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Thirsty Times



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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.

Bad news comes in threes they say. Here's our trio of unwelcome stories.

Admiral Taverns have been granted change of use for the **Three Horseshoes, Bannister Green** to a private dwelling. Another lovely country pub, which thrived as a Ridley's house, lost forever. Very sad, and shows how important it can be to get your local pub listed as an Asset of Community Value. See the article on the Sportsman's Arms in this issue.

Not far from Bannister Green the **Butcher's**



Arms at North End is currently closed. Let's hope GK can find another tenant – you

have to worry every time a pub changes hands these days.

And it's goodbye to the Haward family who have turned the **Wagon & Horses** in **Brain-**



tree into a superb pub over the last 2½ years, taking it into the GBG. Steve, Christine, Henry, Chaz & Lindsay

will be greatly missed. Steve was able to offer a range of ales from local breweries alongside owner Greene King's range. GK say that they expect the pub to remain open while they recruit a new licensee. They will

have a hard act to follow.

On to happier news and one of CAMRA's key campaigns is to highlight the contributions which pubs make to charity. Most pubs have at least one collection box on the counter – and we shouldn't underestimate how valuable these are to the charities concerned. But here are just a few examples of exceptional giving (if your pub can match or beat these then let Pub News know).

The **Golden Fleece** in **Duke Street** is always in the news, thanks to Brett, the enthusiastic landlord. Their chosen charity is Cancer Research and their annual music festival –



Baydays – in the newly refurbished beer garden raised £1,477, taking their annual total to over £1,700. A beer garden in Chelmsford? Yes, and it hosts their 3rd beer festival across Cask Ale week (27th September – 6th October). They will also be running a cask ale promotion throughout October with discounts and special offers for CAMRA members. It kicks off with a CAMRA evening on 30th September with free food! Let's see plenty of our members there!

Next to a real community pub – the **Endeavour**, at the top of Springfield Road. Their



regular charities are the RNLI and Farleigh but they recently held a raffle for a very

local charity – Chelmsford Homeless – and

Pub News

raised over £120. Well done to them and their customers. They hold a very popular Friday curry club – Mike’s homemade curry with naan or poppadum plus a beer for £8. There’s a mini beer festival starting on Friday 4th October but the Endeavour always has 5 real ales and a guest ale. Hop on a bus or walk it.

The **Woolpack**, by the Odeon roundabout, is another community pub – with a book swap! This raised over £500 for Farleigh Hospice, a favourite charity, in the



last year. At the Easter beer festival £817 was raised for the Isabella Fund (for treatment for a local toddler). Their last beer festival, with 52 ales on offer!, featured an American style brown ale brewed especially by Simon Tippler at Round Tower. Once again the local Scouts ran the food concession to raise funds, as they do at all Woolpack festivals. Maggie & Dave are back running the pub full time now, with quizzes, music nights and sausages galore! Their latest fundraiser, for Macmillan Nurses, was an “evening of ridiculousness” with 4 bands.

The August Beer Festival at the **Rodney, Little Baddow**, was a great success. They are now planning a firework display on 1st November, proceeds to Essex Air Ambulance, and a black-tie do on



New Year’s Eve for Help the Heroes. Last year they raised £300 & £1,600 respectively for these two charities



Another big boost for Farleigh came from the “All Points of the Compass” beer festival at the **Compasses**,

Little Green. Each year all proceeds go to this charity and this year an amazing total of around £4,500 will be donated.

All of which demonstrates how committed many landlords and their customers are to charitable causes.

A change at the **Ale House** in Chelmsford’s



trendy West End, as Warren leaves and Alex, from Baroosh,

joins Dan as joint manager. Their 1st beer festival was also a great success and more are planned. On 24th September there is the next regular meet up of the Beer Club, hosted by Nigel Sadler, this time “discussing, tasting and appreciating” stouts and porters. Just turn up, enjoy some beers and learn more about them.

A reminder that the **White Hart, Witham**



has its 6th summer beer festival 18th – 21st September to

coincide with the International Puppet Festival,

www.withaminternationalpuppetfestival.co.uk. 30 plus beers and ciders, hog roast and barbeque all day on the Saturday with various bands playing during the day.

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Save the Sportsman's Arms

Community fights to save 'derelict' pub

Village residents have recently found their quiet sleepy locality under attack from developers and are fighting to save their rural pub, the **only central meeting point at the heart of the community**.

Nounsley is a small hamlet just south of Hatfield Peverel on the A12. It doesn't have much, a pretty rural ford and a pub, **The Sportsman's Arms**, known as a landmark by taxi drivers for miles around.

