



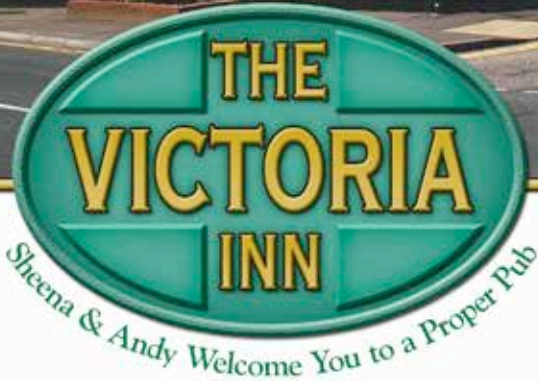
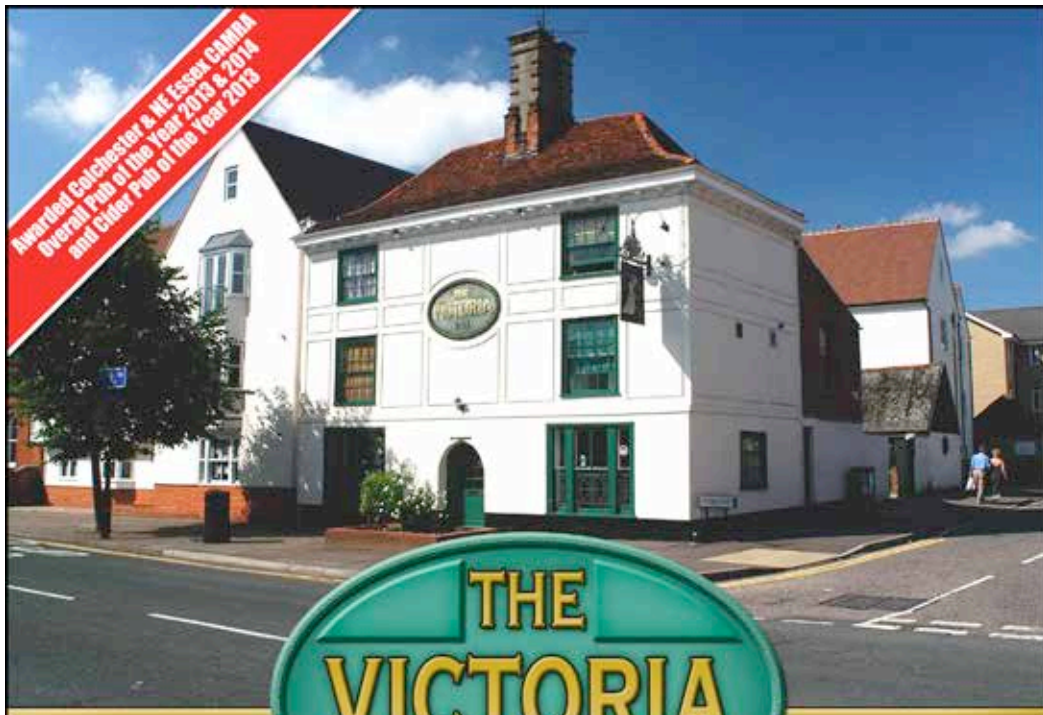
CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE

THIRSTY TIMES

Chelmsford & mid-Essex Branch of CAMRA



Pub of the Year 2014
The Orange Tree, Chelmsford



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PUB OF THE YEAR 2014

Chelmsford & mid Essex branch members have voted The Orange Tree in Chelmsford their Pub of the Year 2014. Having been runner-up for the past two years the Orange Tree beat last year's winner, the Compasses at Littlely Green, into second place.

Owned by Grays, the Orange Tree is a traditional pub in that it's a place for conversation and for meeting friends but that's not to say that it doesn't move with the times. There are weekly charity quiz nights and its customers have raised an impressive amount of money for eight different charities over recent years. Live sporting events are screened with rugby and cricket (unsurprisingly given its closeness to the County Ground) being favourites. The pub benefits from having two rooms – one a typical public bar and the other a larger saloon, sometimes used for events, including private functions. A good range of food is available at lunchtimes, including a Sunday roast, and Thursday is Curry Night. There is a small patio at the back - a suntrap in the right weather - and a small car park.

Landlord "Silent" Mike Collins has been at the pub since 2008 and his knowledge of and enthusiasm for real ale has seen the Orange Tree appear in every GBG since then. The regular beers, Mighty Oak Oscar Wilde mild, Dark Star Hophead & Shalford Brewery Barnfield



Bitter, are joined by five continually-changing guest ales. These are served from a bank of handpumps in each bar or on gravity from casks behind the bars. Check the excellent website to see what's on and what's to come – then get down there fast. Casks can empty quickly here. Real cider is on offer too.

This award represents a double success for Mike who won the same accolade on several occasions when he was at the Queen's Head, just down the road, and he is the first landlord in our area to achieve that distinction. Congratulations Mike. There will be a presentation to Mike on Saturday 22nd March.

