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LONDON DRINKER

Volume 43 No. 1
February/March 2021



The Lexington, Kings Cross - see page 15

Photo by Joanne Scott



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Welcome to the first *London Drinker* of 2021. I was originally going to say 'Let's hope that 2021 is a better year than 2020, which will not be difficult' but 2021 has not started well. When the last edition was published, we were in Tier 2. On 16 December, to no great surprise, London was moved into Tier 3 and then, four days later, into the newly created Tier 4. Now, as from 6 January, we are in the third national lockdown and the Mayor of London has declared a 'major incident' in the capital.

THE LEGAL BIT

We are currently subject to the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (No. 3) and (All Tiers) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2021. These are effectively just a set of amendments to the two previous sets which respectively ended the second lockdown and introduced Tier 4. The Tier 4 regulations had a termination date of 2 February and this has been amended to 31 March. Sadly, an extension looks inevitable and one report that I have seen suggested this might be to the early May Bank Holiday. Only time and events will tell.

The Tier 4 regulations were not debated in Parliament because it was in recess and those for the third lockdown were only debated the day after they came into effect. I have seen some suggestions that this means that they are not enforceable. Not so. They were made under the terms of the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984 which permits the Secretary of State, 'if he is of the opinion that it is necessary by reason of urgency', to make a Statutory Instrument 'without a draft having been laid before, and approved

by a resolution of, each House of Parliament'.

PUBS AND TAKEAWAYS

The third Lockdown saw history almost but not quite repeating itself. When the draft regulations for the third lockdown were published, once again pubs were prohibited from selling takeaway alcohol. Sale of alcohol by delivery was permitted but this is, of course, not practical for most pubs. Once again, CAMRA members and other pub-goers lobbied their MPs to have this overturned and the issue was raised in the House of Commons. This time however we did not succeed. The Government's stance here was a reaction to coverage in both the television news and the national newspapers of people congregating outside pubs drinking beer from open pint glasses which they had just purchased. I witnessed this behaviour myself outside a pub near where I live. One of my friends told me that pub crawls were organised on social media over Christmas and New Year.

There is an argument that the earlier regulations were inadequately worded in that they did not specify sales in sealed containers for consumption at home, as has recently been enacted in Scotland. Likewise, the police could have imposed street alcohol bans but, fundamentally, both customers and publicans must have known that what they were doing was against the purpose, if not the word, of the regulations. Yes, of course it was only a minority; it always is. They however are the ones who get noticed and lead to us all being stereotyped. We need to remember that the majority of people don't use pubs and that they form their opinion of them from the mainstream press which, of course, mostly only print negative stories. That said, a general ban rather than policing individual offenders does have a hint of collective punishment about it, which is a practice that I'm sure that the Government would not normally engage in.

As much as the Government may have a point about the misuse of the takeaway provision by a small number

I'm sure that readers will appreciate why there are currently no printed copies of *London Drinker* available. The production team would however like to assure you that we will return to a printed version as soon as circumstances permit. This may however not be for some time yet. . .

Introduction

of pubs, there is an 'elephant in the room' in the shape of the supermarkets. How can it be fair to the vast majority of compliant pubs to allow supermarkets to continue to sell alcohol unchecked? As Nik Antona, CAMRA's National Chairman, commented, "The least the Government can do is take a sensible approach, think again and allow community pubs to sell takeaway products. No-one wants to see drinking in the streets during a lockdown but allowing pubs to sell alcohol in sealed containers for people to take home, just like shops do, would be completely reasonable. Without a change in these lockdown laws we risk seeing more locals going to the wall, traditional British cask ale under threat and people being forced into supermarkets instead of being allowed to support local businesses by buying beer from the pub to take home." I was, I would add, puzzled by the Government's comment that 'pubs shouldn't seek to act as off licences'. If they hold an off licence then that's what they are and they are having a specific legal right curtailed.

BREWERY OFF SALES

Just to clarify the situation here, breweries and brewery taps selling alcohol both by delivery and directly on site can continue to trade, so long as they have the appropriate licence. The regulations that applied under Tier 4 and which listed businesses that could stay open still apply as follows: '(a) food retailers, including food markets, supermarkets, convenience stores and corner shops' and '(b) off licences and licensed shops selling alcohol (including breweries)'. It is interesting that brewery shops here have parity with supermarkets, unlike pubs. The downside of that is they are not being classed a part of the hospitality sector and are thus not eligible for certain grants.

#PUBSMATTER

This campaign was set up by CAMRA in association with a number of trade bodies including the British Institute of Innkeeping (BII) and the British Beer and Pub Association (BBPA). CAMRA is, of course, a consumer organisation and not, as such, a trade body but here we have common cause. Across the UK, pubs, taprooms and social clubs are at the centre of their communities, raising money for charity and helping ease loneliness and social isolation. The aim of the campaign is simply to publicise the importance of pubs. There has never been a more crucial time to send a clear message to politicians and the media that pubs matter.

#PubsMatter ran originally from 13 to 16 December when CAMRA members and other supporters, given that we were approaching a festive season very different from normal, were asked to fill social media and MPs' inboxes with messages telling them why pubs matter. This will be repeated as and when needed.

One supporter who strongly endorsed the campaign is Duncan Sambrook, the founder of Sambrook's Brewery now in Wandsworth. Duncan kindly gave me permission to repeat his message, "As many of you will know, I am a huge fan of the Great British pub. Since first sampling a pint of Budweiser (yes I am ashamed to say it) with my mate Glen I have been hooked on the places. Each pub is so quintessentially different but yet uniquely the same. They are places to relax, have fun with friends or watch the world go by. I have come up with many a mad plan in a pub, most notably the mad plan to set up Sambrook's brewery and with friends I have enjoyed setting the world to rights over a beer or two and

watching many rugby matches. So it is with sadness that I look on what the government is doing to this most wonderful of industries. These last nine months have been nothing more than the systematic dismantling of the pub sector, which has been unfairly singled out in the coronavirus response. Optimistic observers say we will probably lose 25% of our pubs next year, this following a period of decline where we have already lost 25% since 2001. To think that we would have lost so many small businesses and community hubs in such a short time is just unthinkable. So the industry are coming together to try to raise the plight of the pub in a campaign called Pubs Matter'. You can find out more about the campaign at <https://whypubsmatter.org.uk/>.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

What follows is a personal view only and one which, I acknowledge, many of you might consider to be unrealistic. I believe that our cherished 'wet led' pubs will survive. I am sure that demand for them will return, although it might take a year at the very least. Here we need to draw the distinction between the pub as a business and the pub as a building. Very sadly, and through no fault of those concerned, many pub businesses will fail, probably in the middle months of 2021 when debts which have been 'kicked down the road' like the proverbial can have to be settled. At the same time, there will be people who want to join or return to the trade and small pub chains and breweries who wish to expand. There need to be pubs available for them to do so. It is very likely, unfortunately, that there will be even more opportunistic attempts than usual to redevelop pubs. Some pub owning companies may actually need the cash. Either way, we must be more proactive than ever in challenging such plans. Although the protection for pubs under the current planning legislation is arguably as good as it has ever been, it is not perfect and, in many ways, is loaded in favour of developers. For example, if a local authority refuses a planning application, the developer can appeal to the Planning Inspectorate and if the inspector supports the refusal, they can go to what is called the Second Tier Tribunal. If they are still refused, they can, in theory, carry on right up to the Supreme Court. If the application is approved however, objectors have no right of appeal. All that is open to them is a judicial review, an expensive and complicated process which can only be used to challenge points of law and, crucially, not the merits of a proposal. To paraphrase an expression usually (but arguably) attributed to Thomas Jefferson, 'eternal vigilance is the price of keeping our pubs'.

AND FINALLY...

Two random thoughts: firstly, by way of an example, spare a thought for the publicans of Herefordshire who having started in Tier 2, had just eleven days in Tier 1, 15 days back in Tier 2, then went into Tier 3 and were almost immediately locked down again. How can you run a business in those circumstances?

Secondly, the Isles of Scilly deserve a mention for going straight from Tier 1 to lockdown. For a while, their ten pubs were the only ones open in England. Although at present Tier 1 might look like nirvana, let's not forget that Tier 1 restrictions, with the rule of six, table service and no drinks after 10pm, are still bad enough. We need to be wary of any attempt to leave these particular rules in force once other COVID restrictions are lifted.

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While meetings in person are still not possible, a number of branches continue to hold meetings using various on-line systems. Details can be found on their websites as listed in the panel below.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!



2021 is the 50th anniversary of the foundation of CAMRA. As you may imagine, various celebrations were planned but may not now take place, certainly in the first half of the year. The Annual General Meeting and Conference, which was due to take place over the first weekend of April in Sheffield, will now be another virtual encounter.

The Great British Beer Festival – Winter will be an on-line event – see the advert on page 7. The Great British Beer Festival itself, scheduled for 3 to 7 August, has not yet been cancelled but, if it does take place, it will be a very different event from usual.

JOHN YOUNG MEMORIAL AWARD

One of the events that we have not been able to hold is the presentation of the above to John Hatch. Regional Director Geoff Strawbridge offered to deliver the award to him but John has decided that he is happy to wait until the presentation is possible. Geoff is keeping the award safe for him in the meantime. The award, incidentally, is a fairly magnificent wooden shield with engraved name badges on it.

CAMRA Greater London Region – branch websites

If you want to check on the areas covered by the branches shown below, please go to www.london.camra.org.uk/viewnode.php?id=20208.

London Region:

www.london.camra.org.uk

London Pubs Group:

www.londonpubsgroup.camra.org.uk

Cider and Perry Campaigning:

www.camra.org.uk/cider

Young Members' Group:

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

Bexley:

www.bexley.camra.org.uk

Bromley:

www.bromley.camra.org.uk

Croydon & Sutton:

www.croydon.camra.org.uk

East London & City:

www.pigsear.org.uk

Enfield & Barnet:

www.enfieldandbarnet.camra.org.uk

Kingston & Leatherhead:

<https://kandl.camra.org.uk/>

North London:

www.northlondon.camra.org.uk

Richmond & Hounslow:

www.rhcamra.org.uk

South East London:

<https://sel.camra.org.uk>

South West Essex:

swessex.camra.org.uk

South West London:

<https://swl.camra.org.uk>

Watford & District:

www.watford.camra.org.uk

West London:

www.westlondon.camra.org.uk

West Middlesex:

www.westmidxx-camra.org.uk

Greater London CAMRA AGM and London Liaison Committee

CAMRA's Greater London Region will be holding our Annual General Meeting online at 7pm on Wednesday 31 March, followed by a London Liaison Committee (LLC) meeting for branch representatives and regional officers.

The main business of the AGM will be to approve the regional Accounts for 2019 and 2020 and to elect the principal honorary officers to serve for the twelve months until March 2022.

A Zoom Meeting ID and Passcode will be sent to all those on the LLC mailing list and to other members who have notified the Secretary (roytuninstall.camra@gmail.com) at least a week prior to the meeting.



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Lockdown heroes

Bad times sometimes serve to bring out the best in people. CAMRA branches across the country have been presenting 'Lockdown Hero' awards to pubs and breweries who have gone that extra mile to serve their communities despite all of the restrictions placed on them. You could say that it is enlightened self interest on their part but, all the same, they have been there for their customers and communities. These are the awards made by CAMRA branches in London of which I have so far been informed.

BROMLEY BRANCH

An award was presented to the Orpington Liberal Club. Acting Chairman Peter Muldoon said on Facebook, "I was absolutely delighted to collect a special certificate from Bromley CAMRA on behalf of all the volunteers that collectively run the Club for our continued provision of fine real ales over the Lockdown period. Well done to all the members that make this Club such a great place."

KINGSTON AND LEATHERHEAD BRANCH

The branch made awards to three local breweries, Big Smoke in Esher, Park Brewery in Kingston and Brightwater in Claygate. All of them have worked tirelessly over recent months to supply beer throughout the local community and beyond. Big Smoke set up an 'app' and were running food deliveries to those in need within a couple of weeks of lockdown in March. Park Brewery went from having no online presence to being able to supply beer nationally within a matter of weeks. Brightwater Brewery, a small five barrel operation, continued to make deliveries of their beer, despite having limited staff through a large part of the year – a real labour of love.

An award was also given to the Willoughby Arms in Kingston, the branch's current joint pub of the year. The Willoughby has continued to serve a range of ales from local and regional breweries, both to takeaway customers as well as opening when permitted. It has been a real hub of the community in North Kingston, and, until now, one of the few pubs in the branch to remain open all through the pandemic.

Branch chairman Richard Russell advises that, sadly, no physical presentations were possible but all four recipients have received an electronic certificate and a letter of congratulations.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH

The branch also applauded their local brewers. On 21 November, Branch Chairman Colin Coyne presented an award to Andy Moffat of Redemption Brewery in Tottenham.



Andy with the award

Colin praised the great efforts that Redemption had made for the community, including acting as a Tottenham Foodbank Collection Hub and offering take-away school packed lunches, and, of course, for providing take away offerings and supporting pubs during lockdown.

The second brewery was the Moncada Brewery in North Cricklewood. John Cryne, their CAMRA Brewery Liaison Officer, said, "It's a really hard time for pubs

and breweries at the moment and London being in Tier 2 has added to the pressure. We are all missing using the pubs in a normal, social fashion. It's great to acknowledge what people such as Julio Moncada and his team have been doing to keep people supplied with their beer; Julio even does the deliveries himself." The award was made in December and the photo shows, left to right, Nigel Tarn (Brewery Manager), Robin Murphy (Brewer), Gareth Hilton (Head Brewer), John Cryne and Julio Moncada.



SPREADING THE WORD

Christine Cryne issued a press release about the Moncada presentation on behalf of North London Branch. It was picked up by prominent local newspaper the *Ham & High* who ran a very helpful article mentioning other breweries in their circulation area, such as Gorgeous, Beerblefish and the Goodness Brewing Co. The article contained some very interesting quotes which I have included in the Brewery News section.

MORE AWARDS?

There will, of course be many more heroes than these and I hope to report on more in the next edition. We thank them all for their efforts and look forward to better times when, once again, we can relax and enjoy a pint or two with our friends in the comfort of a pub.

We need a cider campaigner!

