



CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE

Thirsty Times



CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE

Chelmsford Summer Beer & Cider Festival 2013

Admiral's Park, Rainsford Road Tuesday 9th–Saturday 13th July

Popular location near to the Town Centre

- **Over 300 Real Ales** • **Over 100 Real Ciders & Perries**
- **A wide selection of Belgian Beers** • **Local Wines** • **Food served all day**

Live entertainment every evening and family fun on Saturday afternoon featuring a fun fair. See our website for full details!



Tuesday 9th–Saturday 13th July 12 noon–11pm

Entrance is FREE to CAMRA members. Non members free until 5.30pm, after 5.30pm £4 Tuesday to Thursday, £5 Friday and Saturday.

Join CAMRA at the event and get your entrance fee refunded.

Refundable £3 deposit on Festival Glass if returned by 11.15pm.

Please respect our neighbours and avoid parking in roads adjacent to the Festival, very limited parking is available in the nearby free car park.

The Festival is only a 10 minute walk from the town.

No. 51 bus passes the site generally every 30 minutes until 7.30pm.

www.chelmsfordbeerandciderfestivals.org.uk

Chelmsford and Mid-Essex Branch of
CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale

Issue 006
Summer 2013



Dominion Brewery produces a range of unique and inspirational beers inspired by history, culture or fate. The first brew Yukon Gold took us to the Klondike. Amber Porter took us to a bank in Colchester. The next brew will be an American IPA brewed with English Cascade hops.



For over 30 years Pitfield has been one of the pioneering breweries in the UK- in 2000 Pitfield started organic beer production. We now produce an award winning range of many styles of beer, using the finest organic ingredients. All our beers are certified organic by the Soil Association. All the bottled beers are certified vegan by The Vegan Society. Cask beer is vegan unless fined at the request of the customer.

Dominion Brewery Company, Pitfield Brewery, Moreton, Essex, CM5 0JE
www.dominionbrewerycompany.com

The Ale House



**From country wide cask ale and cider,
to imported German lager and worldwide bottled beers,
no matter what you drink, the Ale House is the place for you.**

Open Mon - Thu: 11am to 11pm; Fri - Sat: 11am - 12am; Sun - 11am - 10pm



Each week there is a selection of 12 real ales, a number of ciders, a selection of German lagers on tap and a wide range of imported bottled beers from around the world.

24-26 Viaduct Road, Chelmsford, CM1 1TS 01245 260535



[alehouse.chelmsford.7](https://www.facebook.com/alehouse.chelmsford.7)



[@Alehouse_Cford](https://twitter.com/Alehouse_Cford)

www.the-ale-house-chelmsford.co.uk

2 Support your local pub - don't give them an excuse to close it!

Pub News

Reports in Pub News are provided by local CAMRA members, licensees and Thirsty Times readers. Further news of changes at local pubs is very welcome. Please send news to news@chelmsfordcamra.org.uk.

The **Compasses, Littley Green** has done it again! Our branch Pub of the Year for the second year in a row has been voted Essex Pub of the Year, again just as last year. Many congratulations to Joss, who recently marked 5 years at the pub by holding a mini beer festival. Springfest featured 20 beers. The pub was once again a mecca for mild drinkers in May as Joss expected to have offered no less than 30 milds in the month. Let's hope the pub can go one step further this year as the Compasses is again a contender for East Anglia Pub of the Year. www.compasseslitleygreen.co.uk

Isn't it great when a landlord starts an email with "Exciting times here!"? Brett Sanders at the **Golden Fleece in Duke Street** reports



that they are now one of Brains nominated craft

beer stockists and expect to have 3/4 of these across the year. They are now also stocking Elephant Brewery beers.

A major development plan started on 3rd June. It's a 3 phase development that sees the external of the building repaired and redecorated. The 2nd phase follows straight on in mid June and will see the garden being redeveloped. Out go the existing umbrellas to be replaced by 6 giant electric canopies which will cover the majority of the garden should the weather demand it! They are

also adding a raised deck plus levelling the existing brick floor, adding some festoon lighting and redecorating the area but keeping the famous mural.

Phase 3 will begin in September. This is a full internal redevelopment that will see the existing toilets replaced, the raised area extended, new floor finishes, a redesigned bar and complete redecoration. They expect to be closed for around 14 days.

Everyone is invited to their garden re-opening party on Thursday 4th July from 6.30. There will be some free food, a BBQ, some complimentary drinks plus live music in the garden from Paolo the mighty small and later on inside from the Yankee Blues Brothers.

CAMRA members still get 20% off the price of all ales, except Brentwood or Elephant breweries beers as they are now only £1.95 every day! www.thegoldenfleece-chelmsford.co.uk

The **Plough** in Duke Street has changed brands (within M & B) from Nicholson's to Oak Tree. The good news is that this means considerably lower beer prices. Their 4 regular ales start at £2.30 a pint and the average price of their 4 guest ales is £2.80. www.theoriginalploughchelmsford.co.uk

There are new managers at the **Riverside Inn, Victoria Road**; Sean and Alison Rees took over in April. There's a new outside bar at weekends – the Cider Hut – and a barbeque on Fridays, Saturdays & Sundays "in the warmer months" says Alison. Regular beers are Young's Bitter, Special & London Gold. Guest ales coming up are Waggle-dance in June, Hummingbird in July, & Sun-down Ale in September. If you hurry, dads can get a free pint on Fathers' Day. www.riversideinnessex.co.uk

Pub News

We approach the end of an era at the **St Anne's Castle, Great Leighs** as Pat & Dave have announced their retirement. They have turned this pub into a superb venue with a range of four well-kept ales – good enough to get the pub into the Good Beer Guide for the first time in 2012 and again this year. The free music nights are legendary and their annual garden party has raised thousands of pounds for charity.

