

Issue 27

Free

Mad Cow



CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE

Newsletter of the
Berkshire South-East branch of CAMRA



Old Manor Wins Branch Pub of the Year 2012

Congratulations to Pub Manager Ian Lynskey and staff at the Old Manor, Bracknell, who have been voted as CAMRA Berkshire South-East's Branch Pub of the Year for 2012. The pub is a former runner-up of this much-coveted award. (more info inside)



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May / July 2012

Distribution

Mad Cow is stocked in the following pubs and distributed by local volunteers (while supplies last). If you would like to stock Mad Cow or help with distribution, please contact the Editor.

Ascot: Belvedere; Jagz; Stag; Swinley; Thatched Tavern; **Barkham:** Bull; **Binfield:** Jack O'Newbury; Roebuck; Stag & Hounds; Victoria Arms; **Bracknell:** Bull; Cannie Man; Downshire Arms; Golden Farmer; Golden Retriever, Goose; Green Man; Old Manor; Peacock Farm; Red Lion; Royal Foresters; Royal Oak; South Hill Park; Silver Birch; **Crowthorne:** Prince; **Eversley:** Frog & Wicket; Tally Ho; **Farnborough North:** Prince of Wales; **Finchampstead:** Queens Oak; **Godalming:** Star; **Ipswich:** Dove Street Inn; **Jealotts Hill:** New Leathern Bottle; **Knowl Hill:** Bird in Hand; **Little Sandhurst:** Fox & Hounds; **Reading:** Hobgoblin; Nag's Head; Retreat; **Sandhurst:** Dukes Head; Rose and Crown; Village Inn; Wellington Arms; **Sindlesham:** Walter Arms; **Sunningdale:** Nags Head; Royal Oak; Sunningdale Lounge; **Sunninghill:** Dog & Partridge; **Waltham St. Lawrence:** Bell; **Warfield:** Cricketers Arms; Plough & Harrow; Shepherd's House; Three-legged Cross; Yorkshire Rose; **Winkfield:** Cottage Inn; Old Hatchet; Squirrel's Bar; The Winkfield; White Hart; **Winnersh:** Pheasant; Wheelwright's Arms; **Wokingham:** Broad Street Tavern; Crispin; Crooked Billet; Dog & Duck; Dukes Head; Emmbrook Inn; Gig House; Hope & Anchor; Lord Raglan; Metropolitan; Olde Leathern Bottel; Loch Fyne; Molly Millar; Queens Head; Redan; Rifle Volunteer; Ship; Square Bar; Two Poplars; Victoria Arms; Warren; White Horse; **Woodside:** Duke of Edinburgh; Rose and Crown; **Yateley:** Highwayman.

If your pub is not listed and you would like to stock the Mad Cow, please let us know.

Welcome to this, the twenty seventh edition of the Mad Cow, but the first edition to be put together by your new editor. Having retired nearly ten years ago, I have found the task a challenge, mostly I suppose because the software has changed some-what since I last used it, and I have become a bit rusty. Thanks go to fellow Committee members for their kind help, and I will endeavour to maintain the high standards achieved by all former editors.

Please continue to send in your pub news and beer festival information, but above all, tell us what you like or dislike about real ale, the breweries or the pubs that sell it.

If you would like to contribute any articles (however long or short), letters, comments, etc. for the *Mad Cow* please send them to the email address below. Whoever edits the next edition (hopefully me) will receive them and be able to include them.

And finally, if you would like to get involved with the branch, check out the diary dates and come along to one of our events. We'd love to see you.

Cheers!

John Winkley
Editor

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CAMRA welcomes new pro-pub policies in Government National Planning Policy Framework

CAMRA has welcomed the introduction of pro-pub policies in the new National Planning Policy Framework. The consumer group has stated that these policies will introduce new responsibilities for local councils to promote the retention and development of local services such as pubs.

For the first time, councils will have a duty to “plan positively” for key local facilities like pubs – and this will apply to all pubs rather than just rural pubs or those in local centres. Councils will be obliged to treat leisure development and community facilities as strategic priorities, and safeguard existing community facilities including pubs.

Mike Benner, CAMRA Chief Executive, said: *‘CAMRA is pleased that policies announced today will help give much needed additional support to valued community facilities such as pubs. This is essential at a time when 16 pubs a week are closing. CAMRA’s research has shown that well-run community pubs are as important to community life as a post office, local shop or community centre so it’s vital they are protected.’*

‘Local communities will be able to refer to the NPPF in relation to local planning matters, which is a step towards providing the tools local communities need to influence development in their neighbourhoods and protect their valued local pubs.’

Brewery News

Crandall Brewery

David and Chrissy started brewing hand crafted real ales in May 2005, located in the beautiful Surrey and Hampshire countryside. It has been running now for six years, and at the very start extensive plans were put into place in preparation for the production of real ale.

Due to illness, David regrettably, even after treatment, is unable to return to his current role at the brewery, and has therefore taken the decision to sell the business either as a going concern or in the form of assets.

The microbrewery is a 5/8 barrel set up consisting of stainless steel vessels and has the capacity to brew 2,720 pints three times per week. The business has plenty of scope for expansion and needs someone to step in and continue the good work.

Brewery Address ...

The Crandall Brewery
Lower Old Park Farm
Dora’s Green Lane
Crandall, Nr Farnham
Hampshire, GU10 5DX

Telephone ...