The Sportsman's Arms was always there for family and group celebrations, a central meeting point for the village in the absence of a shop, church or village hall,..... or so everyone thought.

With three weeks' notice in January 2013, to the shock of local residents, the licensee departed and the Sportsman's Arms closed its doors, seemingly for good.



It became apparent that a residential property development company had bought the pub and garden. They lost no time in applying to move the local development boundary so they could change the pub to residential use and build four houses on the garden.

As part of their approach to Braintree District Council (BDC), they stated that the pub, which four months before had been serving

beer and food to the public, was 'derelict', the appearance of which owed a lot to the careful 'set dressing' of the area to match their claim.

Local residents got organised and lobbied BDC resulting in them refusing to change the development boundary, instructing the developers not to submit further planning applications until they could show that over a reasonable period, say one year, they had been unable to find anyone willing or able to restore the pub to its proper use.

Within a couple of weeks a 'To Let' sign was erected outside the front of the pub.

Winning this first battle brought the community together and helped them realise the strengths and skills they shared, which could achieve significant results. They went on to win again against other proposals in the village to change the development boundary.

One resident, familiar with pubs across Essex and East Anglia suggested the idea of a community pub and described the '**The Norton**' at **Cold Norton**, as a successful venture of this type.

Contact was made with the organisers of 'The Norton' and they were extremely helpful sharing their experience, advice and ongoing guidance on the process of creating a community pub.

A small group also attended an evening at the Department of Community and Local Government which provided contacts within The Plunkett Foundation and Locality funding and gained further advice from groups who had also set up successful locally run pubs.

This evening gave further help clarifying the importance of listing the pub with BDC, reg-

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

istering it as an **Asset of Community Value (ACV)**. In the event that the site is put up for sale again, this enables the community to have an opportunity to bid for the site and gives a 6-month window to prepare a case.

The ACV listing process was started thanks to **Hatfield Peverel Parish Council**, as a suitable entity, making the application on behalf of the residents. This saved valuable time and effort, as the residents did not need to form a formally accredited body in order to pursue this themselves.

Further help was gratefully received from local **District and County Councillor Derrick Louis**, who took an interest, giving advice and helpful liaison with BDC ensuring the listing process went smoothly.

From here on, the dreaming ended and the hard graft began as the Steering Group formed to run the project set about spreading the word to create a contacts list of anyone wishing to register support and wherever possible practical help from **volunteers**, including Painters & Decorators, Electricians, Lawyers, Plumbers, Gardeners, and much else to help secure the lease and give The Sportsman's Arms the TLC it deserves.

A Face Book campaign (Sportsman's Revived) was launched along with a local website (www.nounsley.org.uk) to keep supporters informed of progress.

A local event '**Party in the Park**' gave another opportunity to meet villagers, explain what was happening, record supporters' contact details and offers of help.

One option for funding the project is through a **Community Share Scheme**, which

offers investors the chance to buy affordable shares in the community venture without any individual gaining overall control. The group were pleasantly surprised to find that positive responses to the idea from supporters at the Party in the Park alone on a very conservative conversion rate would more than provide the levels of capital needed for the project.

CAMRA have also provided valued assistance and advice through their network of local branches and their own practical help towards creating business plans through things like the Pub Viability Test.

The vision? To place The Sportsman's Arms back at the heart of the community. The reality? Watch this space!

STOP PRESS

Since writing this article we have been contacted by a couple that are now in the final stages of sorting out terms for re-opening the Sportsman's Arms. The local team responsible for saving the site from development would like to wish the new tenants the best for the future and look forward to working with them to keep the Sportsman's Arms at the centre of the community for many years to come.



Brewery News

ROUND TOWER

Hannah Tippler from the brewery reports: It's been an exciting summer for Round Tower with significant expansion since our humble six cask start in February and we are now slowing down a little so that we have a chance to settle into that expansion. In order to make our brewing more time efficient, we have purchased a bigger copper which will be installed into our brewery soon. We recently brewed a special IPA to celebrate Gyle 25. Hub (5.6%) is strong and heavily hopped with multiple additions of 9 different hops from around the world. We have also repeated our Tippler's Gold (4.2%) and have made another Stout (4.4%) as it is going down really well in our regular pubs. Our beer is now regularly available in Chelmsford in The Orange Tree, The Ale House, The Three Elms and the Star and Garter and we are pleased that our beer is also being enjoyed by increasing numbers of pubs across Essex. We are looking at bottling some of our favourite brews in the autumn ready for Christmas and with that in mind we are planning to put together some gift packs which will be available from several local venues.