They will be greatly missed and will be a very hard act to follow. The last music nights are this month (June) and if you'd like to say goodbye in person their "retirement party" with a DJ is on 29th June. Maybe call in after the Essex Games Day.
www.stannescastle.co.uk

The **Oddfellows Arms in Springfield Road** has a beer festival 25th to 28th July. There is live music on 26th July with the Brit Invasion and Coyote Blues Band on the 27th July. The 28th July is Quiz Night. On sale now and during the Beer Festival will be their amazing French Dipped Sandwiches.
www.theoddfellowsarms.com

Another beer festival coming up is at the **Rodney, Little Baddow** from 9th – 11th August. 12 ales and 4 ciders on from the start at 7 pm on the Friday, plus 3 more in the pub itself. Keen readers will know this is a Morris dancing hotspot – Chelmsford Morris are dancing there on June 26th (8.15 pm), Billericay Morris on 5th September (8 pm). www.therodneyinn.co.uk

The **White Hart, Witham** held their inaugural Spring Beer Festival starting on St Georges Day and it was a resounding success with local micro brewery ales being



very well received.

They are planning to extend their cask range from six to twelve ales this summer as they will be installing a new cask bar of 6 ales pouring straight from the cask. Coming up is their 6th Summer Beer festival starting on Wednesday 18th September (well, summer might have arrived by then!) to coincide with the Witham International Puppet festival on Saturday 21st September which draws 20,000 people to Witham every year! On the Saturday there will be a hog roast and barbeque all day, various bands playing throughout the day, not to mention 30+ ales and ciders on tap!!
www.whitehartinwitham.co.uk

Last issue we reported on the closure of the **Sportsman's Arms at Nounsley**. Despite a 50 signature petition from the 150 houses in the hamlet to keep their pub, plans are proposed for its conversion to residential use plus 2 extra houses in the garden.. There is one person who is keen to buy the pub as a going concern/family home. We wish him, and the other petitioners, success.

Latest news of the **Green Man** at Howe Street is that it will become a licensed tea-room with an animal petting farm on the premises. We can't vouch for any of this but watch this space for further news.

Finally, as we go to press, the **Swan at Felsted** is covered in scaffolding. We understand that GK is giving the outside a major refurbishment.



The signs proclaim "Business as Usual" so why not call in for a

pint or two, stroll along to the Chequers, then catch the bus back to Chelmsford or Braintree.

4 Support your local pub - don't give them an excuse to close it!

Horse & Groom

Food 12 - 2 All Week
Evenings 7 - 9 Wed - Sat

4 Real Ales Always Available,
Lagers, Wines and Ciders

Large Beer Garden
and outdoor
covered smoking area

Horse & Groom Lane
Galleywood Common
01245-261653



HURDLEMAKERS ARMS

Woodham Mortimer 01245 225169

**Beer Festival last weekend of June each year
25+ real ales and real ciders**

- Always a warm welcome
- 4/5 real ales 2/3 real ciders
- Fully beamed & open log fire
- Traditional homecooked food
- Large garden and childrens play area
- BBQ every Sunday during the summer
- Quiz night 1st Monday of month
- Mortimers barn function room
- Large marquee available during the summer



A traditional country pub on your doorstep...

www.hurdlemakersarms.co.uk

King William IV

King William IV is a traditional drinking pub serving an ever changing range of Cask Real Ales and Ciders



**Chelmsford and Mid Essex CAMRA
Cider Pub of the Year 2013**

Our aim is to provide a variety of quality beverages in a casual and traditional environment to appeal to a wide range of customers. We do not offer cooked meals, leaving plenty of room in our compact pub for you to enjoy your drink.

The extensive Gardens are host to many events throughout the year such as Beer Festivals and Musical entertainment. See website for details of our events.



Opening Times:
Mon-Thu 3pm - 12 pm
Fri, Sat & Sun 12noon - 12pm

114 London Road, Braintree, CM77 7PU
01376 567755 kingwilliamiv.co.uk



Our Brewery Shop is always open for Sale
of our Bottled Beers
Minipins (17pt) Polypins (34pt) Firkins (68pt)
available to order

Tel: 01621 851000
www.maldonbrewing.co.uk

**Visit us for Craft Brewed Ales
The Stable Brewery
Silver St. Maldon. CM9 4QE.**

2013 Chelmsford CAMRA



At 12 noon on the 9th July 2013 the Chelmsford & mid Essex Branch of CAMRA will open this year's Summer Beer & Cider Festival in Admiral's Park, Chelmsford, when local CAMRA volunteers will again be ready to serve you the widest selection of real ales and ciders in Essex and probably East Anglia.

We understand that the festival is now only second in size in the Chelmsford area to the 'V' Festival in Hyland's Park. and we pride ourselves that our selection of evening entertainment is well up to the standard set by the 'V' Festival, the food, from the concessions we have sourced, is better, our toilet facilities are superior, and unless you only drink mainstream lager and cider, the huge selection of beers and ciders, are without doubt, much more interesting. Even if you do normally just drink lager or bottled ciders, come and give us a try otherwise you will never know what you are missing – you will even find a real lager or two!! Entrance is free to CAMRA members all the time and non-members until 5.30pm. After that time, non-members will be charged £4 Tuesday-Thursday and £5 on Friday & Saturday, except on Tuesday night when people with the 'Go' advert or members of the Essex County Cricket Club, on production of their membership card, will not have to pay the entrance charge. There is also a £3 charge for the souvenir glass which will be refunded to you, should you not wish to keep the glass, as you leave the festival. The non-member

entrance fee will also be refunded to you if you choose to join CAMRA whilst at the festival. (Membership starts at £23.00 or £15.50 for Concessions) Apart from giving you free entry for the rest of this festival, membership will also entitle you to free entrance to the bulk of other CAMRA festivals. You will also be given tokens for 2 free half pints of beer or cider and when you receive your membership card from HQ, £20 worth of Wetherspoons vouchers entitling you to 50p a pint reduction on the bulk of their real ales and sometimes ciders as well. I think this is what they call in modern parlance 'A no-brainer'!