The Orange Tree will now go forward to the next round of voting – for Essex PotY – and we all wish Mike the best of luck in that.



PUB NEWS



We start this issue with news from our royal correspondent:

“It’s not every day that royalty are seen pulling pints behind the bar, so it was a surprise when Prince Charles and Camilla Duchess of Cornwall arrived in Essex and did just that!

Publicans Kirsten & Julian Webb owners of **The Bell, Purleigh**, welcomed Charles and Camilla into their village pub, as part of The Pub is The Hub for which the Prince is Patron. Pub is The Hub offers independent, specialist advice to communities, promoting the diversification of rural services across the UK. Whilst they don’t directly fund projects, their advisors are able to give communities the tools and contacts to do so, in order to keep pubs and rural services at the heart of every community. The Royal couple arrived at lunchtime to meet staff and regulars from the 14th century village pub. They were there to see the Pub is The Hub-inspired scheme to refurbish an old function room into a valuable community space used for a variety of clubs and teams as well as an occasional cinema.

Since taking over at The Bell four years ago, Kirsten and Julian have worked hard to build on their reputation for good food and drink whilst also supporting the community. Liaising with Terry Stork, the regional advisor for Pub is The Hub, the couple were able to apply for shared funding from Essex County Council to complete the work in early 2013. One year later the room is now home to the cricket club, the darts team, a gallery for local artists and a range of hobby clubs that includes books, yoga, sewing, art and wildfowling.

It was an especially memorable day for John Boyce, director of Mighty Oak, who was introduced to the royal couple. John wore the biggest smile on the day when Prince Charles said he preferred the darker beer which just happened to be the award-winning Mighty Oak Oscar Wilde Mild.”

OK, so the Bell’s just outside our branch area but I thought I’d include that piece in case you missed the coverage on local TV. The pub’s a regular in the GBG, and hosted our recent Beer Cuisine evening. www.purleighbell.co.uk

PUB NEWS



Dave from **The Woolpack, Chelmsford** reports that their mini Christmas Festival was a resounding success with all the beers selling out about 2 hours into the 3rd (and final) day. They are now busy planning their last Easter Beer festival which runs from Thursday 17th - Sunday 20th April. Dave says “I asked our Facebook followers which beers they would like to see and was inundated with requests- so have been busy trying to fill the needs of our festival goers”

Dave goes on to say that Greene King are continuing to excel themselves with the choice of guest ales available. In April there are 9 “outside guests”. Expect to see most of them at the Woollie. **01245 259295**



We’ll be moving in to the peak beer festival season quite soon now but I’ve only two other Spring 2014

dates for your diary at the moment. **The White Horse, Chelmsford** has a beer festival from Friday 28th – Sunday 30th March with a wide range of beers. A charity race night on the Friday, live entertainment on Saturday and hot and cold food. www.whbl.co.uk



The Baker’s Arms, Danbury holds the first of its two beer and cider festivals over the bank holiday weekend, Saturday 24th – Monday 26th May. Live music, and food served all day including their speciality fish and chips and home-made chilli and curry in the beer tent. www.bakersarmsdanbury.co.uk

The Ale House, Chelmsford is intending to further increase their real ale presence with regular mini festivals in the coming year. They are working on an extra 12 ales (making 24 in total) on the last weekend of alternate months. These will include meet the brewer and tutored beer tasting sessions. The first of these is from Thursday 27th - Sunday 30th March when the brewer will be Dave Hewitt of Hewitts Brewery. They are also increasing the amount of live music at weekends as this seems to work well for them, and looking at putting on some of these new-fangled craft keg ales as a trial but that’s a little way in the future yet. www.the-ale-house-chelmsford.co.uk



PUB NEWS

The Endeavour, Chelmsford has just been redecorated throughout and the new colours look great and give a real feeling of space whilst keeping the traditional pub atmosphere. Mike and Jacqui celebrated their 12th anniversary of being at the helm with a party on the 7th February. Music from the Midnight Ramblers was so popular that the band is returning to rock away on Good Friday evening. Then on Easter Sunday it's the annual Charity Quiz, teams of 4 £2 per person. Customers have recently raised £100 for the local homeless charity CHESS and £100 for the RNLI.



Braintree Council refused the application, stating that “the loss, or significant reduction, of existing services and (community) facilities will be resisted, unless there is sufficient evidence that they are no longer viable or needed, or satisfactory alternatives are available”.

In March, 'Pop-Up Restaurant Nights' begin and are planned to continue throughout the year - a Wine Bar Night, a Greek Night, an Italian Night, an Irish Night and other ideas still in the pipeline, all will be £15 per person and will include some form of alcohol! Fear not, real ale will also always be available! **01245 257717**

There is much more explanation of the council's decision on their website – look for application 13/01380/FUL. It may only be round one but nevertheless a victory for the 166 regulars who signed a petition to save the pub. If you're passing call in and show your support.