BISHOP NICK

Libby Ridley from the brewery reports: Bishop Nick is Braintree bound! We've got the keys to our new site in East Street Braintree and the shiny new kit has arrived. Conveniently located between Freeport and the town centre we are a stone's throw from the site of the old Ridley Maltings (sadly now a housing development). So we feel at home. We believe we'll be the only registered brewery in Braintree, Essex. We have invested in a 20 brewer's barrel set up better able to meet the demands of the Essex free-trade and we look forward to casting our net further afield in East Anglia. Our first grown-

up brew is neatly scheduled to take place on Bishop Nick's second anniversary – 23rd September. Emphasis will be on reproducing our three permanent ales but, no longer restricted by capacity, we will bring out a seasonal range as soon as we can. We've got our sights set on winter for the first of those. And we'll be bottling from mid-October so bring on the Christmas gift packs! We couldn't have done it without Felstar Brewery. Franco & Sarah Davanzo have given us an amazingly generous kick-start by letting us use their brewery but we must go forth and multiply!

New outlets: Cambridge's fantastic new brewpub – The Cambridge Brew House have been ordering from us recently and the beers have gone down well and ditto The Lion Inn at Boreham. Cheers to that!

FELSTAR

Now that the cuckoo has flown the nest, this month Felstar Brewery go about celebrating twelve years of brewing at Felsted vineyard. Like a proud mother hen they have waved goodbye to their progeny and will continue to brew exciting new ales and real lagers using English and German barley under the supervision of an Italian brewer.

GEORGE'S

The new beer for September is "Danny Boy" (Come in Danny Boy), a special brew which together with Broadsword completes the "Where Eagles Dare" radio call, "Broadsword calling Danny Boy, come in Danny Boy". This is a pale amber ale at 4% abv which has fruity high hop notes, is palate-filling with a crisp finish to slake that summer thirst.

The October special beer will be "Cunning Murrell" named after Essex born James Murrell, thought to be a witch doctor many

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

Brewery News

many years ago and who gained the name "Cunning Man" which ended up as "Cunning Murrell".

The brewery has a new member of staff in the voluptuous shape of Tom Betmead, ex car sales, now taking on the position of Brewery Cat and a new piece of kit in the shape of a 4 head bottling plant in order to be able to offer a range of 500ml bottles in good quality off licenses and the brewery itself.

BILLERICAY BREWING

By the time of the next issue of Thirsty Times we hope to be reporting this new brewery up and running behind the Essex Beer Shop on Chapel Street. See the Bille-ricay Quickie article in this edition.

MIGHTY OAK

Here are the brews coming up for autumn: Giant Haystacks is a 4.1%abv German style lager brewed with wheat malt and a blend of traditional aromatic hops which is golden, crisp and refreshing.

Jolly Roger is brewed for September's national Speak Like a Pirate day and is a deep mahogany 4.5%abv beer. Yargh, 'ave a drop 'o' the very best grog me 'earties.

Burntwood Bitter makes a return this Sep-tember and has a clean fulsome bitterness, well balanced by complex malt flavours and is a copper 4%abv beer.

Boozer Cruiser 4.2%abv Oyster Stout - deep, dark, delicious and moreish.

Blue Sky Drinking 3.6%abv Golden – their best idea all year!

Oak Nouveau 2013 4%abv Pale Gold - brewed with fresh green hops.

Whispering Death 5%abv Pale Blonde - brewed with new season New Zealand

hops. The aroma is very hoppy with hints of berry fruits and zest. Strong hop flavours are tempered by a good biscuity malt flavour.

The big news is that the brewery expansion is taking shape and completion is due some-time in 2014.

GROWLER BREWERY

Paul McGivern, "Mac", from the brewery reports: The brewery has increased brewing capacity, bought two pubs and brewed a beer with some pop legends. We've been featured in The Times, The Sun and numer-ous other papers.

That was all good stuff but something hap-pened at the Great British Beer Festival to top all of that. We won Champion Speciality Beer of Britain. This was particularly exciting given the brewery has won the award twice before with Umbel Magna but the first time since the new owners took over.

We have always been focused on quality and use the same ingredients that Ian Horn-sey used when he created Magna. Indeed it was a treat to be stood with him having a drop of the 5% Porter with the touch of cori-ander at the GBBF and get the seal of ap-proval from Ian also. So a hat-trick for Um-bel Magna and one we are really proud of.

Our first pub **The Hare and Hounds at High Garrett Braintree** had its inaugural beer festival on Sept 12th and featured Magna, Old Growler, Umbel Ale, Lemon Head and Gladness, the beer we co-created with the nutty boys. It has been an exciting project and great to see the guys as passionate about beer as we are. Our second pub will hopefully soon be open. Keep an eye on the **Wagon & Horses in Sudbury**.