Apart from selling over 300 different real ales and 100 different ciders there will be 7 Brewery Bars ranging from small local micros to the larger national brewers, and Podge's Belgium/Continental Bar. The stall



providing soft drinks free of charge will this year be run by our chosen charities, the Meningitis Trust and City of Chelmsford Mencap. Although soft drinks are free, a donation would be much appreciated should you so wish. For food, as well as Tim's Burger and Hot Dog Bar, now expanded to include a variety of homemade curries, there will be a Hog Roast, a Bratwurst, and a Thai curry stall and hopefully a Fish & Chip van. There will be other stalls selling cheeses and pies, chocolates, 'T' shirts and beer & cider memorabilia, and locally produced

6 Support your local pub - don't give them an excuse to close it!

Beer & Cider Festival

wines. On the Saturday afternoon (Family Fun Day) there will be a giant inflatable slide and 4 roundabouts for the younger generation, as well as face-painting and an ice cream van. The face-painting will also stay a bit later this year to cater for the more mature generation! For those who wish to find a bit more about beers and ciders we are also providing various events, including tasting courses on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday evenings, and Saturday afternoon and if you are interested in joining one or more sessions there are details on our web site

www.chelmsfordbeerandciderfestivals.org.uk and elsewhere in this publication



As for the festival, apart from the erection of over 23,500 square feet of marquees, the laying of the track way, and the siting of the portacabins and toilets, all the other work is undertaken by a dedicated hard-grafting band of volunteers. Over the weekend prior to the festival opening they erect almost ½ mile of Heras fencing, build and erect over 1,800 square feet of stillaging, over 300 feet of bar frontage, lay 1.5 miles of electrical cables and ancillary equipment, almost 1,000 feet of water and drainage pipes, rack and provide cooling for over 300 barrels of beer and 100 cartons/kegs of cider and test and check that it all works prior to the authorities giving it the all clear before we open to the public. It is during the actual event that you will see the bulk of our 200 volun-

teers working hard to ensure your enjoyment of the event. After the festival closes the same band of volunteers then have to dismantle, and pack the equipment and clear the site by the Tuesday after the festival closes. **An excellent team effort but quite an undertaking!!** If you feel you would like to be part of this commendable effort please contact Ann staff@chelmsfordbeerandciderfestivals.org.uk or fill in a SBCF13 Volunteering Application Form.



Over the whole festival we expect to cater for up to 20,000 visitors all of whom are having a very enjoyable time and will be receptive to the environment in which they are in. What a wonderful opportunity for anyone who wishes to promote themselves, their products or an event, and we have various sponsorship and corporate packages for this purpose that may be of interest. If this is the case please contact sponsorship@chelmsfordbeerandciderfestivals.org.uk when Kevin will be happy to help.

Editor's note. Romance can blossom at the beer festival too. Congratulations to Mark and Sally who met at the 2011 festival and plan to marry later this year!

Finally, if you have been before, we look forward to seeing you again, and if you have not been before, why not give the festival a try as we feel that you won't regret it, especially if the sun is shining!!!

Cheers

Brewery News

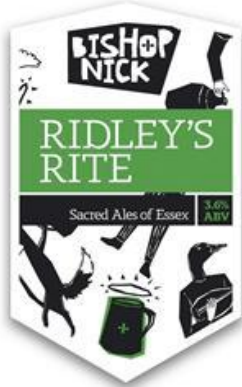
BISHOP NICK

Nelson and George are busier than ever at the moment. Priority is replenishing stocks after an incredibly thirsty month thanks to CAMRA & Pub beer festivals & Bank Holidays.

In the spirit of all things Mild this May we brewed a dark 3.5% which has all gone. Local free houses snapped it up in support of CAMRA's Mild Month. Ours was a classic brewed with chocolate malt. A full flavour and a rich dark colour. Lighter hopped than a bitter but still dry and enticing.

Our 4% Golden Ale Heresy was at the Cambridge Beer Festival, and Colchester and Thurrock both had Ridley's Rite (3.6%) & Heresy. Colchester also had our Mild.

Ridley's Rite is now permanently on the bar of The Compasses, Little Green which celebrated its 5th Anniversary under the stewardship of Joss Ridley with a 'Spring Fest' in May. Nelson attended the opening of the 'Ale & Hearty' exhibition at Chelmsford Museum. A brilliantly curated collection



charting Chelmsford's brewing history. It prompted a nostalgic trip down Ridley's Memory Lane. It was heartening to see such an array of Ridley memorabilia – more than we've got in the loft! Some Bishop Nick drip mats and pump clips are about to join the cabinet!

We've got big and exciting plans afoot which will be detailed in the Autumn issue of Thirsty Times so watch this space...

MIGHTY OAK



KINGS 4.2% Rich Golden Ale was launched back in February as our newest permanent beer. The feedback so far has been extremely positive and sales have rocketed. We have high hopes for this Citra hopped beer over the coming summer months.

Sales are on the up across the board here at Mighty Oak. Since winning at GBBF in 2011 we have held onto a steady increase of customer base and turnover of beer. We feel that there is a growing confidence across the trade as a whole. Real ale has never been so popular, so much so that we are about to increase the size of our plant - doubling the brew length by the end of 2013. We are very excited about the possibilities that increasing our size will bring; being able to stretch out across the south of England, possibly further; maximising the savings of scale to ensure the very best prices for our customers; by doubling the size of the brews we can offer the ever popular 'one off' specials to even more pubs and clubs.