Once again **The Golden Fleece** in **Chelmsford**, in collaboration with Brentwood Brewery, are hoping to produce a benefit beer for an Essex cricketer. This year it's a bit special as the cricketer is England captain Alistair Cook. Negotiations are ongoing but if all goes to plan Cooky's specially brewed ale will be launched on 16th or 17th April, and will then be widely available across Essex & possibly the country. www.thegoldenfleece-chelmsford.co.uk



The Albert in **Witham**, which closed after a fire last year, has reopened as **The Railway**. It is owned by Star Pubs & Bars so beers are from their list. GK IPA is always on, joined by two guests. Food is served all week.

Good news also on **The Queen's Head** in **Braintree**, which was recently put up for sale by Greene King. After a brief closure it has reopened as a freehouse with, we understand, the existing tenants retained by the new owner. Again, this friendly community pub deserves our support.

Greene King applied for planning permission to demolish **The Rifleman** on Rifle Hill and replace it with private dwellings. To its credit,

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BREWERY NEWS



BILLERICAY BREWING CO

Billericay now has its first brewery for over a hundred years. Billericay Brewing have just started brewing on their new microbrewery situated in Chapel Street, just behind the Waitrose Car Park. After a year of brewing at Pitfield Brewery, near Ongar, brewer and company director Trevor Jeffery has developed an impressive portfolio of beers. The aim is to produce craft ales with taste and character. They have started with a range of 4 beers: Billericay Blonde, a refreshing 4% ABV golden ale; Mayflower Gold, a powerful (6.5%ABV) hoppy American style IPA; A Mild With No Name, a strong (5.5%ABV) dark mild and their latest brew Billericay Dickie, a 4.2% hoppy amber ale. More beers are planned for the near future.

Whilst brewing at Pitfield Brewery most of the production has gone into bottles to be sold in The Essex Beer Shop, situated in Chapel Street, next to the microbrewery. Now that the microbrewery has been commissioned, approximately half the production will go into draught aiming to sell to local pubs, bars and clubs. The beers have already made successful appearances at local beer festivals. Ask your local pub if you would like them to stock the beers.

The Essex Beer Shop opened in June last year and has quickly established itself as Essex's leading specialist beer retailer. As well as stocking Billericay Brewing beers it also stocks a wide range of beers from other Essex breweries, such as Brentwood, Crouch Vale, Farmers and Wibblers. In addition it stocks beers from some of the exciting new London microbreweries, such as The Kernel, Weird Beard and Beavertown – if you've not tried them yet, you are in for a treat. Also it

has frequently changing guest ales from UK and international breweries plus Essex wines and ciders.

The shop provides free tastings each weekend and also runs tasting evenings each month – these are good social occasions to learn a little more about beer. Tasting sessions can also be booked for a group of friends or a local club. Bookings are now being taken for brewery tours and later this year there will be the opportunity to become a brewer for the day and spend the day brewing your own beer! Personalised beers for celebrations such as weddings and company promotions are also offered.



BISHOP NICK



Libby Ridley Reports:

We're busier than ever at the moment. Had a great start to the year. Our first official limited edition ale – Feast – went down extremely well. We've sold out and are ready to brew our Spring Ale – Hop Cross (3.8%) using a speciality extra pale malt.

Our bottle-conditioned ale is starting to find its way on to the shelves of local outlets and plans are afoot to make them available online too. We have all our permanent beers available in 500ml including the Limited Edition beers. Drop-in trade to our Braintree site is great which proves our local profile is on the up. We've got plans for a Father's Day event for families on site and a new brew for the summer (and of course a Mild for May).

Please note our new telephone number - 01376 349605. Sign up for our e-newsletter at info@bishopnick.com or follow us on Facebook or [@bishopnick](https://twitter.com/bishopnick) on Twitter.

BREWERY NEWS



MIGHTY OAK

Purchasing the building next door to the brewery last year has given Mighty Oak lots of opportunities to expand. So now the hard work begins. They have made the whole of the ground floor into a massive cold room and now they have a huge new hot liquor tank. Work is still also going on in the main part of the brewery where they are installing an effluent plant, 30 barrel mash tun & copper and 30 barrel fermenting vessels. Apparently this is all happening in the midst of their busiest months on record and the brewing staff are looking longingly at the new equipment, keen to get brewing with it come summertime.



Nev enjoys the extra space



ROUND TOWER



Hannah Tippler writes:

Round Tower Brewery celebrated its first birthday at the Chelmsford CAMRA Winter beer festival in February. It's been a fantastic

first year and we'd like to thank everyone for their support. Getting our beer into bottles and on the shelves at Lathcoates and Chelmsford Co-op stores has been a highlight as our beer has been drunk by a wider audience and the feedback has been great especially with those who enjoy the best local produce. This next year looks exciting too as we are settling into some of our most popular styles of beer to repeat brew. Crank 3.6% went down very well in local pubs and so we are keeping a citrusy sub 4% gold in stock. Our Slipstream 5.7% was a massive beer and a massive hit in bottles and we will be making sure we repeat it during 2014. We are also keeping a mid 4% chestnut brown amongst our range and Simon is experimenting with some American yeast to give these beers a clean, modern taste accentuating the hops. We always have our ever popular Stout in stock as it has been appreciated by local drinkers from the start. Simon has been working hard in the brewery and we plan to open to visitors during the spring. We are also enjoying getting involved in local events and have lots of exciting plans for the summer