01252 319000

Old police station to become Pub and Brewery

Two entrepreneurs are to open a micro brewery and pub on the site of the old Henley police station. David Bruce and Clive Wilson used to own the Capital Pub Company, which had a chain of 34 pubs, until they sold it to Greene King for £93 million last year. Now they have set up the City Pub Company with three new sites outside London, including the one in Henley market place.

The Beer Festival Guide

by *Simon Grist*

Updates will be put on our website at seberkscamra.org.uk/localfestivals.shtml



11th - 12th May 2012: Kingston Beer & Cider Festival

camrasurrey.org.uk/festivals/kingston

This excellent CAMRA festival is accessible by train (changing at Twickenham, which is on the Waterloo line from our area). They advertise over 50 ales plus 12 ciders and perries. Reduced entry for CAMRA members.



19th May 2012: Newbury Racecourse Beer Festival

newbury-racecourse.co.uk

Just like our own Ascot beer festival, this one is run in conjunction with a race meeting. It is described as a "Best of British" festival featuring around 50 beers and ciders. Reduced entry for CAMRA members.



4th June 2012: Bracknell Ale & Wine Festival

bracknellalefestival.co.uk

After a successful event last year, this will be the 2nd festival organised by Bracknell Town FC. Expect a selection of around 15 ales from local breweries, and a specially sourced selection of wines to taste too!



8th - 9th June 2012: Alton Summer Beer Festival

altonbeerfestival.co.uk

This beer festival is now located in larger premises at Alton College, and is the better for it. Expect around 80 ales, plus a dozen ciders and perries. Entry is by advance ticket only.



8th - 10th June 2012: Frog & Wicket, Eversley Green

thefrogandwicket.co.uk/eversley/june

A small local pub festival with around 16 ales available over the weekend. On the Friday there is also a cricket day on the adjoining pitch (Eversley CC playing the Lashings World XI) followed by live music in the evening.



9th - 10th June 2012: Twyford Beer Festival

twyfordbeerfest.co.uk

Located within easy access of Twyford station, this festival is run in aid of a men's cancer charity. Over 30 real ales are promised, plus a small cider and wine bar. The local Bingham's brewery help out, and their fine beers will no doubt feature.



22nd - 24th June 2012: Hope & Anchor, Wokingham

the-hope.net

A first beer festival for this friendly local pub. Expect around 10 ales to be available over the weekend. On the Saturday afternoon, we will present the pub with their runners-up award from our branch Pub of the Year competition, and this will be followed by live music on the Saturday evening.



www.seberkscamra.org.uk
4th – 7th July 2012: Ealing Beer Festival

ealingbeerfestival.org.uk
This splendid CAMRA organised beer festival features over 200 real ales. There are also plenty of ciders & perries, with foreign beers too. Reduced entry for CAMRA members.



6th – 7th July 2012: Guildford Beer Festival
guildfordcc.com/the_guildford_beer_festival.html

This festival is run by Guildford Cricket Club in a marquee beside their pitch. They promise around 60 real ales from independent and micro breweries in Surrey, Berkshire, Hampshire and Sussex, plus a selection of ciders. Entry is by advance ticket, with reduced entry for CAMRA members.



13th – 14th July 2012: Camberley Town Real Ale & Cider Festival
ctfcsupportersclub.co.uk

This festival is run by Camberley Town Football Club. Details are unavailable as we go to press, but expect around 16 real ales and ciders.



20th – 22nd July 2012: Windsor LocAle Beer Festival
swmcamra.org.uk/beer_festival.html

This festival is organised by our friends in the Slough, Windsor & Maidenhead branch of CAMRA. Expect over 45 real ales plus ciders and perries – all from within a 30 mile radius of Windsor. Note that this festival runs during afternoons, typically finishing about 5:30pm.



27th – 29th July 2012: Bird in Hand, Knowl Hill
birdinhand.co.uk

This nearby country inn is running a small Summer beer festival. Details are unavailable as we go to press, but expect around 12 real ales.



7th – 11th August 2012: Great British Beer Festival
gbbf.org.uk

This beer festival is CAMRA's pride & joy, and is being held at Kensington Olympia this year due to the Olympics. Expect a mouth-watering 800 ales, ciders, perries and international beers, with the vast majority of British brewers being represented. Naturally there will be reduced admission prices for CAMRA members.



16th – 19th August 2012: Egham Beer Festival
eghambeerfestival.co.uk

Our friends at Egham United Services Club always find some interesting and unusual ales for their charity beer festivals. Expect around 60 of them, plus around a dozen ciders and perries. Reduced entry for CAMRA members.



18th August 2012: Fleet Lions Beer Festival
fleetlions.org.uk/beerfest

This festival just south of our branch area is run by Fleet Lions in aid of charity. They promise 28 real ales, plus ciders and wines. Buying tickets in advance is recommended as they were close to selling out last year.

Pub News

Tally Ho, Eversley

A message posted on the pub's website said: "A tragedy has occurred at our beloved Tally Ho - on April 10th we experienced a serious fire which has destroyed most of the roof and the upper floor, so will be closed for a month or two while we rebuild the pub. It is most distressing. We'll be posting regular progress reports and photos to keep you abreast of developments."

