

FREE



Volume 48 No. 4

August/September 2026



Chris Cobbold - See page 14



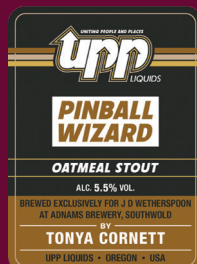
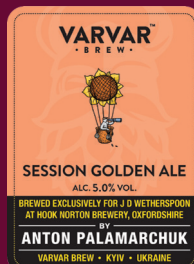
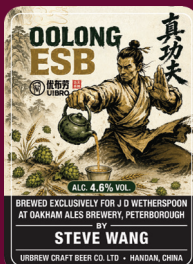
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CAMRA is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee and registered in England; company no. 1270286.

The next edition, October/November 2026, will be published on Wednesday 30 September. The editorial deadline for this issue is no later than Friday 11 September. Material for publication, including press releases, should preferably be sent by e-mail to ldnews.hedger@gmail.com. Please also use this e-mail address to contact the editor.

All contributions to this magazine are accepted on a voluntary basis only. All articles are compiled or written by the editor unless otherwise credited. Artificial Intelligence is not used. The views expressed in this magazine are those of their individual authors and are not necessarily endorsed by the editor or CAMRA.

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Subscriptions: please send either £9 for the mailing of six editions or £17 for 12 editions to Stan Tompkins, 52 Rabbs Mill House, Chiltern View Road, Uxbridge, Middx UB8 2PD. Please make cheques payable to CAMRA London Area. If you wish to pay by bank transfer, please contact treasurer@london.camra.org.uk. These prices apply to UK mail addresses only. To arrange for copies to be sent overseas, please contact us.



The tied house system has long been a bone of contention in beer drinking circles. Should those companies that own and operate pubs but do not brew have the right to insist that their tenants and franchisees buy their beer only from them, usually at above market price, and when the landlord is buying in the beer. This is, of course, in addition to the pub's rent. The situation is slightly different in the case of pub-owning breweries who are, at least, selling their own beer, but also needs reviewing.

This business model for pubcos was secured by an exemption made under European Union competition rules. When the UK left the EU, that regulation passed into UK law. The Competition and Markets Authority have been conducting an 'access to market' review into its operation for the last two years.

CAMRA had been encouraged by the review but become impatient that no progress is being made in what appears to be a simple issue. Consequently, we have decided to put the case to the public in the form of a report called *Beer in the UK*. There are a number of issues affecting pub finances, not least unregulated energy prices and employment costs, but having to pay over the odds for beers that publicans – or their customers – do not really want and being denied the right to buy in beer from more interesting and often local breweries at a more reasonable price is at the forefront of them. A more interesting beer range rather than what we have come to know now as the 'usual suspects' would also attract more customers.

The report explains three crucial points:

- Seven of the top ten selling 'craft beers' in the UK are made by just four global brewing conglomerates;
- Many of the UK's favourite 'continental' and 'import' lagers are actually brewed in the UK;
- Data from the Society of Independent Brewers and Associates (SIBA) shows that

the demand for independent beer is 280% higher than the share that they have of the pub market.

The UK's alcohol duty system is also considered to be in need of review.

CAMRA's chairman, Ash Corbett-Collins, commented, "Ordinary drinkers are being short changed when it comes to choice and quality at the bar. Our report proves how the global players are exploiting the status quo to squeeze out independent brewers, to the detriment of ordinary publicans and beer drinkers. The Government needs to step up, start taking the issue seriously, and take action that matches up to their statements about supporting pubs and the communities they serve."

Editor of the report, beer writer Tim Webb, added, "The fact that a narrow clique of multinational corporations dominates the UK brewing industry is a national embarrassment. They only make beers that suit their production facilities, ignoring the types that beer lovers want to drink. They do not know how to reverse beer's downward spiral, make little profit, and brew nothing worth exporting. They cannot grow the UK economy. The way that better, independent, brewers are excluded from the on-trade beer market is scandalous."

The report has the support of SIBA. Their chief executive, Andy Slee, said, "As Europe's largest beer consumer group, CAMRA is right to call for change for a UK brewing industry which is dominated by global beer giants which restricts access for British independent breweries. At the heart of its excellent report is a call for greater consumer choice, transparency around brewery ownership, and lower taxes for small independent breweries which SIBA wholeheartedly supports. Eighty percent of beer drinkers want to see independent beer alongside global brands on the bar, yet our indie brewers are locked out of supplying 63 per cent of pubs. This is bad for pubgoers, bad for landlords, and bad for the health and vibrancy of the British pub and beer market."

Beer in the UK (28 pages) contains a lot of information that will make readers think. It can be downloaded at camra.org.uk/beer-report.

Tony Hedger

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A complete collection of all issues of *London Drinker*, going back to the first edition in 1979, is available on-line. Go to <https://londondrinker.camra.org.uk/wordpress/> for editions from August/September 2020 onwards or www.london.camra.org.uk before that. These are all scalable to read in larger print.

CAMRA volunteers distribute copies of *London Drinker* to some 1,200 pubs and clubs in and around Greater London. Wetherspoons deliver them to all of their outlets in the area and Fuller's supply them to over 100 of their managed houses. *London Drinker* has the largest print distribution of any CAMRA local magazine. It is also available online at www.london.camra.org.uk and a link is emailed to all CAMRA members living in London who have opted to receive electronic communications.

Branch diaries

This is a list of CAMRA Greater London regional and branch events for August and September 2026, as notified at the date of production. **For full details of the events listed below and where no events are shown, please consult the branch website as listed.** If no events are listed, it does not mean that there are none taking place.

Meetings, visits and socials are open to all; everyone is welcome to come along. 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

September

- Mon 21 (7.30) Regional meeting; Counting House (Ledger Room), 50 Cornhill, EC3V 3PD

Advance notice: Thu 1 October (from 7pm)

John Young Memorial Award presentation;
Bohemia, North Finchley N12 9QH

LONDON PUBS GROUP

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

August

- Wed 19 Mildmay Line tour: (6pm) Tap East E20 1EE, (7pm) Lord Napier & Star E9 5ER, (8pm) Cock Tavern E8 1EJ, (9pm) Pocket N1 2AS, (10pm) Tapping the Admiral NW1 8SU

September

- Mon 14 (7.30) Meeting: Trinity (upstairs) SE1 1JX.
All CAMRA members interested in pub research and preservation welcome

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

CIDER

Ian White, ikwcider@icloud.com

YOUNG MEMBERS' GROUP

Dario Bertero, dbertero.w@gmail.com

Facebook: Greater London CAMRA Young Members

BEXLEY

Rob Archer, branch.contact@bexley.camra.org.uk

August

- Wed 12 (7pm) Meeting; Hangar, The Oval DA15 9ER
- Wed 26 (7pm) Social; Broken Drum, Blackfen DA15 9PT

September

- Wed 9 (7pm) Meeting; Door Hinge, Welling DA16 1TR
- Sat 19 Micropub tour; see Bromley diary for details
- Wed 23 SL3 Bus route social; see website for details

www.bexley.camra.org.uk

BROMLEY

Social Sec: Barry Phillips, social.secretary@bromley.camra.org.uk

August

- Thu 6 Farnborough BR6 social: (7.30) Change of Horses 7BB, (8pm) Woodman 7BA, (9.15) Ye Olde Whyte Lyon 8NE, (10.15) Black Horse 8NW
- Fri 14 (7pm) Cider Festival social; Orpington Liberal Club BR6 0RZ
- Sat 22 Annual Crystal Palace Triangle social with Croydon & Sutton & SE London branches: (12pm) Douglas Fir SE20 8DL, (12.50) Alma SE19 2TA. Further pubs to be visited may include White Hart SE19 2EZ, Sparrowhawk SE19 1RX, Bull & Finch SE19 1PL, Royal Albert SE19 1RX, finishing (6pm) Westow House SE19 1TX

September

- Wed 9 Hayes BR2 social: (7pm) Royal British Legion Club 7DJ, (8pm) Real Ale Way 7EB
- Mon 14 Bromley social: (7pm) Bricklayers Arms BR2 9HW, (7.40) Cork n Cask BR2 9HW, (8.30) Richmal Crompton BR1 1DS, (9.20) Partridge BR1 1HE, (10.10) Star & Garter BR1 1NZ
- Sat 19 Bromley CAMRA & Orpington Liberal Club tour of Bexley branch micropubs: (12pm) Broken Drum DA15 9PT, (1.15) Door Hinge DA16 1TR, (3.15) Bolthole DA16 2PL,

- (4.30) Kentish Belle DA7 4QW, (5.45) Long Haul DA7 5AE, (6.45) Bird & Barrel DA7 6HG

- Wed 23 Downe BR6 social: (7pm) George & Dragon 7UT, (8pm) Queens Head 7US
- Wed 30 (7.30) Committee meeting;
Orpington Liberal Club BR6 0RZ
<http://bromley.camra.org.uk/calendar/>

CROYDON & SUTTON

Social Sec: Roger Ford, 07977 984219,
social@croydon.camra.org.uk

August

- Thu 6 Worcester Park & North Cheam social: (8pm) North End Tavern KT4 8ST, then Nonsuch Inn SM3 9AA
- Wed 12 (8pm) Addiscombe social; Claret CR0 7AA
- Sat 22 (12pm) Crystal Palace Triangle; see Bromley diary for details
- Thu 27 Wallington SM6 social: (8pm) Dukes Head 0AA, then Whispering Moon 8QF

September

- Wed 2 (8pm) Addiscombe social; Cricketers CR0 7ER
- Thu 10 Sutton SM1 social: (8pm) Shinner & Sudtone 1DT, then Moon on the Hill 1DZ
- Wed 16 (8.30) Open committee meeting; Green Dragon CR0 1NA
- Wed 23 (1pm) Social; Portland Arms SE25 4PT
- Sat 26 (12pm) Bob Steel Memorial Tour; details on website

www.croydon.camra.org.uk

EAST LONDON & CITY

Branch Sec: Andy Kinch, 07757 772564, elacbranch@mail.com

September

- Wed 2 (7.30) Pig's Ear planning meeting; Black Lion, Plaistow E13 0AD
- Thu 3 (8pm) Meeting; Pembury Tavern E8 1JH
- Tue 15 (7.30) Pig's Ear planning meeting; European, Leyton E10 7EQ

www.pigsear.org.uk

ENFIELD & BARNET

Peter Graham, 07946 383498,
contact@enfieldandbarnet.camra.org.uk

August

- Tue 4 High Barnet EN5 social: (6pm) Lord Nelson 2SA, (7pm) Black Horse 4BW
- Tue 11 Palmers Green & Winchmore Hill social: (7pm) Alfred Herring N13 5TT, (7.30) Fox N13 4JD, (8pm) Dog & Duck N21 3LH
- Sat 15 (from 12pm) Botany Bay Cricket Club, East Lodge Lane, EN2 8AS
- Fri 28 (12pm) Social; Bohemia, North Finchley N12 9QH

September

- Thu 3 Southgate social: (7pm) Fishmongers Arms N21 6AD, (8pm) New Crown N14 5PH
- Wed 9 East Barnet EN4 social: (6pm) Lord Kitchener 8AS, (7pm) Railway Bell 8RR
- Sat 12 Day trip by minibus; details on website
- Tue 15 Social: (7pm) Arnos Arms N11 1AN, (8pm) Elephant N12 8NR
- Wed 23 (7.30) Ponders End Working Men's Club, 46 South St, EN3 4LB
- Tue 29 East Finchley N2 social: (7.30) Five Bells 0LZ, (8pm) Bald Faced Stag 8DL

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

KINGSTON & LEATHERHEAD

John Burns, contact@kandl.camra.org.uk

August

- Mon 3 (3pm) Quiet pint; Mitre, Richmond TW9 1UY
- Wed 5 (7.30) Pub of the Season; Anglers, Walton KT12 2PF
- Sat 15 (7.30) Festival social; Bricklayers Arms, Kingston KT1 3DS



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Branch diaries

- Thu 27 New Malden/Berrylands Clive Taylor Memorial Walk: (12.30) Royal Oak, (1.30) Glasshouse, (2.30) Berrylands (via rail replacement bus), 3.30 Woodies, 4.30 Watchman

September

- Wed 2 (7.30) Meeting; Rising Sun, Epsom KT18 5DX
<https://kandl.camra.org.uk/>

NORTH LONDON

Contact John Cryne, treasurer@northlondon.camra.org.uk

August

- Tue 4 (7.30) Pub of the Season; Crown & Anchor, Euston NW1 2HL
- Wed 12 (2pm) Leisure social; Mossy Well, Muswell Hill N10 3SH
- Tue 25 South Kilburn tour with West London: (4pm) Clifton NW8 0JT, (5.30) Carlton Tavern, (7pm) Queen's Arms, (8.30) Old Bell, (9.30 optional) Priory Tavern

September

- Tue 8 Hampstead tour: (7.15) King William IV, (8.30) Flask, (9.15) Old White Bear
- Wed 16 Stoke Newington N16 social: (4.30) Mackintosh Brewery & Ale House plus optional tour, (7pm) Prince (Kynaston Rd), (8.15) Coach & Horses, (9.30) Rochester Castle
- Tue 29 Holborn GBG launch; details tba
<https://northlondon.camra.org.uk>

RICHMOND & HOUNSLOW

Damian Smeaton, 020 8898 1356 (leave message), contact@rh.camra.org.uk

August

- Mon 3 (7.30) Meeting; Admiral Nelson, Whitton TW2 7BB
- Sat 29 (3pm) Festival social; West London Trades Union Club, Acton W3 6ND

September

- Tue 1 (7.30) Meeting; Cross Lances, Hounslow TW3 3TU
- Sun 6 Beer by bus: Prince of Wales, Fulwell TW2 5QR; then Twickenham (William Webb Ellis), Brentford (Black Dog), Kew Bridge (Express Tavern), Chiswick (George IV), finish Hammersmith
rh.camra.org.uk

SOUTH EAST LONDON

Andrew Large, 07794 350930, contact@sel.camra.org.uk

August

- Tue 4 Nunhead social; meet (7pm) Herne Tavern SE22 0RR
- Sat 15 Greenwich social; meet (12pm) Gate Clock SE10 9RB
- Sat 22 (12pm) Crystal Palace Triangle; see Bromley diary for details

September

- Tue 1 (7.30) Branch meeting and social; Hand & Marigold SE1 3UH
- Wed 9 Kennington social; meet (7pm) Old Red Lion SE11 4RS
- Sat 26 Visit to St Albans Beer & Cider Festival; meet (12pm) Membership stand
- Tue 29 Waterloo East social; meet (7pm) Anchor & Hope SE1 8LP
<https://sel.camra.org.uk>

SOUTH WEST LONDON

Mike Flynn, 07751 231191, info@swl.camra.org.uk
Cycling: Geoff Strawbridge, geoff.camra@gmail.com

September

- Wed 9 (7.30) Meeting and (8pm) Branch AGM; Sultan, 78 Norman Rd, SW19 1BT
- Wed 23 Streatham SW16 social: (7pm) Rebel Inn 1BS, then to include Leigham Well 2BT and finish Railway SSD
<https://swl.camra.org.uk>

WATFORD & DISTRICT

Andrew Vaughan, 07854 988152, branch@watford.camra.org.uk

August

- Fri 7 Summer London pub tour: meet (5.30) Barrowboy & Banker, 6-8 Borough High St SE1 9QQ

September

- Sat 12 Batchworth Heath & Woodcock Hill WD3 social: (3pm) Ye Olde Greene Manne 1QB, (4.30) Rose & Crown 1PP
- Mon 28 (8pm) Meeting; Essex Arms, Watford WD17 3EG
www.watford.camra.org.uk

WEST LONDON

Social Sec: Paul Young, 07591 125486, pyoung3114@aol.com
Paul Charlton, 07835 927357, contact@westlondon.camra.org.uk

August

- Wed 12 Westminster social: (2pm) Feathers SW1H 0BH, (3pm) Buckingham Arms SW1H 9EU, (4pm) Speaker SW1P 2HA
- Tue 25 South Kilburn tour; see North London diary for details

September

- Tue 8 Charing Cross social: (2pm) Lemon Tree WC2N 4BP, (3pm) Stranded WC2R 0QN, (4pm) Ship & Shovell WC2N 5PH.
- Mon 21 Marylebone social: (2pm), Golden Eagle W1U 2NY, (3pm) Barley Mow W1U 6QW, (4pm) Metropolitan Bar NW1 5LA
www.westlondon.camra.org.uk

WEST MIDDLESEX

Branch contact: Ben Hart, ben@westmiddx.camra.org.uk
Social Sec: Bob O'Brien, 01895 673266

August

- Tue 4 (from 12pm) All day social; Moon on the Hill, Harrow HA1 2AW
- Wed 12 Ruislip HA4 tour; (7.30) White Bear 7DF, (8.30) Hop & Vine 7AN
- Thu 20 (8pm) Social; Fox & Goose, Hanger La, W5 1DP
- Fri 28 (from 12pm) Festival social; West London Trades Union Club, Acton W3 6ND

September

- Thu 3 (8pm) Social; Good Yarn, Uxbridge UB8 1JX
- Thu 10 (8pm) Social; Castle, Harrow on the Hill HA1 3EF
- Thu 24 (8pm) Social; Red Lion Hotel, Hillingdon UB8 3QP
- Wed 30 (8pm) Meeting; Grosvenor, Hanwell W7 2DT
<https://westmiddx.camra.org.uk>

The electronic copy deadline for the October/November 2026 edition is no later than Friday 11 September.