WIBBLERS



Nigel Sadler reports:

We will be launching some great new events this year as part of our continuing development and expansion plans. The first of these will be a set number of Open days, including brewery tours. These will be informal turn up and join in events (any groups over 8 must pre-book). They will include a chat about the art of brewing, a chance to look at and try some of the ingredients we use and finally there will be plenty of our beers and Dengie Cider Co products to enjoy throughout. Every now and again we plan to fire up the BBQ subject to the weather! There will also be the chance to purchase bottles from our onsite shop.

BREWERY NEWS

The first of this year's Brewery Open Days, with tour, are planned for the 5th April, 3rd May and 7th June. They are from 12 noon to 3pm

Next we are launching "Be the Brewer" experience days. These make great gifts and will enable the participants to get fully hands-on with the brewing of a beer throughout the day. All in all a truly great gift idea for the beer enthusiast or loved one in your life. The full day's programme will involve hot liquor treatment, mashing in, hop additions and much more behind the scenes testing and yeast viability checking. There will also be a 17 pint mini pin of the beer you made available for collection one week after your experience day.

Be the Brewer days will be held on 16th April, 21st May, & 18th June. Numbers are limited to 4 per day and include a light lunch. Times: 8.30am to 5pm (approx.)

Finally our new limited numbers "Beer & Cider Club" will start. Meeting on Friday nights, dates to be advised, throughout the year an annual membership fee will entitle you to:

- Exclusive, personalised Wibblers' Beer Club polo shirt
- 10% Discount in our shop.
- Free entry for you and a guest for up to 3 Open Evenings where you can sample new and exclusive beers, take a tour of the brewery or our hop yard and meet the Brewery Team.
- A free minicask (8 pints) of beer when you join.

Check out our website for further information on the above at www.wibblersbrewery.org.uk and please email Abby@wibblers.co.uk to book a place or for further details on all of these events.



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BRANCH DIARY

Wednesday 12th March:
Branch Meeting at the White Hart, Margaretting Tye.
 Bus fare £5 members, £6 non-members.
 Depart from opposite Railway Station at 8pm, with the meeting starting at 8.30pm.

To save money we will be going to this meeting by taxibus so please arrive for the bus by 7.45 so the correct bus size can be ordered.

Saturday 22nd March:
Branch Pub of the Year Presentation to the Orange Tree, Lower Anchor Street.
 The presentation itself will take place at 9pm.

Saturday 29th March:
Essex Pub of the Year Bus.
 We'll go around all the other Essex Branch Pub of the Year winners and formulate the Branch vote for Essex POTY. As the full list of winners is not yet known, nor is the schedule. We'll leave from opposite the Railway Station sometime Saturday morning and we usually get back late afternoon/early evening. Full details will be on the website as soon as they are known and I'll obviously keep those who've booked informed of the departure time.

Free - Please book in advance for this - Numbers limited.

Tuesday 1st April:
Real Ale Runabout to Roundbush, Maldon & Little Totham.
 Bus departs opposite Railway Station at 7.30pm, fare £9 members/OAPS, £10 non-members.

Wednesday 9th April:
Branch Meeting at the Woolpack, Mildmay Road, Chelmsford
 No bus to this meeting which starts at 8.30pm.

Friday 11th April:
Bus to Maldon Beer Festival.
 Bus departs opposite Railway Station 8pm, fare £9 members, £10 non-members.

Please book in advance for this by 4th April to guarantee your place.

Tuesday 6th May:
Real Ale Runabout to Colchester, Wivenhoe & Brightlingsea.
 Route includes the Black Buoy in Wivenhoe, recently taken over by the community. Bus departs opposite Railway Station at 7.30pm, fare £9 members/OAPS, £10 non-members.

Saturday 10th-Sunday 11th May:
Weekend in Liverpool by rail.
 Details are still being finalised but if you would be interested in going please contact me ASAP as the earlier I book the cheaper it will be. At the moment we could travel for about £53 return each before senior railcards etc. I intend initially booking for those of you who have expressed an interest (after confirming the price is okay) around 8th March.

Wednesday 14th May:
Branch Meeting at The Oddfellows, Springfield Rd, Chelmsford.
 No bus to this meeting which starts at 8.30pm.

Tuesday 27th May:
Rail Trip to Colchester Beer Festival
 Meet at Chelmsford Station at 7pm to arrange Groupsaves for the 19.14 departure, arriving Colchester 19.39. We'll return on the 23.02, arriving back in Chelmsford 23.25.

Tuesday 3rd June: Real Ale Runabout.
 Route still to be decided. Check the website nearer the date,

Wednesday 18th June:
Branch Meeting at the Square & Compasses, Fuller Street.
 Check the website nearer the date for travel arrangements.