Our current London Cider Coordinator, Ian White, is looking to step down to concentrate on other CAMRA responsibilities. If you enjoy traditional cider and perry and want to help raise their profile in the London area, this could be the job for you. The work involves liaising between the cider representatives at branch level, the Regional Director and other parts of CAMRA. It will take up about an hour or two a week (or perhaps a bit more if you want). Full support and assistance will be given. Ian is happy to provide more information if you e-mail him at ikwcider@icloud.com.

SURPLUS BEER AND FOOD

Not for the first time, pubs and restaurants were caught with full cellars and larders by the very short notice given for a major change, in this instance the move into Tier 3 from 16 December (the damage having been done before the coming of Tier 4 and the second lockdown). Having come out of lockdown in early December, many had stocked up for Christmas and New Year leaving them with suppliers' bills to pay. That day the *Evening Standard* ran an interesting article about what happens to it. Most of the article referred to restaurants but the pub trade did get a mention.

Karen Boshier, the Managing Director of Greene King's Premium, Urban and Venture Division, said, "The fact we are not compensated shows a lack of material understanding of what we are having to throw away, or give away to food banks. It comes at a material cost to the business." As previously, Wetherspoon's pubs sold off beer at 99p per pint. The George Inn, Borough High Street, was selling lager for £2.00 and cask ale for £1.49. The manager explained that whatever remained would be transferred to another Greene King pub, the Anchor on Bankside, which, unlike the George, is able to sell takeaway beer. His surplus food stock was donated to a local food bank.

Several restaurants gave their surplus fresh food to the staff that they were having to return to furlough and who faced Christmas on 80% of their basic wage without the customary bonus of tips. Others offered very generous discounts to local residents or restarted their on-line sales operations.

Since March the *Evening Standard* has been running an appeal called Food for London Now. Its partner in this campaign is the Felix Project, London's biggest food redistribution charity. It includes a number of CAMRA members among its volunteers. Richard Smith, Felix's Head of Supply, commented, "The Felix Project is exceptionally busy rescuing food supply from restaurants and bars who have had to close because of Tier 3 restrictions. Food waste is always a problem at Christmas but these sudden restrictions are aggravating the issue. We urge restaurants and pubs with surplus food in London to get in touch and we will do our best to get it safely out to good causes serving people in need." Let us hope that the appeal was successful so that some good came out of the situation and that the donations didn't include too many scotch eggs.

VICTORY IN INSURANCE CASE

On 15 January the Supreme Court found against certain insurance companies who claimed that their business recovery policies excluded cover for the consequences of the COVID pandemic. The case was brought by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) together with a claimants' action group and it is estimated that it will help some 370,000 small businesses. Others, sadly, will have already closed for good. It is uncertain how many pubs will benefit. Tenants of some of the larger pub owning businesses were obliged to take out policies with the POB's preferred insurer. It may not be all good news however. Some policies were

worded in such a way that COVID claims were legitimately excluded. The cost to the insurance industry will no doubt be recovered by increased premiums and the exclusion of certain types of business.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

As previously, various grants and loans have been promised to compensate for the third lockdown. Most of these, as before, will be administered by local authorities, to whom the Government is advancing a further £594 million. Once again, the grants are based on rateable value as follows:

Rateable value	Grant
£15,000 or under	£4,000
£15,000 to £51,000	£6,000
Above £51,000	£9,000

The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS), otherwise known as furlough and originally due to end on 31 October, has been extended to 30 April. It has returned to paying 80% of an employee's wages, with the employer being responsible for National Insurance and pension contributions and, should they choose (or be able to afford) to do so, the remaining 20% of the wages. There will be a review at the end of January.

Trade bodies are still looking for a better financial assistance package, including the continuation of the business rates holiday into 2021/2022 and a reduction in VAT. The latter is now entirely at the Government's discretion following the end of the EU transition period. The VAT reduction to 5% for the hospitality sector (excluding alcohol sales of course) had, in any event, been extended from 12 January to 31 March. This was notified by HMRC on 3 December. It is worth remembering that whenever alcohol is purchased, in a pub or a supermarket, the Government still receives the duty and the VAT.

I should add that while CAMRA wants to see pubs receive proper financial support, we are not alone in still waiting, despite many requests, to see any substantial evidence that closing COVID-secure pubs is necessary to prevent the transmission of the virus.

RENT RELIEF

If any particular debt is likely to lead to pubs closing, it is rent arrears. UKHospitality estimated that, at the end of December, rent debts in the hospitality sector stood at £1.6 billion, and a further quarter's rent fell due on Christmas Day. The moratorium on taking debt recovery action for commercial rent arrears, including actions for the forfeiture of leases, has been extended to 31 March. Although welcome, it delays rather than solves the problem. The various pub owning companies have different approaches to the situation; some are being very good; others are not. The Government's advice is that businesses should pay any or all rent where they can, which isn't particularly helpful.

CAMRA's National Chairman, Nik Antona, said, "The Government must deliver a proper financial support package for publicans and do something to make sure that thousands of commercial pub tenants don't face eviction in April 2021.

As before, we want pub companies to lead by example and cancel rent for tenants where pubs are forced to shut, as many in Tier 2 and 3 areas are, and, where pubs can open, charge rents that are reflective of actual trade - which has been decimated by the restrictions placed on pubs across the UK. While some business tenants have agreed rent holidays and deferrals with landlords over the past nine months, many have not. The Government has said this latest extension also aims to give landlords and companies a further three months to come to agreements."

The Government has indicated that commercial landlord and tenant legislation is to be reviewed because it is thought to be no longer fit for purpose for the current economy.

BREWERS ASK FOR HELP

At the beginning of January the Society of Independent Brewers (SIBA) sent a letter to the Prime Minister signed by more than three hundred small independent breweries. As mentioned elsewhere, breweries are not classed as being in the hospitality sector. While, unlike pubs, those with shops can continue to supply takeaways (provided that they have the correct licence), breweries did not receive the various hospitality grants, the VAT reduction or the business rates holiday. SIBA Chief Executive James Calder told *Drinks Retailing News* that the aim of the letter was to, "convey the depth of feeling from the independent brewing sector that it has constantly been overlooked, but more so that it is imperative this Government acts now or risks setting the British brewing industry back a decade with widespread business closures. The hugely important Christmas period has been a joyless one for brewers, as the vast majority of their market is closed yet there has been no compensation and little support forthcoming. The Prime Minister needs to make it his New Year's resolution to help small breweries, secure the future of one of Britain's most successful manufacturing industries and deliver an urgent package of direct support for small independent breweries." SIBA want the measures mentioned above to be extended to small breweries and for compensation to be paid for the millions of pints that have to be thrown away when pubs are forced to close. Even though they can reclaim the duty, they still have to pay for the ingredients used. The proposed changes to Small Brewers Relief also remains a concern.

The Scottish Government has promised £1.8 million in help for small breweries north of the border and the business rates holiday has been extended to manufacturing businesses, including breweries, in Northern Ireland.

SUBSTANTIAL MEALS

I thought that I would include this, just in case at some point we return to Tier 2 under the previous rules. That said, very few people could see the point of this requirement and the definition of a 'substantial meal' became a running joke, mostly because of comments by certain members of the Cabinet concerning scotch eggs, pasties and salad.

Although the ministers appeared ignorant of it, there was a basis of case law, *Timmis v Millman* (1965). The circumstances were that two pub customers were accused of simply drinking in a pub that had a supper licence which

required them to have a meal. They were eating sandwiches which the police said was not a meal but their successful defence was that they had pickles and beetroot with the sandwiches and this made it a table meal and not 'a mere snack from the bar'. Also, it is legal to serve 16 and 17-year olds alcohol in a pub or restaurant so long as it is with a 'table meal' which the licensing legislation defines as a meal that 'might be expected to be served as a main midday or main evening meal, or as a main course at either such meal'.

Disappointingly, there were reports of a lot of food going to waste. CAMRA's Chief Executive, Tom Stainer, commented, "It's disheartening to hear that the new government restrictions have resulted in an increase in food waste, particularly at a time of year when many families will be forced to go without. This simply underscores how little thought has been given towards the 'substantial meal' requirement. It really has been a recipe for disaster from start to finish."

All the same, you do have to admire the inventiveness of many pubs in coping with the requirement, not least the use of instant meals, to which the publican just had to add hot water.

ODDS AND ENDS

A strange anomaly occurred at the end of the second lockdown on 2 December. Although in areas under Tier 2 pubs could only serve alcohol with a table meal, the same requirement did not apply to cinemas, theatres, concert halls and sports grounds. According to the regulations, alcohol could be served if it was "ordered by, and served to, a customer who has a ticket for an exhibition of a film, a performance or an event of training or competition at the venue, to consume in the area where the audience is seated to watch the exhibition, performance or event".

In December, the Chief Executive of Young's, Patrick Dardis, complained to the *Daily Telegraph* that police officers and other officials had been going into pubs and subjecting customers to 'overzealous' enforcement of Tier 2 regulations, disputing what constituted a substantial meal and making sure that customers left as soon as they had finished eating. Deputy Chief Constable Paul Netherton, the lead for civil contingencies at the National Police Chiefs' Council, was reported on *MSN News* as saying that the police were well aware of what constituted a substantial meal, but that it was down to local council licensing departments to ensure pubs were abiding by the law and he added, "Police will not be visiting pubs checking on what people are eating. If we are faced with an issue, we may issue warnings and take action. We have other priorities."

A complete collection of all
42 years' issues of *London Drinker*
is available here on our website:
www.london.camra.org.uk,
scalable to read in larger print

Southwark Borough makes new ACV listings: the COVID epidemic threatens our pubs, both as businesses and as individual properties, so this is good news. In November, Southwark Council agreed to list a further three pubs as Assets of Community Value (ACVs). Although not as important as it once was, ACV listing still carries weight in the planning system and can, of course, be a step to community ownership.

The Bear in Camberwell New Road (SE5 ORP) was closed by owners, the Wellington Pub Company, in 2017 after they were granted planning permission to convert the upper floors into seven single bedroom flats. The ground floor was to be retained as a pub and it was supposed to reopen in the middle of 2018; nothing however has happened. Consequently, local community group, the SE5 Forum, nominated it for ACV listing. The railway arches on Camberwell New Road are being redeveloped and landscaped and the Forum sees the reopening of the Bear as contributing to these improvements. They are also campaigning to reopen Camberwell railway station which closed in 1916 but now stands on the Thameslink route.

The second pub is the Beehive in Carter Street (SE17 3EW). It was nominated by the Walworth Society and spokesman Jeremy Leach told the *Southwark News*, "Its heritage, coupled with its hidden location in West Walworth, make it a very special pub for its history and atmosphere. It is unique in Walworth and very different to other pubs situated along the high street. People love it for these qualities; its friendly welcome and its almost rural location."

Finally, there is the Ship, a Fuller's house in Borough Road (SE1 1DX). Formerly a venue for CAMRA London regional meetings, the Ship has a distinctive tiled frontage and a wood panelled interior, plus a pleasant rear garden area.

Admiral Mann, Holloway: the last report that I had on this classic 19th century corner pub, formerly owned by McMullen's, was in October 2018 when it failed to reach its reserve price at auction. Planning permission had been obtained in June 2018 for conversion into three flats. The application was originally refused by Camden Council but approved on appeal to the Planning Inspectorate. These works have not been carried out and, in November, a further application was made to temporarily convert the building as follows: 'Temporary change of use for the period of 3 years from Public house (Class A4) to Large House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) (Class Sui Generis) with associated alterations'. The plan shows these alterations to be the creation of seven double bedrooms, two single rooms, five bathrooms and two kitchens. The reference is 2020/4462/P should you wish to look further. The pub was previously being marketed by specialist agents AG&G, although it is not currently on their website.

Antelope, Leyton: this is another case of works being carried out without permission. The pub, which dates from 1879, closed in 2014 when it was purchased by Tvzi Ltd who converted it into 14 flats with a retail unit on the ground floor. Waltham Forest Council served two enforcement notices, requiring that the property be restored to its previous condition. Tvzi Ltd appealed to the Planning Inspectorate on both counts and the appeal was heard in November. I

have now heard that the appeals were dismissed and the order to reinstate remains in force. However welcome this is, the long term future of the pub still remains to be decided. The owners argue that the pub is too small to be viable and there are enough pubs in the area, although over 1,500 local residents signed a petition calling for the pub to be reopened.

Carlton Tavern, Kilburn: several messages from the 'Rebuild the Carlton Tavern' group have appeared on Facebook recently saying that negotiations were in progress with the owners, potential operators had been identified and the pub would be opening 'early in the New Year'. I suspect that the COVID regulations may delay that but it is promising news all the same. The group are looking to renew the pub's Asset of Community Value listing. It is understood that the developers, CTLX, still want to convert the upper floors to flats. Fingers crossed.

Churchill Arms, Kensington: congratulations to the management of this famous Fuller's pub who still put on a wonderful display of Christmas lights despite all that has been happening. The lights were turned on at 5pm on Wednesday 2 December and screened via Facebook Live.

Hop & Rye, Bromley: sadly, a loss to report. Having been sold by the pub company Stonegate to a company called Havenhill Ltd and closed in May 2019, the pub, formerly the Beech Tree, was demolished in November. Unusually, planning permission to do this was granted in advance of any application for redevelopment being submitted and when it was, it was refused. A second application was refused in December. Apparently, the property had been squatted and vandalised so Bromley Council may simply have been glad to see the back of it. There is a story that its original name comes from a fine specimen of a purple beech tree that once stood outside. Sir Joseph Paxton, the architect of the Crystal Palace, was so impressed with it that he had it dug up and replanted in the grounds of his new project.

Larkshall, Chingford: the building was originally a 16th century farmhouse with Victorian additions, converted into a pub in 1982. It is privately owned and was leased to Greene King. GK have however decided not to renew their lease because they consider it to be no longer viable. Its future as a pub is consequently uncertain although Waltham Council have a local requirement that pubs need to be marketed for two years before any application for redevelopment will be considered.

London & South Western, Clapham Junction: this is a new Wetherspoon's outlet, converted with remarkable alacrity from a former Revolution Bars site (see page 26 for more details). For you railway buffs, the locomotive (No. 415) on the fascia is an L12 class (4-4-0), designed for express passenger work by Dugald Drummond and built at Nine Elms in 1904/05. They were in service until 1955 and, of the 20 built, none survive. The full address of the pub is 276/288, Lavender Hill, SW11 1LJ.