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

REAL ALE

CAMRA defines real ale as live beer:

'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.'

Within this definition comes cask-conditioned beer, which is 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'. It should be left to settle and condition in the cellar, for up to ten days if necessary and served at cellar temperature, which is 11 to 14°C.



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JOHN YOUNG MEMORIAL AWARD

This year's winner is the London Brewing Company. They were nominated jointly by CAMRA's North London and Enfield & Barnet branches. LBC started brewing at the Bull in Highgate in 2011, moving to the Good Beer Guide listed Bohemia in North Finchley (N12 9QH) in 2014. They are now one of London's oldest independent brewers. LBC remain committed to cask beer and, in their second pub, the Three Lords in Aldgate (EC3N 1DE), handpumps have pride of place. The award is scheduled to be presented at the Bohemia on 1 October. More information will be included in our coverage of the presentation.

CROYDON & SUTTON PUBS OF THE YEAR

On 28 May we presented the certificate for the Sutton Borough Pub of the Year to the Hope in Carshalton (SM5 2PR). Dominic received the certificate on behalf of the pub. He is the driving force behind the successful pub beer festivals.



Next, on 9 June, we presented the award for the Croydon Borough Pub of the Year to the Dark Horse in Selhurst (CR0 2DW). Emma, one of the owners, is holding the certificate. She was accompanied by her colleagues Harvey (wearing the Dark Horse mask!) and Aidan. This award is especially pleasing because we feared for the pub's future when Shepherd Neame put it on the market.



However, the former licensees of the Royal Standard bought it and have carried out a superb refurbishment. They now serve three or four cask ales from independent breweries, along with a selection of craft keg.

Steve Thompson

NORTH LONDON SUMMER PUB OF THE SEASON

As we all know, it's been very warm recently, so our branch thought it more than appropriate to have a Summer Pub of the Season and we decided to give this award to the Crown & Anchor in Drummond Street (NW1 2HL), not far from Euston Station. With so many pubs in our geographic area, this is quite an achievement. A small group of us had previously met at the pub one afternoon and the manager very kindly arranged a table for us to sit together. It is that sort of service that impresses people. The award is, of course, oriented around cask beer.



When we discussed who should receive the award, what brought the C&A to the top of the list was the range of beers that it has on tap, the interest that the serving team showed in the beers and their quality as reflected in the NBSS Scores. What we want the award to achieve for pubs is for beer drinkers to be attracted to come and visit a pub that might not be on their radar and so recognise the effort that is put into serving great beer. Manager Pawel Pierog responded as follows, "We're delighted to receive the recognition from the North London CAMRA. It's a huge privilege and personally, I couldn't be more proud. It always has been my goal to promote real ale in every pub I've been working or managing. It's a unique style of serving beer and truly deserves attention as well as the UNESCO heritage status." The award will be presented on 4 August but that does not prevent you from visiting before then. And, if you are a CAMRA member, take your card because members receive a discount in this Grade II-listed pub.

John Cryne

RICHMOND & HOUNSLOW EVENTS

In May, during one of the pub's pizza nights, the branch assembled to present its Pub of the Year award to the Mitre in Richmond (TW9 1UY). This was the pub's second such award and so the landlord, Chris French, suggested it be presented to Rudi the pub dog. Branch chairman Bob Gordon tried valiantly to comply but, as it wasn't edible, Rudi wasn't interested. With thanks to George Gimber for the photo, which appears on page 10.

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Branch members thoroughly enjoyed a 'mild month' tasting at the William Webb Ellis in Twickenham (TW1 3RR). This tasting of six milds was organised by Clive Donaldson, the ale manager at this popular Wetherspoons house.



Clive is pictured pouring the closely contested winner, Gothic Dark from Twickenham Fine Ales. This 4.6% ABV beer is described on TFA's website as 'a strong, dark mild brewed using two types of chocolate malt. Full-bodied and malty but with a dryish, chocolatey edge'.

John Austin

SOUTH EAST LONDON PUB OF THE YEAR

It was a bold statement that owner Oli Carter-Esdale made on the opening weekend of the uniquely named Hand & Marigold in Bermondsey (SE1 3UH) in March 2025, "I want us to be branch pub of the year." But, within a remarkably short space of time, this vision has become reality. Oli, together with Alice Hayward, took on an empty shell of a pub and have created a welcoming, traditionally-styled and wet-led free house, utilising a perfect blend of Oli's experience from running the successful Trafalgar free house in Merton with Alice's design flair and experience working for Cloudwater brewery. The pub sources its beers and ciders from independent and family-owned producers.



For Alice, Bermondsey was the ideal location to fulfil her dream of running a pub, having traced seven generations of her family to the area. The Hand & Marigold dates from the late 18th century and, in the early 20th century, was leased to Watneys. In the 1990s the pub was bought by Eileen Webb and has remained in the same family ever since. Although COVID took its toll and the pub closed in 2021, the owners were always keen to see it reopen. The large, etched mirror on the wall of the bar is on loan from the Webb family. The picture shows branch chair, Andy Large, with Alice, Oli and the pub team and not forgetting Oscar, the dog!

Steve Silcock

DULWICH BEER FESTIVAL

This year's South East London branch festival, our third at Dulwich Hamlet FC, took place from 21 to 23 May with over 1,600 lovely customers basking in glorious sunshine across all three days. This was an increase in attendance of a staggering 29% compared to last year and so it was no surprise that, by early Saturday evening, all 60 casks had sold out, along with all 26 ciders and perries. Huge thanks are due to our hardworking volunteer team who rose admirably to the challenge of looking after all our extra visitors.



We received many compliments about our beer and cider ranges, which was very pleasing to hear and makes all the hard work of our selection team worthwhile. Undoubtedly,



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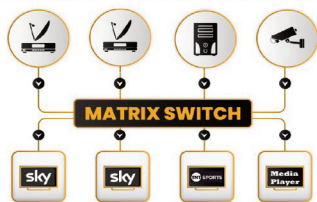
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News and events

the main talking point was the rare sight at a London festival of Tynt Meadow Trappist ale (ABV 7.4%) in cask, which had been collected from the beautiful Mount St Bernard Abbey in Leicestershire by our cider representative, Mike Allen. There are no prizes for guessing which beer was voted the best of the festival: Tynt Meadow of course! Gregg's Pit took the honours for best cider/perry. Thanks to the generosity of our visitors, we were also pleased to donate over £230 to St Christopher's Hospice. With thanks to Gavin A Fernandes for the photo montage.

Steve Silcock

Sign up!

A number of CAMRA branches send newsletters to their members by e-mail.

To receive these, CAMRA members need to consent to the receipt of e-mails from their branch.

To do this, log in to the CAMRA website (<https://www1.camra.org.uk/>)

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Set Branch to 'yes'.

(This is for the new version of the website).



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A list of CAMRA events taking place throughout the country is available at https://events.camra.org.uk/events?event_view=list or through this QR code.



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London Drinker is published bi-monthly.

The next edition, October/November 2026, will be available from Wednesday 30 September.

It will also be available on-line at <https://londondrinker.camra.org.uk/wordpress>.

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



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I am sad to report the passing of Chris Cobbold, on 26 June, after a long period of illness. Chris was prominent in the activities of CAMRA in London from the 1970s to the 2010s.

Chris was born in Worthing, Sussex, into a family who appreciated beer. His parents had been members of the Ancient Order of Froth Blowers. He came to London to train as a primary school teacher at the Froebel College in Roehampton (now part of Roehampton University). Chris was in the first cohort of male students that they admitted. After graduating, Chris took a post at Henry Cavendish Primary School in Balham where he spent his whole career. In the course of his 37 years there, he found himself teaching the children - and even grandchildren - of his original pupils. He was well respected and very much part of the local community.

Although he remained forever loyal to Sussex beers, Harvey's Old Ale in particular, once in South West London he discovered Young's beers. He joined CAMRA soon after, becoming active in South West London branch. He became chairman in the mid-1980s and held the post for 19 years. Chris's management style was very much influenced by his profession and feathers were ruffled from time to time. Chris could be dogmatic and stubborn but the branch prospered.

SWL branch had previously run three one-off beer festivals but, in 1986, Chris proposed that it was time for another. Premises were identified (the William Morris Club at the 'quiet' end of Wimbledon Broadway) and the first of three Wimbledon Beer Festivals was held in February 1987 with Chris as organiser. It stocked only beers brewed by independent London brewers. I was recruited by a colleague to work at the second one and it was here that I first met the imposingly tall, broad and bearded Mr Cobbold. The success of the Wimbledon festivals led to larger premises being sought and, in February 1990, we held the first of 24 Battersea Beer Festivals in the impressive surroundings of the Battersea Grand Hall, behind the Arts Centre on Lavender Hill. Chris continued as organiser for the first few years and thereafter remained ever-present, meeting and greeting. A number of branch members, myself included, worked at all 24 events. Chris was always proud of his record of only ever having to throw out a customer on two occasions; both times it was his elder brother Bill... The hall was not available in 2015 because of refurbishment works during which a fire broke out. The hall was very seriously damaged and by the time it was available to hire again, we could not have incurred the increased cost.

By 1978, CAMRA's London Region had grown to 13 branches and it was decided to launch a magazine to represent them all. That magazine was, of course, *London Drinker*. The first edition came out in March 1979. Chris joined the editorial team in April 1983, staying until the end of 1999. His co-editors, at various times, were Ian Amy, Dave Oram and Andy Pirson, who happily is still contributing. All editions of LD are available on our website and Chris's writings are well worth reading. See page 3. Chris took a rather laissez-faire approach to editing and a number of rather strange articles appeared during his reign. He continued also to distribute LD for as long as his health permitted.

Chris was a bar manager at the Great British Beer Festival for a number of years, along with fellow branch members

'Uncle' Ted Higgins and John Barry, both sadly no longer with us. John was the premises officer at Chris's school and they had become very good friends. At Leeds in 1988 Chris met John Gilbert, a brewer for Watneys. John lived in South Wimbledon and so he was recruited into SWL branch. In due course, John moved to Salisbury to set up the Hop Back Brewery and Chris was an early supporter and shareholder, along with other branch members. When Hop Back began to open their own pubs, John promised Chris that there would be one in South Wimbledon and that it would be their only pub in London. The Sultan (SW19 1BT) opened in 1994 and it became a second home for Chris on Saturday afternoons in particular, along with many others, me included. Chris later returned to the GBBF to work in the Finance Team.

Football was another of Chris's enthusiasms. He ran the Wandsworth Schools Under 11 team for many years, with several of his boys going on to have professional careers. He was also a season ticket holder at Brighton & Hove Albion, regularly taking the train to Falmer until his health problems set in. On a Saturday, Chris always needed to know the football results as soon as possible and so, in the days before smartphones, I had to take my pocket radio to the Sultan and write them down for him. Usually, at five-to-six, a newspaper, open at the football fixtures, would be hurled across the table in my direction.

When visiting his friend Willie in Glasgow, they would often go to obscure games. Chris acquired a deep knowledge of lower league Scottish football and, in particular, whose brand of pies were available at the various grounds and their quality. I remember him telling me about one ground where he bought a pie at half-time but, as he was about to take a bite, a local told him that the pies were not for eating but for throwing at the players.

Travel, in various forms, played a large part in Chris's life. He didn't drive. In his early days he owned a tandem and made regular tours around the country, usually with his current lady companion on the back seat. In later years he made regular trips in Whitsun week with a group of teaching colleagues. Chris also usually managed to squeeze in a canal boat trip every year with an assortment of friends over the years.

Another annual event was the trip to Eastern Europe, nearly always Czechoslovakia, as it was when they started. The itineraries revolved around brewery towns such as Plzeň (Pilsen) and Brno rather than tourist centres. Quite often, German beer centres such as Düsseldorf were visited on the way out or back.

Chris was a railway enthusiast and regularly went on the steam-hauled 'Great Britain' trips that covered the length and breadth of the country. Once he went as far as New Zealand for a steam loco trip, making new friends in the process. One of those friends, Tim Cooper, recalls an incident one Sunday lunchtime in Kingussie, Scotland, when a tour was taking a break. Chris naturally made his way to the local pub and a number of people from the trip joined him. Without hesitation Chris bought them all a drink. The landlord was grateful for an unexpectedly busy but very worthwhile hour or so.



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Chris's interest in railway heritage saw him make substantial donations to various engine restoration and 'new build' projects. One in particular, on the Severn Valley Railway, was the building of a Riddles BR 3MT 2-6-2 tank engine. Locomotives of this type had once been common at Clapham Junction in Chris's trainspotting days but none survived the end of steam services. When complete, locomotive 82045 will run on the Severn Valley Railway and will be a permanent memorial.

One of the best aspects of being a member of CAMRA is the opportunity that it provides to meet people with whom you would never otherwise have crossed paths. I am glad to have met Chris and to have had him as a friend. Chris is survived by his sister, Anne, and several nephews to whom we send our condolences.

With thanks to Valerie Farnell for the photo on the cover.

Tony Hedger

Pub news

* Ever since Wetherspoons sold the site in 2019, it has been likely that the **Crown & Sceptre** on Streatham Hill (SW2 4AH) would be a target for development because of its sizeable car park and garden. It is a purpose-built pub, still with much of its decorative Trumans tiling intact. Over the last few years it has drifted on, with a spell as a Portuguese bar, but now plans have been filed with Lambeth Council for a substantial redevelopment. The developers say that the plan is intended to 'enhance the existing pub' but, in fact, it sees part of it being demolished and the remainder surrounded by blocks containing what the developers describe as '117 high quality non-self-contained co-living units'. Comments closed on 13 July, having been extended from 18 June. CAMRA's South West London branch has objected.

* Some sites seem never to be able to find a permanent identity. What was the South End Green Social and previously the **Cork & Bottle** in Hampstead (NW3 2QX) has now reopened as the **Fleet Tavern**. It has been taken on by the Stanley Pubs group who operate several pubs in the area, including the Tufnell Park Tavern. They say that they have always wanted a pub near the Heath. The pub will feature rotating cask ales and an affordable menu of Mediterranean style food. It will be music free. There have been some alterations but most of the pub's historic fixtures have been preserved. There has been a pub on this site since 1721 with the current wedge-shaped building dating from 1904. We wish them well.

* One of the benefits of a pub being owned by its community is that they can do something constructive with their profits. The shareholders in the **Ivy House** in Nunhead (SE15 3BE) set up a charitable foundation in 2025 and this now manages their fundraising activities and their support of local charities. Their latest donation was of £1,000 to the Southwark branch of Little Village baby banks, which help young children living in poverty by providing clothes, toys and baby equipment. It is one of the Mayor of Southwark's charities and the Mayor, Councillor Claire Sheppard, was present when the cheque was handed over. That wouldn't have happened if the pub had been turned into a block of flats.

* The **Kenley Hotel** (CR8 5AA) dates from the 19th century and has several attractive features, including curved window glass, an original stained-glass window and decorative pillars. It closed in July 2025 while owners Star Pubs & Bars (Heineken UK) looked for a new licensee. It was also reported that they had put the pub up for sale. Given the uncertainty, local residents, led by KENDRA (the Kenley & District Residents' Association), became concerned for the future of the pub and so successfully petitioned the Borough of Croydon to list it as an Asset of Community Value. KENDRA are also setting up a community benefit

society with a view to buying the freehold of the pub, although they fully realise that this will not be simple or quick. They are starting by holding public meetings over the summer to raise support. They have approached Star Pubs & Bars but still await a reply.

* The **Orchard** in Ruislip (HA4 7DR), a former Beefeater that closed at the end of 2023 is a handsome 'brewer's Tudor' building that, during the war, was used as accommodation for Polish aircrew stationed nearby. Last year, the supermarket chain Lidl submitted a planning application to Hillingdon Council for it to be demolished and replaced with a supermarket. This met with considerable opposition from local residents and the application was rejected. Lidl are now trying again. This time they are trying to meet with the Ruislip Residents' Association to discuss their plans prior to submitting a new application. It's good of them to consult first but I suspect that it won't change the residents' feelings on the matter.

* Another pub that appears to be having problems establishing itself is the **White Hart** in Stoke Newington (N16 8EL). It operated as an Antic pub until February 2025 when it was repossessed, then reopened under new operators a month later but has now been repossessed again and the building has been secured. It is understood that Stonegate hold the head lease and were responsible for both closures.

