). Was BRITISH PRINCE, PRINCE. Having closed in 2013 for demolition and residential development, supposedly retaining a pub, the ground floor has actually become an estate agent.

W13, ASHBYS (Trust Inns). Was PRINCE ARTHUR. Cask beer discontinued.

HAMPTON (TW12), DUKE'S HEAD (ex-Enterprise). Having closed in 2012, now converted to residential.

HOUNSLOW (TW3), PLATFORM 3 (Wellington). Was RAILWAY INN, NORTH STAR. Closed, now an Indian restaurant.

WEST DRAYTON (UB7), RED COW (ex-Greene King). Having closed in 2012, now two shop units.

OTHER CHANGES TO PUBS AND CASK BEER RANGES

CORNEY & BARROW. All ten bars (mainly EC postcodes, one in E14) were acquired in 2016 by Drake & Morgan. Other changes, e.g. renaming or introducing cask beer to those outlets that did not already have it, will be reported separately.

CENTRAL

EC2, GRIFFIN. Reopening already reported in WPU 16. The operator is now Barworks.

WC2, GLOBE. Renamed **COVENT GARDEN**. Fuller's London Pride and guests.

WC2, TPA BAR. Was TIN PAN ALLEY. Renamed **SMOKING GOAT** in 2014. Now a Thai restaurant with a basement bar. No cask beer. A few keg beers, e.g. Beavertown, Wild Beer.

WC2, WALKABOUT (Intertain), Temple Pl. Was SHOELESS JOE'S. Operator acquired by Stonegate.

W1 (Fitzrovia), GEORGE & DRAGON (ex-Greene King). Now leased by BrewIT Microbrewery Ltd. Three changing cask beers, dispensed by a vacuum system, so don't be put off by the tap delivery. Currently trialling a microbrewery.

EAST

E1, WHITE HORSE (Admiral), 48 White Horse Rd. Sold to MacNeil Ltd.

E5, VERDEN (ex-Enterprise). Was CRICKETERS, PENNY FARTHING, SHAMPS. Acquired October by Barworks, operated by Grace Land, and renamed **MERMAID**. Still no cask beer but does have 16 'craft' keg beers.

E14, RAILWAY TAVERN (Punch), 576 Commercial Rd. Changed hands and renamed **CRAFT BEER CO** in December. Six changing cask beers and twenty changing keg beers (you can be certain of a decent range spanning the spectrum from uber pales to dark stouts and a lot in between) and a very impressive range of bottled beers.

HORNCHURCH (RM12), HOG'S HEAD (Stonegate). Renamed **SUTTON ARMS** in 2013 but not previously reported. At least three cask beers, e.g. Adnams, Brentwood, Sharp's.

UPMINSTER (RM14), ESSEX YEOMAN (Greene King). Renamed **JUNCTION** in 2015. Now has three Greene King cask beers.

NORTH

N1, MUCKY PUP (Enterprise). Was RAM & TEASEL, RAM BAR. Taken over in November by Angel Comedy Club (who also operate upstairs at the Camden Head) and renamed **BILL MURRAY**. One cask beer, e.g. Exmoor Gold, Sharp's Doom Bar. One real cider, Weston's Old Rosie.

NORTH WEST

NW1, T E DINGWALL BUILDING (Intertain). Was BAR RISA, MARKET BAR @ LOCK 17. Operator acquired by Stonegate.

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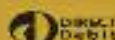
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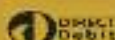
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NW1, WHITE MUSTACHE (Admiral). Was SOVEREIGN. Sold in 2012 to Mendoza, operated by Mr Happy Bars Ltd.
NW6, ONE SIXTY (Onesixty Fahrenheit). Taken over by the operator of Porky's restaurants and renamed **ONE BOURBON TAVERN** (sister venue in N8). No cask beer. A dozen keg beers and a range of bottles.

SOUTH EAST

SE13, LADYWELL TAVERN (Enterprise). Taken over in December by Laine's as part of a new 'managed expert' partnership with Enterprise.

SE23, HONOR OAK (Punch). Was ST GERMAINS HOTEL. Lease taken over in December by Laine's.