It is incidentally not the first pub in the area to be named after a railway company. Until about seven years ago, in nearby Cabul Road, you could have found the London, Chatham & Dover Railway Tavern. The building is still intact although it is now a photographic studio.

White Hart, Mitcham: a planning application has been submitted to build at the back of this very handsome pub to create 18 flats which will also incorporate the rear half of the pub itself. The pub dates from the 18th century and is Grade II-listed but Heritage England have delegated permission to Merton Council to decide the matter. Looking at the plans, on first examination, the remaining portion of the pub looks too small to be viable. The historic Cricket Green area of Mitcham has seen a number of pub losses, such as the Cricketers and the Queen's Head, and the historic Burn Bullock is closed. Another loss would be very damaging.

Yorkshire Grey, Holborn: this imposing Grade II-listed building on the corner of Gray's Inn Road, once a brewpub, appears to be a victim of the COVID trading conditions. The manager reported on Twitter that he had 'handed back the

keys' to the pub company, Stonegate. Stonegate have the pub on a long lease and so redevelopment is unlikely. We wait to see what happens in due course.

Iron Duke, Great Yarmouth: I am pleased to report that there has been a positive development in the story of this wonderful Art Deco pub. The owners have relented and Great Yarmouth Borough Council has agreed a loan to the Great Yarmouth Preservation Trust to enable them to purchase the Grade II-listed building. The Trust will then use its own funds to make emergency repairs and conduct a feasibility study as to the future use of the building. Some further external funding may be needed.

**Are you a CAMRA member?
If not, why not join?
See page 35 for details.**

Normally, London Drinker is distributed by CAMRA volunteers to some 1,200 pubs and clubs in and around Greater London and is supplied direct to all of their outlets in the area by J D Wetherspoons. This will be resumed as soon as possible.

A link to the on-line version is e-mailed to all CAMRA members in Greater London for whom we have e-mail addresses.

If you know of a CAMRA member who has not received the e-mail but would like to, they need to change the settings on their membership record. They need to sign in, go to 'My Membership/edit membership details' and opt into receiving electronic communications.

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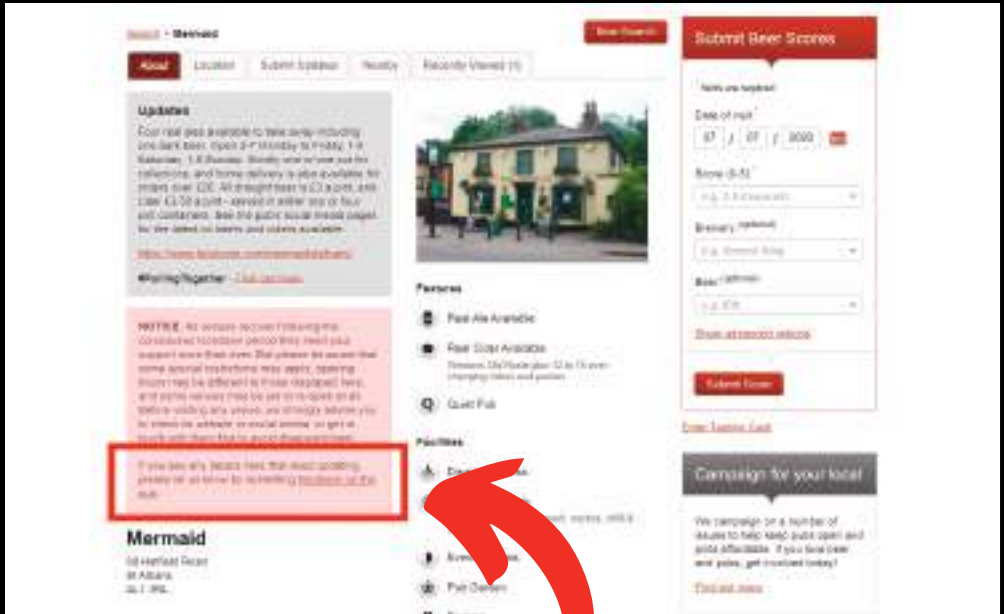
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CAMRA updates its definition of real ale

The definition of real ale in the Oxford English Dictionary is essentially the one that CAMRA adopted in its early days: 'Cask-conditioned beer that is served traditionally, without additional gas pressure' and obviously excludes the description of bottle-conditioned beer as 'real ale in a bottle'. Over CAMRA's 50 year existence, there have been many developments in the art and craft of brewing and so the National Executive asked the Technical Advisory Group to review the terminology. The agreed way forward is now to have two definitions, one being a subset of the other.

The more general concept, **live beer**, is defined as 'beer that, when first put into its final container, contains at least 0.1 million cells of live yeast per millilitre, plus enough fermentable sugar to produce a measurable reduction in its gravity while in that container, whatever it may be'.

The thinking behind this is that a beer without live yeast will only be at its best on leaving the brewery and it will gradually fade and become stale. A living beer however continues to develop character after leaving the brewery. Consequently many bottled beers remain drinkable for many months and, as Christine has recently described, some particularly well-made stronger beers may last – or even

improve – for a decade or more. This also applies to certain strong beers which, although they do not meet the definition of 'live beer', can improve with age because of the type of yeast used and other biological processes. Storage, and in particular temperature, remain important considerations. A useful source of information here, as mentioned in the last edition, is the EBCU beer styles list: www.ebcu.org/the-beerstyles-of-europe-and-beyond/.

The subordinate concept, **cask-conditioned beer** is then defined as 'live beer that continues to mature and condition in its cask, any excess of carbon dioxide being vented such that it is served at atmospheric pressure'.

Leaving the beer to settle and condition in the cellar, for up to ten days if necessary, remains vital. The recommended cellar temperature is 11 to 14°C. Most cask beers will 'drop bright' and will pour clear because of the use of finings. Some modern cask beers however are not fined or filtered, leaving the beer hazy. This might not look quite so attractive but clear beer is a relatively modern concept and this simply reflects older practice. Not fining beer creates flavour differences from clear beer but both are equally authentic.

More detailed coverage of this subject can be found on CAMRA's Learn and Discover website.

Oddfellows - a COVID casualty

When you think about the impact of the virus on pubs and beer festivals, you also think in turn of breweries and the likes of maltsters and hop farmers. The damage however spreads even further.

At the end of 2020, the Oddfellows Chocolate Company, one of the regular stallholders at many CAMRA beer festivals decided that they had no choice but to shut up shop. Founder Emily Flanagan, said, "Our wholesaler who we supplied bulk to every week stopped buying from us in April and, of course, we have lost all of the festivals which we relied heavily on, so we have had to let go of our rental unit and come home. Unfortunately, we cannot carry on."

Emily started the business back in 2010 when she became hooked after attending a specialist chocolate course. She reflected, "I started making truffles and chocolates for family and friends in my kitchen at home alongside my part time job. Word soon got around about my great flavours and before I knew it, I was spending all day, every day, making them."

Husband Ian began helping Emily and they took stalls at a variety of events, from farmers' markets to beer festivals. Emily was delighted to see how well her strong flavoured chocolates were going down and the business grew. In 2013 they moved into a small unit in Burton-on-Trent and took on staff.

The next big transformation came in 2015 when they changed their name from Merry Berry Truffles to the Oddfellows Chocolate Company. Emily explained, "We decided to change our name as it sounded too much like that famous baker (Mary Berry) to a name that best reflects who and what we are about today." The change also provided an opportunity for a rebrand.



I have used their chocolate to pair with beer at many events in pubs and beer festivals, including the Great British Beer Festival, Ealing, Pig's Ear and as far away as the Copenhagen Beer Festival. They were great quality chocolates and the variety of flavours made it easy to match them although Scorpion Death Chilli Chocolate could be a bit of a challenge. I, and many of their fans, will miss them. I am however delighted that, for their swansong, they will be supplying the virtual beer and chocolate event which I plan to hold at Easter. What better time is there for saying goodbye than at the time so traditionally associated with chocolate?

Christine Cryne

Music bars at risk of permanent closure

The music scene in London is one of the best in the world, attracting big name artists to iconic venues such as the Electric Ballroom (Camden), the Forum (Kentish Town) and Brixton Academy. These independent grassroots venues are essential, not only for artists starting their careers but also for communities. Furthermore, they contribute significantly to the night time economy. Most of the smaller music bars and venues have been closed since the start of the pandemic and are struggling for survival because many of them did not receive sufficient Arts Council England emergency funding.

The Music Venue Trust (MVT) is a UK registered charity which acts to protect, secure and improve grassroots music venues for the benefit of communities and upcoming artists. The MVT has launched a 'traffic light' campaign (#savethe30) to save thirty live music venues around the UK which it has identified as likely to close without urgent support. Seven of them are in London: EGG and the Lexington (both Kings Cross), the Windmill (Brixton), Alchemy (Croydon), the Spiritual Bar (Chalk Farm), the Post Bar (Tottenham) and the Waiting Room (Stoke Newington). You can help by asking your MP to support the campaign, by buying merchandise or by donating to your favourite music venue. Go to the MVT #SaveOurVenues Red List at <https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/save-our-venues-red-list>.

To feature one of them, the Lexington in Kings Cross is a gem amongst London's smaller music venues, with an interior described as 'bordello baroque'. It has played host to Graham Coxon and Billy Bragg in the past. The pub only

received 40% of the Arts Council England funding which they applied for and they are waiting to hear if they have been successful in the current round of Arts Council England funding, which should be announced sometime in January. In the meantime they are raising additional funds to ensure their survival until March 2021. The Lexington's manager, Stacey Thomas, told *London Drinker*, "I was really upset and inconsolable when I got the news, as we expected to be fully funded. We are looking forward to reopening and putting on bands and drinking good beer." Stacey likes to support local breweries and there are four handpumps in the downstairs bar, usually serving cask ales from the likes of Redemption and Signature Brew. The pub also features US craft beers and, possibly uniquely, has its own brand of bourbon whisky called Whiskey Thief. It is produced by MGP Distilleries in Lawrenceburg, Indiana, and bottled and matured by the pub. It is described as a mature and truly well-rounded bourbon, with a pleasant sweetness, an undercurrent of fruit spice, delicate vanilla and mocha notes finishing with a hint of liquorish.

If you wish to help save this unique music venue, please take a look at the Save the Lexington crowdfunding campaign for rewards and merchandise at <https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/help-the-lexington-survive-until-march-savethe30>.

Joanne Scott

(Joanne is Pub Protection Officer for CAMRA's North London Branch)



Inside the Lexington

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Beer and cheese - only virtually!

The lockdown inevitably led to all of CAMRA's usual Christmas activities being cancelled so, to maintain the spirit, the North London Branch held a virtual beer and cheese tasting on the Tuesday before Christmas. We decided to throw it open to any CAMRA member who was interested and 65 of them, from all over Britain, participated; all missing the pub and in need of some fun! Those taking part were asked to supply their own beer and cheese and a great 90 minutes was spent munching and slurping.



The first combination was a wheat beer with a goat's cheese. Quite a lot of people had not tried a goat's cheese before and this certainly opened a few eyes with the wheat beer cutting through the creaminess. Beers varied from Erdinger, Franziskaner and Weihenstephaner to Moor's Claudia, Patronus and German Kraft Hopeweizen.

Next was a golden ale with Camembert. This encouraged lots of people to find their local beers including ELB Jamboree, Quantock Gold, Glamorgan Jemima's Pitchfork and Thornbridge Jaipur. The cheese was also creamy but needed a beer with a bit more bite and strength of flavour to cut through its richer characteristics and the beer's bitterness provided a contrast.

People were asked to try both combinations with and without crackers to see how this affected their perceptions. With the Camembert, it was about even, with as many people preferring the cheese on its own with the beer as with the biscuit, but this changed with the goat's cheese. Almost two in three preferred it with biscuits because the latter took some of the fattiness from the soft cheese.

The third combination was the very traditional one of bitter and mature Cheddar. Once again, our tasters were creative in finding a bitter of around 4.5% ABV, sourced from London, Yorkshire, Suffolk, Kent and Somerset. The malty, sweet nuttiness of the beer complemented the same aspects of the cheese and the hoppy fruitiness cleaned the palate.

You couldn't do a cheese tasting without a blue and most people opted for the Great British Stilton, which was tasted with two different beer styles: a porter or stout and a premium bitter/strong ale. There were many varieties of porters and

stouts chosen than for any other beer style category, including a Polish stout and a porter from Virginia, USA! For the ale, Fuller's was a popular choice with people choosing ESB, 1845 and Vintage of various ages. The oldest Vintage was a 2008, which was described as port-like. With this pairing, it was important that the beer had the strength of flavour to stand up to the rich taste and aroma of the Stilton.

As always, with everyone's palate being different, opinions were mixed as to which of the two beer styles went best with the cheese. The porter/stout match was the favourite preferred by 60% of people and this was chosen as the overall winning combination, followed very closely by the mature Cheddar with premium bitter/strong ale. It is worth noting however that every matching got votes. The lowest was the Camembert and golden ale with 10% of the votes, reflecting the recommendation not to have just one beer on offer, whatever food is being served.



Deciding on the best pairing wasn't the only judging that took place on the evening. For a bit of fun people were asked to come with various styles of Christmas apparel and the enthusiasm and variety on offer reflected the daftness of the occasion. The winner, as judged by Branch Chairman Colin Coyne, was Sandra Crane for her 'Santa stuck in the chimney', accompanied by Chris wearing the dog's antlers! Enough said!

The overall results are shown at the foot of this page.

Christine Cryne

Editor's note: I participated and would like to thank Christine (and John in the background) for a very enjoyable event. For the record, my preference was cheddar and bitter with biscuits.