Sad news from one of our favourite local pubs. The Swan at Little Totham, winner of the CAMRA National Pub of the Year in 2002 & 2005 is closed! As a long term loyal customer of ours, we were shocked to hear the news that doors closed on May bank holiday and hope that this is just a short-term closure.

ROUND TOWER

It is an exciting time for Round Tower. Our first few months have exceeded all our expectations and, with our beer going down so well, we are starting to expand our production. Earlier this month we started doubling our brews and, with a new fermenter and

8 Seek out LocAles in your local pubs. Support your local breweries.

Brewery News

plenty of new casks being purchased at the end of May, we will be able to brew three times as much beer each week than when we started back in January.

We've been making a wide range of different beers including some stronger ones such as our Square Peg Black IPA (4.9%) which was great fun to both brew and drink and was made with Australian and American hops and our Spokes, a 5.3% IPA. We've also continued our popular 4% Golden Ales which are packed with hops.

We were delighted to be included in Chelmsford Museum's 'Ale and Hearty' exhibition as Chelmsford City's 21st century brewery. We continue to be grateful for the huge amount of support we receive from local publicans, the Essex Chronicle and CAMRA.

WIBBLERS

We now have 2 new permanent cask ales joining our range. We welcome Dengie Best 4.1% and Dengie Dark 3.8% to the Wibblers ale family alongside Apprentice and Dengie IPA. We have also renamed our popular Hoppy Helper which becomes Dengie Gold 4%.

Dengie Dark – Light-medium bodied easy drinking ale with a low level of bitterness which helps enhance the dark malt character. Gentle chocolate notes with a slight hint of caramel on the nose.

Dengie Best – Good traditional straw coloured bitter featuring finest Fuggle and Golding hops on the back end. Medium bitterness with the classic aroma of an English ale.

Daft name, Great Beers!



RAILWAY TAVERN



John & Joy welcome all old and new customers.

Fine selection of well kept ever changing real ales.

Home cooked food served
10.00am – 2.30pm.

Secluded beer garden.

Duke Street, Chelmsford
CM1 1LW
012 4528 0679

The Taste of Summer in Chelmsford

Once again we have put together an exciting programme of Beer and Cider tastings at this year's Chelmsford summer beer festival. Feel free to contact tastings@chelmsfordbeerandciderfestivals.org.uk to book places ahead of the festival. Some of these events are sure to sell out, so get in there while you can.

All start at 7.30pm, except for the Saturday event which starts at 2pm, and include around 6 drinks. Cost is a mere £6, if booked in advance.

Tuesday 9th July – **JOHN KEELING** - Meet the Fullers Brewer

Hugely respected in the beer world, mine of beery information, top brewer, raconteur and all round great bloke. Prepare to be entertained. See page 11 for a question and answer session with him.

Wednesday 10th July – **DES DE MOOR** – London Calling

London now plays host to around 50 breweries of which only a handful can trace their history back more than 3 or 4 years. With such a revolution who can keep up with this plethora of new brews?

The answer is Des de Moor, beer writer and international beer judge based in London; he not only authors CAMRA's London's Best Beer, Pubs and Bars Guide but has his finger on London's pulse.

Des believes beer is an artefact of human society, not a simple intoxicant but capable of being enjoyed and appreciated in the same way as all the other finer things in life, and should be celebrated as such.

Thursday 11th July – **ROGER PROTZ** – The future of Beer

If you have never heard Roger's take on the

future of World Beer you are in for a real treat. Not only is he the editor of CAMRA's annual Good Beer Guide, he is also the author of more than 20 books on the subject of beer including the best-selling 300 Beers To Try Before You Die. Not only can he look back on how beer has developed through the years but come and see Roger's predictions for the future of beer.

Friday 12th July – **SIMON TIPPLER and TREVOR JEFFERY** – So you want to set up a brewery?

OK, so you have messed around with some of those brewkits or you could have also brewed full mash brews perhaps even with spectacular results but do you think you could earn your living from it?

These guys do. They have both started from scratch in their pursuit of the perfect beer and a perfect business.

Come and have a word and a beer or six with the owners of Round Tower Brewery and Billericay Brewing Company to hear what it is like to go commercial.

Saturday 13th July - **PETE BROWN** – What has happened with Cider?

You probably know Pete from his best selling books Man Walks into a Pub, Three Sheets to the Wind, Hops and Glory and most recently Shakespeare's Local.

Now Pete is about to turn the cider world upside down with his soon to be published World's Best Cider - the first ever book to take a comprehensive look at the various cider traditions around the globe, co-authored with photographer Bill Bradshaw.

Come and see Pete's fresh new take on cider and prepare to have your perceptions challenged!

10 Seek out LocAles in your local pubs. Support your local breweries.

Meet the Brewer

John Keeling - Fuller, Smith and Turner

When did you start brewing? 1974 at Wilsons Brewery Manchester

What got you into brewing? My mum got me the job- I liked working in a brewery so much I went and studied brewing at Heriot Watt

What is your favourite beer you brew at Fullers? Chiswick Bitter

What is your favourite beer brewed outside Fullers? There are so many but if I had to name one it would be Boddingtons from 1974. So many happy memories

Where do you think the future of brewing lies? Flavour is the future if beer

What is your proudest moment in brewing? Winning the gold medal for ESB at the beer world and having Michael Jackson intercept me en route to the stage to shake my hand

Do you have any brewing regrets? Pity the craft beer revolution didn't start 20 years ago

What is your brewing ambition? To bring good beer back to the masses

What was the last beer you drank and why? The next beer I will drink will be Chimay Gold. I am attending the launch tonight. The last beer was Chiswick yesterday lunchtime. The perfect lunch pint.