ADDISCOMBE (CR0), CLARET FREE HOUSE. Sold in September to an independent operator (ditto the sister bar in Cheam). Renamed **CLARET & ALE**. Still has Palmers Best and five guests, including from micros.

BEXLEYHEATH (DA6), ROBIN HOOD & LITTLE JOHN (Enterprise). Sold to the licensee. Still has eight cask beers, including Bexley.

BROMLEY (BR1), WHITE HORSE (Punch). Sold to a private owner. Now has Harveys Sussex Bitter, Sharp's Doom Bar and two guests, e.g. Southwark.

SELDON (CR2), SIR JULIAN HUXLEY (Wetherspoon). Now has five guests, in addition to the regular Wetherspoon ales.

SOUTH WEST

SW6, MALT HOUSE (Spirit lease). Was JOLLY MALTSTER. Acquired in 2012 by Brakspear and operated since 2013 by

Jolly Fine Pub Group, who also run the Victoria SW14 and Fox & Grapes SW19. Brakspear's Bitter and Oxford Gold, plus a guest, e.g. Marston's Pedigree, Ringwood.

WEST

W3, LILI LOUNGE (Wellington). Quickly reverted to **DUKE OF YORK**.

HEATHROW (TW6), BRIDGE BAR (The Restaurant Group), Terminal 4 Airside. Renamed in December **PRINCE OF WALES**. The cask beer is a 'house' IPA.

HOUNSLOW (TW3), BAR 113. Was ROYAL GEORGE, LARKIN INN, and other names. Renamed **GIO'S BAR**. Still no cask beer.

HOUNSLOW (TW3), TOMMY FLYNN'S (Enterprise). Was FRIEND IN HAND, WISHING WELL. Renamed **SNUG**. Still has cask beer, Fuller's London Pride and Sharp's Doom Bar.
TWICKENHAM, FOX (Enterprise). Transferred to Bermondsey Pub Co managed division.

CORRECTION TO WHATPUB UPDATE 4

N15, DUTCH HOUSE (Admiral). No cask beer. Fuller's London Pride pumpclip only for show; the keg version is available.

The Oxford English Dictionary defines real ale as "Cask-conditioned beer that is served traditionally, without additional gas pressure"



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In both cases, please state 'letter for publication' so as to avoid any misunderstandings.

MARKETING OF 2017 LONDON DRINKER BEER AND CIDER FESTIVAL

I have been disturbed to see the flyers and the advertisement in Dec/Jan *London Drinker* magazine for this important item in the CAMRA in London diary.

I conclude that there are those who are pre-empting the result of the Revitalisation Project by the use of 'London craft beers'. We all know that 'craft' beer is a meaningless marketing term whose main connotations are of being over-gassy, over-chilled and sold at definitely over-bloated prices. CAMRA works only with agreed definitive terms which are widespreadly known and real ale and real cider are clearly defined and are what the Campaign is currently all about, so are the terms which should be used on festival publicity.

I do hope that the *London Drinker* festival will only sell those drinks which strictly meet the definitions of real ale and real cider and also decline to sell any products which breach our internal and external policies eg cask ale brands where the same brewery also sells a keg version of the brand using similar point of sale material which does not overtly differentiate the nature of the beer.

Roger Corbett

Festival organiser Christine Cryne replies: CAMRA should have taken ownership of the term 'craft' when it first started to be used in this country and we missed a big trick. Despite what we might like, this term is here to stay. It is clear from research that many younger people classify 'craft' as beer

with flavour regardless of whether it is keg or real. CAMRA's membership in the under thirty age group is declining in London and we need to do something about it. The purpose of using 'craft beer' in our marketing is to encourage more under 30s to the festival. We therefore stand by our decision to use the term. This year, as the Pig's Ear festival has done in the past, we will have a number of beers that will be served in 'kegs'. The best way to describe them is akin to having very large bottled conditioned beers but in metal containers rather than bottles. These beers are unpasteurised and will be dispensed using air pressure.