London: World Class Beer City

Any discussion of the world's great beer cities in the '80s, '90s or noughties would most definitely not have involved London. Bamberg, San Diego, Portland (Oregon), Sheffield, Antwerp, Bruges: all were miles ahead of London - until very recently London didn't even come close.

But over the last 3 - 5 years, incredible things have been happening in our capital city. Once a city with a fine beer tradition, London has once again become a very beery city, one now easily able to compete with those other world class contenders.

Back in the day, finding good beer in London was easy: you went to the White Horse on Parson's Green, the Market Porter in Borough Market or the nearby Royal Oak. Oh, those three and the Wenlock Arms - the good old, tatty but comfortable Wenlock, where you were sure to find a good pint and a decent range of ales. With the exception of the White Horse, all of these fine old boozers were notable for their good range of well-kept cask ales. We were thankful for what we had. For something exotic - a range of bottled Belgians, or the occasional American or Belgian beer on keg, it was the White Horse or nothing. Their legendary Old Ale Festival every November was pretty much as good as it got beer-wise in London, along of course with the Great British Beer Festival and a handful of other CAMRA stalwarts such as London Drinker and Battersea Beer Festival. All solid, good and worthy. But a world away from what we have now.

'Meet the Brewer' events, tap takeovers, beer dinners, brewery taps, craft beer bars showcasing quality cask, keg and bottled beers, and beers from exciting, new-wave London breweries - these were all the stuff of dreams. Never in a million years did I expect things to have changed so com-

pletely by 2013.

So, what's happened? Many credit the opening of the Rake in 2006 with kick-starting the new wave of bars and pubs, but good and innovative as the Rake might be, for me the real game changers came a little later on.

On the pub front, Cask Pub and Kitchen opened late in 2009. Showcasing a range of 10 immaculately kept cask ales, their innovation was to also sell a range of increasingly excellent high quality keg beers - often from American, Danish or Belgian breweries, but more recently featuring superb keg beers from newer London and UK brewers. They also started with a range of several hundred high quality bottled beers from around the world, setting a new standard for bottled beer lists in London.

On the brewery side, Kernel Brewery also opened in 2009. This was a hugely significant moment in London's beer renaissance. Many articles have been written about Kernel's Evin O'Riordan finding inspiration in the hoppier beers he found when visiting the US. For those of us who enjoy beer travel, no longer do we have to travel to find the sort of beers we used to seek out in New York or on the West Coast. They are now brewed with skill and passion right here in Bermondsey, SE1, to well-justified critical acclaim.

The success of Cask and Kernel inspired many others to open new pubs and breweries. London now has upwards of 50 breweries (and counting) - a dramatic rise from the low point of just 6 breweries in 2007. My London beer guide - which used to consist of basically one page of A4 with half a dozen entries - now stretches to 22 pages. Most of the places I now list have opened since 2009.

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

Following the immediate success of ventures such as Cask Pub and Kitchen, new wave bars and pubs such as Euston Tap (2010), Brewdog Camden (2011) and the Cask's sister pubs Craft Beer Co (now 3 branches, in Clerkenwell (2011), Brixton and Angel (both 2012), (as well as a Brighton outpost) have completely changed the landscape of drinking in London. Never before have we had pubs with upwards of 40 draft beers. A common theme of most of the new pubs and bars is the mix of a strong cask ale line up along with a range of innovative and exciting quality keg beers. Many also offer a bottled beer list from home and overseas.

New breweries pop up every week (or so it seems): along with Kernel the pick of the new breweries include West London's innovative Weird Beard Brew Co; Partizan and Brew by Numbers (both walkable from Kernel and all open for a marvellous Bermond-

sey brewery tap crawl on Saturdays); Beavertown in Hackney Wick - check out the amazing meaty BBQ menu at their Duke's Brew & Que in Haggerston, and Rocky Head in Earlsfield, whose Pale Ale is sublime. Redchurch in Bethnal Green and Howling Hops (under the Cock Tavern in Hackney) are two other stand outs, but many of the others are also brewing extremely good beer and I am confident most will not only survive but thrive.

So with new pubs and breweries opening every week, London's beer scene hasn't been so healthy in decades. With new festivals such as August 2013's London Craft Beer festival, things are set to go from strength to strength.

London a world class beer city? In 2013, the answer is an emphatic YES!