Dukes Head, Wokingham

Julie and Adrian Taylor are the latest landlady and landlord to put their names over the door of the Duke's Head in Langborough Road. The pub also has a new menu. Mrs Taylor grew up in Wokingham and is a former head girl at The Emmbrook School in Wokingham

Nag's Head, Reading

The Nag's Head, in Russell Street (the pub that advertises with us every time) has been voted the pub of the year by the Reading & Mid Berkshire CAMRA branch.

Red Lion, Bracknell

This pub has just reopened and is serving a range of beers from Caledonian Brewery, including a new 2.8% ABV beer, imaginatively called 2POINT8.

Victoria Arms, Wokingham

The possible sale of the tenancy of the Victoria Arms in Wokingham has fallen through. But the potential buyer's loss is our gain - Current licensee Ebony Kaye continues to do a fine job, providing a warm welcome and serving well kept beers including LocAles.

Lord Raglan, Wokingham

The owners of the Lord Raglan pub (Great Little Pub Company), a listed building in Denmark Street, Wokingham, have applied to Wokingham Borough Council for permission to install new signs and to change the name to The Raglan.

The proposal has received objections from The Wokingham Society, which is concerned about the change of colour on the signs and the loss of the word 'Lord' from the name.

This pub was named after Lord Raglan, a famous cavalry commander, following the Crimean War.

This 19th Century pub was originally three cottages and became a beer house in 1838. It is one of several Wokingham pubs named to commemorate the Crimean War.



Campaign Corner *by Clive Doran*

Community Pub Month – April 2012

This was a new national pub campaign in a bid to get more people than ever involved in championing the importance of the community pub. The main aims of Community Pubs Month were to encourage more publicans to organize and promote events to attract further trade, and spread awareness of community pubs through the media.

In general, nationally this has been a success in the press and in the media, but at the locally level this has been a bit low key and a bit subdued. However, next year we are going to try and improve on this.

Community Pub Winner

Members of this branch have voted for their Community Pub of the year 2012, which is the Royal Oak, Bracknell. So, congratulations to them and their regulars. The presentation took place on Thursday 26th April.

Mild Month – May 2012

CAMRA is once again celebrating Mild Month in May and the milds in Britain continue to grow.

This year we are asking the active CAMRA branches to encourage at least one pub in their area to stock at least one Mild during May for the local pub-goers to try.

We would also encourage non-active members to speak to their local licensees to see if they would be willing to try some Milds during May.

What is mild?

Milds are black to dark brown to pale amber in colour and come in a variety of styles from warming roasty ales to light refreshing lunchtime thirst quenchers.

Malty and possibly sweet tones dominate the flavour profile but there may be a light hop flavour or aroma.

Slight diacetyl (toffee/butterscotch) flavours are not inappropriate. Alcohol levels are typically low

Pale milds tend to have a lighter, more fruity aroma with gentle hoppiness.

Dark milds may have a light roast malt or caramel character in aroma and taste.

Scottish cask beers have mild characteristics with a dominance of sweetness, smooth body and light bitterness.

Original gravity: less than 1043
Typical alcohol by volume: less than 4.3%
Final gravity 1004 – 1010
Bitterness 14 - 28 EBU

Contact details :-

More information can be found at www.seberkscamra.org.uk
Clive can be contacted at campaigns@seberkscamra.org.uk



The Plough and Harrow, Newell Green, Warfield. RG42 6AE

Hi everyone, from The Only Pub in the Village, to our customers loyal and newcomers alike. We have made some exciting changes to our lovely little pub, not to the building but to what we offer our customers.

We are now offering traditional Pie with Mash 'n Liquor for all you Londoners in the area, as an addition to our already well-established lunches, including of course, our super Sunday Lunch. We have become renowned for our freshly cooked vegetables and locally sourced meat, enhanced by our speciality gravy and friendly atmosphere. We will soon be starting our curry nights again, so watch the boards outside for more info. or check our website:

www.ploughandharrowwarfield.com

Just to ice the cake, and we don't mean gateaux or cheesecake, we are now offering music fortnightly; a double whammy on the last Friday and Saturday of the month, with Karaoke in-between once a fortnight.

KEEPING IT REAL is our aim, a proper pub for proper people, just like you! Why not pop in and sample our ales. We keep 3 on tap, Greene King IPA and 2 guest ales. We have a great garden, large car park, super covered area for smoking with its own flat screen tv and sofa. Summer's on its way so leave the DIY and join us for some fun. Check us out on FACEBOOK and make new friends.

We can throw a great party for you providing any food
and music of your choice

call us on 01344 426603

email: ploughandharrow2011@hotmail.co.uk

we're looking forward to seeing you.

Richard and Carolyn

Branch Diary

MAY

Wednesday 2nd May 8pm
Social @ Reading Beer Festival (Open Wed 2nd – Sun 6th May). Meet in Slough tent

Thursday 17th May 8pm
Mild Month Social – Rose & Crown, Sandhurst

Thursday 31st May 8pm
Mild Month Social – White Horse, Wokingham Without

JUNE

Wednesday 13th June 8pm
AGM + POTY Presentation – Old Manor, Bracknell – Branch Members only

Branch Annual General Meeting

All members welcome to attend. If you would like to stand for any office within the Branch please contact the secretary

secretary@seberkscamra.org.uk

Saturday 23rd June
POTY Runner-Up Award and Beer Festival Social - Hope & Anchor, Wokingham. Presentation at 4.00pm