PUB CLOSURES

Would it be possible to move the letters page closer to the front of your magazine? If this had happened in the December/January LD, David Docherty's letter would have saved everyone a lot of time and hassle reading the whole magazine. Many thanks to David for taking the time to summarise all the reasons pubs are closing, all four of which are valid points. However, what he neglects to do is propose any sort of solution to any of the problems. Had he read his copy of LD more closely, or any CAMRA publication for that matter, he would have learned of the efforts made by his fellow CAMRA members to improve the state of some pubs.

David uses the word 'overpriced' in his correspondence. In all areas of the country, some pubs will be more expensive than others but prices are usually linked to how much it costs the pub to source it. This is why CAMRA and others lobbied for market rent-only options for tied houses, so they would have freedom to source different beers, presumably at different (lower) prices. It's not a perfect system but this is one advantage of it. It's also worth pointing out that smaller breweries, for example, don't have the same economies of scale of Marston's, say, so their beers will be sold at a higher price because they have higher overheads per pint produced related to the size of their operation. The alternative is the story one landlord told me, about a large pub chain famed for championing smaller breweries, in a way that gives them the

same sort of deal as supermarkets give to dairy farmers.

We also saw the line about craft beer being 'grossly overpriced home brew'. Again, the small brewers' premium applies but I'd be very surprised if some of the most popular traditional real ales came into the world fully formed, instead of starting out as an experimental, small-batch production in a shed somewhere. In this context, the only difference for craft beer is they are letting their experimentations loose on the public earlier in the process.

I have no answer to David's complaints about uninterested staff taking customers for granted in badly run pubs, to conflate his first, third and fourth points. The only real response to is point out that pubs with something special about them, whether the choice of drinks, events or amenities, will survive as long as there are customers spending money there. In the face of multiple closures, plenty of pubs have seen an upturn in business, either by absorbing customers of ones that have closed, or more likely, because they give people a reason to visit them.

Ed Taylor

David Docherty knowingly lists his reasons why pubs are closing at such a rate of knots. Although these reasons are real they have existed for as long as pubs have existed. It is worth pointing out to him that the accelerated rate of recent years owes more to two additional reasons.

1. The high tax and duty paid on beer is making pubs an expensive past-time, and profits hard to come by – especially for such long hours publicans have to put in. A pub shouldn't have to be rammed to the rafters seven days a week for it turn a decent profit. This is why people are choosing to drink at home, and indeed good publicans choosing other careers.
2. Pub owners, often pub companies (i.e. property companies), and eager developers with no interest or connections to the local community, know full well that there is much more money for a lot less effort to be made from selling flats rather than selling beer, particularly in London.

Bad pubs should and do close down, like any other business – although it is possible and preferable for a new owner/manager to turn them round. But I have seen numerous well run and popular pubs close down and this is why true pub lovers are fully justified to ‘harp on’ about it.

Tim Matthews

BEER IN MALTA UPDATE

Mick Allen’s interesting article ‘Beers in Malta’ needs slightly

updating. Farson’s now brew two beers which he didn’t mention: IPA (5.7% ABV) and Double Red Strong Ale (6.8% ABV), the latter of which has just won a Gold medal at the Brussels Beer Challenge. Both are only available in 330 ml bottles as far as I am aware, and are difficult to find in Malta, never mind anywhere else. They are both good beers in my view, and I wonder if the new Lord Chambray Brewery’s excellent ales has induced them to respond.

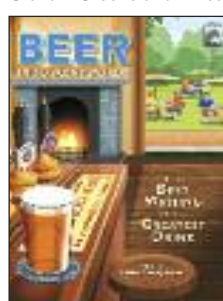
The Courage background to Farson’s is interesting. I understand that their Blue Label beer is a straight copy of the old Courage Pale Ale in bottles, and was brewed primarily with the British Forces in mind, as Valetta was home to a large garrison as well as being the last port of call for Royal Navy ships to stock up with ‘British’ beer before going through Suez.

Ashley Vickers

Books and writers

BEER IN SO MANY WORDS

Apologies but this book would have made a good Christmas present but it slipped through the net of my filing system. On 3 November, The Homewood Press/Safe Haven Books released *Beer in so Many Words*, an anthology of beer writing compiled by Adrian Tierney-Jones and featuring the likes of Ian Rankin, Roger Protz, Pete Brown, Graham Greene and Ernest Hemingway, to name but a few.