* I am pleased to report that an out-of-court settlement has been reached in the **Whitewebbs Toby Carvery** (EN2 9HH) case. Readers will recall that owners Mitchell & Butlers felled a 500-year-old oak tree without permission. The resulting row led to Enfield Council starting legal action to terminate M&B's lease on the site. Now M&B have agreed to pay compensation. The amount has not been divulged but it will be sufficient to support the council's Enfield Chase Landscape Restoration scheme, which is London's largest tree-planting project. This will include the re-establishment of a community orchard on the Ridgeway. M&B said, "We recognise that the felling of a well-loved veteran tree within the grounds of the Toby Carvery, Whitewebbs, has upset many local people, and we fully understand the strength of feeling this has caused. Mitchells & Butlers again, sincerely apologise for the upset this has caused." M&B and the Council have agreed to work together to ensure the health and safety of the public. Both parties now consider the matter closed.

* Rather disappointingly, Thornbridge & Co have admitted that they only installed six handpumps instead of the usual ten at the **Wild Swan** in Holborn (EC4A 1ES) because they thought that London was 'not really a cask ale city'. They expected cask ale to be 10% of sales but instead sales have exceeded 25%. Well done, you London drinkers!

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Champion Beer of Britain: awards for all colours!

In some years, CAMRA's Champion Beer of Britain competition is more tightly fought than others. This year it really was difficult. The judges on the final panel had a very hard choice when deciding on the medallists. It was also encouraging that the top four beers were a true reflection of the quality of Britain's cask beer and the range of styles and flavours available.

First place, by a whisker, went to Bristol Beer Factory's Independence (4.6% ABV), which had won the Premium Pale, Blond and Golden Ales category. *"A pale strong beer. Strong enticing citrus nose, with piney hops. Caramelised citrus, tangerines, grapefruit and digestive biscuits lead to a dry peppery bittersweet finish, which lingers. Refreshing full flavoured, fruity and smooth."*

Second place went to a Scottish premium bitter, Wildcat (5.1% ABV) from Cairngorm Brewery. *"Toffee, malt hops and a little orange on the nose, flavour is dark orange marmalade with honey. The spicy hops develop and then linger in a dry bitter finish, which is balanced by some toffee notes. Well balanced and satisfying."*

Third place went to a strong dark ruby beer from Driftwood Spas, who are based in Trevaunance Cove, Cornwall. Their Alfie's Revenge weighs in at 6.5% ABV, narrowly beating a beer with an alcohol content at the other end of the scale as fourth place went to a mild.

You might not have heard of Shortts Brewery in Eye, Suffolk, but they have been around since 1912. Their Two Tone Mild (3.8% ABV), which had won the Mild category, pleased the judges. Beer writer Roger Protz was particularly taken with it as a great example of a British dark mild.

Blue Monkey took home two golds as category winners for BG Sips (4% ABV) (Session Pale, Blond and Golden Ales) and Infinity Plus 1 (5.6% ABV) (IPAs [English and New World]) with another gold, for Session Bitters, going to Purple Moose's Glaslyn Ale (4.2% ABV).



The final judging panel

The competition is however more than just the gold medal winners; it takes two years for a beer to get to the final judging and all of the beers were worthy of their place. For a full list of the 50 plus beers judged, see <https://cryneinyourbeer.sitelio.me/cryne-in-your-beer-articles>.

There are two opportunities coming up to taste some of the beers that are competing to be judged next year. Wimbledon Brewery are very kindly hosting the Premium Pale, Blond and Golden Ales category for London and the South East region at their September beer festival (details at <https://wimbledonbrewery.com/>) while the judging for the regional Mild category will be held at the Pig's Ear Beer Festival in December (www.pigsear.org.uk). In addition, the Bohemia in North Finchley will be hosting the judging for the East Anglian region bottle and can-conditioned beers category on Saturday 7 November (2.15 start). This is an opportunity for people to assess the beers and score them, so that you can see how difficult it can be to be a beer judge. See <https://tinyurl.com/EastAnglianbeers>.

Christine Cryne

CAMRA Design Awards

As many readers will recall, CAMRA has been running the Pub Design Awards in conjunction with Historic England for many years now. The awards are judged by a panel of experts in design and conservation and celebrate pubs that have been refurbished, converted, or have made a major difference to their community. The chair of the panel, Andrew Davison, explained, *"Despite the increasing pressure on the hospitality industry, people are still prepared to invest time, money and energy into pubs and bars. In these troubled times, the pub still has a key role to play in our communities and those who are working to conserve, repair and renovate them should rightfully be applauded."*

The winners for 2026 have now been announced and Greater London pubs feature prominently.

Conversion to Pub Use: this is awarded for a building that was not previously a pub and focuses on how the building's character and historic features have been adapted to create a pub atmosphere and ambience.

There were joint winners, one of which was the **Blue Stoops** in Kensington (127-129 Kensington Church Street, W8 7LP). This is a conversion from the former Kensington Wine Rooms by operators Allsopp's Taverns.



One striking feature is the blue ceramic bar front featuring the Allsopp's hand trademark. It sells their beers. The other winner was **St Peter's Tavern** in Liverpool (L1 4BH).

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CAMRA Design Awards

Refurbishment: awarded for the refurbishment of an existing pub building which enhances the design of the original pub.

The winner was the **Leyton Engineer** (265 High Road, E10 5QN) which was originally Leyton Town Hall, a Grade II listed building dating from 1895. It was converted to a pub some time ago, originally operated by Antic, but it is now in the dependable hands of Remarkable Pubs. A number of historic features, such as glazed screens and mosaic and terrazzo floors, have been refurbished and a new bar-back installed, along with some brass chandeliers.

Remarkable Pubs were also awarded a 'Highly Commended' for the **European**, again in Leyton (557-559 Lea Bridge Road, E10 7EQ). This former Wetherspoon's outlet (The Drum) had been 'modernised', during which all of its pub features were removed. These have now been restored to create a welcoming traditional pub in Victorian style, albeit one with the modern refinement of an open kitchen.

McMullen's brewery received a 'Commended' for the **Duke of York** in Fitzrovia (47 Rathbone Street, W1T 1NW), which they fully refurbished shortly after acquiring it. The main point of interest is the ceramic tiled bar counter in the ground floor bar; they also removed what had become a somewhat controversial pub sign.

Community Local: this award recognises the conservation or refurbishment of street-corner pubs that are at the centre of the local community. The winner is the **Lord Southampton** in Kentish Town (2 Southampton Road, NW5 4HX). Dating from the 1850s, the pub closed in 2022 and fell into a near derelict state before Aimee Brown and Phil Harrington took a lease on it, carried out extensive repairs and reopened it as a community local. It now has one star on CAMRA's inventory of historic pub interiors. We featured the pub in our April/May 2025 edition when it opened. It should not be confused with the Southampton Arms, also in Kentish Town (139 Highgate Road NW5 1LE).

Not all of the London winners were able to celebrate the presentation in Birmingham and so Ellie Eames, our Regional Director (left), and Jane Jephcote, the chair of the London Pubs Group, accepted the awards on their behalf, with Andrew Davison of English Heritage looking on.



Historic England Conservation: this award recognises 'constructive conservation'; preserving a pub's historical architectural features while, at the same time, improving its facilities to secure its future viability. The winner is in Birmingham but I thought readers might like to know about it because it will (eventually) be handy for the HS2 station at Curzon Street. This is the Grade II-listed **Woodman** (1 Curzon Street, Digbeth B4 7XG) which has three stars on CAMRA's inventory of historic pub interiors. The pub's multi-room layout has been retained and the main features to look out for are the historic Minton tiled walls, especially those in the Smoke Room.

For details of the other winners and photographs of the winning pubs, please take a look at https://camra.org.uk/awards/pub-design?selected_year=2026.

Remembering John Young

On 17 September it will be twenty years since John Young, the chairman of Young & Co's Brewery, passed away. CAMRA's London Region continues to salute his memory with the John Young Memorial Award but I thought that a more in-depth recollection was warranted.

Mr John, as he was usually known, will always be remembered for declining to join the growing trend among brewers to switch to keg beers, deciding that the majority of the brewery's output would remain cask conditioned. This had a significant effect on the emerging real ale movement in the 1970s. Sadly, he died while the last ever batch of Young's beer to be brewed at Wandsworth was in the fermenting vessels. It is said that beer from this last batch was served at his funeral.

Shortly afterwards, brewing was transferred to the Eagle Brewery in Bedford under a partnership with Charles Wells & Co, which proved to be short lived. Young's head brewer, the late Ken Don, did his best to match the beers, in particular by using the Young's yeast but, as he pointed out at a tasting session that I attended, the beer could never be the same because they used conical fermenters at Bedford and very different water. The Eagle Brewery took its water from natural wells in the area whereas Young's had used Thames Water tap water, which they 'burtonised'. After various manoeuvrings, the current versions

of the beers are now brewed by Carlsberg Britvic at the former Marston's Albion Brewery in Burton-on-Trent.

John Young was born in 1921. His parents, William Allen Young and Joan Barrow Simonds, both came from well-established brewing families. Mr John was educated at the Nautical College in Pangbourne, so it was expected that he would join the navy. He decided to become a pilot and served in the Fleet Air Arm during the Second World War. By the time he was stood down in 1945, aged 24 and with the rank of lieutenant commander (equivalent to a major in the army), he had flown 25 different types of aircraft from six different aircraft carriers. He then continued his education at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, obtaining a degree in economics.

At first, he pursued a career in shipping but, in 1954, he and his brothers were summoned to join the family firm. In 1964 he succeeded his father as chairman. He was still in post at the time of his death. Mr John had a very 'hands on' management style, making regular visits to the pubs in the brewery's estate. Although he was at heart a traditionalist, he knew that the company had to move with the times. A lager was brewed (although the first attempt, Saxon, was pretty awful) and children's rooms were added to many pubs.

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Remembering John Young

Young's were famous for using shire horses to pull their drays in the local area. This was down to Mr John who was a great enthusiast for working horses and helped save the shire breed. He was president of the London Harness Horse Parade from 1957 to 1968 and of the Greater London Horse Show from 1972 to 1974. Mr John was also heavily involved in charity work. He chaired the National Hospital for Nervous Diseases and supported the National Society for Epilepsy, raising significant funds for both. He was awarded a CBE in 1975 and was made a Freeman of the City of London in 1986.

We have recently made several mentions of the Young's 135 Club. Those who did the tour will know that the pub most distant from Wandsworth was the Fountain in Plumpton Green, Sussex. It was not easy to get to; until recently, trains only stopped there to serve race meetings. It became a Young's pub in 1965 and only because it was close to where Mr John lived and he wanted a local selling his beers. It passed into the hands of Punch Pubs when the Ram Pub Company was sold. Punch Pubs have now put it up for sale, as they have done with a number of the pubs that they acquired in this deal. Local campaigners have set up a Community Benefit Society to acquire it for the village and this has received support from Queen Camilla, who grew up in the village. Given that he was very much a Royalist, I'm sure that Mr John would be delighted that the current queen was helping to save his local.

In the course of preparing this article, the news came through of the death of Mr John's son, James Guillaume Allen Young, at the age of 74. James happily followed his father into the family business and was deputy chairman of the company at the time of Mr John's death. James might have been expected to succeed him but instead he left the company to follow a very different career. James, who shared his father's love of animals, set up an alpaca farm, Moonbrook Alpacas Ltd, near the family home in Wisborough Green, West Sussex. We send our condolences to his family and friends.

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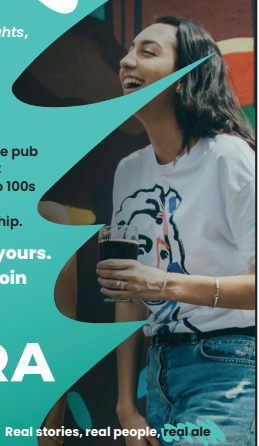
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THE BAD NEWS

I'm sad to report the closure of two London independent breweries. Leyton based **Queer Brewing**, founded in 2019, announced in June that the business was unable to continue and that they would close on 31 July. At least they went out on their own terms, without taking anyone else with them. Ironically, this came at the start of Pride Month, which should have been their busiest time of year. The company won the Diversity Champions of the Year award at the 2026 SIBA Business Awards. Lily Waite-Marsden, one of the founders, bravely made the announcement in a video on Facebook and it was hard not to share in the deep disappointment.

Similarly, **Redemption Brewing Company** of Tottenham went into administration in June. Founded by Andy and Sam Moffat in 2010, it is the familiar story of ever-increasing operating costs catching up with what had been a thriving business. The brewery continues in operation and the administrators are working hard to sell it as a going concern so that all might not be lost. The brewery had close links to the Antwerp Arms, the community pub in Tottenham (N17 8AS), but the pub is not affected by what has happened to the brewery.

It is not just the financial aspects that matter here. In both cases good people have seen their ambitions and hard work come to nothing. We thank all involved for their efforts to date and wish them the very best for the future. I wonder if the situation would have been different if they had been able to sell their beers more widely, as outlined in CAMRA's Beer in the UK report.

While not a closure, it is similarly sad to see the **Portobello Brewery** leaving London. This is due to happen sometime during the summer. It is understood that they have been priced out of their original North Kensington site by a rent increase. Now owned by the Sunrise Beverages group who also own the St Peter's Brewery in Suffolk, it has yet to be announced where brewing will be moved to. There are long term plans to re-establish a presence in London with a taproom and microbrewery. The Portobello pub chain is now a separate company.

ROTHER VALLEY CLOSURES

Although not London-based, Rother Valley Brewery beers were occasionally seen in London, usually at CAMRA beer festivals. Sadly, the company closed in May. Based in Northiam, near Rye (TN31 6QT), the brewery was founded in 1993 and specialised in brewing with English hops. It is understood that the closure came about when the head brewer retired and there are no reports as to the brewery's future.

CHANGES AT GOSNELLS DRINKS

Happily, London's only producers of mead are doing well enough to make plans for the future. They have outgrown their brewery in Peckham and so have reached an agreement with Sandford Orchards, an independent cider producer in Crediton, Devon, for their mead to be produced there. Gosnells will retain control of the recipes and quality control. Management of Gosnells' taproom in Enid Street, Bermondsey (SE16 3RA) has been passed to Big Hug Brewing. It will continue to sell Gosnells' products as well as Big Hug's own beers, giving Big Hug their own outlet for the first time. Gosnells will retain the management of John the Unicorn, their pub in Peckham (SE15 4TL).

FLEEING THE COUP

The Old Speckled Hen beer brand was created by Morland Brewery of Abingdon, Oxfordshire, and passed into Greene

King's hands when GK acquired Morland in 2000. GK have since added variations to the range in the form of Old Golden Hen, Old Crafty Hen, Old Master Hen and Low Alcohol OSH. It was announced in May that GK were selling the brand to the independent Spanish brewers S. A. Damm. Readers will recall that Damm recently acquired the Eagle Brewery in Bedford from Carlsberg Britvic and that they are brewing their Estrella lager for the UK market there. Damm have said that it is their intention to brew other beers in Bedford, including, possibly, cask ale and so this may be what is happening. All the same, it seems a bit odd that GK should sell off one of their major beer brands when they are spending £40 million on a new brewery. In the meantime, GK continue to sell off pubs, although there were none in London in the latest batch.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S COLLABORATION BREW DAY

The IWCBD reached a new peak this year, with 88 different beers being brewed around the world. 1,153 brewers participated and an outstanding £33,889 was raised for women's causes. This is the second year that the competition has been organised by UK based Women On Tap CIC, a social enterprise championing gender equality in beer, and it has seen IWCBD grow into a global movement. The founder of Women On Tap CIC, Rachel Auty, commented, "The growth we've seen in 2026 is genuinely extraordinary, but what moves me most isn't the numbers, it's the stories. Women coming together in breweries, taking up space, supporting each other, and turning their passion for beer into lasting impact for the causes that need us. This is exactly what IWCBD is for."

IS IT ORANGE OR IPA?

Well, that was the problem that I had with a can of Signature Brew in front of me for tasting. It is a can coloured orange but the beer is Backstage IPA (5.2% ABV) and what a pleasant drink it is. ORANGE is a company that has been around the music industry since 1968, producing amplifiers, record players and the like; they proudly say 'Orange is built to bring music to life'. And in many ways that is what Signature Brew has done. The beer is a collaboration that sees one of their core beers reimaged.



It will be available exclusively in independent music venues on draught and in specially redesigned cans, as well as from Signature Brew's webshop. Profits from every pint sold in participating venues will be donated to the Featured Artists Coalition, the UK representative body for music artists. This is Signature Brew all over: strong supporters of live music and brewers of great beer. Make sure you have some when you are next at a gig (especially at Signature Brew itself) or purchase a can or two from their webshop. Full details can be found at <https://www.signaturebrew.co.uk/>.

John Cryne

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Last call for a slice of history

The National Breweriana Auction, run by CAMRA's Games and Collectables section, returns to Burton on Trent's Town Hall on Saturday 24 October. Sadly, for organisational reasons, this will be the very last national auction after 40 events, so don't miss it!

We expect to have around 150 interesting auction lots; everything from mirrors to trays, advertising signs, water jugs, flagons, bottles, books and pump clips, as well as a few more unusual items. In addition, there will be a number of stands selling brewery memorabilia, adding to the atmosphere in this wonderful Victorian venue.

There will be all sorts of items from all over the country. What about a flagon from Wadworths? Based in Devizes, Wiltshire and founded in 1875, remarkably they are still owned and run by the descendants of John Smith Bartholomew, the co-founder of the brewery.