Wednesday 27th June 8pm
Social – Red Lion, Bracknell

JULY

Thursday 5th July 8pm
Social – Wheelwright's Arms, Winnersh

Wednesday 18th July 8pm
Business Meeting – Crispin, Wokingham, in the garden

AUGUST

Wednesday 15th August 8pm
Branch Meeting – Nag's Head, Sunningdale (tbc)

Monday 27th August
Bank Holiday Lunchtime Social – Jack o'Newbury

SEPTEMBER

Thursday 6th September 8pm
Social – venue tba

Thursday 20th September

GBG 2013 Launch Event + Social – venue tba

OCTOBER

5th and 6th October
Ascot Beer Festival

Please check our website for diary updates:

www.seberkscamra.org.uk/diary.shtml

Ad 5 –Victoria Wokingham File: ad5-VictoriaWoky.pdf

From the Chair *By Nick Boley*

First of all may I give my very warm welcome to John Winkley, the Mad Cow's new editor. John is living proof of the power of advertising, responding to our plea for an editor in Mad Cow 26. John has a background as a technical author, although he is now retired. He also has experience producing newsletters, having edited the Berkshire newsletter of the British Horse Society successfully for many years.

The branch voted for its pub of the year (POTY) for 2012 at our meeting on March 1st following a month of pub-going (I know, it's a tough job, but someone has to do it). The winner was the Old Manor in Bracknell, with the Hope & Anchor in Wokingham being the worthy runner-up.

The Old Manor has both its supporters and detractors, largely as a result of it being a JD Wetherspoon pub. Love them or loathe them (and I am something of a fence-sitter on this one), JDW pubs, at their best, provide a good range of beers at competitive prices, usually kept in top condition, and promote both cask ales and traditional ciders in a manner which is exactly in line with CAMRA's ideals. They are no-frills pubs which attract a broad clientele.

The Manor is, I would say following extensive research around the country, one of the better JDW pubs. The building itself is historic in parts and not short of character, which rather distinguishes it from some of the cinema/ bank/car showroom conversions in their portfolio. Indeed, I can scarcely remember the last poor pint I've drunk in there, and a pint which is merely 'OK' is worth a remark due its relative rarity.

The consistency of beer quality, as well as the overall feel of the pub, has improved since manager Ian Lynsky took over last year. Ian, and his staff, are pro-CAMRA and deserve our support. There's always a local beer available, off the Wetherspoon's list, usually Loddon, Rebellion or Windsor & Eton.

The Hope and Anchor is a definite success story. Our webmaster, Simon Grist, who has spent a good deal of time talking to licensees Reid and Hattie Gutzman (and, partaking of the occasional small glass of ale), says that "The Hope & Anchor is a

wonderful turn-around story. In less than three years Reid & Hattie have built the pub into a thriving community local. Many people visit simply for the well kept beers and friendly welcome, but there is plenty more besides – from bar billiards to salsa classes, from quiz nights to live bands. It's good to see the hard work paying off.

The dates for the presentations can be found in our Diary on page 13. The licensees at both pubs are keen to link the presentation evening to a pub beer festival, which should make for a couple of splendid evenings.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, George Osborne, announced his budget on 21 March. Despite the huge amount of lobbying from the brewing and pubs industry, CAMRA members and other drinkers, ploughed on regardless in imposing the beer duty escalator which will result in an additional 10p a pint in our pubs. It is, however, unlikely to raise the price of cheap supermarket lager and smooth by 10p a pint!

We were already paying 40% of the total beer duty across the whole of the European Union in the UK, and it could now be even higher. Of course if, as expected, we spend less on beer then the tax take to Mr Osborne will reduce, whilst pubs and breweries will be under pressure resulting in more closures and job losses. Very short-sighted, Mr Osborne!

All readers are invited to sign the e-petition at http://epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/29664/?friendly_id=saveyourpint, and try and get the Government to stop the incessant tax rises on our beloved pint.

I suggested recently that the CAMRA National Executive invite Mr Osborne to next years' AGM in Norwich so we can debate beer duty with him. Now, wouldn't that be fun! I do wonder sometimes how much our major supermarkets and mega-brewers contribute to the funds of our political parties funds, as they would appear not to be the losers here – and never have really been.

Despite all of this, the pub is still the best place to have a beer or two. The social environment, chatting to friends, acquaintances or even total strangers whilst supping on some traditional draft beer is a pleasure, and something we should all be proud of and fight to maintain. We can not let the great British pub and great British traditional ale die and, if I have anything to do with it, we won't give up without a fight!

Printers ad

Ad 6 – White Hart

The Pub Of The Year (POTY) Selection Process

By Nick Boley on behalf of the branch committee

Elsewhere in this issue you will read about our choice for branch Pub Of The Year (POTY) and runner-up. We have heard some comments about these – I have already said that Wetherspoon's really divides opinions, and that does seem to be borne out!

So, how do we select our POTY?

Firstly, at our Good Beer Guide Selection meeting (our POTY has, unsurprisingly, to be selected for the Good Beer Guide) we vote for the pubs from our branch area to go in the guide. We had 28 members at the meeting, which was an excellent turnout). The 5 pubs with the most votes go forward to be judged as our branch POTY, unless there are specific reasons not to.