Written by: Jezza (SW London). Follow Jezza on Twitter: @bonsvoeux1



The Golden Fleece Cask Ale Festival 27th September - 8th November



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Billericay Quickie

It is amazing how fast you can be whisked away from Chelmsford through the leafy lanes of Stock to find yourself propping up a bar in downtown Billericay. The number 100 bus takes just over 20 minutes and deposits you close to the **Coach & Horses** at 36 Chapel Street. On our visit there was a choice from Wibblers Apprentice, Doom Bar & Special from Sharps, a beer from Bury St Edmunds and their featured guest beer the beautifully hoppy 4.2%abv Yorkshire Terrier from York Brewery.

The pub is full of architectural quirks like the odd half partition impeding an otherwise full view of the gents and the odd inset lanterns above the bar. There are the obligatory traditional collections of pewter pots and equine paraphernalia along with various prints of coaching scenes. The area to the right of the bar is given over to dining and the full food menu is big on home-made pies and fish. Kitchen times during the week are 12.00-14.00 and 18.00-21.00.

Another reason for visiting the town is the newly opened **Essex Beer Shop** a little further down at 54C Chapel Street. It is worth visiting their website to get their full opening hours. Owner Trevor takes a pride in stocking beers from Essex, plus new and upcoming London brewers with some real showstoppers from Weird Beard, Redchurch, Kernel and Partizan. There is talk that the shop may soon also stock some of the best that Belgium can offer in what will become the new Billericay Brewery. Watch this space.

Our next stop was **The Chequers** at the junction of Chapel and High Street. This historical pub gets the vote for the prettiest



pub exterior in town, although the inside is not quite so well preserved, but they do have a great display of old black and white

photos of the pub through the ages. This is a lively place which offers regular events, music and parties. The garden is entertaining with iron tractor seats which come with a warning that they get very hot in sunny weather and over the fence is an odd high-rise chicken coop complete with ginger chickens who stare unneringly. The pub dog Ubu is sociable with anyone who happens to be eating. Young's ordinary appears to be the house beer with three rotating guests of varying qualities providing support.

Further down the hill is the pub which gets the vote for the ugliest in town - the inevitable Wetherspoon, **The Blue Boar**. The modern, almost brutalist exterior gives way to an extraordinarily lengthy interior, extended further by a terraced rear garden. This former



Co-op supermarket now retails all the usual Wetherspoon's offerings and we tried two out of the six hand pump choices. Enough said.

Further down the road is the **Crown** a modernised pub with an outside area for competitive smoking. A backboard beer menu

boasts of Stella Artois at £4 a pint and sticky tables evidence patrons' preparedness to part with it. There is



boasts of Stella Artois at £4 a pint and sticky tables evidence patrons' preparedness to part with it. There is

Crouch Vale Brewers Gold for the more discerning.

On the opposite side of the road there is the smaller and prettier **Railway**, a traditional pub unsurprisingly near the station. This one has a diverting selection of board games, bar billiards and a piano. Their scratchings



from the porcine heartland of Wolverhampton were a sublime pairing with the excellent Oakham Citra while enjoying a game of

Connect 4. The winner said the Woodforde's Wherry was great too.

Now at Billericay's transport hub you can either jump on a train in the direction of Liverpool Street or Southend or take the bus as we did back to Chelmsford. Last weekday bus from Billericay Rail Station to Chelmsford is 22.31.



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Brewing Returns To Chelmsford

With a name like Tippler you're almost duty bound to produce beer.

So it seemed only right that Simon Tippler would not only become a brewer but be the man behind the first brewery in Chelmsford in almost 40 years. Grays, the last brewer in the city, moved out in 1974 - the year Simon was born - but now the smell of hops and barley is wafting across the city again.

Simon has brought the great brewing tradition back to Chelmsford with Round Tower Brewery, a brand new business that stirred into action at the beginning of 2013.



I was lucky enough to witness the first commercial beer being brewed in Chelmsford in four decades as Simon created Tippler's Gold, which was officially launched at Chelmsford Winter Beer Festival alongside Rectory Stout which went down so well it was

named Beer of the Festival. Not bad for a brand new brewery at its first festival!

"I like beer and I also like a project," Simon told me at the time. "So a few years ago I thought I'd have a crack at making beer."

Simon started off with home-brewing, using brewing kits in his garden shed. From here he would create 25 litres of beer at a time and got to know the noble art of brewing, trying out different recipes and refining his techniques.

After three years of researching, experimenting and brewing, Simon felt it was time to step up and move into commercial brewing,

setting up Round Tower Brewery with his wife Hannah.

"I thought I'd just have a go, how hard can it be?" said Simon.