Or what about a limited-edition commemorative Millennium Ale set comprising an unopened bottle, glass and bottle opener in a lovely metal container. This is from Mansfield Brewery who started brewing in 1855 in North Nottinghamshire, were taken over by Wolverhampton and Dudley in 1999 and closed in 2002.

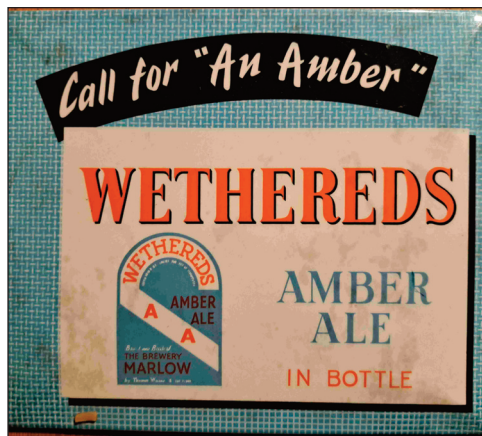
There are numerous items that you can either display or even use! What about a tray from Bass now that it is has become fashionable again? There are a number of lots from Worthington, including an ashtray (well used!), a match holder and the famous Worthington Mayor jug. Straddling the two brewers is a trio of leaflets listing their bottlers. These two Burton on Trent breweries were founded in the mid/late 1700s with Worthington the older by 16 years. By the late 1800s, Bass was the biggest brewery in the world and merged with Worthington in 1927. Bass sold the brand to Coors (now Molson Coors) in 2002



The Worthington Mayor

and it is currently brewed by Carlsberg Britvic. Maybe their best known brand was Worthington White Shield; an iconic British style bottled IPA. It ceased production in 2023 but you can still buy it in Norway and the Netherlands. Among the lots is an unusual display card advising customers to order their last bottle at last orders 'to allow for the care necessary in pouring the last rush of orders for Worthington White Shield'. The auction wouldn't, of course, be the auction without a Guinness item or two. This year we have a mug and a display stand.

These are just a few of the items on sale, each with a history to tell. No expertise is required to participate in the National Breweriana Auction. It is great fun to take part in (or even just to watch) and it's an opportunity to get some great bargains that can appreciate in value. And, of course, like any CAMRA event, there will be some good beer (from a local brewery) on sale all day.



Wethered's sign

Burton on Trent is easily accessible by train. The journey is usually under two hours with one change. The Town Hall is just a short walk from the railway station and is wheelchair accessible.

The event starts at 10.30am with an opportunity to view the lots and browse the breweriana stands. Bidding starts at noon and is normally finished by 3pm, giving a chance to have a final perusal of the stands before visiting some of Burton's iconic pubs on your way home.

Entrance is by catalogue (£3.00), available on the day or in advance by post (£6.45 first class). Book on <https://tckty.camra.org.uk/e/559/national-breweriana-auction>. If you can't get there, postal bids will be accepted; just contact Bill Austin on 07831 688276 or baustin1951@btinternet.com. For more details, see www.gandc.camra.org.uk.

Christine Cryne

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Cloth, meat, diamonds and leather

On 15 April, CAMRA's London Pubs Group visited the Smithfield area for an evening tour. The first visit was to the **Viaduct Tavern** in Newgate Street (EC1A 7AA). This pub is Grade II listed and rates three stars on CAMRA's National Inventory of interiors of outstanding national historic importance (hereafter 'the inventory'). This popular Fuller's pub (previously Allied, Ind Coope and Nicholson's) was built in 1874 but the wonderful fittings seen today are from a remodelling by Arthur Dixon in 1898-1900. The separate drinking areas (as indicated by the multiple outside doors) have gone but there is an amazing amount of excellent decoration.



The etched, gilded and cut-glass panels at the rear are truly spectacular and are the equal of the work at the Princess Louise in Holborn. Another highlight is the small, glazed-in office at the rear of the serving area that was used by the pub's management. The ceiling, with its swirling relief panels and which probably dates from the original build in 1874, is also a fine sight. Then there are the three paintings of languid ladies, signed 'Hal', on the right-hand wall representing agriculture, commerce, industry and art. The real ale choice was Dark Star Hophead plus Fuller's ESB and London Pride.

Our second pub was the **Hand & Shears** in Cloth Fair (EC1A 7JA), also Grade II listed and with three stars on the inventory.



The Hand & Shears

Popular with office workers at lunchtime and early evening, this is one of the best kept secrets among City pubs and looks the same as hundreds, if not thousands, of plainly-furnished London pubs did a century ago. The building probably dates from 1830 with later fittings. The corner entrance has an unusual pair of curved doors. There are in fact several doorways, each leading into a separate drinking space around the central servery. These areas are named in the door glass which looks like a refitting by Courage in the 1930s, viz: 'Private Bar', 'Public Bar' and 'Saloon Bar'. Real ales on offer were Draught Bass and Timothy Taylor's Boltmaker and Landlord.

The third stop was the **Fox & Anchor** in Charterhouse Street (EC1M 6AA), another Grade II-listed building but with only one star on the inventory. The decorative gable at the top of the building dates this pub to 1898. There is a gorgeous Art Nouveau ceramic frontage and entrance.



Entrance to the Fox & Anchor

Designed by Latham Augustus Withall and built by W H Lascelles and Co, the decorative panels on the inside external walls of the ground floor and the decorative front were designed by W J Neatby and manufactured by Doulton & Co of Lambeth. Inside, there is a long servery on the left with a pewter-topped counter. What looks like an original bar-back stretches along most of the wall behind the servery and has carved wooden pillars and bevelled mirrors. At the back, behind the main room, is a small panelled room with three tiny intimate snugs leading off it, though much of the woodwork here is thought to be relatively modern and may date from 1993. Formerly an Allied Taylor Walker house, it is now owned by Young's and was serving Adnams Ghost Ship, Fuller's London Pride, and Timothy Taylor's Landlord on the night.

The next call was at the **Hope** in Cowcross Street (EC1M 6BH). This Young's house, previously Watney, is Grade II listed and rates one star pub on the inventory. The most striking feature is the left-hand wall with its beautifully coloured tiled dado. Above it there are three panels of decorative mirrors carrying painted intertwined monograms 'TH' (presumably 'The Hope'). This is a late 19th-century four-storey building with many fittings from Victorian and inter-war times. Above a black polished granite base is a fine recessed pub frontage including a rare central bay bowed and curved window.

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The Hope

There is a tiled dado in both exterior porches and tiled panels higher up the wall, but sadly the 'Public' and 'Bar' panels on the double doors on the right and 'Smoke Room' panels were replaced by plain glass during a refurbishment in 2017. The colourful tiled dado continues down the left-hand internal wall and the mosaic floor here confirms that there was a partitioned passage for access to the rear room prior to the removal of all room divisions. The bar counter dates from the late 19th century but the bar-back fitting was replaced in 2017. Fuller's London Pride and Timothy Taylor's Landlord are normally served here.

Ye Olde Mitre in Ely Court (EC1N 6SJ) was our fourth venue. Finding this vibrant, historic pub in a tiny alley between Hatton Garden and Ely Place is a test of pub-going initiative but success is rewarded by several regular ales plus a guest. It is said to have been founded in 1546 to minister to the servants of the Bishop of Ely whose London residence was in the vicinity and whose headgear provides the name of the pub. This connection supposedly led to Ely Place being



Showing the way

legally in the county of Cambridgeshire until 1772. The pub was rebuilt at the end of the 18th century but the interior we see today is a remodelling dating from around 1930 with lots of panelling in the then-fashionable Tudor style. There are two rooms either side of a central servery: a small, cosy one at the front and a larger one at the back. Off the latter is an intimate little snug, now named 'Ye Closet'. The upstairs Bishop's Room was fitted out about 1990. The gents can only be entered from outside – a real rarity now in a London pub. Another Grade II-listed building, and with three stars on the inventory, this pub was once part of the Allied Friary Meux estate but is now owned by Fuller's, serving London Pride plus the guests.

The evening concluded in the **Craft Beer Co** (formerly the Clock House) in Leather Lane (EC1N 7TR). Yet again listed Grade II and scoring one star on the inventory, it has features from the 19th and early 20th centuries. This is a mid-19th century three-storey pub with a green glazed tile ground floor and rendered upper storeys. Three doors indicate that it was subdivided but is now a single room. It has a stunning ceiling of 19th century sectioned ribs and decorated ventilation grills, with mirrors added in the late 20th century. The bar counter dates from the early 20th century but has modern panels added to the front and a new bar top over the original one. The bar-back dates from the late 19th century and has five narrow mirrored strips with ornate capitals at the top.



The coat of arms

Notable is the free-standing royal coat of arms in stone above the corner entrance. Kent Pale (house ale) plus five changing cask beers are normally served here.

As an aside, something apparent on this tour was the extensive penetration of both Fuller's and Young's into a part of the capital far from their historic west and south-west London bases.

Jane Jephcote and Kim Rennie

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Home brewing - past and present

Brewing at home has been with us for many centuries but it changed substantially in 1880 when the prime minister of the day, William Gladstone, decided to raise money and appease the farming lobby by replacing a tax on malt with an excise duty on the finished product. This meant that home brewers, even those who brewed beer for their own consumption, became regulated and inspected and had to pay a licence fee. Over the years, this led to many people being dragged into court and fined.

Eventually, it was decided that the prosecutions were not worth the effort, although it was not until 1963 that the 1880 regulations were abolished. This prompted a growth in home brewing, fuelled by the availability of brewing ingredients and equipment on the high street. In particular, Edme's famous malt extract was very popular because it negated the need for full mashing. So buoyant was the market that the Daily Mirror estimated that, in 1978, there were around two million home brewers. The enthusiasm did not last however and the market declined, just leaving the diehards. These remaining home brewers however became more sophisticated, aided not least by a growth in the number of home brewing books that provided both recipes and tips to make good beer. To support this, in 1995, James McCrorie founded the UK Craft Brewing Association. He avoided the term home-brewing because, as he told Boak & Bailey in 2013, "it had come to mean, in Britain, a can of crap and a kilo of sugar."

In due course, home brewing came to play a key part in the growth of British independent brewers. Many of those who went on to found award winning breweries, such as Evin O'Riordain of Kernel and Andy Parker of Elusive, started off as home brewers. Indeed, Andy went on to co-author CAMRA's Modern Homebrewer book.

It is estimated that there are currently around 1.5 million home brewers and they are becoming more technologically

savvy, with some using automated brewing techniques and smartphone-controlled systems. The increased knowledge and care being taken has certainly paid dividends as regards the quality of the beers in both CAMRA and SIBA home brew competitions.

London has its very own home brewing group, the London Amateur Brewers, who are celebrating their 20th birthday next year. They run a number of competitions, ranging from their 'Open', which is for any beer style and attracts over 200 entries, to ones that are 'type specific'. This includes their annual 'Lager than Life' competition, which features a whole range of different style lagers from Vienna and Californian Common to Pils and Helles. Lucas Stolarczyk, the organiser of the competition said, "The main idea behind the competition was because many home brewers are afraid of brewing lager." It is obvious that this initiative has worked. Judged at the Pillars' Brewery in Walthamstow, who are lager specialists, the quality of the competition beers was as good as anything tasted at a commercial beer judging. Furthermore, the competition's good reputation attracts judges from all over Europe. The winner on the day was a German Pils called Why Not, brewed by Mikko Salo. It was beautifully crisp with a good balance of malty sweetness and hoppy bitterness.

There is no membership fee to join the London Amateur Brewers who, like CAMRA, are a volunteer organisation. They meet every month, alternating between on-line and face to face, when home brewers can bring their beers along to share and get feedback. LAB welcome both experienced brewers and novices. For more information visit <https://londonamateurbrewers.co.uk/>. To find out more about the history of home brewing, I recommend Boak and Bailey's article at <https://boakandbailey.com/2019/02/the-history-of-home-brewing-in-the-uk>.

Christine Cryne

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Five Friends creating a community

There is no doubt that the London brewing market is a mix of fortunes at the moment and so it's great to see that Bianca Road Brewing is thriving. Their current story is however influenced by another nearby brewery, which unfortunately saw harder days after many years of initial success.

Two of Bianca Road's owners formerly worked at Brew By Numbers. BBN began operations in a railway arch in Bermondsey before relocating its main production site to Greenwich in 2021, where it also operated a taproom. Unfortunately, BBN faced severe financial pressures from the COVID pandemic and so entered administration. It was sold to Breal Capital (later called Keystone) in 2023. Brewing continued in Bermondsey for a while before being transferred to the Black Sheep Brewery in Yorkshire.

Matt Simpson was working at nearby Bianca Road, set up by Reece Woods in 2016, and he persuaded Terry Staples, ex-BBN, to join him and Jordan Fancey, the head brewer. Then, last year, the duo were joined by Dennis Ratcliffe, also ex-BBN, and Andrew Fleming who is the head brewer at BrewPoint in Bedfordshire. The five then arranged a management buy-out of Bianca Road.



Dennis, Matt and Terry

Terry, who looks after sales, said, "At this time we had three arches, which housed the cold room, brewery, tap room and Enid Street Bar. We moved into a fourth arch last year and set up a new enlarged tap room. This has provided us the space to move the cold room into the brewery and give the Enid Street Bar more space." To help fund the expansion, Bianca Road ran a crowdfunding campaign in 2025, aiming to raise £20,000. Unlike traditional fundraising, it was a reward-based campaign with every investor getting £2 back in credit to spend at the new taproom (or via their online shop) for every £1 invested. This investment has transformed their operation. The brewery's brew length has remained the same (3,000 litres, circa 18 barrels) with seven fermenters varying in size from 2,500 litres to 4,000 litres. In the early days, their canning operation was contracted out but, in 2019, they invested in their own canning line and this has continued to prove a good investment. Their core range: Easy, Juicy, Hazy and Crispy, are available via their online shop and at the Tap Room. Matt joked, "We are not very creative when it comes to beer names."

The two tap rooms account for 50% of the brewery's earnings but only 30% of volume, with the remaining 70% going through external trade. As part of the Bermondsey Beer Mile, their bars are standing room only on Saturdays. Dennis commented, "It's great for turnover but we do need to employ door staff, simply to keep people safe. They forget we are on a busy street and visitors have a habit of just walking off the pavement and into the road."



The bar in the Tap Room

Most of the external sales are in the south east with 25 regular outlets, including the Craft Beer Co group and the 'Tap' chain, but they do have a permanent lager line in the Gateshead Central Bar! Currently, the emphasis is on keg beer but they are considering putting in a handpump in the Tap Room in due course.

The Enid Street Bar, just a couple of arches down from the new Tap Room, has a mezzanine seated area that can be hired and hosts a number of special interest groups. Dennis said, "We host a number of events from the usual meet the brewers, to poetry and folk groups and Dungeons and Dragon enthusiasts, who meet on Sundays. We see ourselves as a community and we are taking active steps to attract more women. We want more of a mixed audience." The ethos of attracting the community is reflected by the 33% price discount on Mondays to Thursdays for people living in the local postcodes.

Their community engagement also reaches beyond the commercial. They work with Westminster House, a youth club in Peckham, 'helping young people aged 8 to 18 make positive choices'. They brew a beer and donate to the youth club for every pint sold.

Going forward, Bianca Road are looking to grow. "We want more retail outlets," said Terry. They certainly now have a solid base for the future and their two bars are worthy of a visit; they have spent the investment money well. And leaving the last word to Dennis, "We want to be open to everyone." You will be assured of a warm welcome.

Christine Cryne

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Cask Ale Week

This year's event runs from 17 to 27 September. Organised by Cask Marque as before, and supported by CAMRA, this celebration of cask ale will feature various pub-based events such as beer festivals, tap takeovers, meet-the-brewer events, ale trails and quiz nights. You can find details of what is happening in your area on the events map at <https://caskaleweek.co.uk/pubs-and-breweries/>.

Private equity and pubs

Although the Stonegate pubco is currently trading well, they have a large long-term debt that they incurred primarily from their purchase of the Enterprise pub group. They have devised a 'transformation strategy' under which they are exploring the sale of what they call their 'platinum estate'; this consists of around 1,000 of their best freehold pubs, amounting to roughly a quarter of their estate. Stonegate are reported to be planning to 'test the market' with a first batch of 300 pubs. Already a number of potential bidders have emerged, including Terra Firma Capital Partners, the private equity firm founded by Guy Hands and now run by his son Richard. I'm not convinced that the private equity model of business, with its expectation of relatively short-term gains on assets, will be good for the pubs involved.

Meanwhile, Whitbread's closing of its Beefeater and Brewers Fayre outlets in order to expand its Premier Inn hotels and improve their profitability has not gone down well with one of its major shareholders. Corvex Management, an American hedge fund, are demanding that the board simply put the whole company, valued at £3.9 billion, up for sale. Not all of the Beefeater and Brewers Fayre sites are suitable for incorporation into hotels and so some have been sold off. Wetherspoon's have acquired five of them, although none are in London. Mitchells & Butlers have also acquired six sites, presumably to add to their Miller & Carter or Harvester chains.