This year, one member asked if we could give the Jack o'Newbury, winner in 2010 and 2011 a "rest" this year. The vote was carried by a large (but not unanimous) majority. Many branches do this, so that it is not seen as "the same old pub(s)" always winning. Many branches do not allow their POTY to be considered after ONE year, and we are recommended from CAMRA nationally to consider the "rest" option.

So, we promoted number 6 from our list and held our POTY competition. This involved members being asked to visit the pubs, mark them against various categories and enter the marks on a scoresheet. For information, the categories are:

- Quality of beer, cider or perry
- Atmosphere
- Service/welcome
- Clientele mix
- Sympathy with CAMRA aims
- Good value

I'd like to say which these 6 pubs were, but that would breach the embargo for the 2013 Good Beer Guide! Needless to say, regular readers would recognise most (if not all) of them from the Top 5 Beer Scores section over the year.

Members visited these pubs over a 4 week period, individually or in small groups. This way, the pubs could be judged on several days and not one particularly good (or bad) occasion.

Members listed their pubs in order, and also submitted their scores (for use as a tie-breaker) to Pubs Officer Dave Goater. Over 20 votes were received – which was excellent considering the short time to carry out the surveys – and as a result the Old Manor became our POTY (for the first time since 2002, when we were still part of Reading and Mid Berks branch, although it was runner-up in 2008). Our runner-up was the Hope & Anchor in Wokingham. The result was close, which is frequently the case.

So, that's the mysteries of the inner workings of our POTY system laid bare. The process is likely to change in future years, as we (like all CAMRA branches) continue to innovate and review our processes. But one thing will still remain – the choice will be democratic, and chosen by branch members.

6th Ascot Racecourse Beer Festival

by Mike Smith, Festival Organiser

Berkshire South-East CAMRA will be back again on the 5th and 6th of October to run the 6th Ascot Racecourse Beer Festival. After the searing autumn temperatures and unprecedented demand of 2011 we are determined to have enough real ale to quench the thirst of racing fans and beer lovers alike.

If you join CAMRA for the annual cost of just £20 (concessions available) you can gain half price entry to the country's premier racing venue and enjoy some first class racing whilst supping some excellent ales. We are holding prices this year at £1.50 per half pint making us one of the best value CAMRA festivals in Great Britain.

As usual we will showcase our LocAle breweries from Berkshire and the surrounding counties, but in addition this year, we are pleased to welcome the breweries from the Highlands and Islands of Scotland to feature on our regional bar. There will be over 200 different real ales, ciders and perries to choose from including a welcome return of the Fullers bar offering their full range. We are currently in

discussion with our festival favourites to bring you a few one-off festival special brews as well, so hopefully Ascot Ales will surpass their wonderful Coconut Crocodile which rode off with the Beer of the Festival award last year.

For cider lovers, we will have thirty varieties to choose from including local producers – Mr Whitehead; Ciderniks; Salthill and Tutts Clump augmented by our favourites from the West Country and Devon all served, we guarantee, without ice!

There will be hot and cold food available all day and live music to entertain alongside the racing. Plans are also advanced to bring back the popular exhibition darts.

Putting on a beer festival is only possible with the help of our volunteer members, particularly those serving behind the bar. So if you fancy giving it a go please contact us, no experience is necessary and full training will be given.



Beer-Festival-MADCOW-Ad-7[1].pdf

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

As real ale drinkers we need to support our pubs, and for me there is nothing better than a good walk with a pub stop or two along the way, and publications such as yours provide me with ideas of where to go. Luckily I had not read the Pub News report on page 4 of the November 2011/January 2012 edition of Mad Cow, so after six miles I walked into the Queens Oak, Finchampstead. Those who were standing vertical were at the bar buying beer, my pint was very good, crystal clear, well conditioned and earned a 4 using your scoring system. Staff were friendly, and as I had eaten my own sandwiches along the Blackwater Valley Path, I did not get a chance to see if the bread was soggy (my sandwiches were not by the way), and as for the pink Wetherspoons, perhaps I am strange but it did not worry me!

It all goes to show good and bad impressions can be had anywhere. I think however, before going to press with a report such as presented, others should be consulted so a fair and balanced view can be presented, for a bad reputation takes just a moment to get but turning it around takes an awful lot longer. If, however, we all think the place is crap.....go for it!

To conclude lets keep it fair, and here is a point, in a pub I visited some time ago at the bar a card stated "If you enjoyed your visit tell your friends. If you did not, tell us and we will put it right." We need to encourage publicans and sometimes that requires letting them put things right, most want to get repeat trade after all.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Goddard

(copy sent to the Queens Oak)

Dear Sir,

I note that the Government intends to implement a minimum price for alcohol in England and Wales. This is, in my opinion, a good thing and an opportunity to help restore some balance between the off-trade and the on-trade (i.e. pubs).

Sadly, the proposed price of 40p per unit will make very little difference, if any, to this balance. All mainstream supermarket lagers and alcopops will be unaffected, but a few stronger lagers and ciders may be. There will be no affect on pubs, as I haven't come across anywhere selling a pint for less than £1 lately – even Wetherspoons.

If we want to help our beleaguered pubs and small brewers this figure should ideally be doubled to 80p. A consequence of this is that it will also address the issue of problem drinking more effectively. Those of us who enjoy an evening in the pub and prefer to drink, whether in the pub or at home, quality rather than quantity, would not see an appreciable difference.

I know some would see this view as controversial, but if we are going to do something about minimum unit pricing for alcohol, let's do it properly.