Do you have a Brewing hero? Reg Drury my old boss.

Which beer do you wish you had brewed? I wish I could have worked in Belgium and made a lambic.

What is your favourite hobby outside of brewing? Listening to music. All sorts jazz, rock and classical.

What is your favourite quote from Mark E Smith? Hit the North.



John will be officially opening this year's Chelmsford Summer Beer & Cider Festival on Tuesday 9th July at 6 pm and hosting a beer tasting at 7.30 pm.




The Village pub is back

Gerry and Sue welcome drinkers and diners alike. We have two to three real ales, good wine selection, home cooked food using fresh, local and seasonal produce. Functions catered for. New large secret garden coming end of May.

THE
SWAN  INN
FELSTED

Tel: 01371 820245. Station Road, Felsted, Essex.
www.theswaninn-felsted.co.uk

Pete Brown Talks Cider

We have a great coup for the afternoon session on the Saturday of the Summer beer festival. Renowned commentator on the drinking industry Pete Brown has agreed to join us. A few years ago he set himself a target to get behind the psyche of cider. Here is one of his first blogs on where things were then.

It's time we talked about cider

Because I'm something of an expert on beer, many people believe I know about cider (and perry). It's quite flattering I suppose, that they just assume I know loads about a drink that isn't beer and that I don't claim to be an expert on. But it's been going on for so long now that I feel obliged to learn a little. I've been extending my consultancy activities into cider over the last couple of years, and I've been boning up my product knowledge so that I can incorporate it into my tutored tastings, food matching and writing.



This image was created by someone looking to promote cider. Not take the piss out of it. Hmm.

Not many of the beer people I know talk

about cider (or perry) that much - I get the impression that they treat it with disdain as inferior to beer, or that it's a guilty secret. For those among us who feel a little defensive about being called a beer geek, the bumpkin image of cider (and perry) makers and drinkers means there's someone one rung down from us who we can turn on.

For those who've argued with CAMRA that they should support all quality beer rather than just cask ale, cider is a bone of contention - the organisation that responds to criticism about beer with "The clue is in the name: what is it about the Campaign for Real Ale that's so difficult to understand? That's what we're about, and that's all", cider (and perry) is an example of breathtaking hypocrisy, supported wholeheartedly by CAMRA at festivals and throughout the organisation despite the fact that it is clearly not real ale.



Cider is a sophisticated, quality drink. No, it really is.

But if that's all we think, we do cider (and perry) a disservice.

I wrote recently in the Publican about the 'joyful anarchy' of cider, how cider (and perry) producers all seem to have a great

Pete Brown Talks Cider

time and many seem to operate at a slight angle to reality. ABVs tend to be approximate. Labelling and packaging often seems a little rough and ready. It's gloriously sham-bolic.

But there's also refinement at the other end of the spectrum. We have this positioning problem with cider in the UK, in that we consider it a direct alternative to beer. We see a farmhouse cider at 8% ABV and sigh and go, "Shit, a pint of this is going to get me arseholed," and we shrug and order a pint anyway.

But why? Cider is made from fruit, not grain. It has a flavour range from dry to sweet, rather than bitter to malty. Does that remind you of anything? Yep, cider is a closer cousin to wine than beer. Indeed sparkling perry was apparently the inspiration for champagne. Cider is a hybrid, halfway between wine and beer, and yet different from each.

I'm not a purist about cider, same as I'm not a purist about beer. If it tastes nice, I'll drink it. But I do have one rule: it's ostensibly made out of apples. Therefore it should taste of apples. Or pears. It doesn't have to be squeezed on a nineteenth century press by a yokel in a leather jerkin and come out unfiltered and filthy to be cider. It can be carbonated, balanced, blended, contain sulphites and stabilisers, come from big manufacturers, be served over ice from a pint bottle... I don't care. So long as it's recognisably made from what it's supposed to be made from. And tastes nice.

I was helping an ad agency pitch for Magner's once. I organised a tasting of the big commercial cider brands, and got a bit of a surprise. We took Strongbow, Woodpecker, Magner's, Bulmers, Gaymers and Westons Organic and tasted them next to each other.

As you'd expect, the Westons Organic was by far the most pleasant drink. What surprised me was just how bad the others were - with one curious exception. They didn't actually taste like apples. I've had cider lollies from ice cream vans that taste more of cider than these drinks did. They were sweet, fizzy and synthetic, the sweetness artificial with no discernible link to anything that's ever been outdoors, let alone on a tree. They weren't cider: they were alcopops repacked as cider, cheap, nasty alcohol in a new set of clothes to suit changing mainstream trends.

The exception? Magner's. Say what you like about it - and I know it certainly doesn't look natural - but it tasted of apples. It wasn't a patch on the Westons, but it belonged in the same group, a class apart from its more commercial peers.

On a hot day I'll take an Aspalls or an Addlestones over beer. Hall & Woodhouse sent me a case of their Badger pear cider and it's almost stupidly drinkable - shamefully I was hiding my last few bottles from people when we had our summer barbecue last month.

And if you're lucky enough to encounter Dennis Gwatkin - probably the most celebrated cider maker of the moment - you'll find stuff there to delight any craft beer enthusiast. His cider aged in whisky barrels was one of the best drinks I encountered all last year. Served in a wine glass, lightly chilled, it beats rose wine at its own game on long summer evenings.

So I like cider (and perry). I'm drinking more of it/them. And I'll be talking about them on the Saturday of the Chelmsford Summer Beer & Cider Festival.