Wetherspoon's news

Further to the report in the last edition that JDW are opening bars in European airports, Greggs are now opening their first European branch in Tenerife South Airport. Enrollado de salchicha anyone?

JDW have announced the names and opening dates of their two new pubs in London. The one at the Trocadero in Shaftesbury Avenue (W1D 7EP) will be called the Piccadilly Hall and will open on 13 October. The other, next to Charing Cross Station (11 Strand WC2N 5HR) will be called the Benjamin Franklin and will open on 24 November. Both dates may be subject to change.

Somewhat oddly, JDW closed the George in Croydon (CR0 1LA) for 'extensive refurbishment' for the seven weeks 1 June to 31 July, thereby completely avoiding the FIFA World Cup.

Fuller's news

Like-for-like sales in Fuller's managed pubs increased by 4.9% over the year ending March 2026, with total revenue increasing by 5.7% to £397.8 million. This was despite a 0.8% increase in operating costs. Returns on drink, food and hotel accommodation all increased. This has generated sufficient funds to buy the freeholds of two London pubs: the Avalon in Balham (SW12 9EB) and the Duke of Sussex in Waterloo (SE1 7AY).

Both are currently leased to Stonegate who have subleased them to other operators. Fuller's are looking for further sites to acquire and they also plan to spend £30 million on refurbishing existing pubs, with the flagship project being the addition of 26 hotel rooms to the Barrowboy & Banker at London Bridge (SE1 9QQ). The share buyback programme will continue with the acquisition of one million 'A' shares.

Young's news

At the company AGM it was reported that results for the first 14 weeks of the current financial year are good, with revenue increasing by 9.4%. Trade over the late May bank holiday weekend was 'exceptional', especially in those pubs with gardens and riverside locations. The FIFA World Cup and the Wimbledon tennis championships have also contributed.



Visitors to the Young's AGM

The recently acquired Cubitt House pubs have been integrated and have also made a contribution. Chief executive Simon Dodd told the AGM, *"While the backdrop remains challenging, we are well positioned and looking ahead to the rest of the year with confidence."* Mr Dodd also told the trade press that 'the big thing we're seeing is the resurgence of beer. We've seen 8% sales growth, with volume up 3%'. Young's are also launching a share buyback programme, looking to acquire £10 million of its 'A ordinary' and 'non-voting ordinary' shares. With thanks to Alasdair Boyd for the photo.

Mixed messages

Here are a few comments that readers might find interesting. All of these quotes come from the *Propel* hospitality trade newsletter.

On 22 May, the chief executive of Mitchells & Butlers (M&B), Phil Urban, said that the company's Nicholson's brand remains the 'golden goose that keeps on laying'.

On 12 June, one of M&B's divisional directors said, *"With the rise in labour costs, the key is to keep your pubs busy. It becomes a problem when you have quiet pubs. Focus on the guest experience, grow your volume and it's not such a big problem."*

On 5 June, the chief executive of Stonegate Group, David McDowall, reported that they had received more applications over the last year for operator-led and leased and tenanted pubs, 'than at any point in the history of Stonegate or Ei Group.'

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The best beer in the world

Peter Jackson joined the brewing industry after he left university, for, he says, 'a bit of a laugh'. Over the years he has worked for a number of breweries including Whitbread and eventually becoming sales and marketing director for Marston's. It was then that he decided that he wanted to set up his own brewery. With the help of a friend, Andy Nicol, he started to turn the idea into a reality. Peter had however never brewed and so he turned to another friend, Sean Franklin, founder of Roosters Brewery. Sean was one of the pioneers in this country of pale, hoppy beers and he helped Peter to experiment in a brew kit in his garage. The result was London Pale Ale, a smooth, 4% ABV golden ale made with a mix of British and American hops. It is still in Southwark Brewery's core range today.

Peter wanted his brewery to be in Southwark. He is passionate about the history of brewing in the area, which was once home to breweries such as Courage and Barclay Perkins. This idea proved trickier than he thought but premises were eventually found and the brewery opened in 2014 in Druid Street, at the top of the Bermondsey Beer Mile.



Peter (left) with Leo and Louis

The brew length remains at 10 barrels but another couple of fermenters have been squeezed in since the brewery started, bringing the total to five. The head brewer, Leo, has an interesting pedigree. He studied Fine Arts at Newcastle University. He then became involved with Stu Brew, a small brewery supported by the university where students brewed and sold their beer. Leo ended up working there and lecturing the students. Eventually, he returned to London and started to contact breweries looking for a job. This coincided with Southwark's previous brewer deciding to leave and Leo took his place. He has just been involved in recruiting a trainee brewer

to assist him and, with Leo's background, Louis is likely to have a positive experience. Unlike the beer names, which all have a local connection, the logo of an elephant has no connection with Southwark at all. Peter explained, "We needed a logo and the designer suggested an elephant. They told us that everyone likes elephants so we went with it."

Southwark's beer production is biased towards cask, with sales mainly within the M25. They tend to only brew keg for the tap room, often to satisfy the 'Bermondsey Milers'. There are three core keg beers plus Bermondsey Black and a Pilsner. Peter said, "We get the Pilsner brewed elsewhere for us as we don't have the space to lager it properly."

There are seven core cask beers: Bankside Blond, London Pale Ale, Mayflower, Routemaster Red, Bermondsey Best, Harvard and Potters Fields Porter. With the exception of Harvard (5.5% ABV) all of the other beers are below 4.5% ABV. Harvard is named after John Harvard, who was born locally above his father's pub. After losing a lot of his family, he emigrated to America and amassed a substantial book collection, which he donated on his death to Cambridge College. The college subsequently changed its name to Harvard.

Like all brewers, Southwark has seen costs increase, including rent, but it is clear that Peter is committed to the brewery. "Financially, it was the worst decision I have ever done and I have never worked so hard in my life but it's good fun," said Peter. And his commitment to cask beer, remains as strong as ever, "Cask ale always has been, and always will be, the best beer in the world."

The tap room can be found at 46 Druid Street, Bermondsey-West, SE1 2EZ. There can be up to six beers on handpump. For more information, go to www.southwarkbrewing.co.uk.

Christine Cryne

High Days
and Holidays,
Sad Days
and
Jolly Days,
Beer is Best!



London, Capital of Brewing

At the last count, there were 86 independent breweries in Greater London.

They are listed on CAMRA's Greater London Region website: www.london.camra.org.uk.

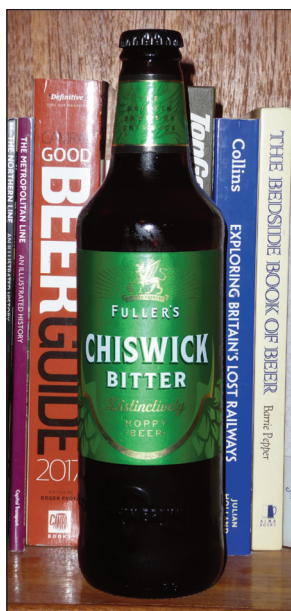
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Fuller's brewery has the admirable record of winning CAMRA's Supreme Champion Beer of Britain award for three different beers, a feat unsurpassed by any other brewery. ESB (5.5% ABV) first claimed the gong in 1978 and again in 1981 and 1985, followed by London Pride (4.1% ABV) in 1979 and Chiswick Bitter (3.5% ABV) a decade later in 1989. Yet while the likes of ESB and London Pride continue to be sold regularly in cask and bottle, Chiswick Bitter has alas fallen from grace and was discontinued from regular production a decade ago.

Chiswick was first produced in 1930, named after the location of the brewery. A light session beer with a lingering bitterness and a lacing of malt, it is counterpointed with Northdown and Challenger hops for added fruitiness, along with a residual spiciness from the addition of Goldings hops, which are added to the brew after fermentation to add flavour and aroma, a practice known as dry hopping. The late Martyn Cornell once described Chiswick Bitter as a modern take on the lost art of light mild. Mild, he notes, is merely a description rather than a style. There are many sub-varieties, ranging from mild porter, light bitter, scotch mild, Burton mild and extra-strong mild to mild stout, which eventually evolved into milk stout. Its close association with the lower ABV dark mild has erroneously been applied since the mid-20th century. Historically, mild was a term for beer that was only conditioned for a short period before distribution, so any beer variety that was produced this way could be classified as a form of mild, whether heavily or lightly hopped.

Chiswick Bitter falls into this category since it was conditioned for a short duration, despite it often being mistakenly dubbed as a bitter. The prevalence of light mild dwindled after the 1950s as the popularity of bitter overtook it, yet Fuller's continued to produce this beer regardless. When former brewing director John Keeling joined the brewery in 1981

as a junior brewer, Fuller's brewed three main brands, Chiswick Bitter, ESB and London Pride. While the latter two were sold in barrels, kilderkins, and firkins, Chiswick Bitter was distributed in kilderkins and firkins only. We could assume this was due to its shorter shelf life but its lack of popularity among publicans could also have been a reason. All three beers were sold at most of the 120 tied pubs within their estate at the time, though some only sold two and it's easy to guess which one was omitted. Chiswick Bitter won the standard bitters category in the



Champion Beer of Britain competition in 1989 and then, despite competition from the likes of Old Peculier (5.6% ABV) and Landlord (4.3% ABV), took the coveted prize of Supreme Champion Beer of Britain. Its success was considered a surprise, given the lack of pubs that sold the beer at the time. In 1999, the brewery refined its production of Chiswick Bitter so that it settled more compactly in order to produce a more consistent and better tasting product and, by this time, the beer was also being sold in bottle along with their other core-range products.

The beer continued to win awards, including at the Battersea Beer Festival and the runner up prize at the Castle Rock beer awards in 2015. Following a successful first run in the USA in 2014, it was distributed and sold in draught across the country (alongside ESB and London Pride), with the brewery's US brand manager, Charles Stanley, reporting that this was due to the increasing popularity of full flavoured session beers. Despite these plaudits, cask sales of Chiswick Bitter were falling as customers shied away and a number of publicans reported having to dispose of large quantities of unsold beer. Eventually things came to a head and in October 2015 Fuller's announced that the beer would be pulled from their core range and would now be a seasonal beer only. The brewery claimed at the time that this was due to the increasing popularity of Seafarers Ale (3.6% ABV), a former Gale's brand that they had acquired along with the brewery. In reality its demise was due to the lack of turnover and the restructuring of their production line.

Chiswick Bitter eventually quietly disappeared from circulation entirely. With the increasing popularity of lower ABV beers, in the summer of 2024 the brewery released Griffin Gold (3.5% ABV). This was promoted as having a crisp bitterness, complemented by a burst of citrus and pine, making it the ideal beer for summer days. Roger Protz described it at the time as being a modern revision of Chiswick Bitter; however, it is brewed with American Cascade, Citra and Hallertau Tradition hops and so it is closer to the hop-forward beers pumped full of tropical citrusy flavours that currently dominate the market.

Meanwhile, the demand for the revival of Chiswick Bitter gathered pace as fans of the beer instigated a social media campaign calling for its return. Eventually, Fuller's relented and, in May 2024, they announced that the beer would be returning in bottled form for a limited period. After a successful relaunch in December that year the brewery decided to return Chiswick Bitter to its core range, albeit in bottle only.

In recent years the demand for lower strength beer has been gaining momentum, as health-conscious punters increasingly shun stronger beers for session strength alternatives. Markedly, low and non-alcohol beers have become the fastest growing beer-category. Given that Fuller's already has an established brand in the form of Chiswick Bitter, perhaps the time is right for them to once again release it in cask form.

Mike Goldwater

Kingston's Quiet Pint

Not every CAMRA event needs to be a pub crawl. In Kingston and Leatherhead branch, a quieter alternative has been gaining ground: the Quiet Pint. The idea is simple; we meet in one pub, stay put and enjoy a relaxed afternoon of conversation and good beer without the timetable, cost or pace of a traditional tour. It is normally held from 2pm to 5pm but people are, of course, free to come and go as they want.

The concept came from Keith Richardson, our branch membership secretary, who reflects that many organised crawls, while popular, can feel a bit regimented and sometimes expensive. He notes, *"On a five-pub trip you might easily spend £25 or more, plus travel. I thought why not just meet somewhere and stay there?"* There was also another motivation. Sitting alone in a pub, Keith wondered how many others might appreciate a sociable but low-key gathering, particularly those free during the day or newer members unsure about joining a larger group.

The first Quiet Pint was held at the Coronation Hall in Surbiton (KT6 4LQ). It attracted around sixteen people, including visitors who had spotted the listing in *London Drinker*. Some went on to explore other local pubs afterwards, an added benefit for the wider trade.

Since then, the format has proved quietly successful. Events are held three or four times a year, drawing a mix of regulars and newcomers. Recent gatherings have moved beyond Wetherspoon venues (initially chosen for

their affordability) to include a broader range of pubs offering a warm welcome and reasonably priced daytime pints. Around twenty people attended the most recent event, at the Watchman in New Malden (KT3 4ES). The atmosphere was easy-going; no schedules, no pressure, just conversation at its own pace. A small group of card players settled in unobtrusively, while others took the opportunity for longer, more relaxed chats than are often possible on the move.

For the branch, the appeal lies in its inclusivity. Quiet Pint sessions are, in short, CAMRA at its simplest: good beer, good company and time to enjoy both.

Happily, the idea is spreading and at least one other branch, North London, is regularly holding similar events. Look out for others in the Branch Diaries column at the front of the magazine.

Dave Butler

Editor's note: *this should not be confused with an April Fool's joke that the Morning Advertiser ran this year. They reported that in a bid to encourage 'mindfulness', the Government was to introduce a 'quiet hour' to pubs every evening. During this period there would be no music, no TVs turned on and no noisy snacks such as crisps and pork scratchings sold. Customers would have to speak at library volume.*

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3 MINUTES FROM: CARSHALTON STATION, MANY LOCAL BUSES.

There are positive signs that cask beer isn't quite dead yet. A few breweries have recently installed a handpump or two in their tap rooms but Brookfield Drinks have taken a much bigger plunge. They are investing around £2 million in the launch of a new cask beer.

LionHeart is a 4% ABV session bitter, brewed for Brookfield by Woodforde's in Norfolk. Many cask beer drinkers will know the name. They are long-established history brewers of cask beer, with their flagship, Wherry, having won numerous CAMRA awards.



Brookfield Drinks is probably a less familiar name. It's a UK sales and marketing company that specialises in the distribution of drinks to the on and off trades. The business was founded in 2012 by Nigel McNally, a former managing director of Charles Wells in Bedford and a long-time supporter of cask beer. At the launch of LionHeart, Nigel said, "Cask beer has struggled due to low throughput and inconsistent quality. There also seems to be some activity to confuse the consumer such as putting pasteurised beer through handpumps. All in all, we are seeing pubs disengage with cask beer but you can only get cask beer in pubs so they ought to be focusing on it. It's no surprise that those pubs investing in cask beer are growing." He added, "There are changes in the market. There is a move for drinkers to seek authenticity and provenance. We are also seeing a rising demand for premium cask, driven in part by interest in the style from Gen Z beer drinkers. Our aim

with LionHeart is to restore the pride in England's signature beer style and give pubs the support they need to stock cask ale with confidence."



The king in search of a beer!

The beer is designed to drink stronger than its 4.1% ABV, more akin to a premium bitter. There is however a twist. LionHeart is brewed to a 12th-century-style recipe using open fermenters. Not only is it made with classic English hops, Challenger and Goldings, but it also includes an addition flavour in sweet gale. This plant is also known as bog myrtle and was one of a number of ingredients, including mugwort and yarrow, that were used before hops were introduced into Britain. It gives bitterness and pine and herbal notes. It would have been a familiar ingredient during the reign of Richard I. This is the link that gives the beer its name. The result is a full flavoured dark amber beer with orange, apricot, toffee and a resinous character on a malty base, leading to a lingering bitter sweet, peppery finish.

Brookfield is targeting not just independent pubs and bars but also larger pub groups and national chains. They are also looking to have a presence at beer festivals and the beer's roll-out is being backed by broadsheet, radio and television adverts. The latter, not taking itself too seriously, features a thirsty Richard. Nigel's goal is for LionHeart to help revitalise the English beer sector as a whole. I think we can only wish it every success in raising the profile of good cask beer.

Christine Cryne

Get out of the group chat and into the round

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Costa Rica: minnows against a giant

As in so many parts of the world, in Costa Rica international breweries have a strong influence and that influence has recently gone up more than a notch. It is however worth looking back to understand the market.

By comparison with Europe, commercial brewing in Costa Rica is a relatively recent phenomenon. It wasn't until 1852 when permission was granted to open a brewery. This produced Torres beer but was short lived and closed in 1861. Over the next couple of decades, a number of breweries were set up, including one by the government, but it was in 1888 that Cereveceria Globol was established, changing its name to Gran Cervceria Traube when it relocated its brewery. Well known at the time for its Pilsen beer, the brewery was taken over by the Florida Ice & Farm Co in 1912. Pilsen continues to be produced by FIFC to this day and its sales make it number two in the market. This was FIFC's first entry into brewing. The company had been set up four years earlier by three brothers from Jamaica, originally to produce ice and farm goods.