The press release explains, “These days beer could not be more popular. New craft breweries open by the week; most pubs routinely serve several draught real ales; supermarkets stock an astonishing range of the best beers from all over the world and BrewDog raises millions by crowdfunding. Even Majestic Wines now sells beer. But until now, though people have always written evocatively and

passionately about this delicious beverage, no-one has collected all the best beer writing into one volume, even though the same job has often been done for wine. Now the award-winning beer writer Adrian Tierney-Jones has put that right, with this endlessly entertaining anthology, packaged as a beautiful small-format hardback perfect for the gift market. In it you’ll find great writers from Patrick

Leigh Fermor to A E Housman and Ernest Hemingway celebrating good ale, as well as the most fashionable new beer writers like Evan Rail, and the best, funniest, most delicious celebrations of beer in fiction and poetry.”

The book has a cover price of £14.99.

BRITISH GUILD OF BEER WRITERS

Author Pete Brown has been named Beer Writer of the Year 2016, thus winning the Guild’s top award, the Michael Jackson Gold Tankard. Mr Brown also won the award in 2009 and 2012. He achieved the 2016 award by heading two categories: the Fuller’s 1845 Award for Best Beer Writer – Trade Media and the Molson Coors Award for Best Beer Writer – National Media.

The Guild’s Brewer of the Year title was awarded to Richard Westwood, the managing director of Marston’s Brewing Company for his forty years’ contribution to the brewing industry during which time he rose from laboratory technician at Wolverhampton & Dudley to lead the UK’s largest brewer of cask ales.

The Guild also presented its first ever honorary membership to Dave Myers, one half of the Hairy Bikers. This was in recognition of his television series ‘The Pubs that Built Britain’, made with partner Si King, and his contribution to the Guild’s 2016 awards for which he served as one of the year’s judges, helping to select winners from over 150 entries submitted.

Compiled by Tony Hedger

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Our advertising rates are as follows: Whole page £325 (colour), £260 (mono);
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THE FINAL COPY DATE FOR ADVERTISING IN OUR NEXT ISSUE (APR/MAY) IS FRIDAY 10 MARCH

Can February March? No, but April May

(Anon. What a load of rubbish!)

Hello again, and a belated Happy New Year. I trust that your year is well under way – Christmas decorations stashed away and resolutions broken. Let's start off with a few number puzzles

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. 20 B of C in a N | 6. 7 AN of N |
| 2. 6 LY to BS | 7. 22 P for the WQ in S |
| 3. 3 P on a CE | 8. 3 M in a L |
| 4. 2 H in a RS | 9. 1 EP (NB or A the F) |
| 5. 12 S on a NPC | 10. 7 M of the PS by GH |

Guess what... it's 5BY4 time again. You may recall that back in August 2015 I asked you to match some of London's Blue Plaques with their locations. Well, in 2016 English Heritage unveiled fifteen new ones. As they commemorate quite a good range of people in a fair spread of places, I thought that a selection of these would make a good round, so here we go. I have not included all four of those in Chelsea; in fact I have specifically omitted the three in Paultons Square (two of them on the same house):

- | | |
|---|--------------------|
| 1. Sir Benjamin Baker
(Forth Bridge designer) | A. Feltham |
| 2. Bobby Moore | B. Kensington |
| 3. Dame Margot Fonteyn | C. West Kensington |
| 4. Laurie Cunningham (first
black footballer to play
for England) | D. Barking |
| 5. Tommy Cooper | E. Bow |
| 6. Sir Frederick Ashton
(choreographer) | F. Knightsbridge |
| 7. Dr Thomas Barnardo | G. Chiswick |
| 8. Freddie Mercury | H. Stroud Green |
| 9. Joseph Lyons
(tea shops & corner houses) | I. Covent Garden |
| 10. Ava Gardner (actress) | J. Chelsea |

For Christmas I was given a nice book called 'For the Love of Radio 4 (an unofficial companion)' by Caroline Hodgson – well recommended for devoted radio listeners. Some of the following general trivia questions have been inspired by it (and others ripped off from it):