Yours faithfully

Peter Nixon,

Easthampstead

Ad 8 White Horse

LANDLORD'S MUSINGS

An occasional Interview with a Landlord from a local Pub. Answers are limited to 140 characters. (approx.)

This time we welcome **Peter and Natalie** from the **White Horse** on Easthampstead Road Wokingham.

Q. How long have you been in the Pub Business and at the White Horse?

A. We have both worked in pubs & restaurants for twelve years. This is the first pub of our own and we moved in last July. So nearly time for our first birthday party.

Q. What do you most like about the Pub Trade?

A. Meeting people & seeing them enjoying themselves. Our regulars are good characters and this contributes to a great atmosphere.

Q And the least?

A. The paperwork. We would much rather be in the bar than in the office.

Q. What Real Ales are you selling today?

A. Greene King's IPA & Abbot. Our guest ale this week is York Brewery's Guzzler.

Q. And how will these change over the coming weeks and months?

A. In addition to their own beers, through Greene King we now have access to guest ales from other independent breweries, so we have a new one every week.

Q. How important are Real Ales to your Pub?

A. Very. Cask ales are the only products that pubs sell that you can't buy in supermarkets. We take pride in our ales and get great compliments on the consistent high quality

Q. What are your impressions of CAMRA in the area?

A. Very active and supportive of pubs in the area, but we've never seen much photography going on!

Q. What plans have you got for your Pub in the next year?

A. By the time this is published, we will have redecorated inside & out, and landscaped our new front garden. More room for BBQs

Q. What would you like to get over to our Readers to encourage them to come into your Pub?

A. With our staff we're proud of our service standards. Peter is passionate about his food, everything is home made, fresh to order. Specials change frequently. The good beers and wines from around the world complete the package.

Q. What Wrong would you most like to put right in the pub trade?

A. We need a more level playing field for purchasing and more freedom for tied premises.

Q. Which celebrity would you most like to work behind your bar and why?

A. We were going to say the Muppets, but I think that we already have a few

LocAle Update

By Nick Boley

We have another two LocAle breweries to report this quarter. The Two Cocks brewery, situated on the beautifully-named Christmas Farm in the village of Enborne, near Newbury, started brewing late last year, with their Civil War themed beers Cavalier, Roundhead, Puritan and the latest offering, Gibbet. Abbey Ford in Chertsey commenced brewing in March. It is hoped that beers from both breweries will be available at this year's Ascot Racecourse Beer Festival.

Since the last issue we have accredited the Bull at Barkham, which has been regularly selling at least one LocAle amongst their 5 cask beer offerings, with Bingham's Twyford Tipple and Brickworks Bitter both proving particularly popular. We have also accredited the Walter Arms at Sindlesham, who now regularly sell Bingham's Twyford Tipple in good condition.

We are still assessing a few other local pubs for accreditation, but urgently need reports on beer quality and confirmation of permanent availability. So please can our readers let us know about the following pub which is under review:

- o Dog & Partridge, Sunninghill (regular Andwell's Gold Muddler)

LocAle Pubs

Ascot - Jagz
Barkham - Bull
Binfield - Jack o'Newbury
Bracknell - Old Manor
Sandhurst - Rose and Crown
Sindlesham - Walter Arms
Winkfield - White Hart
Winkfield - Cottage Inn
Wokingham - Crispin
Wokingham - Square Bar
Wokingham - Victoria Arms

Of course, if you stumble across any other pub in the branch area selling local ales, please let us know so we can find out whether they are permanent and start the process of assessment going.

LocAle Brewers

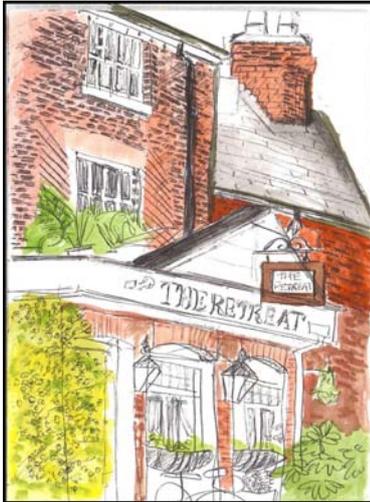
(within 25 mile radius of the centre of the branch)

Abbey Ford - Chertsey
Andwell's - Andwell, nr Hook
Ascot Ales - Camberley
Bingham's Brewery - Ruscombe
Crandall - Crandall
Farnham Brewery - Farnham
Hog's Back - Tongham
Loddon - Dunsden Green
Longdog - Basingstoke
Rebellion - Marlow
Sherfield Village Brewery - Sherfield-on-Loddon
Tillingbourne - Shere
Triple fff - Alton
Twickenham - Twickenham
Two Bridges - Caversham
Two Cocks - Enborne, nr Newbury
West Berkshire - Frilsham
Windsor & Eton - Windsor
Zero Degrees - Reading (Brew pub/restaurant)

And, needless to say, we all need to talk to landlords who do have some choice of which cask ales they stock, and to persuade them that LocAle is the way forward for them.

Hopefully we can keep the LocAle bandwagon rolling and persuade more licensees of the good business sense of stocking locally-produced beers. When we see pubs which support local food producers and make a big splash about their support for all things local, and then ignore the merits of local brewers it does rather annoy me. Local brewers need to play a part here too, and we can help them by telling them about pubs which could stock LocAles.