The overall results were:

Favourite Beer		Favourite Cheese		Favourite Combination	
Porter/Stout	34%	Stilton	32%	Stilton & Porter/Stout	26%
Premium bitter	26%	Cheddar	28%	Cheddar & Traditional bitter	24%
Wheat beer	16%	Goat's cheese	20%	Stilton & Premium bitter	22%
Golden ale	12%	Camembert	20%	Goat's cheese & Wheat beer	15%
Traditional bitter	12%			Camembert & Golden ale	13%

CONGRATULATIONS

The chief executive of UKHospitality, Kate Nicholls, has been made an OBE for her efforts on behalf of the hospitality sector during the long months of the COVID pandemic. Her comment to the Press Association is worth reproducing in full, "While I am personally humbled and honoured to receive this recognition, I have to pay tribute to the entire UKH team for their tireless work and campaigning throughout this year, continually highlighting to Government the specific challenges our sector faces. Hospitality businesses were hit first and hit hardest by the pandemic but, despite this, there have been countless inspirational examples of leadership, resilience and collaboration, of people coming together to support their local communities during this unprecedented time, helping to feed frontline NHS and key workers, the homeless and support others in need. It is those values that make me proud to have represented and been part of such a wonderful sector for many years. Our focus now is to continue to press Government for additional financial support that will enable businesses to survive through the winter and be in a position to reopen and welcome back customers." Our congratulations go to Ms Nicholls.

Steve Baker, the National Chair of Pubwatch, also received an OBE for his services to reducing crime and improving safety on licensed premises. Mr Baker, a retired police inspector, has been in post since 2007.

From what reports I have seen, only two publicans, one each from Hertford and Somerset, received awards, both MBEs. Given all that the trade has been through and has contributed to their communities during the pandemic, this strikes me as a bit mean, but perhaps reflective of the Government's attitude to pubs.

A MINISTER FOR HOSPITALITY?

Reflecting the belief that the Government simply does not understand the hospitality industry, a Parliamentary petition was launched calling for the appointment of a minister with specific responsibility for the sector. The petition highlighted the sector's economic importance: it provides around three million jobs, has an annual turnover of £130 billion and generates £38 billion in tax income. It does not however have its own minister, unlike the arts or sport. Instead, responsibility is spread between ministers in the Departments for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, and Digital, Culture, Media & Sport. Did someone say 'joined up government'? The petition achieved in excess of the 200,000 signatures needed to secure a debate in Parliament and this took place in Westminster Hall on 11 January. During the debate, which lasted an hour and a half, the Government, in the shape of Paul Scully, the Minister for Small Business, Consumers and Labour Markets, acknowledged the sector's importance but thought that the existing arrangements were adequate. He maintained that he and Mr Johnson were 'doing all we can within government to understand and represent the interests of the sector'. The motion was passed by a significant majority. The vote is however not binding and it does not commit the Government to act on it. All the same, any publicity about the problems currently faced by the sector is welcome.

CAMRA's National Chairman, Nik Antona, commented, "MPs from all parties and from across the nations of the UK made it clear just how important pubs, social clubs and breweries are to communities – not only boosting local economies and providing jobs, but also as a key part of our social fabric, tackling loneliness and social isolation. It is clear that there is cross-party support for a long-term financial stimulus package to allow pubs, clubs and brewers to be part of both the economic and social recovery from the COVID crisis, including backing for CAMRA's campaigns to renew business rates holidays, extend VAT cuts to help wet-led pubs and cut beer duty for draught beer to help pubs compete with cheap supermarket booze once restrictions begin to lift. It was particularly encouraging to hear the Government's Small Business Minister recognise all the hard work and investment that has gone into making pubs and hospitality businesses COVID-secure, and his belief that the sector shouldn't be scapegoated. It's important to make sure the Government encourages and allows everyone to socialise safely in our pubs, clubs and taprooms once restrictions are lifted."

We used to have a minister among whose designated responsibilities was 'community pubs'. This task no longer appears as a specific item in any ministerial brief but it is understood that Luke Hall, the Minister of State for Regional Growth and Local Government at the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government deals with it.

ALCOHOL TAX REVIEW

The evidence gathered at the consultation stage is now being reviewed. As explained previously, this area was previously 'harmonised' with EU law, although why that meant that we paid eleven times more than in France or Germany I never quite understood. The Government has acknowledged that there are inconsistencies and is looking to make the system simpler and more reasonable. That is also what some trade bodies such as UKHospitality and the British Institute of Innkeeping want, while CAMRA particularly wants to see a reduction of the duty paid on cask beer served in pubs to help safeguard wet led pubs. Achieving any sort of balance will not be easy. On the one hand, some say that the Government must put high taxes on alcohol to deter consumption, hence it being one of the so-called sin taxes. On the other hand, and especially in the coming years, the Government needs the income, which, in 2019/2020 totalled around £11.15 billion.

PUBS CODE NEWS

Despite the current restrictions on pubs, the Forum of British Pubs is still helping pub tenants to change to Market Rent Only (MRO) agreements because this may well put pubs in a stronger position to survive in the long run. In three cases reported on in November, all saw a reduction in the rent being paid to their pub owning business and the FBP's Dave Mountford commented, "Anyone facing a rent review, or a lease renewal, should be aware of the importance of achieving the ability to go free of tie, with a rental figure that could easily be below their current tied one."

One report that I saw urged pub tenants to seek an MRO agreement as soon as possible because, in certain circumstances (but excluding a nationwide lockdown), the

COVID restrictions can act as a trigger for MRO applications, without the need for a rent review. It is however a very complicated situation, more so perhaps than it should be, and it is vital that expert help is sought.

Just after the December/January edition was finalised, the Pubs Code Adjudicator, Fiona Dickie, wrote an article in the *Morning Advertiser* about some of the issues that came out of the review of the Pubs Code and which have been put out for further consultation. These included improvements to the Market Rent Only (MRO) timetable and setting up both a dispute resolution system and an appeal system that did not involve the High Court. Ms Dickie added that, "The Secretary of State (for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy) has given me guidance about how I can develop the PCA's reach and impact. He has thrown down the gauntlet and challenged me to change how the PCA does business, and it is a challenge I'm ready to accept." She also commented, "We should be better at talking about our successes. This isn't publicity for publicity's sake; it's important to show the regulator is having an impact so that tenants have confidence in me and can see that I am getting the job done and changing pub company behaviours."

PCA v STAR PUBS & BARS

This is curious. Readers will recall that the Pubs Code Adjudicator fined Star, the pubs arm of Heineken UK, £2 million for breaches of the code relating to Market Rent Only (MRO) agreements. On 22 December, the PCA issued a press release detailing the recommendations that she was making and giving Star six weeks to respond with details of how they would comply. There had however been a report in the *Morning Advertiser* five days earlier which said that Star were to appeal to the High Court against the fine, which Star's managing director, Lawson Mountstevens, described as 'unwarranted and disproportionate'. He added that, "We are deeply disappointed and frustrated at the outcome of the PCA's investigation. There are many aspects of the report that we fundamentally disagree with." He went on to accuse the PCA of not responding when they had sought guidance about the terms that they were offering to tenants seeking MRO agreements. There is more to come, I suspect.

SMALL BREWERS' RELIEF

The technical consultation on the Government's proposed reform of the Small Brewers' Relief system was published on 8 January. CAMRA's National Chairman, Nik Antona, commented, "As trade associations and brewers will be doing over the coming weeks, CAMRA will also take the time to digest and analyse the complex consultation document, which does include new information on the Treasury's decision-making process to date, and we look forward to providing a full response to the Treasury as part of the consultation process. The consultation document states that 73% of small brewers surveyed said that they are content with the current structure of Small Brewers' Relief, so we remain unconvinced that the proposed changes – resulting in around 150 small brewers paying more tax – are the best route to improve SBR. While we recognise that any changes to SBR will not come into force until next year, this has been a devastating year for small brewers, who have been unable to benefit from the same level of financial support as other

hospitality businesses during the COVID crisis. These changes are due to come in at a time at when the Government should be providing more support to our vibrant small brewing sector to aid its recovery, rather than planning on withdrawing tax relief from some of the smallest brewers, who are vital to maintaining consumer choice in the beer market."

JOINING IN

Given that, well before we had ever heard of COVID, LGBTQ+ venues seemed to be more at risk of closure than pubs in general, there is good news about the Joiners Arms in Shoreditch. The pub closed in 2015 following its sale to developers Regal London by Enterprise Inns. Under a condition imposed in the planning permission by Tower Hamlets Council, a pub will be part of the new development and it must be a LGBTQ+ venue for at least twelve years. In a gesture that you would not normally expect from property developers, Regal London have acknowledged that progress with the development is slow and have offered the Friends of the Joiners Arms campaign, who had secured Asset of Community Value listing for the pub, £100,000 to cover the cost of setting up a temporary 'pop up' bar. This in addition to the £138,000 that they have already promised for the fitting out of the new permanent pub. Speaking to the *Guardian* (10 January), Regal London's planning director agreed that it was unusual, adding, "We have had a lot of workshops over Zoom with the Friends of the Joiners Arms and got to know them, and the importance of protecting the Joiners, and we want to do our part."

TURNING THE TIDE

The hospitality and beer industry based digital community *What's In The Glass?*, founded by Gabriele Bertucci, is making a series of 25 minute films that will document London's beer culture during the pandemic. As their press release explains, "The last few months have been incredibly difficult for pubs; probably some of the hardest they have ever faced. We feel these stories need to be shared through a contemporary media and with expert voices to bring about a greater understanding of people's struggles working in the pub and beer industry. Watching the show will offer an expert and unique insight into British public houses and explore how much the London pub culture is at risk during and after-pandemic'. You can find out more from their website whatsintheglass.co.uk or from Facebook facebook.com/whatsintheglassuk. They are also looking for funds at crowdfunder.co.uk/turning-the-tide-campaign.

MORE DEEP RY

It's not just Glasgow. Over Christmas, a chippy in Cowes on the Isle of Wight was deep frying battered mince pies. This was in addition to their usual festive offering of deep fried battered Brussels sprouts. At least, with the Island having been in Tier 1 at the time, there would not have needed to be any debate as to whether these delicacies constituted a substantial meal.

You can find up to date news posts from CAMRA London Region's Twitter account at <https://www.london.camra.org.uk/>

LONDON BREWERS FEAR FOR THE FUTURE

The London Brewers Alliance (LBA) was set up in 2010 by thirteen London breweries. Thanks to London's growing and vibrant brewery scene, with at least five new entries in the *Good Beer Guide's* breweries section each year since 2010, the LBA now has 105 members. They recently conducted a survey of their members and worryingly it revealed that if COVID restrictions continue as they are, nearly a half of them do not see themselves as having a long term future. The numbers were as follows:

Safe	38%
1 to 2 years	19%
9 to 12 months	5%
6 to 9 months	12%
Less than 6 months	12%
Not sure	14%

The LBA's secretary, John Cryne, commented, "The majority of brewers in London rely on pubs and restaurants for their sales but because they are a supplier, they don't receive the same support. The furlough

scheme has helped but life as it is is not sustainable. Even during the summer, pubs had been drastically cutting the beer they ordered as people did not flood back to pubs, particularly in central London. There was a double whammy in that pubs were also reducing their range and, as independent London brewers were often represented as a guest beer, they were the first to lose out. As a consequence, some of our members have not bothered to reopen."

Happily, it isn't all doom and gloom. John continued, "Although those breweries with tap rooms did benefit from the summer relaxation, it is those with their own can and bottling lines that are best placed to weather this storm. They have been busy doing home deliveries, either themselves or via others. And it certainly has been all hands to the pumps; I have had three brewery owners delivering the beer themselves; no sitting in offices for them!"

THE STATE OF PLAY

On page 8 I mention an article that appeared in the *Ham & High* newspaper. These are the quotes from the three breweries that the *H&H* contacted in addition to Moncada. They give a good indication of the situation in which our small breweries have found themselves. You have to admire their determination and flexibility.

The Gorgeous Brewery, situated behind the Bull in North Hill, Highgate, is run by brother and sister team Rob and Sam Laub. Sam described the past year as 'a shock to everyone's system' but they were delighted with the way that the community responded. They were, Sam said, 'lovely and ordered cases of beer directly from us'. Gorgeous also linked up with some beer subscription agencies to boost sales.

James Atherton, the owner of the Beerblefish Brewery in Edmonton, said that cask beer made up 90% of his trade in March 2020. Although that trade ended, the demand from drinkers and bottle shops increased. As James said, 'people need beer', so the brewery shifted its production to bottles and mini-kegs. They had good weeks and bad weeks but they survived, as he said, 'by being small and able to adapt quickly'.

The Goodness Brewing Co in Wood Green overcame the setback of not being able to open their tap room for most

of 2020 by setting up a delivery service, not just for beer but for pizzas as well. They recently started a crowdfunding appeal to purchase a canning machine. Their co-founder, Zack Ahmed, told the *H&H* that it would make their operation 'faster and cheaper' and would also make it easier to produce 'one-off specials'.

BEAVERTOWN BREWING

Congratulations to Beavertown who won the UK Brewer of the Year award at the 2020 International Beer Challenge. In all they collected five medals: two golds for Neck Oil and Lupuloid IPA and three silvers for Gamma Ray APA, Bloody 'Eil Blood Orange IPA and Nanobot, their low alcohol beer. This year's judging, inevitably, had to be carried out virtually.

BOHEM BREWERY

The Tottenham based brewers of Czech-style beers have recruited Jonathon Swaine, the former managing director of Fuller's Inns, to advise them on growing the business and expanding their distribution operation. Petr Skocek, one of Bohem's founders, said, "We're delighted that Jonathon is working with us to support the brewery's growth. This is a challenging time for the whole sector, but Jonathon's willingness to come on board is testament to the fact that we have a very distinct proposition in the market. Our fresh, authentic lager offers a point of difference, and having access to the advice and contacts of someone of Jonathon's calibre is a huge benefit as we focus on continuing our carefully managed strategy for growth."

CLARKSHAW'S BREWERY

In a White, CAMRA's Brewery Liaison Officer for Clarkshaw's has kindly passed on this report from Lucy Grimshaw, one of the brewery's directors. "Back in the middle of March we were getting ready to reopen our taproom after our annual winter closure. We had a brewery full of beer ready for customers when the news came that we would be shut down. Over the next few weeks our stocks of bottles flew out at an unprecedented rate but the casks and tanks of beer for drinking on site were going nowhere. As a very small taproom, we were unable to safely open throughout 2020. We repackaged what casks we could but hundreds of litres of beer went to waste and we have now ceased production of cask beer for the foreseeable future. However, it was not all doom and gloom. While we've been closed to the public, like many breweries, we have adapted the way we get beer from the brewery to people and to this end we have pivoted to producing more small pack. We stock five litre mini-casks which are available through the Brew2You 'app' or from our online shop <https://clarkshaws.co.uk/shop.html>. These contain real ale which is conditioned in the container. We have also invested in developing techniques to re-use the mini-casks and now have our own bespoke, very mini, two-stage cask washer. Our customers can now have real cask ale at home and can maintain their environmental credentials either by returning the empty minis to us or holding them until their next delivery, just like a pub would, for uplift, cleaning and re-use. The containers themselves are also climate neutral and, by re-using them, we further reduce the environmental footprint of our beers."