Tuesday 15th - Saturday 19th July:
Chelmsford Summer Beer and Cider Festival, Admiral's Park.

PALE ALE UNITES BREWSTERS AROUND THE GLOBE



Sophie de Ronde

The World's first International Women's Collaboration Brew Day (IWCB) was spearheaded by Brentwood Brewing Company's Head Brewer, Sophie De Ronde. Organised in celebration of International Women's Day on Saturday March 8th, the aim of the event was to raise the profile of professional female brewers, known as brewsters.

"My mission was to get the message about this exciting, worldwide event out to as many brewsters as possible, so that they would decide to join in on IWCB Day.

"We women brewers make fantastic beers, not that men don't, but they have dominated the industry for so long that it's time for us women to make an impact again. It's all about celebrating the history of women in the industry and giving us modern day brewsters a bit more exposure," said Brentwood Brewing Company's Sophie De Ronde.

Each participating brewster followed the same basic recipe in her brewery on March 8th to create a 4% ABV pale ale, session beer, made with Cascade hops, a variety that is universally available. The resulting real ales are all called Unite Pale Ale. Whilst brewsters stuck to set parameters on colour, bitterness and ABV, each brew is unique. Brewsters were encouraged to stamp their creative flair and professional style on the beer and add flavourings of herbs, spices and fruits if they wished.

The idea sprang from a meeting of Brewsters belonging to ProjectVenus. The group of a dozen or so like-minded ladies meets every couple of months at a different member's brewery. In the spirit of collaboration they collectively brew something innovative and generally celebrate women producing, drinking and enjoying beer. Set up three years ago, the UK and Eire organisation, Project Venus, was inspired by the American Pink Boots Society charity.

Both outfits aim to promote professional women in brewing.

With this seed of an idea, Sophie has led the IWCB project and with the help of Denise Ratfield of the Pink Boots Society across the pond, is promoting the worldwide event via social media networks. At least 120 brewsters from around the World committed themselves to the project - in New Zealand, Australia and America as well as Canada, the UK and Ireland.

Participating breweries were encouraged to make donations from the sale of Unite Pale Ale to The Pink Boots Charity in America and/or a local charity of their choice.

Brentwood Brewing Company will be making a donation from the sale of Sophie's version of the IWCB Unite Pale Ale to both the Pink Boots Society charity and SNAP, Special Needs and Parents. This Brentwood-based charity, celebrating its 20th anniversary this year,

supports Essex families of disabled and special needs children aged up to 25.

With Cascade hop supplies being donated to the brewery by well-known merchants, Charles Faram & Co Ltd of Newland near Malvern in Worcester; and malt generously supplied by Muntons of Stowmarket Sophie hopes to maximise the brewery's donations to charity.

Brentwood's Unite Pale Ale should be available for drinking at the end of March. Look out for bottles in the brewery shop.

Details about IWCB can be found at:

- [facebook.com/events/518752271572934](https://www.facebook.com/events/518752271572934)
- www.internationalwomensday.com
- www.brentwoodbrewing.co.uk/international-womens-brew-day
- www.projectvenus.co.uk
- www.pinkbootssociety.org

COMMUNITY PUBS MONTH: APRIL

CAMRA will again be organising Community Pubs Month in April following the success of 2013's event. This month of action gives pubs a campaign to focus promotions around and try some new marketing initiatives to attract more custom.

We would like all pubs to take part by organising some fun events for the local community to enjoy in April and encourage pubs to try a variety of different communication methods of informing the locals of what is planned including press releases, social media such as Facebook & twitter, website, collecting local email addresses and sending regular e-newsletters, leaflet drops, adverts in other local amenities etc.

26 pubs close every week. We do not want this situation getting any worse, so please encourage your friends (especially those that do not visit pubs regularly) to have a night out Spring 2014

in one of your local pubs in April to show your support. Imagine if your local was one of the 26 to close next month!

How will CAMRA support this event?

We have produced some free promotional packs for pubs to use that will remind people how great pubs are.

All pubs that feature in the Good Beer Guide 2014 will automatically be sent a promotional pack. Other pubs can order one by visiting www.communitypubsmonth.org.uk. The promotional packs will be sent out in February and March.

CAMRA's national press office will also issue a number of press releases to raise the profile of pub-going.