FIFC has grown steadily since that time, expanding its interests into retail and distribution. Its Imperial beer, the market leader, dates from 1924 and its Bavaria brand from 1932. You would however be hard pushed to identify that all three beers came from the same brewery; the bottle labels are less than transparent. FIFC, which has 75% of the beer market, recently announced that it is selling its core interests to Heineken; they have had a relationship with the company for over 20 years and Heineken already had a significant shareholding.

Needless to say, with FIFC's dominance, the other breweries in Costa Rica, made up of a variety of craft brewers, are 'also rans' in terms of volume, although this isn't for want of trying. Sources indicate that the first craft brewery was at a restaurant called K&S in east San Jose in the 1990s but it was short lived. However, it did spark some interest and, a few years later, a dedicated craft beer bar called Cabeza Grande opened in San Jose, eventually relocating to the Arenal area. It evolved into the Lake Arenal Brewery (and Hotel) which still exists today. However, most people believe that it was the launch in 2010 of the Costa Rica Craft Brewing Co in San Jose that really kicked off the craft beer market. The interest in craft brewing was also helped by the increasing access to home brewing supplies assisted by two companies, TicoBirra and La Bodega de Chema, who began importing ingredients and equipment in about 2012. Home brewers are, of course, well known for driving the craft beer movement in many countries.



Since then, the number of craft brewers has grown with some, such as Monteverde, having a tap room in another town (La Fortuna) as well as their original brewery and tap room in Monteverde. However, most breweries have a relatively local distribution through the many independently run bars. The exact number of craft brewers in Costa Rica is difficult to ascertain but estimates indicate that there are around 200, with most tourist areas offering one or two usually local beers, mainly in bottles. These are of variable quality with some excellent but others exhibiting brewing faults, generally hygiene or fermentation problems. It isn't easy brewing beer in a warm country.

Costa Rica: minnows against a giant

What they may lack in expertise, they certainly make up in creativity. You'll find the usual lagers and American influenced beers (it can take just four hours to travel from the USA) alongside plenty of beers with added herbs, spices and fruit such as Sinco Amigos Blonde Ale Con Pitaya (dragon fruit).

So, what of the future? Beer tourism and a gradual shift from spirits and wine is helping to grow the market, which is estimated to expand at over 5% per annum for the next few years. But craft beer may still have a bit of an uphill struggle with local drinkers. Conversations with bar tenders indicated that Costa Ricans tended to stick with the FIFC beers and

one said 'Craft beer isn't that popular with locals as it's got too much taste', although he (a local) admitted that his favourite beer was a barley wine!

Costa Rican brewers also have a problem in that they have to import ingredients such as hops, although they do grow barley malt locally. Also, as in most countries, brewers bemoan government regulation but there is also no doubt that, given a competitor with 75% of the market and now access to the deep pockets of Heineken, there are definitely easier countries in which to be a craft brewer.

Christine Cryne

Usque ad mortem bibendum

By gatecrashing our brains, beer has shaped human history. The alcohol in beer is 'ethanol', a toxic substance that can poison other animals but we humans have enzymes that remove ethanol from the body. We inherited this ability from the apes who, over the millennia, came down from the trees and foraged fallen fruit that had fermented. This gave primates, and later humans, a love for the taste and smell of alcohol, which gave us an edge.

Eventually, early humans learnt how to make booze intentionally. Evidence from China reveals 10,000 year-old uncovered jars that contained a beverage akin to mead. The earliest recorded evidence of humans brewing beer was from the Sumerians who lived in and around Babylon from ca 4000 BCE to ca 2000 BCE in what is now Iraq. They loved their beer, drinking an estimated litre a day each from long straws placed in a communal bowl. Barley, pomegranates and dates were the main ingredients. The Romans drank mainly wine in preference to beer but were ultimately defeated by the beer-drinking barbarians to the North.

Here and elsewhere beer helped human settlements to grow without falling apart, although several may have fallen over. Evidence abounds of shared feasting where beer fostered group cohesion such as singing, dancing, story-telling and even worship. Such activities, then as now, reinforce social bonds and create feelings of pleasure, reward and stress release. One could add that it makes potential mates seem more desirable, thus encouraging population growth.

Today, regulars at a local pub have large and close support networks that not only enhance well-being but also act as a buffer against mental and physical injury. One academic, Edward Slingerland of the University of British Columbia (Canada), argues that beer is more than a companion to human progress but a pre-condition for it. It allowed the emergence of large-scale stratified human societies by encouraging tribal primates to co-operate with strangers. Humans could not have built civilisation without first getting drunk enough to intermingle and co-operate at a level unusual or unheard of in other species. As a recent article in the *Economist* (20 December 2025) put it, "human civilization has marched forward to the sound of clinking goblets."

Nevertheless, new worries about alcohol are spreading. Quite a few friends and family of mine have been 'ordered' to cease drinking alcohol altogether, to their collective and probably unnecessary misery. Surely moderation would be

preferable to abstinence. Their alternative is non-alcoholic beer but it is debatable whether these beers are becoming more palatable. I have yet to drink one that even closely matches the real thing and I am not alone. Scientists continue to labour to produce non-alcoholic beers and the market for it is growing, if very slowly. UK sales of it are still only 1.4% of the market for alcoholic beer while sales of that have declined only marginally from an annual per capita average of 8.9 litres in 2011 to 8.6 litres in 2021. So, there is hope for us all yet, especially if our pubs accommodate the small but growing market for non-alcoholic herbal beers and similar.

Sambrook's, my local brewery in Wandsworth, brewed a non-alcoholic beer about three years ago called Stand Easy but it was soon discontinued because it didn't sell enough. I drank a non-alcoholic keg lager there in April called Budvar Nealko, brewed in Chechia with Moravian malt and Saaz hops just like its famous, alcoholic elder brother. Despite being drinkable, I found it a little dry and metallic with no after-taste whatsoever.

I remember, some years ago, an American TV advert for Coors Lite. Two bright young things (BYTs) were prancing around, necking this beverage from the bottle. First BYT says to second BYT, with an enormous, grotesque grin, "...and NO lingering after-taste!" Surely the whole point of beer is to have a lingering after-taste...



Usque ad mortem bibendum

Pictured on the previous page is a pint of Oatmeal Stout (5.5% ABV) brewed by John Hatch at Sambrooks. It features chocolate malt balanced with Golding and Admiral hops, plus oats that contain beta-glucans, a soluble fibre to help line the intestine and prevent cholesterol getting into your body. It also helps to regulate blood sugar by acting as a pro-biotic. Result is a healthier gut and a damn good beer. 'Breakfast beer'? Why not!

The final word goes to Des de Moor, celebrated London beer writer, sadly no longer with us, who said; *"Beer is an artefact of human society, not simply an intoxicant but capable of being enjoyed and appreciated in the same way as all the other fine things in life and should be celebrated as such."*

Peter J Sutcliffe

Paddington and Maida Vale tour

This is a twin-centre pub trail that includes some of the most outstanding pub architecture in London and then moves on to one of the most concentrated clusters of good pubs in the capital. It then finishes at a railway and tube station to take happy drinkers home.

CAMRA's old Central Southern Region, which included branches from Buckinghamshire, Berkshire and Oxfordshire, traditionally had an annual visit to London. A couple of years ago the region was abolished when CAMRA reorganised its structure but that hasn't prevented the old region 'going rogue' and continuing to maintain the tradition of the London excursion.

This year's event took place in March, with a pub tour taking in two distinct areas: Kilburn/Maida Vale and Paddington. I was lucky enough to do the trail twice; first researching the route in January. All of us thoroughly enjoyed the event. In fact, we enjoyed it so much that we thought that we would share the route and pub details with *London Drinker* readers.

We started between Kilburn Park and Maida Vale tube stations at the Carlton Tavern on Carlton Vale (NW6 5EU). This is a must-visit pub for all CAMRA members and probably the only building in Britain to achieve listed status after being demolished. I'm sure that *London Drinker* readers are familiar with the story but for those of you yet to visit, look out for the reconstructed bar counter, etched windows, terrazzo flooring, ceiling mouldings and the original pub sign. See also the non-historical Bayeux tapestry inspired interpretation of modern London life. Three changing ales are available, included house beers from Ansapach and Hobday.



The Carlton Tavern

A 15-minute walk away south, past Maida Vale tube station, is the Warrington Hotel on Warrington Crescent (W9 1EH). This pub is Grade II listed and has one of the most spectacular pub interiors in London, mostly dating from a refit in the 1890s. The grand entrance porch gives an impressive welcome while inside there's a stunning collection of architectural details: a curved mahogany bar, marble fireplace, gilt-patterned arches and nearly forty mirrors. The main bar is dominated by a huge staircase surrounded by Victorian plasterwork and etched glass. The naked lady paintings on the canopy, though period in feel, actually only date from 1965. On my research visit Draught Bass was one of three ales on offer. However, only one draught ale, Old Speckled Hen, was available when the regional party visited. This led some to sample cans from Belleville Brewery from the pub's fridge.

There is a persistent local rumour that the Warrington Hotel's opulent upper floors operated as a high-class brothel in the late Victorian and Edwardian era, with the lavish ground-floor bar serving as the reception and introduction space. Despite Twickenham brewery's Naked Ladies being spotted on draught during the research visit, we can report no nefarious activities continue in the pub in the present day!

A two-minute walk away, the Prince Alfred, pictured over the page, on Formosa Street (W9 1EE) has one of London's oddest and most prized interiors. Dating from the 1860s and having been remodelled around 1898, the pub represents the ultimate in Victorian pub compartmentalisation. It is the most important example of its kind in London. It is Grade II* listed and is also on CAMRA's National Inventory of Historic Pub Interiors. It features five distinct bar compartments divided by ornate carved screens around a peninsula servery. The compartmentalised layout includes pot-boy doors, rotating snob screens and a towering island gantry with the original clock as its centrepiece. It also features a plasterwork ceiling, which was restored following a major collapse in 2015, plus engraved glazing, elaborate mosaic and tilework. Operated by Young's, it features their standard selection of real ales. The pub can get busy and it's a shame from a drinker's perspective that the large room at the rear is devoted to diners.

A five-minute walk away, past Warwick Avenue tube station, the Warwick Castle on Warwick Place (W9 2PX) is tucked away close to the Grand Union Canal and the Little Venice basin. It was built in the 1840s and the large bar area has a feel of distinct rooms, hinting at a more compartmentalised Victorian past. There's a completely separate room with a fireplace off to the left.



The Prince Alfred

The pub is also recognised on CAMRA's National Inventory. There's outdoor seating, which fills rapidly on a sunny day. The pub features two regular and two changing ales. There is a house beer called Made of Ale and Timothy Taylor's Landlord is a regular.

The next pub is a pleasant 20 to 30 minute canal walk along the Paddington Basin. A few members of the party stopped off to redeem some of their vouchers at one of the newest Wetherspoons in London, the Sir Alexander Fleming. A quicker alternative is to go one stop on the Bakerloo Line from Warwick Avenue to Paddington. A few minutes' walk along Sussex Gardens from Paddington Station is the Monkey Puzzle (W2 1JQ). Built in 1969 in the ground floor of a residential high-rise development, this pub has a traditional feel inside despite its relative modernity. There is some attractive coloured glasswork separating various seating and dining areas around an L-shaped bar. Look out for the replica map of London created sixteen years after the Great Fire and the eponymous Monkey Puzzle tree in the garden.



The Monkey Puzzle

Next, a five-minute walk away, is the Victoria on Strathearn Place (W2 2NH). This is a Victorian local of outstanding national importance; it is both Grade II-listed and on CAMRA's National Inventory. Dating from 1864, it may contain the earliest pub bar-back fittings in the country and, remarkably, little has changed since. The bar-back is the centrepiece with gilded mirrors and a clock still reading 1864. The counter has retained its original panelled bays and has a working brass water-dispenser for diluting spirits. Don't miss the Regency fireplace tucked into the angle of the building. This is a Fuller's pub and features the Fuller's range but also has guest beers. I had an excellent pint of Thornbridge Jaipur.



The Victoria

On the way back to Paddington station is a pub that has rapidly established itself as one of west London's best beer destinations. The Bear on Spring Street (W2 1JA) is part of the Craft Beer Co estate. It's a spacious pub with raised seating booths, some additional seating downstairs and a glass door through which the cellar is visible. A good range of cask ale and an even more extensive range of keg beers is available, with one regular house beer and four changing beers, often from Siren, Titanic, Iron Pier and other highly-rated breweries.

There was a temptation to linger at the Bear, so it was fortunate that the last pub on the trail is inside Paddington Station, raising the chances of drinkers making it home without complications. The Mad Bishop & Bear is somewhat hidden up a couple of escalators in the station shopping centre (W2 1HB). The name neatly combines two bear references: Paddington Bear, Michael Bond's fictional character who arrived at this station from darkest Peru, and the heraldic bear from the Bishop of London's coat of arms. Once inside, it's a spacious Fuller's pub on two levels. Two rows of five handpumps serve Fuller's cask ales, often including a seasonal, plus one or two guest ales. With station information screens inside, it's the ideal place to wait for your platform number to appear.

Note: Architectural references summarised in some cases from CAMRA websites.

Mike Clarke

This is a tale of how a simple conversation in a pub can lead to a nice surprise. CAMRA's Richmond & Hounslow branch has for the last year been trying different and new events to get more members involved. One of these was a German themed Christmas meal at the Northumberland Arms in Brentford (TW8 8JB). During this event I found out that on New Year's Day some members were visiting the Admiral Nelson in Whitton (TW2 7BB), which is my local. I turned up and found about 30 people there, most of whom I had never met before. This was the surprise: I had met the Weekly Wind-Up.

The Weekly Wind-Up group was formed in 1981 and is largely made up of those who work or have worked in the transport industry or have an enthusiasm for it. Combined with their transport interest, they also share a love of real ale and meet every Thursday to sample it at 'real' pubs and clubs in and around London which are, naturally, close to public transport links.

Since that chance meeting I have been inspired to attend as many Wind-Ups as possible. I present for you a selection of the places we have been this year. I should add all the venues serve the highest quality ales and always include a dark ale, often specially added. For example, the Admiral Nelson had all four small batch Twickenham Fine Ales stouts on the bar. Sometimes, many venues open early to accommodate the Wind-Up, which usually kicks off at 4pm.

- 8 January: **Nelson Arms**, Tonbridge (TN9 1UP). This multiple award-winning pub a short walk from the station has ten hand pumps and sells real cider and a keg range too. On a miserable wet night it was a warm haven, lovingly restored in 2018 with a nautical theme and four cosy bar areas. I tried beers from Sheffield (bitter), Bath (mild) and Kent (stout).
- 29 January: **Mitre**, Richmond (TW9 1UY). This ex-Young's pub, built in 1865 on church land, is now a free house. Up to 14 pumps serve ten real ales from mostly small independent breweries, plus up to four ciders. During our visit there was a dark mild from Burning Sky and a stout from Three Legs. The pub also has an excellent in-house pizza maker from Wednesday to Sunday.
- 19 February: **Old Cross Tavern**, Hertford (SG14 1JA). This friendly local is a conversion from an antiques shop in a grade II-listed building. There are no TVs and the pub serves up to six real ales. There was a nice warming real fire during our visit. A stout by Lacons and Maris the Otter from York brewery were among the beers.



- 26 March: **Pocket**, Islington (N1 2AS). This newly reopened pub is a popular local with a small historical frontage. A trip to the toilets is an adventure down into the cellar that feels like you are going outside! Pub Ale Best by Blackjack and Life Coach stout by local brewer Howling Hops were available on two of the eight pumps.
- 2 April: **Albion Brewery Bar**, Northampton (NN1 1PR). Phipps brewery returned here in 2014. This brewery bar is in the restored building of the 1884 Ratcliffe & Jeffrey's Albion Brewery. All the fittings have been recovered from closed Phipps pubs. Eight pumps serve all the Phipps beer range plus a rotating guest. There is a clear modern interpretation of the Victorian industrial scene in the building with the brewery visible through a glass screen and lots of memorabilia to view.



- 9 April: **Orpington Liberal Club**, (BR6 0RZ). This local club in a converted house has won multiple CAMRA awards. It is run by a committee of real ale fans and serves up to five beers, as well as cider and perry. The club focuses on LocAle and microbreweries. Mr Grundy's Blighty was the highlight, a dark, strong 'Olde English' mild bitter. Also on the bar were two stouts from Pig & Porter. Other lighter beers were available!

So, if you enjoy travelling to new places to visit different pubs to drink excellent beer (often dark) with friendly like-minded company (and a dog or two) and you are free on Thursdays, I would thoroughly recommend the Thursday Wind-Up group and its rationale. For more information, go to weeklywindup@outlook.com.

Damian Smeaton

The **WhatPub?** pub database is no more. However the data remains available for all to use, not just CAMRA members, as part of the main CAMRA website; just go to <https://camra.org.uk/pubs>. It continues to feature over 31,000 pubs that currently serve cask beer plus records of pubs that do not sell cask beer or are closed.

All of the information used 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 cask beer and cider on offer. You can search by specific pub name or general location.