GERMAN KRAFT

This company operates three outlets, two inside Mercato Metropolitano food markets in Elephant & Castle and Mayfair and the other in Kingsland High Street, Dalston. They have been operating for some time but somehow we missed their arrival. The beers are brewed in the German tradition and served fresh from tanks or kegs at each site. Accordingly, they are brewed without additives or preservatives and are unfiltered and unpasteurised. In order to comply with the German purity law of 1516, they use only water, malt, hops and yeast. They were offering takeaways during the summer but are currently understood to be closed.

HACKNEY BREWERY

Another transfer to Walthamstow! After ten years, Hackney are planning to leave Dalston and set up a new brewery and beer hall with a large outdoor seating area, adding another port of call to the Blackhorse Beer Mile. The project, called High Hill, is being financed by a 'Pay It Forward' crowdfunding scheme which was launched at the end of November and ran until 16 December. They were hoping to raise £30,000 but, according to their website, the final figure was £49,351, with 639 people contributing. Joint founder Pete Hills told the *Morning Advertiser*, "We've been looking for a site for a long time, but High Hill was worth the wait because the space is perfect for us inside and out. This is a huge step for us, putting us on a national stage while still remaining rooted in the London scene we love so much." They were hoping to open the site in March but, inevitably, that will most likely be delayed. For more information see <https://www.hackneybrewery.com/high-hill>.

JAWBONE BREWING

Jawbone are now brewing and their beer is available from their taproom at Unit C, 1 Strawberry Vale, Twickenham, TW1 4RY. It is open from noon to 7pm. Their first brew is a pale ale called Bone Idle (4.6% ABV) which is currently available in cans. See their website for more details: www.jawbonebrewing.com/. My thanks to George Gimber for supplying some welcome good news.

MECHANIC BREWERY

We would ask readers to ignore the item about this brewery that originally appeared here.

We have misunderstood the situation as regards the company's closure.

More information will be provided as soon as possible.

PARK BREWERY

A successful second round of crowdfunding in the autumn generated some £140,000 from around 200 subscribers. This was very impressive considering that they were only aiming for £100,000. The company, set up in 2014 by Josh and Frankie Kearns and based in Kingston upon Thames, will use the funds to increase brewing capacity and step up their marketing operation. Park were another small brewery to demonstrate their flexibility during 2020. They acquired a second-hand canning line and quickly set up an

on-line shop, with around 2,000 home deliveries made in 2020.

PORTOBELLO TAKES OVER ANTIC PUBS

In the last edition I reported that Portobello were looking to expand their pubs operation. I did not however expect anything to happen quite so quickly or in the way it did. At the end of November, the investment trust, Downing LLP, decided to transfer the management of thirteen pubs in which it has an interest from the Antic group to Portobello's new pubs division. This arrangement is for the management of the pubs only; the ownership of the pubs, which is spread across nine different companies, remains unchanged. The sites involved include the Westow House in Crystal Palace, which, as part of a recent refurbishment, was extended to include 23 en-suite bedrooms.

Effra Social	SW2 1DF
Eltham GPO	SE9 5DQ
Farrs School of Dance	E8 3DF
Forest Tavern	E7 9BB
John the Unicorn	SE15 4TL
Knowles of Norwich	SE27 9AF
Old Red Lion	SE11 4RS
Pratts & Payne	SW16 1HJ
Royal Albert	SE14 6TJ
Shinner & Sudtone	SM1 1DT
Sylvan Post	SE23 3XU
Walker Briggs	SE19 1TX
Westow House	SE19 1TX

Mark Crowther, the recently appointed chairman of Portobello, was quoted on the *Brixton Buzz* website as saying, "We intend to invest further in the estate to ensure the pubs maintain their retail offer and distinctive personality in their local markets." An associate director at Downing LLP, Nick Carter, added, "We are always seeking to work with high-quality, talented operators and are pleased to partner with Portobello, with whom we are looking forward to an exciting future for these pubs. We would like to thank the team at Antic for their previous management of these assets." I have seen no suggestion whatsoever of any criticism as regards Antic's running of the pubs and early reports were that existing staff were retained, although that situation may have changed because of the COVID restrictions.

Antic, predictably, were not happy and they posted a message on the Effra Social's website which said that they had only been given 36 hours' notice of the transfer and that it was, to their mind, 'untimely, unwarranted, and we believe ill-conceived, and certainly not what one would expect from an 11 year relationship'. Antic still operate some 37 pubs across London and they have every intention of continuing to run these pubs in, as they describe it, 'the spirit of our rather eclectic public house approach'.

SOUTHEY BREWING COMPANY

Just before Christmas, Penge based Southey Brewing collaborated once again with the lifestyle blog, *Deserter*, this time to produce a new version of their *Deserter IPA*. It was part of *Deserter's* fundraising campaign for their new

book, *Shirk, Rest and Play*, written by beer enthusiasts Andrew Grumbridge and Vincent Raison. The recipe for the 5.5% ABV IPA was given a tweak to include Citra, Cascade and Mosaic hops, with dry hopping using El Dorado, Cascade and more Citra. Sadly, no live event was possible and so the beer was made available in cans. There may still be some available in various local outlets, including Southey's own beer shop.

Andrew and Vincent founded *Deserter* in 2014 to help future generations avoid the evils of hard work, ambition and sobriety. Their first book, *Today South London, Tomorrow South London*, was well received, winning the London *Evening Standard* Comedy Book of the Year. *Shirk, Rest and Play* continues the theme, described as 'a

blueprint for a happy life, shorn of duty and deference and filled with celebration and sausage rolls'. There is also a *Deserter Pubcast* (sic). Take a look at <https://unbound.com/books/desertertwo/>.

WIMBLEDON BREWERY

Wimbledon Brewery recently announced, "We thought about offering a 10% discount during January but decided instead to donate 10% of the proceeds from our shop and home delivery sales to our chosen charity, the Wimbledon Foodbank". They also gave the Foodbank's website address so that people could make their own donations. Good on them.

A dog has its day

One of my Christmas beers was Sambrook's Brown Dog Riot. Many beers these days have strange or unusual names but this one commemorates some curious events in Battersea at the turn of the 20th century which I think are worth telling.

The story starts in February 1903 when the physiologist Dr William Bayliss of University College London, while conducting research into hormones, performed an experiment on a brown terrier dog in front of 60 medical and veterinary students. Bayliss insisted that the dog had been properly anaesthetised but two of the observers, later identified as 'Swedish activists', thought otherwise and reported the matter to the National Anti-Vivisection Society. The Society accused Bayliss of 'cruel and unlawful' behaviour but Bayliss responded by successfully suing the NAVS for libel.

In 1906, the anti-vivisection movement revived the controversy by commissioning a memorial in the form of a fountain surmounted by a bronze statue of the unfortunate dog and bearing the inscription 'In Memory of the Brown Terrier Dog Done to Death in the Laboratories of University College in February 1903 after having endured Vivisections extending over more than two months and having been handed over from one Vivisector to another till Death came to his release. Also in memory of the 232 dogs vivisected in the same place during the year 1902. Men and women of England, how long shall these Things be?' As Battersea, a hotbed of radicalism at the time, was already known for the Dogs' Home (established 30 years earlier) the Borough Council agreed to it being installed on the Latchmere Recreation Ground. George Bernard Shaw and Charlotte Despard were among those who attended the unveiling.

Public opinion had generally sided with the anti-vivisectionists and a Royal Commission was set up in 1906 but did not report its findings until 1912.

The statue was regularly vandalised. Pro-vivisection students were blamed, given that they had declared that the statue was 'an insult to medical research'. It got so bad that a 24 hour police guard was put on the statue. The situation worsened in 1907 when, on 10 December, a large number of the students, styling themselves the 'anti-doggers' and bolstered by contingents from Oxford and Cambridge

Universities, staged a march through central London, bearing effigies of the deceased dog on sticks. At Trafalgar Square they met with opposition from groups of suffragettes and trade unionists and it reportedly took several hundred police officers to bring the situation under control. There were several further such incidents which became known as the Brown Dog Riots.

Battersea Borough Council decided to put an end to the problems by removing the statue. In March 1910, four of their workers, under cover of darkness and reportedly protected by a contingent of 120 policemen, did the deed. It is believed that the statue was melted down shortly after. A protest rally was held in Trafalgar Square and a petition demanding its reinstatement gathered 20,000 signatures but that was effectively the end of the events.

The dog was not however forgotten. In 1985, a new statue of the brown dog, by Nicola Hicks, was commissioned by anti-vivisection groups. It is different from the original and can be found in Battersea Park, on the Woodland Walk, near the English Garden. This statue is dedicated to all animals used in testing around the world.

As for the beer, to quote Sambrook's website, Brown Dog Riot is loaded with West Coast hops and deep, satisfying dark malted barley. It has citrus fruit and pine resin flavours, coupled with toffee and bready caramel notes. It is currently available from the brewery in 440ml cans and minikegs. Go to <https://www.sambrooksbrewery.co.uk/>.

Finally, I should add that Sambrook's are close to completing their relocation from Battersea to the Ram Quarter, the site of the former Young's brewery, in Wandsworth.

London, Capital of Brewing

At the last count, there were around 130 breweries in Greater London. They are listed on CAMRA's Greater London Region website: www.london.camra.org.uk. Please support them by buying their beer, where available, either direct or from permitted stockists.

Will the lights go out for bars, pubs and breweries in Europe

As we go into 2021, we are all aware that pubs, bars and breweries face a hard time with many likely not to survive. This situation is however not just to be found in the UK; it exists right across Europe, with all social activities taking the brunt of measures against COVID. In December I contacted six people who I know through the European Beer Consumer Union (EBCU) to see what was going on and it doesn't make for pretty reading.



SPRING 2020

In March, COVID was beginning to make its mark across Europe and countries started to take action. The Netherlands, Belgium, Finland and Spain all closed their bars, pubs and restaurants, most of them until mid June. As in England, takeaways were generally allowed and many breweries switched to this mode of operation. Spain was an exception, with only outlets doing food allowed to do takeaways. In May, it was estimated that beer production losses for 2020 would be around 48%. It wasn't great news for all countries that could do takeaways either. To quote Fons Minne from Zythos (Belgium), "Pubs, bars, restaurants had to close doors for several weeks (13 March to 8 June). Takeaway was permitted but this was not a big success, especially not for cafés where no food is served".

André Brunnsberg (an EBCU Executive Member) reported on the mixed bag of a situation in Finland, "Some pubs tried to survive by also selling take-away beers up to 5.5% ABV in alcohol, something not possible before the new



André (left) and a colleague

alcohol law was taken into use in 2018. Many small breweries saw during the spring a rise in their direct sales and there was clearly a national trend of supporting local small businesses. Most of the beers sold in Finland are sold in grocery stores so, for many breweries, the spring didn't have that much of an economic impact. But for other, not so rural breweries, the spring was a tough period."

Denmark and Sweden each took a different approach. In Denmark, pubs, bars and restaurants were allowed to open but had to comply with the two metre social distancing rule and there was a maximum limit of 50 people, although no restrictions on closing time. Discotheques and night clubs had to close. Sweden did something similar with no lockdown but restrictions on guest numbers. This resulted

in 20,000 employees being given notice. The impact was noticeable on breweries; Tomas Lindohf from Svenska Ölförbundet said "Most breweries noticed a downturn in sales in restaurants, events and export. During April some of the lost volume was covered by increased sales at the state owned alcohol monopoly, Systembolaget. Several of the craft breweries increased their production of low-alcohol beers to increase sales through other venues than Systembolaget, like supermarkets and similar venues".

SUMMER 2020

Although the summer saw a decline in COVID infections across Europe, the approach to relaxation was variable with most implementing change in June. In England, of course, it was July but some northern areas reverted to higher restrictions a month later. Belgium was strict although a 1am closure time was allowed and Fons said, "No drinking or ordering standing at the bar; this was only allowed when sitting down with a restricted number of people at one table and social distancing had to be respected. A circulation plan had to be organised (avoiding people crossing each other), restricted number of people in the lavatory room, mouth and nose masks had to be put on when standing up, people had to register when they entered a pub and when they left again, etc." This clearly had an impact on sales. Fons continues, "It was a lot of organisation for modest profit (maybe a third of the normal sales). It was no 'pleasure' going to the pub these days . . . only diehards did."



The Netherlands also had restrictions with limited numbers inside, although here the social distancing was 1.5 metres and terraced seating was more relaxed. Spain, like the UK, took a regional approach with four tiers based on COVID numbers. Angeline Drouant, another EBCU Executive Member who lives in Spain, commented, "By that time, most bars and specialised shops had developed an online shop or improved the existing one. That means the breweries could produce beer that could be sold online in addition to bars, as the general public was reluctant to go out." This, of course, is something that the UK also suffered from.

Finland also saw major relaxations and, in Helsinki, Finland's largest beer festival, the Suuret Oluet Pienet

Will the lights go out for bars, pubs and breweries in Europe

Panimot (Big Beers, Small Breweries) went ahead albeit with tightened restrictions on the number of visitors. Andre said, "Beer consumers that found their local breweries in the spring continued their support during the summer by buying beer directly. Weather-wise it was also a nice summer, which affected the economics of the breweries positively."

Positive comments on recovery also came from Sweden with companies having an opportunity to recover some of their losses in the spring. Tomas said, "During the summer a lot of breweries had some of their best months ever, both in restaurant sales and at Systembolaget." By comparison, Denmark appeared to tighten their approach. Lars Jeperson, from Dankse, said, "Admittance to bars, pubs and restaurants was limited to ten persons. Opening hours were restricted to be no later than to 2am and could not take in any more guests after 11pm. If they let in guests after 11pm they had to close at 12pm. Discotheques and night clubs remained closed."