AUTHOR OF 'GRAYS ELEGY' DIES

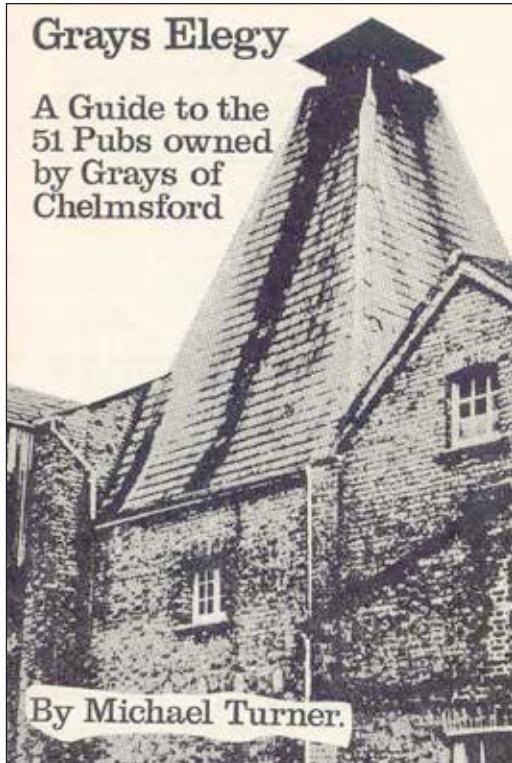
It was in 1974 that Michael Gray announced that, due to death duties, the family owned brewery in Springfield Road was to close. In future all Grays public houses would serve Greene King beers supplied from a new distribution depot at Galleywood. This was sad news for Essex beer lovers including Michael Turner who was passionate about the quality of Grays beers and the pubs where it could be enjoyed. He decided to experience both for a last time before change occurred and embarked on a "Grand Tour" of all the existing 51 Grays pubs. The pleasure that he obtained from this was then expressed through the writing of Grays Elegy. This now difficult to find little booklet provides an interesting insight and unique record of each Grays pub at that time (March – September 1974). Michael went on to be a founding member of the Chelmsford and mid Essex Branch of CAMRA (which met at the Black Bull, Margaretting in October 1974) and it was therefore with sadness that older



members of the branch heard that he had died in November 2013.

During the 1970-80s Michael played an active role in branch activities including helping to organise the first Chelmsford beer festival held at the Lion and Lamb, Duke Street, in 1977. He was the first member of the branch to act as Brewery Liaison Officer to Ridley's Brewery. His unassuming manner and sound brewing knowledge helped him to become a good friend of the then head brewer, Timothy Atkinson. This enabled branch visits to the brewery (and its cellar tap room), saw Mr Atkinson attend branch meetings to update on brewery activities and occasionally receive awards for brewing. The photo shows Michael at a presentation to Tim Atkinson to mark his retirement in 1986. At a time when mild as a beer choice was rapidly disappearing Michael was a great advocate for mild and it was thanks to his enthusiasm that Chelmsford and mid Essex branch initiated the campaign 'Make May a Mild Month'. This hit a chord with many other drinkers and was taken up by CAMRA as a national campaign, the success of which has led to the widespread revival of mild in the UK.

Although Michael lived in Billericay he kept up his contact with the branch through attendance at the Summer and Winter beer festivals. He was also a keen supporter of Essex County Cricket and on match days might be found at lunch with friends enjoying his usual half pint of mild at pubs like the Railway Tavern, the Woolpack and the Orange Tree.



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COLCHESTER PUBS

"Could you do me a huge favour?" he said "Write me a piece on Colchester pubs. About 600 words for our brethren in Chelmsford. Don't miss anything out. And try not to upset anyone!" - Typical Branch Chairman our All!

Funnily enough it'd be easier for me to write a piece on Chelmsford pubs in many ways, because as a non driving occasional visitor to the capital city of Essex I can wander about as I choose and discover and re-visit inns and hostelrys without fear of favour with or without a GBG tucked under my arm for guidance.

But let's rise to the challenge and imagine that (after a full English before departure) I'm a visitor to Britain's oldest recorded town starting from Colchester's oldest recorded railway station. I'm a man on a mission to "do" Colchester's town centre pubs in one day GBG in hand.

There's brave. So much to do – so little time. Where do you start?

First stop WH Smith on the town side platform. Buy a map of Colchester. Then in the first pub pick up a FREE copy of the 'Must Have!' Colchester CAMRA Guide to Real Ale Pubs in Colchester!

So where is that first stop? Bricklayers. Adnams Flagship pub in the Town. Out of the station, to the road, look left. Technically in the people's republic of Mile End the Bricklayers is a decent-sized but still cosy and relaxing former pub of the year, that's been nurturing locals and commuters alike for as long as I can remember.

Down to the bus stop. Get a Day Rover from the friendly driver and head for North Hill. On your right on the way up is the Norfolk and then the Victoria Inn. The Vic. Right by a bus stop, our CAMRA town pub of the year, and my local. Great ales and ciders on offer in this Freehouse. Not a food pub but a genuinely

friendly "proper" pub: especially on Sunday late afternoons if you like a bit of live music. Nice thing is you could go in on your way into town or on your way back to the station. Or both!

Thence up town by bus (or on foot if you've got climbing equipment) and past the heavily restored Marquis (formerly a Marquis of Granby – C18th name on a C16th site) for some local history. Hop off at the High Street, cross over and cut through Bank Passage opposite and head for Trinity Square. Sadly The Cups (now a Fat Face) is long gone but the half timbered Purple Dog (formerly the Clarence) is going strong right in the medieval heart of town and has been an Inn since the year dot (ish) A new GBG entrant in 2014, consistent, and increasingly popular at lunchtimes.