Beer and Cricket

In my last article I talked about the weather problems which can surround cricket matches starting in mid-April and so it turned out to be this year. Essex's first game against Gloucestershire was significantly affected by rain which was perhaps fortunate for Essex since they seemed to be the weaker side. As it happened they achieved a draw. They then had an away match at Northamptonshire and were beaten to such an extent that head coach, Paul Grayson, issued a public apology to fans for such a dire performance. Then came a home match against Hampshire which, due to a now customary batting collapse, they could have lost but scraped home for their first victory of the season, thereby lifting them off the bottom of the league table. The pre-season promise of a drive for promotion to division one already seems to be in jeopardy.

I also wondered if Rafa Benitez would still be at Chelsea FC. Well he is at the time of writing and maybe doing well enough for the unforgiving Chelsea fans to give him some credit, although there seems to be a "special one" lurking in the wings.

All Essex home matches are played at the County ground in Chelmsford apart from a festival week in Colchester at the delightful Castle Park which sits adjacent to the River Colne. This year Essex entertain Northamptonshire in a return fixture from Tuesday 20th to Friday 23rd Aug and then there is a limited over match against Derbyshire Falcons on Sunday 25th August. In one day cricket Essex are called The Eagles; I guess that there is a greater likelihood of finding falcons in Derbyshire than eagles in Essex!

There will be a beer tent on the ground but beer is served in those horrible collapsible plastic "glasses" for health and safety reasons. As for Chelmsford I have calculated the walking times to the nearest pubs. Col-

chester is blessed with nine pubs in the current Good Beer Guide, seven within walking distance of the ground; there are one or two even nearer but not currently in the guide. For further details of Colchester pubs visit www.colchestercamra.org.uk

Colchester is well served by buses and trains but, if you are relying on the bus and wanting to drink after the game, be aware that the last bus back to Chelmsford is around 7pm. A nice idea is to consider staying at the Layer Fox at Layer-de-la-Haye, a pub which focuses on local ales and food sourced locally. It has some bed and breakfast accommodation and is just a couple of miles south of Colchester, and, if you fancy a day off from the cricket, there is good walking in the locality and, just down the road, is the Essex Wildlife Trust Visitor Centre at Abberton Reservoir. You are not far from Colchester Zoo if that's your thing!

At Chelmsford on the 27th August there is an international twenty overs a side match between England women and Australia women; I wonder if the Aussies overdo the amber nectar?

Once a year I like to consider a week away where Essex are playing a side that is in a nice part of the country. In the past I have stayed at Taunton and Gloucester, the attraction being that these places have good pubs and walking possibilities which I enjoy. A most memorable day was a visit to Grace Road, Leicester for a one day match. Just outside the ground is a pub called The Cricketers which, at one time, was the entrance to the cricket ground. It has a balcony on the first floor which overlooks the cricket ground. That day Ravi Bopara hit a double century, most of his sixes coming in the direction of the pub. One had to be careful in timing the raising of a glass of Everards to one's mouth in case a cricket ball was flying towards you!

Beer and Cricket

An even better place to visit is Canterbury. Apart from Canterbury having numerous good pubs, the local branch of CAMRA sometimes has a beer tent on the ground for CAMRA members and their guests. Is this an idea for the Chelmsford and Colchester branches of CAMRA to consider!!

Roger Protz is a lover of both beer and cricket and his book "The Beer Lover's Guide to Cricket" published by CAMRA is delightful. It contains some splendid pictures of cricket themes and the notable pubs which are near to each County's grounds.

If you wish to find more information about Essex County Cricket Club the telephone number is 01245 252420 or visit www.essexcricket.org.uk

The
WHEATSHEAF



Family-run real ale pub	Live Sky Sports football
Regular changing selection of real ales	Open 12-11 Mon-Sat; 12-10.30 Sun
Large beer garden and children's play area	Meals 12-3 Mon-Tue; 12-3, 5-9 Wed-Sat; 12-4.30 Sun
Home cooked and locally sourced food	

**The Green, Maldon Road, Hatfield Peverel,
CM3 2JF 01245 380 330
www.thewheatsheaf-pub.com**

THE THREE ELMS

Coming Soon!

**The Third Three Elms
Real Ale & Cider Festival
9th-11th August 2013**



20 plus real ales

20 plus real ciders

Fun, Food & Music

Enough said!



Chignal St. James, CM1 4TZ, 01245 443151, www.the-three-elms.com

Ale & Hearty

Ale & Hearty: The Pubs and Breweries of Chelmsford

This exhibition at Chelmsford Museum runs until 14th September 2013 and is well worth a visit. In conjunction with the exhibition four talks are being held at the Museum on Saturday afternoons.

The first has already taken place but still to come are the following:

Saturday July 6th - 'Drown Your Dogs In It, Drop Some Frogs In It'. Beer in the Great War by Siobhan McGinn

Siobhan leads tours to Belgium which explore beer in the context of the First World War and is a writer of beer books. She is currently pursuing post graduate military studies at Birmingham University.

Saturday August 3rd - 'Shakespeare's Local' by Pete Brown

Pete has recently been voted Beer Writer of the Year for the second time. He will talk about the George Inn at Southwark, the inspiration for his book of the same name which was serialised on Radio 4.

Saturday Sept. 14th - Malt and Malting by Elphin Watkin

Elphin, an ex-engineer and member of the Essex Historic Buildings Group, has surveyed and analysed old buildings for twenty-five years. He campaigned for the restoration of Dunmow Maltings and is one of its Trustees.

Admission is free but it is recommended that you book a place since numbers are limited by telephoning the Museum: 01245 605700. The talks will take place in the Museum lecture room at 2.15 p.m.

1st Witham Beer Festival

Plans are well under way for the first Beer Festival to be held at the Public Hall in Witham. The festival will take place on Friday 27th and Saturday 28th of September.