AUTUMN 2020

It was definitely a case of 'here we go again' with the speed and severity of restrictions varying from country to country although most seem to have avoided the yo-yo approach taken in England.

The Netherlands closed their restaurants and bars from 19 October with a review in December, which ended up with an extension of the closures. Belgium and Finland followed a similar pattern, with a gradual tightening of measures as infections increased. Jos Brouwer, who lives in the Netherlands and is a member of PINT, said "Later, when infection numbers kept increasing despite the measures, there was a complete lockdown of bars, restaurants and catering. Most businesses switched back to pick-up/takeaway only. As for now, this is still in place." André commented, "This time the restrictions (in Finland), on top of the reduction of guests, hit alcohol selling times with bars and night clubs having to stop selling alcohol at 10pm. Sadly, Finnish law doesn't make a difference between nightclubs and pubs, which led to discussion in daily media as many pub owners felt the time restrictions being unfair. The restrictions for bars and restaurants again had a negative impact on the sales for the Finnish breweries, especially for those situated in bigger cities, the limits for pubs had a negative impact on sales."

Denmark managed to keep their restaurants and bars open until December, albeit with reduced opening hours and numbers (parties of ten and no entry after 11pm but they could stay until 2am). However in early December they all had to close with alcohol takeaways allowed up to 10pm. Spain appears to have fared better but with reduced opening times and regional variations. Angeline reported, "Breweries took advantage of the time to buy new equipment (sometimes through crowd funding), do a paint job on their facilities and develop new recipes. Most of them have developed a good website to sell beer online, sometimes with the typical combo 'beer + cheese + cold meat' and the sales have been very good, although not as good as sales in the taproom would have been." Happily, the situation has brought out the philanthropic element. Angeline added, "A beer has seen the light, called Cobeer-19 and 19% of the margins will be transferred to needy

sectors. At first 19 breweries were participating, now there are almost fifty". Spain is under partial lockdown again since 25 October for a six-month period but bars are open with a capacity limitation.

Similarly, in Sweden, bars are still open but with tightening rules. Tomas commented, "The autumn started well enough for the breweries, with some of the increase from the summer carrying over into September and October. When the second wave started in Sweden during October, the restaurant sales dropped quickly and they were not equally compensated by increased sales through Systembolaget". In November, there was a ban on alcohol sales after 10pm and a maximum of eight people meeting was imposed. This has now reduced to four people and a new time restriction of 8pm is in place until the end of February 2021.



Jos (first left) and Fons (second left) at an EBCU reception

OVERALL IMPACT

Not surprisingly, most contacts, as in the UK, commented on the decline in beer sales thanks to the pandemic. Although most countries reported the growth of off sales from bars and breweries, this doesn't appear to have made up for the loss of the sales through pubs and restaurants. It is worth noting that in some countries, off sales have been limited to outlets that are providing food. The other point that seems to crop up is the fear factor with people being reluctant to go to restaurants, bars and pubs even when they were able. Also, the reduced numbers in an outlet due to the necessity of social distancing and the smaller number of people allowed to meet have had an impact on the atmosphere, which in turn reduces the attractiveness of going out.

Spain reported that, although some bars and breweries have shut down during the year, it has been a minority and it really is too soon to say what the overall impact will be. In comparison, Belgium seems to have already begun to see some of the signs of things to come. Fons reflected that, at the end of 2020, "Zythos counted 377 breweries and 265 beer firms (note 1). Compared to 2019, there are 38 more breweries and 9 beer firms meaning we had more starters than stoppers. There is a lot of fear amongst people working for breweries (sales people, representatives, etc.) that they will lose their jobs. A number of small breweries will also have to stop, I think. They don't only suffer from COVID, but the problems that the Shelton Brothers (note 2) have in the USA will bring down their export business to almost zero.

Will the lights go out for bars, pubs and breweries in Europe

Hopefully they don't have too many invoices that are unpaid. If we only look at the 2020 closures of breweries and beer firms, we see twenty brewery closures (of which nine were in the last quarter of the year) and 23 beer firm closures (of which ten were also in the last quarter). Already a sign of what is to come when the economic horror caused by COVID becomes really visible?"

Next door in the Netherlands, Jos's current thoughts are similar, "Breweries are impacted heavily, especially those who rely on on-site consumption. Still very few closures but I'm sure there will be some shake-out within the near future. New business models keep developing and internet shopping is growing. Home delivery companies like Beerwulf (now owned by Heineken) seem to be flourishing." However, he added, "As for now, restaurants and bars are seriously affected, and some of them are facing serious problems, as there is now far less support from the government, and likely there will be a wave of businesses going out into receivership. In the spring, the government came with a quite generous scheme of subsidies in order to maintain and save jobs. Only time will tell how things develop."

Danske (Denmark) reported that some breweries and bars have had to close and the situation in Finland was equally gloomy. André commented, "Finns have a big respect for authorities. Due to Finnish law the government cannot, without a state of emergency, quickly approve new laws. However, recommendations are still followed by the majority which has helped keeping the infections down combined with the social distancing we Finns are (in) famous for. This behaviour has been very negative for bars and restaurants. At the time of writing the bars have taken a lot bigger economic hit compared to the breweries. However, there are worried minds among the breweries that the beginning of 2021 will be tough as by tradition many Finns choose to

keep a dry January. This combined with the restrictions for pubs might be the nail in coffin for many smaller breweries."

Finally, it was reported in Sweden that, for the first week of December, the revenue loss for bars and restaurants was 74%. Tomas said, "The breweries focused on restaurant sales and export were more impacted by the pandemic than ones focused more on sales through Systembolaget. The Swedish government offered a period with lower employer contribution fees, which helped a lot of breweries. But regardless, during the pandemic there have been a lot of bankruptcies and in December a third of the respondents in a questionnaire to bars and restaurants could foresee a future bankruptcy if the pandemic and the restrictions continue for long."

When we sit nursing a takeaway beer during this latest lockdown, let's remember that we are not alone; pubs and breweries are suffering all across Europe. Consequently, when we are finally allowed out, regardless of where you sit with Brexit, we will all need to rally together to go and support our wonderful European pubs and breweries. That said, sadly, it is clear that many will be turning off their lights for the last time in 2021.

Christine Cryne

Note 1: these are companies who produce beer but don't have a brewery. Their main business has to be beer; a supermarket with a 'house brand beer' cannot be recognised as a beer firm.

Note 2: Shelton Brothers, named after a Prohibition era bootlegging gang, were a major importer of beers into the USA which was put into liquidation by their bank in November.

See <https://www.foodandwine.com/news/americas-most-influential-beer-importer-is-going-out-of-business>.

CAMRA'S PULLING TOGETHER CAMPAIGN

- 1** Pubs, clubs, brewers and cider makers need customers to support them to make sure they can survive through the latest lockdown.
- 2** We ask people to support pubs, clubs, brewers and cider makers by using takeaway and delivery services – and we help them do that by promoting where and how they can.
- 3** The beer and pub industry is a force for good and continues to do amazing work to help the COVID response in their local communities.
- 4** Consumers want to get back to the pub, enjoy cask beer, and have access to local and independent brands.



WETHERSPOON'S

Further to my report on Revolution Bars in the last edition (page 27), their branch at Clapham Junction was one of the properties on which they were hoping to renegotiate the rent. It would appear that nothing came of that because, on 3 December, it reopened as a new JDW outlet called the London and South Western. The conversion reportedly cost £860,000 and, commendably, JDW retained 22 of Revolution's staff members. See also page 11.

It is, I suppose, fame of sorts. The Christmas edition of BBC Radio 4's *Dead Ringers* programme included a sketch involving an impression of Tim Martin. It wasn't particularly flattering but it did at least give a mention to the pub trade's problems.

Meanwhile, the company's genuine publicity will remain in the safe hands of Eddie Gershon's company, Gershon Media Relations for a further five years. The contract gives it responsibility for running JDW's press office, its public relations (both general and financial), crisis management and producing the in-house magazine, *Wetherspoon News*. Rather than the Brexit coverage to which we have become accustomed, the Winter 2020/21 edition has extensive coverage of COVID issues. Some of it makes for interesting – and controversial – reading. That said, there were complaints when certain selected pages were displayed in some pub windows. If you were not able to get hold of a copy of the 120 page printed edition, it is now available on JDW's website.

FULLER'S

Fuller's half-year results to 26 September showed a loss before tax of £22.2 million. Pubs were closed during this period for 14 out of the 26 weeks but, while sales in pubs outside London were 92% of the previous year's figure, the situation in London was not so good. The company remains financially secure because of the value of its freehold estate. Chief Executive Simon Emeny commented, *"We know our customers want to come back, we know they trust us to look after them and provide a safe and sensible environment to enjoy a great Fuller's experience and, over and above this, we have a dedicated and passionate team of people with the ability and desire to delight, surprise and welcome back those customers. This business is armed with a well-invested and well-balanced, freehold estate, excellent people, robust financial foundations, a clear and consistent strategy, and the drive and desire to lead the way out of this crisis. The long-term future for Fuller's looks positive."*

CAMDEN TOWN

AB InBev announced in November that Camden Town Brewery, which it took over in 2015 for £85 million, was to be fully integrated into the company's UK business operation, Budweiser Brewing Group UK&I, as from January. Founder Jasper Cuppaidge is being retained as a consultant but when asked about possible job losses, an AB InBev spokesman said it would retain 'most of the talent' and that, *"We are aiming to reduce any potential total impact to a minimum by reviewing alternative opportunities for any employees within the company."* No doubt the dreaded synergies will strike again. Production will continue at Camden's existing sites in Enfield and Kentish Town.

MITCHELLS & BUTLERS

The operators of the All Bar One, O'Neill's and Harvester chains may have to ask investors for emergency funding. A report in the *Guardian* on 8 January said that the company's cash reserves were down to £125 million and, despite all their outlets being closed, they were facing costs of £40 million per month and had a £50 million debt repayment coming due on 15 March. The article says that Joe Lewis, the majority shareholder in Tottenham Hotspur Football Club, and racehorse owner John Magnier, who between them own nearly half of M&B's shares, approve of the move. The view of one analyst was that, *"Longer term, with a mainly freehold, well invested estate, M&B looks well placed to capture market share from a damaged hospitality sector."*

OAKMAN GROUP

Encouragingly, the Oakman Group, which operates 27 pubs in the south of England and the West Midlands, is looking to expand. They currently have one pub inside the M25, the Beech House in Hampton Hill (TW12 1NY). Historically, the company has raised capital informally from private investors but now it is planning a share release to raise £4.5 million. The aim is to have an estate of around 50 pubs by 2026. If they are successful, they should not have any problems in finding pubs to buy, so long as they can get there ahead of the developers. See also page 28.

BLACKROSE LOOK TO EXPAND

Blackrose, the pub management company owned by property investment company, Aprirose, have engaged the prominent hospitality sector agents Fleurets to add to their portfolio of 41 pubs. They are particularly looking to move into 'affluent and cosmopolitan' suburban London. Their targets are large pubs with a food offer, or the potential to add food and preferably with an outside area. Blackrose were reported to be leading the bids for the 42 pubs which the Competition and Markets Authority required Stonegate and Ei to sell following Stonegate's takeover of Ei.

BRAIN'S

This, sadly, is a tale of our times. On 14 December, Chief Executive Alastair Darby, previously of Cameron's, Marston's and Mitchells & Butlers, announced that the company had sought advice from investment banking advisers and, as a consequence, was effectively up for sale. Mr Darby had previously told BBC News, *"You know, you can't just keep chipping away at an industry, knocking it down, expecting it to get back up again in great shape. Every time we lose turnover, we lay off people, we have to close pubs, sell pubs, the business gets smaller and weaker, and that will be not just us, that will be affecting everybody in this sector."* This was before the 'firebreak' lockdown in Wales in early November. The outcome however was a quite different arrangement. Marston's, now, of course, a pub owning business, are to rent Brain's portfolio of 156 pubs (101 managed and 55 tenanted). Marston's already have 106 pubs in Wales. The pubs will remain branded as Brain's and will continue to serve Brain's beers.

Nik Antona, CAMRA's National Chairman said, *"Restrictions over the last year due to COVID-19 have put a*

huge pressure on the hospitality industry. It's clear that there has not been enough support to protect even a well-established business such as Brains, never mind smaller pubs, breweries and cider producers across Wales. This could be the first of many hospitality businesses forced to take drastic action to survive. The UK and Welsh Governments must work together to provide the industry with further financial support now or we anticipate that there will be even more job losses and closures." It is expected that the transfer will be completed in February.

In the necessary statement to the Stock Exchange, Chairman John Rhys said, "This agreement marks the formation of a lasting strategic relationship with Marston's which secures the future of Brains' pubs and 1,300 of our employees within them. We know and trust Marston's to be excellent custodians of our pubs and, whilst this is not a decision we have taken lightly, we are confident that both our pubs – and our pubs teams – will thrive under their stewardship. Furthermore, this transaction enables Brains to recapitalise its balance sheet and continue its long heritage as an independent entity, preserving this great Welsh business for generations to come."

The original reports suggested that Brain's would continue to brew but, at the beginning of January, came reports that the brewery, which is only two years old, would close with Brain's beers being produced 'somewhere in England'. Marston's are, of course, junior partners to Carlsberg UK in the Carlsberg Marstons Brewing Company. I would have expected CMBC to become involved in supplying Brain's pubs in some way anyway and they must be the logical candidates to take over brewing the Brain's brands. A sad end of 140 years of brewing history.

RESTAURANT GROUP BUY BACK PUBS

Last March, the Restaurant Group (TRG) put the pub chain Food & Fuel, acquired in 2018 for £14.9 million, into

administration. They have now agreed to buy three of the eleven sites from the administrator for £895,000. These are the Queens in Crouch End and the Queens Arms in Pimlico, plus a Coco Momo café bar in Kensington. The Roebuck in Chiswick was acquired in a subsequent deal. TRG also own the Brunning & Price chain, to which TRG transferred the Steam Packet in Chiswick, which wasn't included in the administration. All of the other F&F sites have been sold as going concerns, mostly to Market Taverns, with two leased sites returning to their freehold owners.