Ad 9 Ascot ales



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Ad 10 Bracknell Ale and Wine Festival

CAMRA launches first ever Community Pubs Month

Research shows pubs play an integral role throughout the lives of local communities. New research shows just under 9 in 10 young pub going adults (89%) visit their local pub to meet friends and socialise.

Other new research reveals out of all UK regular pub goers, 1 in 4 currently married couples (25%) first met their partner down the pub! Further findings show over 1 in 3 adults (36%) say their local community uses their pub for events such as weddings, christenings and funerals.

On a day when over 5,500 pubs across the UK are toasting the launch of Community Pubs Month, CAMRA has kick started its festivities with new research showing how local pubs play an integral role right the way through the lives of people in local communities.

Since 2008, over 4,500 pubs have closed across the nation, with licensees battered by high beer tax, greedy pub companies, soaring overheads, and discount booze deals from major supermarket chains. With so many pubs permanently closing their doors on a weekly basis, scores of surrounding local communities are left without their social hub.

Community Pubs Month has therefore been launched by CAMRA to champion pubs as invaluable community assets, and outlets which vast numbers of local people across the UK rely upon so heavily during their daily lives.

Pubs are vital meeting places for young adults, with just under 9 in 10 of them using their local to meet friends and socialise. Further to this, in a poll to regular pub goers, 1 in 4 currently married couples said they first met their current spouse/partner down the pub.

Mike Benner, CAMRA Chief Executive, spoke in the wake of these new findings. He said:

"Pubs are the beating hearts of countless communities across the land, and without their existence, society would be a lot worse off. CAMRA's new campaign is all about reaffirming the vital importance of local pubs, and the essential role they play in many people's lives. CAMRA's research shows people turn to their local pub during meaningful events, so whether you are a real ale lover, or someone who enjoys the weekly quiz down your local, pubs are a core part of our identity and heritage."

"With the launch of Community Pubs Month, CAMRA is urging local communities this April to back their local licensees and give them the support they need during these difficult economic times. Pubs are the original social networking sites, and will continue to provide an invaluable community service as long as they are used by the local people that surround them."

Ad 11 – Membership Form

Ad 12
Cannie Man

Regional Pub Crawl – Holborn to Euston

By Nick Boley

In January, John & Sue Thirlaway arranged another of their excellent London pub crawls, aimed at CAMRA members from all across the Central Southern region. These events are very much part of the diary now, and are eagerly anticipated by all concerned, due to the meticulous planning, research and information John and Sue provide.

This year was no exception and so on a relatively mild January day over 40 thirsty souls descended on central London for a good days' walking punctuated by the occasional small glass of ale!

Thirsty drinkers waited for opening time (12 noon) at the first port of call, the Cittie of York in High Holborn. Architecturally glorious, warm wood panelling and a lovely skylight window, but a Sam Smith's pub with just the one real ale (at £2.60 a pint). This was nothing special and I saw many CAMRA folk drinking the keg stout (tsk, tsk).



The interior of the Cittie of York

A pleasant stroll through legal London with lovely Georgian squares and buildings took us to our next port of call, the Enterprise on Red Lion Street. In a historic part of Holborn with many pubs, most of which appear architecturally fine from the outside, this is something of a gem. With lovely wood panelling, a number of charming murals and pictures on the walls, even in the gents, it was a very pleasant place to while away an hour or so in good company. One thing, though. In common with many pubs in the area it cannot be considered cheap.

This narrow pub stretched back a fair way, and sold the ubiquitous Doom Bar and Tribute but also a fine pint of Purity UBU, favoured by most of us.



The fine interior of the Enterprise

Another stroll took us up into the heart of Holborn and to the Lamb on Lambs Conduit Street. This Young's house has been in the Good Beer Guide for many years and is famous for its original Victorian interior with "snob screens" to give drinkers some privacy at the bar! The wood panelling was impressive as was the range of beers – apart from the standard Wells and Young's range a couple of beers from Sambrook's were also available. The beers of choice – halves only in view of the day ahead – were Young's Winter Warmer followed by Sambrook's Powerhouse Porter. Both were excellent.



Etched window on the exterior of the Lamb



The famous snob screens inside the Lamb

We continued to head north-west, past many places where we could, if we had wished, availed ourselves of a "Boris Bike" on our way to our next pub, the Lord John Russell on Marchmont Street, not far from Russell Square, named after the said Lord John. This was a fine, airy pub with a good choice ales, of which the Adnams Old Ale found favour with many. We also has an encounter with a drunken Irishman, who spoke (loudly) to everyone, but eventually got slung out and was later seen bothering some of our number in a nearby café.

We continued heading north towards Euston – having lost a few of the faithful who had doubled back to the Craft Beer Co in Clerkenwell – a pub crawl all by itself – towards our next destination, Mable's Tavern on Mabledon Place.



Mabel's Tavern

This was possibly the most disappointing pub

on the crawl for me. A fairly bland, ordinary modern-style London pub, with vaguely disinterested staff, TVs (good for catching up on the days footy mind you) and the beer, although well-kept, was bland beyond belief. We tried the seasonal Late Red, which had some flavour. Sheps' beers are a far cry from the days of the early 80s when I would go out of my way to drink them.