1. In the shipping forecast broadcast for the Maritime and Coastguard Agency two new sea areas were defined in 1984 by reducing some adjacent areas in the North Sea. What are they called?
2. In 2002 sea area Finisterre was renamed after the admiral who set up the original service in 1861. What is this area now called?
3. Finally on the Shipping Forecast which sea area receives its name from the most northerly point of Ireland?
4. Radio 4 (along with Radio 1, 2 and 3) was launched on 30 September, but in what year?
5. Desert Island Discs has had two hosts between the original, Roy Plomley, and the current one, Kirsty Young. Who are they?
6. Of the eight most popular records selected over the years by guests on Desert Island Discs, four are by the same composer. Who was he? (and would you like to take a punt at what the pieces were?)
7. A.E.Housman, author of 'A Shropshire Lad' (a collection of 63 poems) came originally from Worcestershire but where was he living when he wrote it?
8. By what name is the actor William Henry Pratt (1887-1969) better known?
9. What national organisation was founded by Octavia Hill, Hardwick Rawsley and Sir Robert Hunter in 1893?

10. 80% of what staple food in the United Kingdom is produced by the Chorleywood process?

So there we are then, 2017 is under way and spring can't be far off. Have a good one.

Andy Pirson

IDLE MOMENTS – THE ANSWERS

As usual, here are the solutions to the puzzles set in the December/January Idle Moments column.

NUMBER PUZZLES:

1. 8 yards is the width of the goal mouth on a football pitch
2. 1603 Death of Queen Elizabeth the First
3. 27,000 Light Years (approx.) to the centre of the Milky Way galaxy
4. .303 Calibre of the Lee Enfield Rifle
5. 3 theatres in the National Theatre complex on the South Bank
6. 1,280 fluid ounces in a bushel
7. 2 classic flat races are held at Newmarket
8. 180 degrees is the sum of the angles of a triangle
9. 4 Rolls Royce Merlins on a Lancaster bomber
10. 1812 Napoleon's retreat from Moscow

5BY4 (Money Bags):

1. £500 in £2 coins – 3.0 kg
2. £500 in £1 coins – 4.75 kg
3. £250 in 50p coins – 4.0 kg
4. £250 in 20p coins – 6.25 kg
5. £100 in 5p or 10 coins – 6.5 kg
6. £20 in 1p or 2p coins – 7.12 kg

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE:

1. After William Morris and his wife Jane left Red House in Bexley, they lived from 1871 until his death in 1896 at Kelmscott Manor in Oxfordshire.
2. The two sisters of Adrian Stephen who became very well known in London literary circles were Virginia Woolf and Vanessa Bell.
3. The Morris Minor was designed by Alec Issigonis.
4. The organisation which has its headquarters at Cecil Sharp House in Camden is the English Folk Dance and Song Society (or EFDSS).
5. Apart from all the animals, there were eight humans on Noah's Ark, according to Genesis – Noah and his wife; his three sons and their wives.
6. The height of the Shard to the tip is 1,016 feet or 309.6 metres.
7. The only free standing structure in the UK taller than the Shard (standing 1,084 feet tall) is the Emley Moor broadcasting tower (or Arqiva Tower) in Kirklees, West Yorkshire.
8. And talking of tall buildings, currently the tallest building in the City of London is the Heron Tower or 110 Bishopsgate (755 feet or 230 metres tall).
9. You probably all knew that Christina Rossetti wrote the poem, 'In the Bleak Midwinter'. Did you know that the music, 'Cranham', to turn this poem into a carol was written by Gustav Holst?
10. Of course you didn't cheat – you all knew that QWERTY on the second row of a standard keyboard is followed by UIOP.



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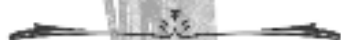
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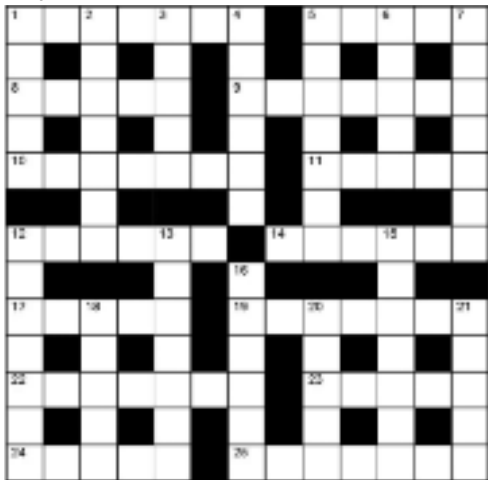
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Compiled by DAVE QUINTON
£20 prize to be won



Name
Address

All correct entries received by first post on 22 March will be entered into a draw for the prize.