BREWDOG

BrewDog acquired the London based Hawkes Cider in 2018 and transferred production to one of its sites in Aberdeenshire. Co-founder and Chief Executive James Watt has however now admitted that this was a mistake. He said in a LinkedIn post that they had 'ripped the soul' out of the company because its main selling point was that it was made in London, with apples pressed fresh on site. Consequently, production is to return to London in expanded premises. Well done them for admitting that they were wrong.

INTELLIGENT KEGS

A company called the Smart Container Company Ltd, based in Pontypridd, South Wales, has come up with an idea which they hope will reduce wastage in the brewing industry, currently estimated at £5 billion per annum. The device, called KegTracker, is attached to a keg or similar container and, using artificial intelligence (AI), provides monitoring information in 'real time' on the state of the keg and its contents in order to avoid spoilage along the supply chain between brewery and pub. The company's vision is to 'eliminate waste, contributing to a sustainable future' and I'm sure that the industry will welcome any cost saving initiative in these difficult times. The system was developed with the assistance of a Government investment grant.



One of CAMRA's aims during the lockdown is to support pubs and breweries by asking people to buy their beer direct from them and not from supermarkets. There is, of course, currently a problem with pubs making off-sales but not so with breweries or off-licences. That said, not everyone has easy access to a local brewery or you may be looking for a wider choice, including cider and perry. Consequently, as part of its Pulling Together campaign, CAMRA has joined up with the on-line delivery service Brew2You. Through their website or using their 'app' you can order a wide range of beer, mostly for delivery. There are also some sites where you can place orders for collection.

As an example of the benefit to small breweries, Buster Grant of Brecon Brewery said, "Brew2You has been a great success story for us. With pubs closing due to the restrictions, we needed to add to our online presence and CAMRA's Brew2You site was the perfect fit. It was a really easy site to set up, and the system works really well, and is very intuitive. With the launch of our partnership with the Welsh Rugby Union, Brew2You was an ideal place to sell these new beers to a much wider audience, and we've had plenty of positive feedback. We look forward to expanding what we can offer on Brew2You."

Any brewery or cider producer who would like to register on Brew2You can do so through the website. There is a small fee.

Health and wellbeing

I'm not going to bang on about it because regular readers know my views on such events as DryJanuary and anyway, it is over now. I just wonder why, at a time like this, people would want to deprive themselves of anything enjoyable.

On the other hand, this year's TryJanuary has been extended beyond the end of January until whenever the pubs reopen. TryJanuary is a volunteer-led, online community that encourages consumers to continue supporting small, independent beer businesses during January, a notoriously difficult trading month in a normal year, let alone when pubs and clubs are locked down again. CAMRA has supported TryJanuary since it began and has sponsored the campaign since 2020. People are also invited to join the TryJanuary online community to help their mental health and wellbeing. The website, which features an online directory of beer businesses and listings for virtual events that any groups, pubs or brewers are holding, can be found at <https://www.tryjanuary.com/>.

NOWHERE TO GO

This is an interesting, if sad, case study as to the effect of pub closures on particular groups. The Cock Tavern in Somers Town was not able to open in Tier 2 because it does not have a kitchen and will, of course, now be closed until further notice. The manager told the *Camden New Journal* (18 December), "It's difficult because this is an old person's pub really. It's like their front room and it's where they socialise. Many of our customers live by themselves and this is their community. At the moment I see them walking around Camden with nothing to do." Let's hope that they will still be around when the pub reopens.

STEPPING FORWARD

On the basis that their 28 pubs across the Home Counties and the Midlands have the space, some have car parks and,

most importantly, they have large COVID-safe refrigerators, the Oakman Group pub chain offered their premises to the Government for use as vaccination centres. They see it as enlightened self-interest. Chief Executive Dermot King told the *Morning Advertiser*, "The only route to any normality is through mass vaccination and for that the NHS needs to be able to work at scale. The entire hospitality industry is desperate to reopen as quickly as possible before we have huge scale redundancies across the sector. The hospitality sector has the venues, it has the infrastructure, the venues are sitting empty, and our offer even includes a contribution towards the cost of the scheme. We want to help the Government and the people of the UK beat Covid-19 because the quicker we're vaccinated, the more lives we save, the more jobs we save, the more businesses we save, and we're prepared to do whatever it takes to see that happen."

Over the next four months Oakman would be in line to collect something like £250,000 in business support grants, as announced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on 5 January. Oakman would however be prepared to forego the grants. As Mr King added, "Clearly, the money offered by the Chancellor would help us in the short-term, but realistically the only way all of us can get back to normal is to get the country vaccinated."

BrewDog also offered help. On New Year's Eve, James Watt, one of their founders, sent a Tweet saying, "We would like to offer our closed BrewDog venues to help with a quick roll out of the vaccine. For free. We have waiting areas, huge refrigerators, separate rooms for vaccinations and an ace team who can help organised. We want to help." Scotland's First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon, acknowledged the offer, saying that the offer would be passed to her vaccination team.

Tributes

JEAN HILLS

I have received the following message from Ron Andrews. Just before Christmas I had a phone call from Doug Carter. He had the sad news to inform me that Jean Hills, his partner

of many years, had passed on. She had died in her sleep after having suffered a heart attack. She did not quite make her 60th birthday. Jean had already put up Christmas decorations and food and drink had been obtained. Many London CAMRA members will recall Jean's smile and great sense of humour. She spent a few years as social secretary on the Enfield & Barnet branch committee and arranged

a couple of minibus trips to pubs and breweries. Jean and Doug originally lived in Ponders End but had moved to Rayne, near Braintree, to be near Doug's work at Stanstead Airport.



TONY EASTWOOD

Many CAMRA members will know of the Small Beer Agency from Lincoln which has supplied many CAMRA beer festivals over the years. Their founder and chairman, Tony Eastwood, has passed away at the age of 72.

The company began as an off licence in Lincoln in 1980, in partnership with Jude, his wife, and grew to become a major player in the cask beer wholesale business. The company also owns two pubs in Lincoln, the Victoria and the Golden Eagle, as well as the Eagle in Boston. There are also off-licences in Sheffield and Cleethorpes. Tony was also a director of the Castle Rock brewery and had been chairman of CAMRA's Lincoln Branch. Their son Rob, who now runs the business with his wife Karen, paid this tribute, "People have described my dad as a real giant of the cask ale industry without ever having brewed a drop of beer. He was passionate about championing British beer and we're determined to carry on his legacy by ensuring cask ale continues to thrive."

WHAT IS WHATPUB?



WhatPub? is CAMRA's on-line pub database. It is available for all to use, not just CAMRA members; just go to <https://whatpub.com/>. It features some 38,000 pubs which currently serve real ale plus records of non-real ale and closed pubs. All of the information has been compiled by CAMRA members and no fee is charged – or sought – for inclusion. You will find opening times, descriptions, facilities, maps and of course details of the real ale and cider on offer. You can search by specific pub name or general location. It is also possible for all users, again not just CAMRA members, to submit updates for entries (factual ones, not contentious customer reviews, please!).

In normal times you will find opening times, descriptions, facilities, maps and of course details of the real ale and cider on offer. In the light of the current crisis however, WhatPub is being temporarily updated with details of which pubs have now reopened and also includes an 'additional services' filter to help you find pubs and local brewery taps which are offering take-outs and/or deliveries. Please understand however that given the frequent changes that are occurring, we cannot guarantee that every entry is up to date.

WhatPub is, incidentally, not to be confused with the Good Beer Guide 'app'. Good Beer Guide pubs are, of course, included but you cannot simply search for GBG pubs in a particular area.

whatpub.com

WhatPub? update 42

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 real ale); all pubs that add or remove real ale; 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.

NEW & REOPENED PUBS & CLUBS CONVERTED TO REAL ALE

INNER LONDON

EC4, UNION (Union Bar & Grill Ltd), 35 Old Bailey. Closed during March lockdown. **PATERNOSTER CHOP HOUSE** relocated here in December 2020 from Paternoster Square. 5 draught keg beers on menu.

E4, DOVECOTE (Ei Group), Friday Hill. Reopened.

SE1, MATCHBOXSE1, Borough Market. Bar and restaurant located behind the Rake pub in Borough Market.

SE9, BERRY & BARREL, 18 Well Hall Pde. Family-run micropub serving craft beers, real ales, wines, gins and cocktails. Opened in a former dry cleaner's in December.

SE10, OLD JOINERY, Ravensbourne Wharf, Norman Rd. Bar and live music venue with a large outside area overlooking Deptford Creek.

SE15, GOLDEN ANCHOR, 16 Evelina Rd. Featured in 'Saving Britain's Pubs with Tom Kerridge', a real ale was installed as part of the makeover.

SE18, LORD HERBERT (Ei Group), 47 Herbert Rd. Reopened under new management in December, following the retirement of long standing landlord John Hanley. Guinness and lager are the mainstay but real ale is also on offer: Wadworth 6X.

SW11, REVOLUTION (Inventive Leisure), 276-288 Lavender Hill. Renamed **LONDON & SOUTH WESTERN**, opened as a Wetherspoon's in December.

OUTER LONDON

BECKENHAM, BR3WERY, 253 Beckenham Rd. This microbrewery (whose name derives from its post code)

opened its new premises, with tap-room, in December. The current takeaway range does include beers from other local breweries, and this will continue even after new brewing equipment becomes operational – delivery of which is expected in January 2021.

CHISLEHURST, COCKPIT, 4 Royal Pde. Chislehurst's first micropub, opening its doors in late December but currently only able to offer a takeaway service. At the time of writing this operates from Thursday to Sunday in the afternoon and early evening. A choice of real ales from small local breweries is available. The house beer, named PIT, is a pale ale brewed by BritHop.

CROYDON, SIGNAL TAP ROOM, 8 Stirling Way, Beddington Farm Rd. Signal's taproom is part of the brewery premises, and is normally open on a Saturday afternoon. Up to 6 keg beers will be served, subject to availability.

KINGSTON, OLD MOOT HOUSE (Tavern Property Co), 88 London Rd. Finally reopened as **KINGSTON 1** after three year conversion to hotel with integral bar and brasserie. No real ale.

KINGSTON, WOODY'S, 5 Ram Passage, High St. Real ale reinstated: one changing beer.

PUBS & CLUBS CLOSED, CONVERTED, OR CEASED SELLING REAL ALE

INNER LONDON

EC2, DAVY'S, 25 Basinghall St. Closed following lease expiry, future uncertain.

EC3, ADRIATICO. Not reopening after 2nd Covid lockdown, future uncertain.

EC3, REVOLUTION (New Inventive Bar Co). Announced in November they will not be returning to the America Square site.

EC4, FOUR SISTERS TOWNHOUSE. Closed following Four Sisters Leisure going insolvent, building being refurbished, and for lease.

EC4, PATERNOSTER CHOP HOUSE. Closed after relocation to former Union bar. Current occupancy of site unknown

E13, SWAN (Admiral Taverns). Licence surrendered by Admiral in February, pub boarded up by December.

E13, VICTORIA TAVERN. Lease expired in May. Pub

awaiting demolition and replacement by flats under 2016 planning application.

SE15, HOLLYDALE TAVERN (Wellington). Closed. Ground floor for lease.

SW1, RILEYS SPORTS BAR (Rileys Sports Bars (2014) Ltd). Closed in March; 80 Haymarket building was being refurbished.

SW8, DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE (Mendoza). Converted to Avenida, a Brazilian burger house/restaurant in December.

SW12, WOLFGANG'S BEER HAUS. Has not reopened since the March lockdown.

SW16, NORBURY (Wellington). Did not reopen after March lockdown. Lease handed back to Wellington and likely to be for sale.

SW17, DYNAMO. Has become LOVE TRIANGLE, a pizza cafe since August, but with a small selection of canned craft beers.

SW18, GROSVENOR ARMS (Ei Group/Frontier Pubs). Apart from a limited pop-up service, has remained closed since March and is no longer listed on the Frontier website.

W3, CASTLE (Fuller's). Reports of signage removal in December. Pub sold to developer in February.

W4, CONNOLLY'S (Ei Group). No real ale.

W13, STAR & SCORPION (Star). Handpumps removed during second lockdown. Was STAR & ANCHOR.

WC1, YORKSHIRE GREY (Ei Group). Tenant handed back keys on London going into Tier 3.

OUTER LONDON

CROYDON, ORCHARD, 116 Orchard Way. Closed and sold towards end of 2019. Planning app to retain pub converting upstairs to four flats resubmitted Nov 2020 after previous refusal.

RICHMOND, HOPE (Ei Group). Reopened as the **RICHMOND CLUB**, a members' club. No real ale. ABK Hell and Weissbier beer on draught.

OTHER CHANGES

INNER LONDON

N17, WHITE HART (Punch Taverns). Long closed, now demolished.

NW9, WISHING WELL (Ei Group). Now back in the hands of Terry O'Sullivan under his Quillrise company following expiry of Ei Group lease. Was the first of his Wishing Well chain to open in 1994.

NW10, SHOP. Renamed **ARABELLA'S HOUSE** Bar & Restaurant.

SE18, GREYHOUND (Star). Lease transferred to Hawthorn Leisure Community Pubs in June.

SE26, ALFRED (Town Centre Inns). Reverted to **PRINCE ALFRED**.

SW4, 64TH & SOCIAL. Renamed **SIXTY FOUR**. A cocktail bar with a couple of draught beers from Camden.

SW12, WE BROUGHT BEER. Reopened without the seating in September as a **CLAPTON CRAFT** off licence.

SW18, HALLOWED BELLY (Pioneer Hospitality). Reverted to **OPEN PAGE**, 'Bar & Dining' with keg beers in December.

W1, COCO MOMO (TRG/Brunning & Price). Leasehold acquired for £200,000 by Santi & Santi aka Marylebone Leisure. Renamed **HOME MARYLEBONE**.

OUTER LONDON

BROMLEY, HOP & RYE (Stonegate). Already reported closed, demolished in November.

CAN'T HEAR THE PUB'S TELLY?
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THE FAMILY BREWERS OF BRITAIN

Congratulations to Roger Protz for winning the Gold Award for 'Best Beer Writer, Print Publications' for the *Family Brewers of Britain* at the *British Guild of Beer Writers* annual awards in December.