This update is based on news items collated by CAMRA's branches in Greater London. We aim to report all openings and closures of pubs and clubs; those that add or remove cask beer; and changes of name, ownership or beer policy. Readers are encouraged to 'suggest an edit' using the website when they find incomplete or out-of-date information (but not customer reviews, please). Members can also 'spot a beer', allowing others to see what beers are currently available.

Available on the Greater London CAMRA website under Pub Updates, a longer version of this schedule includes changes to Cask Marque status, cider policy, LocAle, CAMRA discounts and pub operating model.

NEW & REOPENED PUBS & CLUBS – INCLUDING THOSE CONVERTED TO CASK BEER

INNER LONDON

EC1, JIMMY & THE BEE, 135 Goswell Rd.

Coffee and pastries shop with craft beer.

EC2, LITTLE NEON DOOR, 91-93 Great Eastern St.

Part of a chain of 'house party' bars. Cocktail bar with two keg beers and bottles.

EC2, SIDE HUSTLE, 130 Wood St. Was a branch of Dirty Martini Cocktail Bar chain. Sports bar. Keg beer with bottles and cans. Food is burgers and wings.

EC2, SWIFT SHOREDITCH, 91-93 Great Eastern St.

Part of a chain of cocktail bars. One keg beer with bottles and cans.

EC2, VILLAGE UNDERGROUND ROOFTOP, 8A Great Eastern St. Warehouse usually used for live music and clubbing. They have opened the rooftop to the public for the summer. This is where the tube trains are parked and these are open to customers. Booking is advisable but they take walk ins. Card payments only. Food is pizza.

EC3, FORTNUM'S BAR & RESTAURANT, The Courtyard at the Royal Exchange. Elegant bar from Fortnum & Mason. Six keg beers, mainly house branded.

EC3, LIBERTINE, 1 Royal Exchange, Cornhill. Modern bar & restaurant in the vaults underneath the Royal Exchange.

WC1, JEREMY BENTHAM (Aldrich Inns), 31 University St. Cask beer such as Timothy Taylor Landlord available.

E7, ROOST, Arch 361 Winchelsea Rd.

Breweries bar & restaurant in a railway arch. Keg beer. Food is Algerian spiced chicken.

E8, ROCOLA, Unit 3, 143 Mare St. Breweries bar & restaurant with rotating resident food options.

E11, BOBO & WILD, 39-41 High St. Café & bakery with a 'smokehouse' evening menu. Two keg beers and bottles.

E14, SEA LANES CANARY WHARF, 15 Newfoundland Pl. Bar & restaurant attached to the open-air lido in Eden Dock. The bar area is open to the public but there is a charge to use the lido. Keg beer.

E15, BRITANNIA, 2 Plaistow Gro. Reopened as **BUCCANEER** after site redevelopment. Food is pizza.

E17, COLLAB, 198 Hoe St. Reopened in May as **SOHO THEATRE PUB** as an adjunct to the nearby theatre.

N15, K K MCCOOLS, 265 West Green Rd.

To become the **GREEN HOUSE** with six cask beers.

N16, RYAN'S N16, 181 Stoke Newington Church St.

Reopened as **MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT**. 10 hand pumps serving cask and real cider plus 12 keg taps from the team behind the Robin.

N19, MOTHER RED CAP (Heineken), 665 Holloway Rd.

Reopened in June by Pub Co London Ltd. No cask beer.

NW3, SOUTH END GREEN SOCIAL (Heineken), 154 Fleet Rd.

Reopened as **FLEET TAVERN**. Wye Valley Butty Bach always on, with three changing beers.

SE1, BEER BAR. Bar on the Bermondsey Beer Mile at the intersection of Druid St. and Tanner St. All seating is outside. A range of draught beers are available; no cask beer.

SE1, DUKE OF YORK (Shepherd Neame), 47 Borough Rd. Reopened in June following several months' refurbishment. Three cask beers from the Sheps range.

SE1, LONDON CIDER HOUSE, Unit 50, Jubilee Pl, Borough Market. A range of 10-15 draught ciders on tap, as well as a large selection of bottled ciders from small producers.

SE1, SIXES SOCIAL CRICKET LONDON BRIDGE, 50 Bermondsey St. Formerly a wine bar before being taken over by the Sixes Cricket Franchise in March 2024, the venue hosts a number of cricket nets that can be booked. A bar area with draught beers can be accessed without using the cricket nets. No cask beer.

SE1, TOWER BRIDGE ARMS (ex-BrewDog), 206-208 Tower Bridge Rd. Reopened in June by Urban Pubs & Bars. Cask beer still available.

SE6, DUKE OF CATFORD (InnBrighton/Punch), 67 Rushey Green. Reopened under the original name **BLACK HORSE & HARROW** as a Unity Social retail agreement. Fuller's London Pride.

SE15, SET SOCIAL, 55a Nigel Rd. Members-only arts and social club, with a café, bar, library, and garden. The venue holds a number of arts and crafts events, and also has a stage for live music. Draught but no cask beer available.

SE16, ENID ST TAVERN (Bianca Road Brewery), 87 Enid St. A cask beer brewed by Bianca Road is sometimes available.

SE18, PLUME OF FEATHERS (Dhadda Estates), 282 Plumstead High St. Reopened as **PLUME BAR & GRILL**.

SE23, STUFFED WALRUS (Heineken), 52 Perry Rise. Cask beer now available, such as a changing beer from Wadworth.

SW1, GREYHOUND, 13 Cambridge St.

Reopened as **PURGATORY BAR** from escape room company, No Escape. The two themed 'escape rooms' are in the basement. Drinks are mainly cocktails and spirits with a few wines and a couple of beers.

SW3, NEW FORMS, 9 Chelsea Manor St.

Next to BookBar in the Gaumont development. Café, bar, and record shop, with a couple of keg beers on tap.

SW9, ROYAL OAK (Heineken), 273A Clapham Rd.

Reopened as **ELEPHANT & BARREL** in June, the third of these in London after Fulham and the Crown in Cricklewood, after a £495k refurbishment by Star and new leaseholders, including The Apprentice star Priyesh Bathia. Sadly no cask beer, but (Heineken) Brixton keg varieties available at £7.50 a pint or a staggering £4.50 a half. Stocky, a life-sized model elephant graces the beer garden at the front.

SW11, WOODPECKER (VSP88), 42-44 Battersea High St. Reopened in July after refurbishment, run by Pulse Venues who also operate the Raven close to Tower Bridge alongside pubs in Hampshire, Dorset and Cornwall. Sharp's Solar Wave and Timothy Taylor Landlord plus one or two changing guests including Naughty Knocker Ale, a house beer brewed by Salcombe.

W1, FLARE (Shaftesbury), 14-16 Ganton St.

Reopened as **VAGABOND**, their largest wine bar to date.

W1, G-A-Y (Soho Estates), 30 Old Compton St.

Reopened as **COVEN**.

W6, L'AMI JAC, 94-96 Shepherds Bush Rd. Bottle shop, light restaurant and wine bar with some draught beers.

W14, OLYMPIA, Hammersmith Rd. Incipio Group has opened multiple bars and eateries; none sell cask beer.

OUTER LONDON

CHEAM, HALFWAY INN, 33 The Bdy. One changing cask beer is now being served (such as Tonbridge Golden Rule).

COULSDON, BAR CHORD, 6 The Pde, 258 Coulsdon Rd. Friendly music-themed micropub in ex-wine bar, opened in April. A cask beer from Westerham is served (currently from a minipin), along with wine, cocktails, and lager and cans from Wimbledon.

EAST MOLESEY, MITRE HOTEL (Signet Hotels), Hampton Court Rd. Cask beer now available, Wimbledon SW19.

HAYES, CRAFT BEER ROOMS, 6 Bourne Way.

Reopened as **CRAFTY BOK** in May. No cask beer.

HIGH BARNET, BLACK HORSE (Heineken UK), 92 Wood St. Reopened in June. Fuller's London Pride, St Austell Tribute and Timothy Taylor Landlord, plus a guest.

HORNCHURCH, RISING SUN (Tavern PropCo), 64-68 High St. Reopened as **SHELLY V'S** sports bar and nightclub. No cask beer.

KESTON, FOX INN (Stonegate), Heathfield Rd.

Having closed due to fire damage, the pub reopened at the end of May.

THORNTON HEATH, ELGON VIEW, 61 High St.

Reopened as **M'ZURI**, a restaurant and bar with Afro-Caribbean roots.

UPMINSTER, UPMINSTER PAVILION CLUB,

Upminster Park, Corbets Tey Rd. Opened in 2025 replacing the existing pavilion. The clubhouse services both the cricket and the hockey club.

PUBS & CLUBS CLOSED, CONVERTED, OR CEASED SELLING CASK BEER

INNER LONDON

EC1, LOCO HOMBRE CANTINA & PUB.

Closed, future uncertain.

EC2, BE AT ONE (OLD BROAD STREET) (Stonegate).

Closed, future uncertain.

EC2, PRINCESS OF SHOREDITCH (Stonegate).

No cask beer.

EC3, SLUG & LETTUCE (MINORIES) (Stonegate).

Closed, awaiting new name and operator.

WC1, MARCO'S NEW YORK ITALIAN.

Closed for refurbishment or rebranding.

E1, BLACK HORSE (Wellington). No longer sells cask beer.

E2, MARQUIS OF CORNWALLIS (Stonegate/Craft Union).

Closed, future uncertain.

E3, LITTLE DRIVER (Stonegate/Craft Union). No cask beer.

E11, PLOUGH & HARROW (Stonegate).

Closed, freehold on the market.

E13, CHARLIE'S BAR. Closed, future uncertain.

E13, VICTORIA TAVERN. Closed and boarded up.

E17, BIG PENNY SOCIAL. No cask beer.

E17, MYSHISH. Closed, lease on the market.

E18, OHANA'S BAR. Closed, future uncertain.

N1, LAKI KANE. Closed in September 2025.

N3, AHIR LORENZO'S (London Underground).

Closed in March as TfL did not renew lease.

N16, BIRDCAGE (Stonegate). No longer sells cask beer.

N18, LT'S. Closed, future uncertain.

N19, CHARLOTTE DESPARD.

Closed at the end of June, future uncertain.

NW1, BE AT ONE (CAMDEN) (Stonegate).

Closed, likely to become a Stonegate tenancy with new name.

NW6, ALLIANCE (Loc). Closed, future uncertain.

NW9, GREEN MAN (De Burgo Go Go Ltd).

Closed for renovation.

SE1, SPIT & SAWDUST (Stonegate/Cool Pub Co Ltd).

Closed, future uncertain.

SE10, BELUSHI'S (Interpub). Closed, future uncertain.

SE10, UP THE CREEK BREWERY TAP. Cask beer no longer available since the onsite microbrewery ceased operation.

SE15, GOSNELLS MEADERY. Reported closed in June.

SE18, WHO'D 'A' THOUGHT IT. Closed by June.

SE26, GOLDEN LION (Stonegate).

Closed, Stonegate looking for new tenant.

SW1, GLOUCESTER (Cadogan/Greene King).

Closed, to be reopening by Guy Ritchie early next year.

SW6, BROADWAY BAR & GRILL (Stonegate). Closed again. Stonegate are still looking for a long term operator.

SW8, NINE ELMS TAVERN (Young's).

No longer sells cask beer.

SW10, SOPHIE'S.

Closed in May on lease expiry, future uncertain.

SW16, EARL FERRERS (Stonegate).

Cask beer no longer available.

W1, 100 WARDOUR STREET BAR & LOUNGE.

Closed in January.

W1, BE AT ONE (WIMPLE ST.) (Stonegate).

Closed in June, future uncertain.

W1, BROOKS MEWS WINE HOUSE (Mayfair House Group).

Closed in March.

W1, GREEK STREET LIVE. Closed in February.

W1, MOTCOMBS. Closed last October.

W4, HOLE IN THE WALL (Stonegate).

Closed suddenly, lease available through Stonegate.

W5, TEATRO HALL (Urban Pubs & Bars).

Closed, future uncertain

W10, GARDEN BAR & GRILL (Heineken/House Bars).

No longer sells cask beer.

OUTER LONDON

CHESSINGTON, CHESSINGTON CRICKET CLUB.

Club house destroyed by fire.

CROYDON, BISHOP'S WINE BAR. Closed on 1 July.

Lease terminated by developers, Westfield, after 44 years just outside the Whitgift Centre.

CROYDON, SHIRLEY INN (M&B).

No longer sells cask beer.

ENFIELD, KING & TINKER (Heineken).

Closed, future uncertain.

ENFIELD, LINCOLN, 155 Percival Rd.

Closed in June for redevelopment that might include new pub.

HAMPTON WICK, SWAN (Wellington/Shepherd Neame).

No longer leased by Big Smoke. No cask beer as of July.

HAMPTON, RAILWAY BELL (Stonegate).

The pub has had a complete redesign and renovation in June 2026 with the welcome addition of air-conditioning but no cask beer; card payments only.

HEATHROW AIRPORT, BIG SMOKE TAPHOUSE & KITCHEN (Heathrow Airport Ltd/Big Smoke). Closed.

HIGH BARNET, HADLEY HOUSE (Stonegate).

Closed since May, future uncertain.

KINGSTON, 7000 JARS OF BEER.

No longer sells cask beer.

KINGSTON, BROWNS (M&B). Closed, future uncertain.

NORWOOD GREEN, LAVISH LOUNGE (Multani Estate Management). Closed, future uncertain.

RICHMOND, BRITANNIA (Stonegate).

No longer sells cask beer.

ROMFORD, MULLIGANS ROMFORD.

Closed in June, future uncertain.

SUDBURY, MUMBAI JUNCTION.

Closed, planning already granted for demolition.

OTHER CHANGES

INNER LONDON

EC2, FAZENDA RODIZIO BAR & GRILL, 100 Bishopgate. Renamed **FOGO DE CHAO**.

WC2, CRUSTING PIPE (Davy's). Now **MR FOGG'S MARKET TAVERN**, one of Inception's cocktail bar chain, this one is set to become their flagship venue.

WC2, SINNERS SOCIAL CLUB. Renamed **BOOTLEGGER**.

E17, GEORGIO'S SPORTS BAR & GRILL.

Now **ST JAMES BAR**.

N15, NO.8 SEVEN SISTERS (Stonegate).

Reopened as **WOODBERRY TAVERN** under new operator following refurbishment. No cask beer.

NW1, CAMDEN ASSEMBLY.

Reverted to **BAR FLY**.

NW5, LORD PALMERSTON (Young's). Now owned and operated by Remarkable Pubs. Beer range has included Five Points Pale.

NW8, CLIFTON (Loci Pubs).

Now run by Beyond the Vale Pubs.

SE1, FLOWERS OF THE FOREST (Stonegate/Weir Inns).

Freehold sold to Town Centre Inns.

SE14, DOKIS LOUNGE. Reverted to **STAR & GARTER**.

SE16, GOSNELLS MEADERY TAPROOM.

Now **BIG HUG SOCIAL** from Big Hug Brewing. Sells craft beer, predominantly from Big Hug range, as well as some Gosnell's meads. No cask beer available.

SW1, GRANGE ROCHESTER HOTEL BAR.

Now **WELLINGTON HOTEL BAR**.

SW3, CALLOOH CALLAY. Renamed **MARCH HARE**.

SW9, CANOVA HALL (Urban Pubs & Bars).

Renamed **FERNDALE**.

SW10, CHELSEA GATE. Reverted to **CHELSEA PENSIONER**.

SW16, SW16 BAR & KITCHEN. Renamed the **HILL**.

SW19, HEMINGWAY'S. Renamed **SEVEN ELEMENTS**.

W1, KINGS ARMS (Greene King). Reverted to its original (1742) name, **THREE JOLLY BUTCHERS** after refurbishment.

W1, NEON 194. Now **ONE NINETYFOUR**.

W12, DEAR GRACE (Incipio Group).

Renamed **BLOOMSYARD**.

OUTER LONDON.

KINGSTON, WOODY'S (Windsor & Eton Brewery).

Renamed **WEBREW KINGSTON**.

SUTTON, UNITED SERVICES CLUB SUTTON.

Renamed **SUTTON SOCIAL CLUB**.

UXBRIDGE, 46 CLUB.

Conservative Club renamed again, now **CHURCHILL BAR**.

London's Dead Pubs

There are a number of books about closed pubs in London, along with various websites. This one, despite the sad subject, is probably the most interesting and amusing that I have come across. Split into five sections, Central, East, North, South & South East and West & South West, it contains details of 202 pubs. Most are labelled 'dead pub' but others are encouragingly described as 'back from the dead' where there have been recent developments. For each pub there is a description of what the pub used to be like and, where appropriate, what stands in its place now. There are also over 500 excellent photos. Very usefully, the author makes suggestions as to where you can now get a drink nearby.

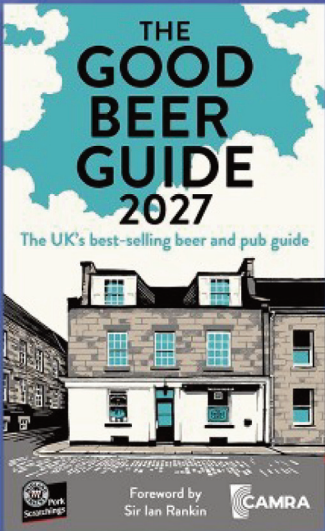
The author, Paul Talling, runs the Derelict London website, which is worth looking at in its own right, and he has gathered the information over twenty years as an organiser of guided walking tours on a number of subjects. Mr Talling has written several other books, including two detailing London's lost music venues.