The prize winner will be announced in the June *London Drinker*. The solution will be given in the April edition.

All entries to be submitted to:
London Drinker Crossword, 25 Valens House,
Upper Tulse Hill, London SW2 2RX

Please Note: Entries on oversize copies of the grid will not be entered into the prize draw.

DECEMBER'S SOLUTION



ACROSS

1. Ominous warning of shoddy camping equipment broadcast. [7]
5. Some kindling left in the fireplace. [5]
8. Put a coat on, a beer's outside. [5]
9. Go on about old money. [7]
10. Set off with hospital department manager. [7]
11. Hesitate to follow wild animal. [5]
12. Lion, perhaps, let out after cows. [6]
14. Nappy returned, given back. [6]
17. Fight venue is new in the district. [5]
19. Drunken dog? [7]
22. Stranded with pain in bed. [7]
23. French girl caught ape. [5]
24. It goes to and fro and round and round... [5]
25. ...and puts off the comedian. [5-2]

DOWN

1. Looks noisily for old writer. [5]
2. Train me poorly to make clothing. [7]
3. More old paintings turned up. [5]
4. Die in attempt to be fashionable. [6]
5. Little devil learning to beg. [7]
6. Sound of good little creature. [5]
7. Went on and finished outside ancient city. [7]
12. Cleaner receiving award for room. [7]
13. Hide the real criminal. [7]
15. A fake journalist is crestfallen. [7]
16. Gets out of crumpled suede leather top. [6]
18. Former law is precise. [5]
20. Odd sailor turning up for dance. [5]
21. Go over again to start cutting during harvest. [5]

Winner of the prize for the October Crossword:
Peter Wright & the Missus, Grimsby, Lincolnshire.

Other correct entries were received from:

Tony Alpe, Pat Andrews, Mark Antony, Henry Arnott, John Barker, Mike Belsham, John Bowler, D.Brand, Kelvin Brewster, Jeremy Brinkworth, Mark Broadhead, Eddie Carr, Kathryn Chard, Peter Charles, Hilary Clark, Brian Collins, Graham Craig, Ebenezer Crutten, Paul Curson, Peter Curson, Michael Davis, Asami Downey, C.J.Ellis, Elvis Evans, Ian Fairweather & Elaine Glover, D.Fleming, Mike Flynn, Roger Foreman, Christopher Gilbey, Henry Girling, D.Gleeson, Marion Goodall, Paul Gray, J.E.Green, Matthew Griffiths, Alan Groves, Caroline Guthrie, Stuart Guthrie, Peter Haines, "Shropshire" Dave Hardy, Simon Harris, Graham Hill, William Hill, David Hough, Alan Humphrey, David Jiggins, Jo & Richard, Mike Joyce, Roger Knight, Hannah Knight-Mayor, Mick Lancaster, Aidan Laverty, Julie Lee, Tony Lennon, Chris Lovelace, Donald MacAuley, Ms Geri McCargo, Derek McDonnell, Tony Martin, Dylan Mason, Mike & Deryn, Rob Mills, Pam Moger, Jan Mondrzejewski, M.J.Moran, Jacqueline Morrell, Dave Murphy, Brian Myhill, Paul Nicholls, Mark Nichols, Michael Oliver, Miss G.Patterson, Stephen Pegum, Mick Place, Robert Pleasants, Portrush Annie, Nicholas Priest, David Renwick, Paul Rogers, Pete Simmonds, Ian Symes, Ken Taylor, Bill Thackray, Colin Thew, Jeff Tucker, Marius Vicker, Andy Wakefield, Mrs C.Ward, Martin Weedon, Elizabeth Whale, Richard Whiting, John Williamson, Sue Wilson, David Woodward, Ray Wright.

There were also 24 incorrect, one anonymous and one incomplete entries.



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