That have-a-go, DIY attitude along with an enthusiasm for brewing stood Simon in good stead as he took over an industrial unit in Chelmsford at the end of last year and started putting together his own commercial brewing kit.

"I made everything because I can't afford to buy it from a manufacturer," he explained. "It's taken a bit of work and planning but essentially, all I've done here is scale up what I was doing at home."

Simon says it took six weeks to kit the brewery out but admits he only really got excited about it when it finally started smelling like a brewery.

After doing a few test beers, Simon got the thumbs up from HM Revenue and Customs to start brewing commercially at the turn of the New Year.

His first brew was Tippler's Gold swiftly followed by the Rectory Stout and now Round Tower has produced around 20 different beers, ranging from golden ales like Free-wheel to Point To Point, a dark brown bitter.



A speciality of Round Tower Brewery has been producing 'solo' beers using just a single hop rather than a combination. So far this range has included Solo Galaxy, Solo Cascade and Solo Bramling Cross, all subtly different in flavour.

You'll now find Round Tower beers on tap at The Orange Tree, The Ale House and The Railway Tavern in Chelmsford and The Three Elms in Chignal St James while other pubs in and around Chelmsford stock them on a regular basis.

It's been a whirlwind first six months of brewing and trading for Simon and Hannah, but they're delighted with how things have gone.

"It's been brilliant," says Simon. "We're just trying to keep up with demand. It's a nice problem to have. As soon as we've got beer ready, we take it out to people.

"We've had limited production capability up to now but I've got a new fermenter coming so we'll be able to make up to 18 firkins a week, which will triple the amount we produce."

It must have been wonderful finding out that Rectory Stout had won Beer of the Festival at the Chelmsford Winter Beer Festival.



"It was a great feeling, we got some really good feedback. I think it went down well because it's a very rich and full bodied stout with deep and complex flavours. Some can be a bit heavy going, other stouts can be a bit light, but this one was just right."

The recipe for that stout was from an original homebrew that Simon made every year for Christmas and he says he'll be brewing another batch for Round Tower in time for the festive season this year.

What does Simon put Round Tower Brewery's remarkable success down to?

"I think it's because we produce a different beer every week and that goes down well. Our beers are regularly on the guest beer lists in pubs and people like trying them out."

Simon also reckons a major factor in Round Tower's success has been the simple fact of being the first brewer in Chelmsford for four decades.

"We've had so much help and support from CAMRA, brewers and publicans," Simon says. "We've been overwhelmed by the support we've had through being based in Chelmsford."

Find out more at
www.roundtowerbrewery.co.uk

by Darryl Webber
(The photographs are reproduced by kind permission of the Essex Chronicle.)

THE WOOLPACK

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First Witham Beer Festival

Witham's first Beer Festival organised by the Witham Public Hall Trust is to be held on the 27th and 28th September at the Public Hall, Collingwood Road, Witham.

The festival will feature over 30 real ales and ciders, the majority of which have been sourced from breweries within Essex, including one from Witham's very own micro-brewery situated at the Woolpack Public House in Church Street.

Other breweries included are Wibblers, Round Tower, Mighty Oak, Farmers and many more.

Ciders will include Carters, Buffoons and Delvin End. Sourced from outside Essex are Weston's Old Rosie and Wild Wood plus a wonderful Perry from Gwynt Y Ddraig, Glamorganshire.

Local wines are also available, these will come from the Mersea and Felsted vineyards.

As well as the ale we will have excellent food available, all of which is produced locally and freshly prepared during the festival. Tickle your taste buds with hot roast beef or gammon, fresh ploughman's or a choice of three different sausages in one of two different homemade rolls.

From 7:30pm each evening there will be entertainment. On Friday we have a local acoustic group "Band of Idlers" and on Saturday evening enjoy a pint or two with "The Lady Killers New Orleans Jazz Band".

The Trust is grateful for the support and advice given by Chelmsford CAMRA throughout the preparation of the festival, which, if successful, will become an an-

nual fixture. We are also pleased to have received sponsorship from Crittall Windows Ltd for this event.

The festival is open from midday until 11pm each day and by pre-registering at www.withampublichall.co.uk you will get your first drink free.

Admission is £3 with £2 being refunded on return of your glass. CAMRA members can gain free admission after 5:30pm each evening by providing proof of membership.

The hall is easily accessed by road or rail and is located close to the centre of town. The postcode for satnav users is CM8 2DY.

Further details can be obtained from our website www.withampublichall.co.uk or by phoning 0845 017 8717



16 To advertise in this newsletter contact Neil on 01536 358670

Cider Press by Claire Irons



to recognise outstanding achievements in the promotion of real cider and perry.