There will be real ales, ciders and wines all sourced from Essex breweries along with food from local suppliers.

Events Manager, Graham Green, said, "This will be the first event of this kind to be held at the hall which is conveniently situated in the centre of the town. It is hoped to have more than 30 different ales available over the two days including a beer from Witham's very own micro brewery located at the Woolpack Inn. We are very excited about the festival and, if successful, it will hopefully become an annual event. We are particularly pleased to be supported by

the Chelmsford and mid-Essex Branch of CAMRA"

The festival will be open each day from 12:00 noon until 11:00pm

Admission is £3 on the door (£2 refundable for returned glass).

Free admission to members of CAMRA on production of evidence of membership

By pre-registering you will be entitled to a free drink.

To register you can phone 0845 017 8717 or go online at www.withampublichall.co.uk

For further information or if you would like to volunteer to serve beer on either of the two days email graham@withampublichall.co.uk

16 To advertise in this newsletter contact Neil on 01536 358670

AMBER ALERT



Otter Amber. One to watch out for from the Good Pub Guide's 2013 Brewery of the Year



OTTER BREWERY

www.otterbrewery.com

Branch Diary

Wednesday 12th June Branch Meeting at The White Hart, Witham.

Bus fare £5 members, £6 non-members.

Depart from opposite Railway Station at 8pm.

Saturday 29th June all-Essex CAMRA Games Day & Charity Day at Felstar Brewery.

The return of this popular event. Assorted games (darts welly-throwing etc. between CAMRA branches, stalls, no doubt some kind of animal racing, beer, food. Bus departs opposite Railway Station at 12 noon. The return trip will be at 6pm. The fare will be a maximum of £9 for members/£11 for non-members but if enough book so that I can reduce the fare I will. ***Please book with me ASAP so I can arrange a bigger bus if necessary.***

Tuesday 2nd July Real Ale Runabout to Kent - Gravesend & Swanscombe.

Bus departs opposite Railway Station at 7.30pm, fare £9 members/OAPS, £10 non-members.

After two excellent pubs in Gravesend we'll finish at the recently turned-around George & Dragon, Swanscombe which is now brewing its own beer in the Caveman Brewery in the cellar. We should get a chance to have a look at the brewery if we want.

Tuesday 9th-Saturday 13th July Chelmsford Summer Beer & Cider Festival.

See poster for more details.

Wednesday 17th July Branch Meeting at The Woolpack, Chelmsford.

No bus to this meeting which starts at 8.30pm.

Friday 2nd August London Pub Crawl.

Meet at Chelmsford Railway station at 1845 to arrange Groupsave Travelcards for the 1903 departure.

Tuesday 6th August Real Ale Runabout to North End, Broxted, Monk St & Duton Hill.

Bus departs opposite Railway Station at 7.30pm, fare £9 members/OAPS, £10 non-members.

Wednesday 21st August Branch Meeting at The Compasses, Little Green.

Bus fare £5 members, £6 non-members.

Depart from opposite Railway Station at 8pm.

Saturday 24th August Day Rail Trip to Norwich.

A return to Norwich due to popular demand. It'll almost certainly be cheaper to prebook so please let me know ASAP if you'd be interested in going.

Tuesday 3rd September Real Ale Runabout to Chappel Beer Festival.

Bus departs opposite Railway Station at 7.30pm, fare £9 members/OAPS, £10 non-members.

The poster is titled "A Campaign of Two Halves" in large yellow letters. It features a central image of a tall glass of beer with a CAMRA logo on it. To the left is a view of Big Ben, and to the right is a smiling woman. A sign in the foreground says "Fair deal on beer tax now!". Below the glass, text reads "Save Britain's Pubs!". At the bottom, there are two columns of text: "Campaigning for Pub Goers & Beer Drinkers" and "Enjoying Real Ale & Pubs". The bottom of the poster has a yellow background with the text "Join CAMRA today - www.camra.org.uk/joinus" and social media icons for Facebook and Twitter.

18 To advertise in this newsletter contact Neil on 01536 358670

The Bell



16th Century Public House
completely refurbished in last year.

5 Real Ales – 1 Gravity Fed

German imported Lager
Schwabau Brau

Food Daily (except Sunday Evenings)

Tuesday & Thursdays – Steak Night
2 x 8oz Rump Steak
& Bottle of Wine - £25

Beer Garden, Pool Table

The Street, Feering, CO5 9QQ
01376 570375



Selection of 8 real ales and ciders

Events such as soul music,
open mic night, indie night, 60s music,
vintage fair and many more

Live Irish music the
last Friday of every month

Showing all major coverage of British
and Irish Lions tour, Cricket, Football,
F1 and Ascot all on our 72" HD Screen

Open Mon-Thu 11.30am – 11pm,
Fri–Sat 11.30am–12.30am,
Sun 12pm- 10.30pm

25 Townfield Street, Chelmsford, CM1 1QJ

t: **01245 269556**
e: **admin@whbl.co.uk**
w: **www.whbl.co.uk**

Thirsty Times

Thirsty Times is published by the Chelmsford and Mid-Essex Branch of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale (© 2013) All rights reserved.

Views or comments expressed in this publication may not necessarily be those of the Editor or of CAMRA.