On foot, down Scheregate steps, turn right past Wetherspoon's (The Playhouse) and the Fox and Fiddler (oh go on then twist my arm) up to the lights, turn left and head for the police station and on up the hill to the Ale House, the well stocked no nonsense sister pub to the Bricklayers and the regularly GBG-listed Fat Cat - sister pub to the Ipswich and Norwich pubs of the same name. Varied ales on hand pump and from the tap room, modern and informal.

Time to think.

Where next? Turn back – or press on across the road and down the side alleys and past the high brick walls of the old garrison on the south side of town, map in hand, to the popular Edwardian corner of the street local the New Inn. Sit and relax while you work out a route to the legendary free house The Odd One Out for a beer or cider and a nourishing hand made cheese roll. It's unique. It's the multi award-winning Oddie. Don't miss it.

Up the road a bit and a new built road to your left sweeps you eastwards to another traditional corner boozier the British Grenadier, another

former Colchester real ale pub of the year. Unspoilt bar, dart board, pool room. Landlord to chat to. Tradition in a pint pot.

Back to the bus or walk down Military Road to town. Head for the Little Crown on Eld Lane - worth a look as a gem of a Victorian London style alehouse, or up to the Castle and through the park to the Foresters. Or you could saunter along High Street, past The George Hotel and the Duchess towards the looming shadow of Jumbo (our amazing Victorian water tower) where you'll find the Hole in the Wall, (GBG entrant 2014) the only Colchester pub that's built into the Roman Wall itself.

And then...

You could go down to the Dutch quarter and the visit the Stockwell, an amazing fully-restored medieval building and gastro pub. Or you could head off down Crouch Street for music at the Bull, try the Kings Arms or the very popular Adnams award-winning Hospital Arms. You could bus out of town (No.65) to the highly recommended Live and Let Live in Stanway, or venture down East Hill to the Goat and Boot, or spend the evening in Wivenhoe's busy pub...

Or...

Be honest you won't do all of these pubs properly in a day - and as CAMRA members we obviously encourage responsible drinking! Sorry for any I've missed out. But I hope I've whetted your appetite for Colchester pubs. We may not be Essex's Capital City – some would argue we're not even Britain's oldest recorded town – Pah! But we'll give anyone a run for their money for quality pubs and choice of amazing real ales!!

Cheers!
AS

For more information – go to our website www.colchestercamra.or.uk or track down one of our Colchester Town Pub Guides where you'll find a listing for every pub in Colchester that sells real ale.

Spring 2014



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MERSEA ISLAND WELCOMES MONKEYS

We were pleased to welcome back visitors to Mersea Island Brewery, the 'Wise Monkeys' team from Colchester CAMRA to brew another batch of Mersea Monkeys following its successful reintroduction at the Colchester Winter Ale Festival.

Beer Festival Organiser Martin Ibberson had persuaded us it was time for another Monkeys brew so Monkey Trev Johnson and son Alex, now brewer at Mersea, dusted off the recipe for this fine Porter. We were delighted to hear that it was runner-up in the Beer of the Festival competition at the Winter Festival and as a result this generated customer demand for more of the same please!

This time a full brew was required so at short notice fellow Monkey Nigel Mullender and guest Monkey Martin Ibberson were drafted in to help. The original Mersea Monkeys was first brewed in 2005, created by fellow Monkey and expert craft brewer Colin Miller, with the cask version being phased out in 2009 and the

bottled version continuing until 2011.

It was early on a fine Sunday morning in February that the motley crew arrived at the Brewery, or rather into the Courtyard Café for a quick coffee. Worried that they were not following the apparent trend for young Brewers to wear their trousers at half mast, the Monkeys set about loosening their belts but were fortunately stopped by Mrs Barber before any damage could be done.

The Monkeys set to work weighing out the different malts which included pale, crystal, black, wheat, cara and roast, with Alex keeping a close eye on the scales. Nigel was taking his time carefully weighing out the crystal, but discovered that all he needed to do was just empty the sack of malt which Alex found most amusing.

Next job was mashing in and this required the work of a champion stirrer, hence Martin was appointed to the job. Once completed there



Thunderbirds are go! Trev in FV1, Nigel in FV2 and Martin in FV3



Nigel emerges unscathed from the depths of the copper

appeared to be a bit of time to relax but Alex was having none of that and lined up three fermenting vessels to be cleaned. There were one or two comments that we only needed one but to no avail.

After a bit of breakfast the sparge system was set up. This very effective piece of equipment, using a shower head and a very useful kitchen utensil, sprayed hot liquor onto the mash which then drained into the copper. The copper was brought to the boil where the Fuggles and Goldings hops were added.

Martin, having never dug out a mash tun before, was not surprisingly nominated to dig out the spent grains. Once completed there was then time for refreshments and an assortment of unlabelled bottles were opened and tried before the Thornbridge Russian Imperial Stout was discovered!

The boil completed, Trev commandeered one of the freshly cleaned fermenting vessels and ensured the wort was running through the heat exchanger at the correct temperature. With only the yeast to be pitched into the fermenting vessel Nigel was quick to volunteer to clean the

nice warm copper, whilst the others carefully manoeuvred the fermenting vessel into the temperature controlled 'cellar'.