2003 Month-long celebration of cider and perry set up and is now held each October.

2005 CAMRA names first National Cider Pub of the Year. 2012 Winner: Royal Oak, Wantage.

2009 Real Cider Sold Here sticker scheme launched for pubs that stock real cider/perry all year.

2010 Local Cider and Perry pump clip crowners introduced. CAMRA publishes a lavishly illustrated book called CIDER!

2013 We continue to lobby National and European Government to change policy and legislation to benefit real cider and perry producers and consumers.

1988 CAMRA forms the specialist Cider and Perry Committee (APPLE). First Cider and Perry Championships held. Now an annual event judged at Reading Festival in May.

1990 CAMRA organises the first of four major Cider and Perry exhibitions in London.

1998 Annual Pomona Award established

CHELMSFORD CIDER FESTIVAL 3rd-5th OCTOBER

In addition to the details on the poster please note we shall have:

- Many ciders not featured before at Chelmsford CAMRA festivals.
- Wine from Felsted Vineyard.
- Friday Night Sidekick Band www.sidekickband.co.uk
- Saturday afternoon Vanessa
- Saturday Night Loaded Dice www.loaded.dice.org.uk
- Quiet room for those who wish to sup and chat without music.

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www.chelmsfordbeerandciderfestivals.org.uk
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Opening times
Thursday 3rd October 5pm - 11pm
Friday 4th October 12 noon - 11pm
Saturday 5th October 12 noon - 11pm

Admission
Card-carrying CAMRA and Triangle Club members receive free entry

Non-members Admission
Thu, Fri, Sat free entry before 6pm
After 6pm Thu £3, Fri £5, Sat £3
Refundable glass deposit £3

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CAMRA Chelmsford and MidEssex

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Branch Diary

Friday 27th September Rail Trip to 1st Witham Beer Festival. Meet at Chelmsford Station at 1905 to arrange Groupsaves for the 1920 departure.

Tuesday 1st October 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.

Wednesday 16th October Branch Meeting at The Cricketers, Chelmsford. No bus to this meeting which starts at 8.30pm.

Saturday 19th October Visit to Burnards Cider & Green Jack Brewery. We'll visit Burnards cidery in the morning then have lunch at the Banham Barrel and go on for a visit to Green Jack Brewery in the afternoon. Bus departs opposite. Railway Station at 9am, fare £22 members/OAPS, £24 non-members. Please book on 01245 600294 by 12th October.

Tuesday 29th October Survey of Pubs for Good Beer Guide 2014. The route will be revealed on the night. Bus departs opposite Railway Station 8pm, free to members, £5 non-members.

Tuesday 5th November Real Ale Runabout to Brentwood, Waltham Abbey & Epping. Bus departs opposite Railway Station at 7.30pm, *specially reduced fare* £5 members/OAPS, £6 non-members.

Wednesday 13th November Branch Meeting/AGM at The Royal Steamer, Chelmsford. No bus to this meeting which starts at 8pm (note early start).

Saturday 16th-Sunday 17th November Weekend in Liverpool. It's hoped to arrange a

weekend in Liverpool on these dates but details are yet to be confirmed as TT goes to print - check the website!

Thursday 21st November Visit to Brentwood Brewery. A visit to Brentwood Brewing Co's new brewery - the cost will be £5/head. Bus departs opposite Railway Station at 7.30pm, fare £9 members/OAPS, £10 non-members. Please book on 01245 600294 by 14th November.

Wednesday 27th November Survey of Pubs for Good Beer Guide 2014. The route will be revealed on the night. Bus departs opposite Railway Station 8pm, free to members, £5 non-members.

Tuesday 3rd December Real Ale Runabout, route to be confirmed. Bus departs opposite Railway Station at 7.30pm, fare £9 members/OAPS, £10 non-members.

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Thirsty Times

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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 Winter 2013
issue (008) is Wednesday 20th
November 2013.**

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Copy deadline for the Winter 2013 issue (008) is Wednesday, 20th November and the publication date is Thursday 12th December. If you stock the magazine and have not received your copies within 7 days of the publication date please contact Derek Beaumont, 01245 264128, beaumat62@tesco.net.



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Spotlight on Grays - The Star



This month's featured pub has the distinction of being one of only seven of this area's pubs to appear in the first Good Beer Guide in 1974. It was described

then as "small and cosy". That brief description would not do justice to the Star Inn of today.

It stands almost opposite the market place



in the centre of Ingatestone with the Norman church towering behind it and it's not hard to imagine it when this was an important parish on the Essex Great Road between London and Colchester and The Star was one

of 27 inns in the village.