To Advertise To place an advert or enquire about our rates please contact:

Neil Richards, 01536 358670 or
N.Richards@btinternet.com

Printed by Portland Print, Tel 01536 511 555

**Deadline for Autumn 2013
issue (007) is Wednesday 21st
August 2013.**

Branch Contacts

Chairman & Essex Brewery News

Chris 'Podge' Pollard,
podgehome@blueyonder.co.uk, 01245
354677

Secretary Stuart Forbes,
secretary@chelmsfordcamra.org.uk

Treasurer Paul Murrell,
treasurer@chelmsfordcamra.org.uk,
01245 290409 / 07762 514018

Social Secretary Brian Debenham,
socialsecretary@chelmsfordcamra.org.uk,
01245 600294 / 07905 698161

Membership Secretary Ian Holbrook,
membership@chelmsfordcamra.org.uk

Cider Rep. Claire Irons,
cider@chelmsfordcamra.org.uk,

Chelmsford & Mid-Essex Pub News,
Bryan Grimshaw,
pubnews@chelmsfordcamra.org.uk

Chelmsford CAMRA Beer Festival,
Derek Beaumont, beauat62@tesco.net,
01245 264128

Cider Press

Cider Search

To find scintillating stock for the Summer Festival Cider Bar I attended The Big Apple Blossomtime events including talks and tastings over the early May Bank Holiday. There were over 150 entries by 60 makers of Cider and Perry in the annual Cider and Perry



Trials held in Putley on the Marcle Ridge in Herefordshire. Judging by the participants themselves through a series of blind tastings ensures a peer

group assessment, and all entries were available for public tasting. I very much enjoyed meeting many of the producers and plan to have some of the winners for the Cider Bar at the Summer Festival. These include Winnals Longdon Single Variety Perry 5.3% from Newton Court, the Avenue Cottage Medium Blakeney Red Perry 5%, the Dry Perry from Ross-on-Wye 6.5% and the Medium Cider from Once Upon A Tree 7%.

Simon Day, Managing Director and Cider Maker at Once upon A Tree gave a very interesting talk about bottle-fermented cider: the techniques involved in making this distinguished drink which undergoes secondary



Simon Day at Dragon Orchard

fermentation in bottles similar to those used for champagne.

In the Flavours of Herefordshire Awards 2012/13 he won three Golds for cider :- Marcle Ridge Still Cider, Carpenter's Croft Sparkling Cider and Blenheim Superb Dessert Cider .Wilces Medium Cider won Silver which I hope to feature too.

Once Upon A Tree was awarded the BBC Food and Farming "Drinks Producer of the Year" 2012.

As usual I plan to have all the Gold, Silver and Bronze winners from the National CAMRA Cider and Perry Championships which were judged at Reading Beer and Cider Festival over the same weekend. There will be over 100 varieties of cider, perry and pyder from all over the country including Essex. Many are available for the first time at the Chelmsford Summer Beer and Cider Festival.

For more details check

www.chelmsfordbeerandciderfestivals.org.uk

Cider Pub of the Year

I shall be presenting Chelmsford & mid Essex Branch Cider Pub of the Year 2013 award to Angus and Marian Hicks the Landlords of the King William IV, London Rd, Braintree at 6pm Saturday 25th May during their Beer and Cider Festival prior to the live music so please come and join us.



Claire Irons

20 Support your local pub - don't give them an excuse to close it!



All of our crisps have won great taste awards

Crisps as they should taste.

www.piperscrisps.com  @Piperscrisps  Piperscrisps

National Beer Scoring System

Have you ever wondered how CAMRA members select pubs for the CAMRA Good Beer Guide?

The National Beer Scoring System (NBSS) is a 5 point scale for judging beer quality in pubs. It's an easy to use system that has been designed to assist CAMRA branches in selecting pubs for the Good Beer Guide and also monitor beer quality by encouraging CAMRA members from any part of the world to report beer quality on any pub in the UK.

If you are a CAMRA member, we want you to tell us about the quality of beer in the pubs you visit.

What do the scores mean?

0. No cask ale available.
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 may cancel plans to move to the next pub. You want to

stay for another pint and may 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.

And yes, you can use half points!

To submit a score go to www.beerscoring.org.uk and login with your Membership no.

Search for the pub and enter:

- The date of your visit
- A score out of 5
- The name of the beer (optional)

Two important points to note are that your score must be for beer quality only, not any other feature of the pub, and you must be as objective as possible – don't give a beer a poor score for quality because it is not to your taste.

You can be sure that the branch will take account of all scores registered when selecting pubs for the next edition of GBG.

 oakham ales

www.oakhamales.com Tel 01733 370500

22 Seek out LocAles in your local pubs. Support your local breweries.

The Square and Compasses



Fuller Street
Nr. Fairstead
Essex
CM3 2BB

01245 361477

www.thesquareandcompasses.co.uk



- AWARD WINNING FREEHOUSE NESTLING IN THE TER VALLEY
- PICTURESQUE CYCLE ROUTES
- LOCAL WALKS INCLUDING THE ESSEX WAY LONG DISTANCE FOOTPATH
- HOME-COOKED HEARTY PUB FOOD USING FRESH, LOCAL, SEASONAL PRODUCE
- GRAVITY CASK CONDITIONED REAL ALES, CIDERS AND FINE WINES
- OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK
- SUNDAY LUNCH SERVED FROM 12 NOON TO 6PM
- PRIVATE DINING ROOM
- GARDEN AND TERRACE

A warm welcome awaits you

The
Square
AND
Compasses
Meet • Eat • Drink

SUMMER BEER FESTIVAL

@ THE WHITE HART INN

THURSDAY 18TH – SUNDAY 21ST JULY

MARQUEE IN THE GROUNDS BEHIND THE PUB

PLENTY OF COVER IN CASE OF RAIN !



80 REAL ALES & CIDER, LIVE MUSIC,

BBQ, CHAMPAGNE, WINE & PIMMS TENT

BUSINESS AS USUAL IN THE PUB

TEL: 01277 840478 www.thewhitehart.uk.com

THE WHITE HART INN, SWAN LANE, MARGARETTING TYE, ESSEX CM4 9JX