Published in June, the book has 206 pages and is in a handy 15cm x 18cm format. It is published by Damaged Goods Books. The cover price is £14.99. ISBN-13: 978-1-9162327-4-7.

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*Sir Ian Rankin photo credit: Louise Motter

In this edition we remember three people who have each played a part in London's pub and beer history in their very different ways.

Rob Jones, who has died aged 69, was one of the pioneers of independent brewing in London. He first came to prominence as one half of the Pitfield Brewery partnership with Martin Kemp. In 1987 their Dark Star, a 5% ABV old ale, won CAMRA's Champion Beer of Britain award. They were the first 'micro' to achieve this. Set up in 1981, they were based in the Beer Shop off-licence in Hoxton, with the brewery in the basement until demand required a move to some former stables nearby.

When the partnership ended, and after spells brewing for other people, Rob set up his own brewery, called Dark Star (he had retained the rights) in the basement of the Evening Star in Brighton. He created a pale ale called Hophead (3.8% ABV), brewed with Amarillo and Cascade hops. The effect that this beer had on the trade cannot be underestimated. With the help of Mark Tranter, whom he met at the Evening Star, Rob expanded first to a site at Ansty and then to a purpose-built brewery at Partridge Green that had a capacity of 20,000 barrels a year. Several other beers were added, such as the award-winning American Pale Ale and my particular favourite, Revelation.

Rob left Dark Star before Fuller's acquired the company in 2018. Fuller's appeared happy to leave them to operate independently until they themselves were taken over by the Japanese brewer Asahi in 2022. One of Asahi's first actions was to close the Partridge Green site. Happily, Mark Tranter, who by then had worked for Dark Star for 17 years, kept the spirit going by founding the Burning Sky brewery at Firle in 2013.

Rob had decided to become a publican and acquired the Duke of Wellington in Shoreham-by-Sea (BN43 6RE). He turned the pub around, greatly increased its beer range and held regular festivals. His plans to brew at the pub never came to fruition but he did establish close ties with Downlands brewery in Small Dole.

It is difficult to know what to say about **Humphrey Smith**, the chairman of Samuel Smith's Old Brewery in Tadcaster, Yorkshire. One Facebook post described him as 'An absolute titan of the British brewing world'. I suspect that not everyone will be so kind. Another

source described him as a 'Christian traditionalist', very much influenced by his grandfather who had been Bishop of Selby. He kept his and his company's affairs very private. In 1982 he took the unusual step of changing its status to an 'unlimited company', which means that while its owners became personally and fully liable for any company debts, the company was no longer required to publish its financial accounts. The company produced as much of its stock (soft drinks, crisps, etc) as possible in house so as not to have to buy them from other suppliers.

Humphrey is, of course, best known for the rules that governed his pubs. Mobile 'phones and similar devices are banned and no music allowed. There is a certain irony that most people would have learned of his death on their mobile 'phones. Foul language is particularly frowned upon. The business was his and he ran it - and its pubs - his way; take it or leave it. Many people approved. There were questions over his employment practices and the management of the company's estate, with a large number of pubs being kept empty, but that never troubled him.

It was reported at the end of 2024 that Humphrey was retiring and that his son, Samuel, was taking over as chairman. This seems never to come about but presumably will do so now. For some years, Samuel has been running their portfolio of 35 pubs in London as a separate entity from the main estate and has not enforced his father's rules quite so stringently. We send him our condolences and wish him well.

I suspect that Humphrey might not have got along with **Norman Balon**, who ran the Coach & Horses in Greek Street, Soho (W1D 5DH) from 1943 to 2006. Norman, who has died aged 99, was legendarily London's rudest landlord. He was very much part of the 'old' Soho, with the pub being used by *Private Eye* magazine for its lunches and its being frequented by the likes of Jeffrey Barnard, famous for his *Low Life* column in the *Spectator* magazine, and who was the inspiration for the play *Jeffrey Barnard is Unwell*. Underneath the bluster, Norman is said to have had a kind and generous nature and looked after his friends.

LETTERS

All readers - not just CAMRA members - are invited to submit letters for publication to *London Drinker* but please remember 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 not, why not join? See below for details



CAMRA essentially remains a campaigning organisation and, with the threats currently faced by our independent pubs and breweries, there is still a lot to be done. Lobbying politicians (both national and local), objecting to planning applications and even delivering magazines such as *London Drinker* all contribute to the cause. Volunteering is a great way to learn new skills and meet like-minded people who share your love of all things to do with beer, cider and pubs. To find out more about volunteering opportunities go to <https://ow.ly/SB3H50V0KGf>.

In addition, as a CAMRA member you will have access to lots of beer-related benefits. You can take advantage of these at home, at events and in pubs. Here are some of the options for you to explore:

- * The campaign: keep up with the campaign that your membership is supporting with our *What's Brewing* online publication, available online here <https://wb.camra.org.uk/>.
- * Beer discounts: your membership card and vouchers get you discounts on your beer at pubs up and down the country. Check out whatpub.com, search for locations and use the filters to find great pubs near you with features you like.
- * Beer festivals: as a member of CAMRA, you get free entry to our 160 beer festivals up and down the country. Search for a festival near you on our website, get out and try new beers!
- * The CAMRA shop: did you know that CAMRA is also an award-winning book publisher? As a CAMRA member, you have access to preferential rates at our shop for books, merchandise and more. Take a look on our website today. <https://shop1.camra.org.uk/>.
- * Member benefits: your membership should allow you to save money on the things that matter to you, which is why we work with partners to bring you great discounts. We're adding more to our website all the time; see <https://camra.org.uk/join/membership-benefits/partner-benefits/>.
- * Keep in touch: whether you're on our website, in the pub or at a beer festival, having a voice and getting involved will allow you to get more out of your membership. *BEER Magazine* and our CAMRA YouTube channel are a great way to keep up to date with CAMRA news and beer, cider and perry in general. The website contains a lot of very useful reference information on all aspects of beer and cider.

Annual subscriptions (from 24 June 2026) are as follows:

- Single membership, paid by Direct Debit, £35.00;
- Joint membership (partner at same address) £43.00.

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'.

Idle Moments

Well hello again. Firstly, I must apologise for the absence of *Idle Moments* in the last *Drinker*; this was because my computer suddenly died, resulting in the installation of a new hard drive (SSD - smaller but quicker than the old hard disc) and effectively a whole new operating system that I am still getting to grips with. Still, it's back now, so here we go.

Let's start with 5BY4. Last time I suggested that My Vinyl had run its course and that I would find another subject but, when I looked at what I had dug out before, I found nearly enough for another helping. I therefore present My Vinyl 3. Whether proudly or shamefacedly, I shall leave you to decide:

Here are the artists:

1. Albion Country Band
2. Martin Carthy
3. The Copper Family
4. Charlie Dore
5. Lesley Duncan
6. Electric Light Orchestra
7. Don McClean
8. Mike Oldfield
9. The Seekers
10. June Tabor

...and here are the albums:

- A. Ashes & Diamonds (1977)
- B. Battle of the Field (1975)
- C. The Bonny Black Hare and Other Songs (1968)
- D. Come the Day (1966)
- E. Discovery (1979)
- F. Homeless Brother (1974)
- G. Incantations (1978)
- H. Sing Children Sing (1971)
- I. A Song for Every Season (1971)
- J. Where To Now (1979)

A few weeks ago, I found myself musing on Henry VIII and his six wives and, in particular, for how long he was married to each. I did a little bit of research to satisfy my curiosity, then I thought, Information is power! No, I didn't. I actually thought, 'information is something I can use in Idle Moments'. You probably won't be surprised at what comes next. Thinking about how to present the information, I decided that the 5BY4 format was the most appropriate, so here is 5BY4, part 2 (or is it 6BY1?): Here are Henry's Wives (in chronological order) and here are their durations (in length order) of their marriages:

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Catherine of Aragon | A. 6 months, 6 days |
| 2. Anne Boleyn | B. 1 year, 4 months, 24 days |
| 3. Jane Seymour | C. 1 year, 6 months, 16 days |
| 4. Anne of Cleves | D. 3 years, 6 months, 3 days |
| 5. Catherine Howard | E. 3 years, 6 months, 16 days |
| 6. Catherine Parr | F. 23 years, 11 months, 12 days |

And so, we come to the culmination of Idle Moments: General Trivia (or whatever else you like to call it). As is often the case, I have selected events from the months covered by the notional circulation period of the current edition of the magazine (but not in the current year, in case you were thinking of splitting the odd hair or two).

1. On 1 August 1876, the 38th state of the USA was inaugurated as 'The Centennial State'. Which state is this?
2. US film director, John Houston and English actress, Joan Hickson were born on the same day - 5 August; in what year?
3. What major group of museums, education and research centres in the USA was founded on 10 August 1846, named after its founding donor, a British scientist?
4. The first Astronomer Royal (who laid the foundation stone of the Royal Greenwich Observatory) was born on 19 August 1646. Who was he?
5. Hearthrob of the silent movie era, Rudolph Valentino died in a New York hospital on 23 August 1926. How old was he at his death?
6. King Edward III's army defeated that of Philip VI of France, greatly aided by the first use of the English longbow, on 26 August 1346. At what battle did this victory occur?
7. The first cricket test match to take place in England (against Australia) started on 6 September 1880. At what ground did this event occur?
8. Queen Elizabeth I was born to Henry VIII and Queen Anne Boleyn on 7 September 1533. Where did the event take place?
9. The much vaunted Battle of the Sexes tennis match, in which Billie Jean King beat Bobby Riggs, took place at the Astrodome, Houston Texas on 20 September; of what year?
10. Former Crown Colony, British Honduras gained full independence from the United Kingdom on 21 September 1981, having previously been renamed in 1873. What is it now called?

So, there we are; that was Idle Moments. If it looks even more cobbled together than usual, that could be because I have not been brave enough to go back to the 80,000+ files currently stored in the Cloud to put them back on my computer, because I'm afraid that the changes to the operating system will cause to chaos to both the computer and the data. If you were wondering, about half of those files are the photographs I have taken since I bought my first 35mm camera in 1968. Yes, I spent quite a few hours scanning colour slides (and latterly, prints) during the Covid lockdown.

Andy Pirson

The answers

Here are the solutions to the puzzles set in the April/May column:

5BY4 (My Vinyl 2):

1. Ralph McTell - You Well Meaning Brought Me Here
2. Bob Dylan - Bringin' It All Back Home
3. Judy Tzuke - Welcome to the Cruise
4. Steeleye Span - Parcel of rogues
5. Jethro Tull - Songs From the Wood
6. Tom Paxton - Peace Will Come
7. Blondie - Parallel Lines
8. Barbara Dickson - Heartbeats
9. Judy Collins - Wild Flowers.
10. Mike Harding - The Rochdale Cowboy Rides Again

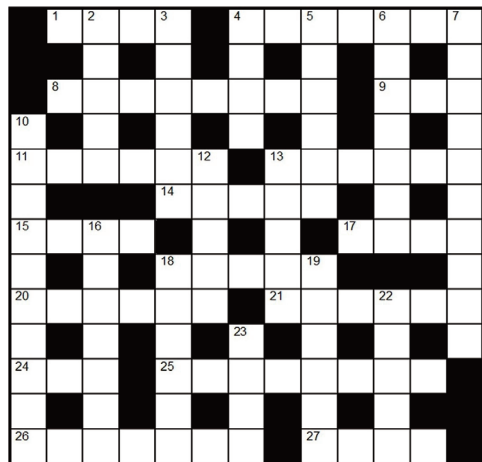
Cryptic Stations:

1. I met my comeuppance - Waterloo.
2. Beehive hair style? - High Barnet
3. Especially shallow for moggies - Catford
4. Big posh home - Mansion House
5. Entrance in the trees - Forest Gate
6. Down by the river - Bank
7. Mad? - Barking
8. They've gone a funny colour - Turnham Green
9. Senior cleric's picnic spot - Canons Park
10. The route to Kingsholm? - Gloucester Road

General knowledge:

1. André Previn was born on 6 April 1929 in BERLIN.
2. 'John Palmer' who was hanged in York for murdering a keeper in Epping was DICK TURPIN.
3. The first Grand National winner trained by a woman, Jenny Pittman, on 9 April 1983, was CORBIERE.
4. When the FA Cup was won with a record score of 6-0 on 18 April 1903, DERBY COUNTY beat CRYSTAL PALACE.
5. The first ever televised snooker break of 147 (during the 1983 World Championship) was scored by CLIFF THORBURN
6. The tragedy of the destruction of the airship Hindenburg, on 6 May 1937, occurred at LAKEHURST, NEW JERSEY.
7. Nelson's flagship, HMS Victory, launched on 7 May 1765, was built at CHATHAM.
8. Britain's first jet bomber, which made its maiden flight on 15 May 1949, was the ENGLISH ELECTRIC CANBERRA.
9. Blackwall Tunnel under the Thames was opened to traffic on 22 May in 1897. The second bore (separating north and southbound traffic) opened in AUGUST 1967.
10. When 'Captain' William Kidd was hanged for piracy on 23 May 1701, the event took place at EXECUTION DOCK at Wapping.

Compiled by DAVE QUINTON - £20 prize to be won!



Name

Address

Telephone

E-mail

All correct entries received by first post on 23 September will be entered into a draw for the prize. The prize winner will be announced in the December/January edition. The solution will be given in the October/November edition.

All entries should be submitted to:
London Drinker Crossword
13 Belvedere Close, Teddington, TW11 0NT

Please note: The address for sending entries to above has changed.

JUNE/JULY SOLUTION



ACROSS

1. Some ideas appear very quickly. [4]
4. Stopped liking and left. [4,3]
8. One glows after band's recall. [8]
9. Slip into the ferry terminal. [3]
11. Negligent concerning a young woman. [6]
13. I'm sadly returning the food. [6]
14. Support for Damien Hirst, maybe, decapitating an animal. [5]
15. Just average. [4]
17. Risk a letter being seen. [4]
18. Rage at a no good old queen. [5]
20. Take down as a joke, it's said. [6]
21. Expressing sorrow for flu outbreak on Paris street [6]
24. Range of Niagara Falls. [3]
25. It's very difficult for the retired thespian [8]
26. Getting a seat after standing [7]
27. A feature of French Indo-China [4]

DOWN

2. Power source of leading soccer side [5]
3. Delight in quiet 14. Somehow. [6]
4. Originally what every brown spider makes. [4]
5. Mean to give girl love. [6]
6. Play a role in the theatre. [7]
7. Clever after class I had. Very impressive! [10]
10. It's wasteful for ship changing hands. [10]
12. Good individual isn't a revolutionary. [5]
13. Son permanently cut off. [5]
16. He doesn't appreciate being on fire. [7]
18. A smell is rising. [6]
19. Rot I see in the country. [6]
22. Entertaining chap, they say, supplies truffles, perhaps. [5]
23. Father with instinctive desire to be settled. [4]

Winner of the prize for the April/May Crossword:
John Dodd, London W12.

Other correct entries were received from:

Ted Alleway, Tony Alpe, H Arnott, Phil & Rose Bell, C Bloom, Hugh Breach, Kay Breach, Kelvin Brewster, Jeremy Brinkworth, Luke Brown, John Butler, Hilary Clark, John Clark, Owen Cunningham, Andy Dadd, Michael Davis, Brian Demby, Al Denty, Mike Dewar, R Evans, Penny Farthing, Colin Francis, Terry Francis, Richard Garton, Paul Gray, J E Green, Alan Greer, A Gregg, Matthew Griffiths, 'Shropshire' Dave Hardy, John Howarth, Alan Humphrey, Martin Jackson, Anthony Jenkins, Eric Johnstone, Brian Jowers, R L P Keys, Pete Large, Terry Lavell, Aidan Laverty, Mal Lawlor, Julie Lee, Tony Lennon, Rosemary Lever, Dave Limn, Paul Limn, David Lopatis, Donald MacAuley, Ken MacKenzie, Ian McDonald, Steve Maloney, Jan Mondrzewski, Ruth Moreton, Al Mountain, Dave Murphy, Mark Nichols, Mick Norman, Gerald Notley, Alan O'Brien, Michael Oliver, Nigel Parsons, Alan Pennington, Portrush Annie, Colin Povey, Theo Povey, Jeanette Powell, Nicholas Priest, James Rawle, Robert Ripley, Richard Rogers, Sarah Jane Rose, Mary Scanlan, Derek Seeley, Amanda Shepherd, Pete Simmonds, Bill Stewart, Bill Stuart, Martin Stubbs, Roy Tassi, Jordan Taylor-Swift, Mike Teale, Bill Thackray, Liam Thompson, Mark Thompson, Andy Wakefield, Martin Weedon, David Whitlam, Richard Whiting, Jerry Wiggins, N Woodford, Shez Wright,

There were also 20 incorrect and 4 incomplete entries.

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