Roger's seminal work is now available on Amazon Kindle. You can download it using the Kindle 'app' or through Amazon for £9.99. The hardback version is still available from the CAMRA Shop on-line for £25.00. It is well recommended. The photographs alone make the printed version the better option in my view.

RECOGNITION FOR LEARN & DISCOVER

CAMRA's Learn & Discover web platform was also shortlisted for the British Guild of Beer Writers awards, in their case in the 'Best Beer Writer – Corporate Communications' category. There is a wealth of knowledge available here. To start, try <https://camra.org.uk/learn-discover/the-basics/>. L&D didn't win but I'm pleased to say that the winner was London's Brixton Brewery for their *Characters of Coldharbour* campaign. You can find more about this on their website

<https://www.brixtonbrewery.com/>. It is also well worth a look.

LONDON'S BEST BEER, PUBS & BARS

Des de Moor's revision of the above is now, inevitably, on hold. Des wrote a fascinating article in January's edition of the CAMRA paper, *What's Brewing*, reflecting on the changes that he has observed, both between the last edition in 2015 and a year ago, when he had almost finished the revision, and what has happened since. You can also find Des's views of the situation on his own website <http://desdemoor.co.uk/>.

OTHER WINNERS

Since I've mentioned the BGBW awards several times, I'll finish the job by also congratulating Jaega Wise of the Wild Card Brewery in Walthamstow for winning the Gold Award in the Best Beer Broadcaster category for her contributions to BBC Radio Four's the Food Programme.

The overall award, the Michael Jackson Gold Award for Beer Writer of the Year 2020, went to Lily Waite who won a gold and two silvers in different categories.

LETTERS

No letters have been received for this edition but all readers – not just CAMRA members – are invited to submit letters for publication whenever they feel so inclined. Please remember however that the letters column is intended for debate and constructive criticism. The editor reserves the right not to print any contributions that are otherwise. Please e-mail letters to: ldnews.hedger@gmail.com. If you do not have e-mail, hard-copy letters may be sent to the same address given for subscriptions on page 3, addressed to London Drinker Letters. In both cases, please state 'letter for publication' so as to avoid any misunderstandings.



If you are one of the people who are keeping the country going at this difficult time, whoever you are or whatever you do, thank you.

Well, hello and a Happy New Year to you. Strangely, as I write this, in the first week of January, it doesn't feel a lot like the 2021 we were looking forward to when I composed the last Idle Moments in early November. Still, at least we are not still in lockdown. No, we are in lockdown again! Never mind, we have a couple of vaccines being rolled out now – and at my age I'm being told I should get my first dose by mid-February; we'll see. . .

So, that's the fun bit out of the way. How about a non-rhyming limerick; I haven't blown the dust off them for a while. Here's one of mine from 1992:

There was an old soldier named Dewar
Who'd made a long career out of war.
But when he found that his foe
Had stolen his shoe,
said, "This time you've just gone too far!"

Now let's do some number puzzles. I hope they're not too obscure; sometimes I have trouble sorting them out the day after I've composed them:

1. 17 P at CJS
2. 206 B in the (A)HB
3. 5 VC by M
4. 29 is the AN of C
5. 1441 F of KCC
6. 2 V in a SQ
7. 31 is the HN whose S is OOT
8. 2 S in a BP
9. 6 TTH of G and the P
10. 8 A of the WV at H

This time 5BY4 follows on from November's and is subtitled "Avian Taxonomy (Coastal)". It includes birds you would be most likely to see at the coast or in estuaries. Watch out, though; I've included a couple specially selected to confuse:

- | | | |
|--------------------|----|--------------------------|
| 1. Oystercatcher | A. | Fratercula arctica |
| 2. Gannet | B. | Stercorarius parasiticus |
| 3. Common Tern | C. | Calidris alpina |
| 4. Dunlin | D. | Larus argentatus |
| 5. Puffin | E. | Sula bassana |
| 6. Manx Shearwater | F. | Sterna hirundo |
| 7. Herring Gull | G. | Numenius arquata |
| 8. Arctic Skua | H. | Haematopus ostralegus |
| 9. Curlew | I. | Alle alle |
| 10. Little Auk | J. | Puffinus puffinus |

And so, with an air of awful inevitability, we come to the general trivia bit. It being the start of a new year (perhaps not quite so new when this hits your inbox) I have selected questions based on significant anniversaries. They are not necessarily centenaries but they are all decennials, so if I am looking for a year as an answer, it will end with a one:

1. Russia launched the World's first space station on 19 April 1971. What was its name?
2. The FA Cup Final held on 23 March 1891 was the first to use an invention of J A Brodie of Liverpool. What was it?
3. Which French impressionist painter was born in Limoges on 25 February 1841?
4. On 5 April 1971, Mrs Fran Phipps became the first woman to reach – where?
5. The first licensed betting shops were opened in Britain on 1 May – but in what year?
6. The sculptor Gutzon Borglum was born in Bear Lake, Idaho on 25 March 1871. What is his most famous sculpture?

7. Capital punishment was abolished on 8 May 1921 in what European country?
8. On 31 March 1921, at Leicester, which jockey rode Gay Lord to the first of his 4,870 wins?
9. The trial of Adolf Eichmann for war crimes started on 11 April 1961. In what city was it held?
10. On 27 February 1951, the 22nd Amendment to the United States constitution was ratified. What was its purpose/effect? Right, that's yer lot; you can go and do something interesting now. Have a good spring.

Andy Pirson

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

Number puzzles:

1. 5 Toes on a Human Foot
2. 4 Last Songs by Richard Strauss
3. 16 Formula One Grand Prix Wins of Stirling Moss
4. 15 Matches in the Six Nations Rugby Championship
5. 163 Floors of the Burj Khalifa in Dubai
6. 4 Laps of the Track in a Speedway Race
7. 8 Triangular Faces on an Octahedron
8. 4 Firkins in a Barrel
9. 168 Prime Numbers Under One Thousand
10. 169 Squares in the London Drinker Crossword Grid

5BY4: Avian Taxonomy

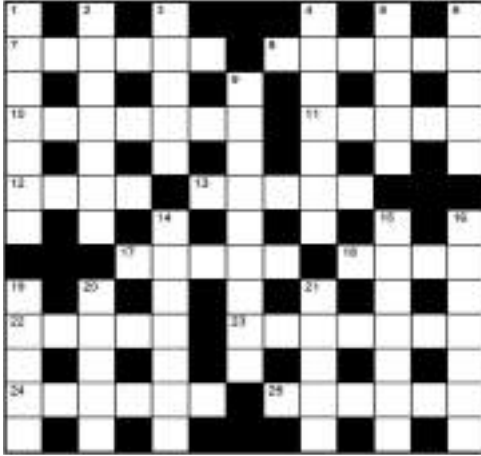
1. Wren – Troglodytes troglodytes
2. Coot – Fulica atra
3. Black-Headed Gull – Larus ridibundus
4. Kestrel – Falco tinnunculus
5. Jackdaw – Corvus monedula
6. Swift – Apus apus
7. Mallard – Anas platyrhynchos
8. Mute Swan – Cygnus olor
9. Grey Heron – Ardea cinerea
10. Mistle Thrush – Turdus viscivorus

General knowledge

1. The Queen made her first televised Christmas message to the Commonwealth in 1957.
2. The former President of the USA who died on 26 December 1972, at the age of 88 was Harry S Truman.
3. Samuel Pepys began his famous diary on 1 January in 1660.
4. The Manchester Ship Canal first opened to traffic on 1 January in 1894.
5. On 2 January 1839, Louis Daguerre took the world's first photograph of the moon.
6. The first Roman Catholic to become President of the USA was John F Kennedy.
7. And the first Roman Catholic to become Vice President of the USA was Joe Biden.
8. The longest month in the year is October (at 31 days plus one hour, at the end of British Summer Time)
9. We all know that the tallest free-standing structure in the UK is Emley Moor Transmitting Station but the tallest structure in the UK is Skelton Transmitting Station in Cumbria, a cable stayed tower that at 365 metres is about 35 metres taller than Emley Moor.
10. The arena that contains features called dedans, tambour and penthouses is a real (or royal) tennis court.

Crossword

Compiled by DAVE QUINTON
£20 prize to be won



Name

Address

All correct entries received by first post on 24 March will be entered into a draw for the prize.

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

For preference, entries should be submitted to: London Drinker Crossword, 25 Valens House, Upper Tulse Hill, London SW2 2RX, but in the current circumstances, we will accept entries in any format that you can manage.

DECEMBER/JANUARY'S SOLUTION



ACROSS

7. Man that is a beginner. [6]
8. Isn't the Queen able to run? [6]
10. After a short time release a police officer. [7]
11. Come back with first real friend. [5]
12. Pork pie manufacturer. [4]
13. Model invested in prophet guide. [5]
17. Sudden reduction of small swelling. [5]
18. One taken in by mean couple. [4]
22. Clothing I see on vessel. [5]
23. New York embraces anything that's against the rules. [7]
24. They never stop trying. [6]
25. Censor's standard. [6]

DOWN

1. Complain about grappler's first fight. [7]
2. Well liked tree around university. [7]
3. Obscure setter's first to be included. [5]
4. Bird that may cause trouble. [7]
5. Crossing from Brest, I leave France. [5]
6. They can hold their beer. [5]
9. Book collection's misguided statement. [9]
14. Place cut off, worried but calm. [7]
15. Get sack about poor cleaning. [7]
16. Requests for customers to carry roubles. [7]
19. Having trouble with food after scampi starter. [5]
20. Cancel article from yearbook. [5]
21. Copper bar from the West Indies. [5]

Winner of the prize for the October Crossword:
C J Tansley, Aylesbury

Other correct entries were received from:

Tony Alpe, Pat Andrews, L Bamford, Hugh Breach, Kelvin Brewster, Joe Daly, John Dodd, Jonathan Edwards, Elvis Evans, Nick Goodwin, Paul Gray, Matthew Griffiths, Caroline Guthrie, Gerry Guthrie, Stuart Guthrie, Peter Haines, 'Shropshire' Dave Hardy, John Heath, William Hill, Carol Jenkins, Claire Jenkins, Eric Johnstone, Mick Lancaster, Aidan Laverty, Marjorie Lopatis, Ken Mackenzie, Rob Mills, Al Mountain, Owen Munney, Dave Murphy, Paul Murphy, Paul Nicholls, Mark Nichols, Gerald Notley, Michael Oliver, Andy Phillips, Mark Pilkington, Robert Pleasants, David Renwick, Nigel Roe, Mark Thompson, Andy Wakefield, Martin Weedon, and Richard Whiting.

There were also three incorrect entries.

Please note: any mention of beer takeaway and delivery services is simply a service to readers.

It does not imply any recommendation and should you have any complaints, please take them up direct with the supplier concerned.

London Drinker has no commercial connection with any of these companies.



Campaign
for
Real Ale

SAVE
PUBS
JOIN
CAMRA

JOIN.CAMRA.ORG.UK
or call 01727 798440

Pulling together to save your local
Keep pubs alive and thriving in every community
CAMRA membership counts, join now

Why should I join CAMRA?

In 2021 CAMRA celebrates its 50th anniversary. In those years it has become one of the most successful consumer organisations in Europe. We must not rest on our laurels however. Above all, we are a campaign; we must continue to protect and promote real ale and to protect the great British pub. This work is currently even more important than ever with Government restrictions putting the hospitality sector under great strain and increasing the risk of pub closures and redevelopment happening under the cover of COVID.

CAMRA is led by volunteers, right up to its National Executive. The more of us doing the campaigning, the better. Please think about joining CAMRA.

There are lots of ways that you can contribute. Just using your local pubs regularly (when you can) is important but there are other tasks such as lobbying MPs, updating pub information, submitting beer scores or liaising with breweries. Hopefully, we will be allowed to meet as groups again before too long. We will then return to listing local branch events in our diary section. In normal times there are as many, if not more, social events as there are business meetings. If you come along, you will not be jumped on to take a job of some sort, although if after a while you feel like doing so, more the better. We appreciate that not everyone has time to give so there are no expectations.

More importantly, you will meet new friends. CAMRA members are a wonderful mix of people of all ages, from all walks of life.

In due course, we will also be able to start holding beer festivals again. Most CAMRA beer festivals need new volunteers and there is a very wide range of jobs available. There is a special sort of camaraderie among beer festival volunteers. It's hard work but there are many who, having tried it once, are hooked for life.

CAMRA also has an active Pub Heritage Group which records, celebrates and helps protect some of the nation's most important community buildings. There are some excellent pub heritage guides available.

CAMRA members can also enjoy a wealth of on-line information on our Learn & Discover platform, contributed by experts in their fields. You can also listen in to our podcast, *Pubs. Pints. People*, all about the world of beer, cider and pubs.

Although not all of them are useful at present, the material benefits of CAMRA membership are:

- Our monthly newspaper 'What's Brewing' (normally sent on-line but available as paper copy)
- Our quarterly magazine 'Beer'
- Free or discounted entry to most CAMRA beer festivals, including the Great British Beer Festival
- Discounts on CAMRA books
- Discounts at some carefully selected holiday companies
- £30 worth of vouchers (60 X 50p) for use in the pubs of those companies who are participating
- Discounts at some pubs, at their discretion

Single membership, paid by Direct Debit, costs £26.50 and Joint membership (partner at same address) £31.50. Add £2 if not paying by Direct Debit. Some concessions are available. You can find out more at <https://join.camra.org.uk> or search 'join CAMRA'.



Advertising in London Drinker

For obvious reasons, we cannot currently produce a printed version of *London Drinker*. At present, we expect the December/January edition to be available on-line only as well. If you would like to advertise in the on-line edition, please contact John Galpin, our Advertisements Manager, as below.

We will return to producing the printed version as soon as we can.

Our advertising rates will then stay as follows:

full page colour £345; full page black and white £275;

half page colour £210; half page black and white £155;

quarter page colour £115 and quarter page black and white £90.

Call John Galpin on 020 3287 2966; Mobile 07508 036835.

Email: johngalpinmedia@gmail.com or [Twitter@LDads](https://twitter.com/LDads).

London Drinker is published bi-monthly. The April/May edition will be available on-line from 31 March.

If you wish to contact the editorial team, please use Ldnews.hedger@gmail.com rather than the address above.