The excitement of nearing Euston was building, as this is a serious beer-drinking neighbourhood. Our route took us close to St Pancras' station – still a stunning gothic creation – and west along the Euston Road. A right after Euston station, and then a left onto Cobourg Street took us to the haven that is the Bree Louise.



The Bree Louise after dusk has fallen

Although many of us had been before, this was my first time and it didn't disappoint. I would call this a proper drinkers' pub, welcoming, a shrine to good ale, with a real buzz about it. The choice of beers was vast, but my preference was a London beer – from the Redemption brewery, which I had heard of but never sampled. Their Big Chief, an American-style IPA at 5.9% was everything a beer should be. Tasty, well-hopped, distinctive and very drinkable. Keeping to one was hard going, but a return visit a few weeks later scratched the itch, so to speak! What a shame this pub will be demolished to make way for the HS2 high speed rail link.

On to our final destination, starting to get very slightly worse for wear, we retraced our steps in time to witness a fire following an accident with a taxi and a motorcycle on the Euston Road, expertly dealt with by the Fire Brigade and the Police, before entering the Euston Tap.

This pub is one of the strangest I've visited, being in one of the two small gatehouses to the original Euston station – the other is now the Euston cider Tap! Very small, with an upstairs drinking area and limited toilet facilities, the beer range was excellent. Everything was on a large blackboard, numbered, and included about 8 or 9 cask beers and another 15 or so craft keg beers (if you like that sort of thing). We probably stayed longer than was strictly healthy, but the beer range demanded it. Beers from Ilkley, Liverpool One and more that I cannot remember (being a bit past note-taking at this stage). The Ilkley Pale, at only 4.3% but superbly well-hopped with New Zealand hops was so good, probably the best of the day and the only one I had to have another.

A superb day, in good company, but only possible thanks to the hard work, dedication and research of John & Sue Thirlaway. Cheers, guys!

Advertising In Mad Cow

Would you like to advertise in the Mad Cow?
- we can assist with basic design.

Please contact us (details on page 2) for bookings.

Deadline for advertisements for the next issue is **15th July 2012**

Breaking Pub News

The Square Bar, Wokingham

This Wokingham Market Place Pub is being renamed, back to its traditional name – The Roebuck. There will be an official ceremony at 10.15 am on Sunday 3rd June 2012, when the Mayor of Wokingham and other civic dignitaries will re-open the pub, as part of the Diamond Jubilee celebrations.

Half Page:	£40
Full Page:	£70
Inside Cover:	£80
Back Cover:	£95

Is Your Pub Serving Your Ale As It Should Be?

Please score the pints of Real Ale that you try in our Branch Area according to the scale opposite (you may use half scores, like 3.5).

Send your scores regularly to David Goater remembering to add the date of your visit, your name and membership number.

Email

beerscores@seberkscamra.org.uk
or text to 07963 149 380

Remember, **you** are judging the quality, so how well it is kept and served, not whether you liked that particular brew. The scores are used to help us choose our Good Beer Guide entries and local Pub of the Year.

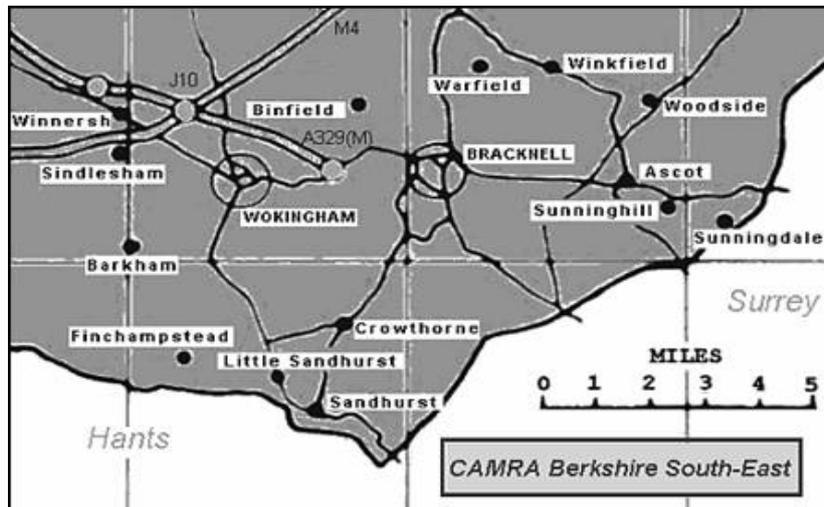
The Current Top Five High Scoring Pubs:

CURRENT TOP FIVE PUBS

- 1) Crispin, Wokingham
- 2) Hope & Anchor, Wokingham
- 3) Rose & Crown, Sandhurst
- 4) Duke of Edinburgh, Woodside
- 5) Old Manor, Bracknell

0	Undrinkable No cask ale available or so poor you have to take it back or can't finish it.
1	Poor Beer that is anything from barely drinkable to drinkable with considerable resentment.
2	Average Competently kept, drinkable pint but doesn't inspire in any way, not worth moving to another pub but you drink the beer without really noticing.
3	Good Good beer in good form. You cancel plans to move to the next pub. You want to stay for another pint and seek out the beer again.
4	Very Good Excellent beer in excellent condition.
5	Perfect Probably the best you are ever likely to find. A seasoned drinker will award this score very rarely.

Half marks can also be awarded.



Branch Area

Ad 13 Ship Wokingham

Ad 14 Victoria Arms, Binfield