Times have moved on. The A12 takes most through traffic out of the village now and in have come a number of up-market shops to cater for the greatly-expanded population. The Star hasn't changed much externally, being a C18th grade II listed building in a Conservation area, but inside it's a different matter.

It seems whenever the Star is mentioned



three topics come up – the fire, the music nights and the parrot. Well, the enormous fire is still there, along with a lot of

exposed beams, and there is still live music occasionally, but no parrot! I can't expand further on any of those topics but if any reader cares to share their memories they would be very welcome!

In 2009 the Star underwent a major, but sympathetic, internal refurbishment and extension, taking in the next door shop. The bar has moved, giving a large open area and a small "snug" on one side. In this snug hangs a large TV screen which may be turned on for events of national importance, i.e. very occasionally.

The main room is dotted with small tables, including a couple of Singer sewing machine



frames, a vast collection of different types of chair – I gave up counting – a couple of leather sofas and a high

backed settle – I wonder if that's always been here. There are also a few circular tables formed around the wooden posts with accompanying stools. Pale-coloured walls and windows on two sides lighten the whole interior. It's a mixture of traditional and contemporary. And if the weather's kind you can sit outside in an enclosed beer garden with picnic benches and some nice planting.

So you'd come here for a drink, or two? Of



course - most people do. Currently the regular beers are Adnams Southwold Bitter and Mighty Oak Maldon Gold.

But there is a bonus in that the Star employs

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

two chefs who offer very good quality food at lunchtimes and in the evenings. From a home-made scotch egg as a snack to a three course meal. Browse the menus on the website, and better book for Sunday lunch.

The Star is run by Liz Haines who has won several CAMRA awards at her sister pub a few miles from here, and is managed by Ellen. This is another Grays pub well worth a visit for good beer, very good food, and to see how an old pub can be given a modern look without losing its character.



The 351 bus from Chelmsford stops almost outside and Ingatestone station is just half a mile away. www.thestar.uk.com, 01277 356441

Happily brewing interesting brews by ourselves or collaborating with Friendly fellow brewers. New beers at Chelmsford: Mad Trappist Belgian Ale 8.0%abv, and CANADA six hop red ale 4.9%abv.

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Billericay Brewing



Billericay Brewing is now well on the road to becoming a microbrewery set up in Billericay. We have been doing collaborative brews for the past 6 months with Dominion Brewery (started by Andy Skene at Pitfield).



This started with Mayflower Gold (6.5% American style IPA – mostly in bottles, but has also appeared on draught at The Ale House, Chelmsford and Chelmsford Winter Beer Festival) and our second brew is a strong mild called A Mild With No Name.

We now have premises in Chapel Street Billericay and will be opening The Essex Beer Shop on Friday 14th June. The shop will stock our own beer and beers from other Essex and London microbreweries – come along to free tasting at our Grand Opening Weekend. The microbrewery will be installed later this year.

Having started my path to becoming a brewer about a year ago, I thought I'd reflect on the great things about being a brewer.

1. **The beer!** Yes I've always loved beer but becoming a brewer has opened my eyes to the great range of beers across the UK and the world. To have a job producing something that is my passion is "living the dream".
2. **It's a happening thing!** What a great time to become a brewer! Over 1,000 brewers in the UK, about 30 in Essex and losing count of how many in London. Brewing is certainly taking off in Britain. But not just a lot of similar beers, the craft beer movement means that

there is now an amazing range of beer flavours. New beer bars setting up and the move to drink beer to accompany food - much more versatile than wine.

3. **The people.** I've met most of my best friends, including my wife, over a beer. Becoming a brewer has meant I've met even more great people. Other brewers, bar & pub owners and of course the drinkers. The great thing is how all the microbreweries work so well together.
4. **Science and art together.** Creating beer is a fantastic marriage of art and science. I'm a scientist by background, but have had a great love of art too. Creating great beer needs science but also art to create its character.
5. **Being my own boss.** I can't believe it has taken me this long to become my own boss. Whilst it may not have the security of a 9-5, it is so liberating to be in charge of what I do. I work hard and can become obsessed by the work, but it's fantastic to decide what I do and when I do it. I'd thoroughly recommend you to try it.
6. **Creativity.** You can experiment and try to create whatever you want. Every beer can be unique. I've not found a beer that tastes the same as Mayflower Gold! Push the boundaries, try to create something special.
7. **It's natural and local.** Yes craft beer uses all natural ingredients and can be a true local product.

If you're out there brewing your own beer, what do you like most?

Follow our latest progress on the website and Facebook - billericaybrewing.co.uk, BillericayBrew.

Trevor Jeffrey

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

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