The finished product will be available at our Easter Beer Festival from 18-21 April which will feature over 30 beers and a range of ciders all from Breweries and Cider producers based in Essex. In addition there will be live music, Morris Dancing and a daily Hog Roast. For more details please see our website: www.merseabrewery.co.uk/beer-festival.

This April is the 10th birthday of the Brewery and to celebrate this we will be launching a new Celebration Ale. After years of experience and expertise gained in the winemaking side of the business and more recently in brewing we have combined the 'best of both worlds' and created a champagne style beer. Whatever you do don't miss out on this unique beer which will be launched at the Beer Festival.

If you can't make Easter why not join us for the Food and Drink Festival on Saturday 24 and Sunday 25 May between 11am and 5.00pm where there will be a range of local beers, wines and ciders alongside some of the best foods and delicacies in the area.



Martin demonstrates that we chaps are good at malty tasking!

Street and onto Lafone Street. Alternatively it's just half a mile back to Bermondsey tube station for the Jubilee Line, or a slightly longer wander back to London Bridge, perhaps via Maltby Street market.

Whichever way you tackle it, the Bermondsey Beer Mile makes an excellent day out and comes highly recommended. Full details of all the Bermondsey brewery taps can be found in the new Beer Guide London, here:

<http://www.beerguidelondon.co.uk/areas.php?area=South/South%20East>

Here's a map showing the full circuit from South Bermondsey station, ending at Bermondsey tube station: <http://goo.gl/maps/tWVPvk>

By Jezza, SW London.

You can follow Jezza on Twitter: @bonsvoeux1 or @beerguidelondon - the Twitter feed for his new online Beer Guide London. You can find the Guide at: www.beerguidelondon.co.uk

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Opening times and full addresses - NB: all five brewery taps are open Saturdays only:

• **Fourpure Brewing Co**
 22 Bermondsey Trading Estate, Rotherhithe New Road, London SE16 3LL
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• **Partizan Brewing**
 Arch 8, Almond Road, London SE16 3LR
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• **Kernel Brewery**
 Arch 11, Dockley Road Industrial Estate, London SE16 3SF
 Open 9am to 3pm

• **Brew by Numbers Brewery Tap,**
 Arch 79, Enid St, SE16 3RA
 Open 11am to 6pm

• **Anspach & Hobday/
 Bullfinch Brewery Tap**
 118 Druid Street, SE1 2HH
 Open 11am to 5pm

NORWICH CITY OF ALE FESTIVAL: CELEBRATING FINE ALE IN THE FINE CITY 2014

This year's Norwich City of Ale Festival looks set to be bigger and better – if that's possible! Now in its fourth year the celebrated festival that has become a firm favourite for ale lovers across the UK will run from 22 May through to 1 June, 2014.

Last year 42 Norwich pubs served 229 cask ales brewed by 36 local breweries during the ten-day festival. Real ale lovers flocked to the fine city from all over the country (and abroad) and a total of 57,000 pints were enjoyed.

Whilst all this evidence points to a highly successful festival, organisers are keen not to rest on their laurels, but to ensure that 2014 is bigger, better and packed with more brews and more events.

“Norwich and its Norfolk hinterland have so much going for them with a fine, historic city, compact enough to be walkable, lots of welcoming real ale pubs and over thirty local breweries producing a great range of ales from mainly local malts and grains,” Dawn Leeder, co-chair of City of Ale explained.

Phil Cutter, Co-Chair added: “More small independent Norfolk brewers are beginning to trade which is a real complement to the quality ale houses that support the local brewing industry. City of Ale has gone from strength to strength with more pubs involved in 2013, and much more interest from real ale lovers from across the UK.

As well as the 229 cask ales last year's festival offered 133 events ranging from beer tastings, mystery tours on the City of Ale bus, a pub treasure hunt and a local brewery pop-up shop. Katie Woods of The Jubilee told of a group from Yorkshire who were very taken by the local brewery pop-up shop she ran during the

festival. “They didn't have enough funds to buy souvenirs as well as beer. So they said they'd be back the next morning” she said, “and I thought, well maybe... but at 10.30am they were hammering on the door!”

And last year a gentleman from Wales did a 400-mile round day trip to spend a few hours enjoying beers at the city's The Rose pub. “It makes me proud to be a Norwich publican” said landlady Dawn Hopkins.

A couple from London turned up at the Brewers' Market: “We've never been to Norwich before, but we saw an article in the London Drinker and thought why not, so we're here for the weekend. So many great pubs all in walking distance - we love it!”

At Take 5 Cafe Bar, landlord Nic Barton met a party of Dutch guys who'd flown over on KLM. “That's quite an accolade when you think what Amsterdam has to offer...”

As well as being the City of Ale, Norwich is also listed as one of the top 15 places to shop in the UK. Outside of London's Oxford Street, Norwich is the only place in the UK to have four national department stores as well as a local independent department store, Jarrod, within its city centre.

More details about the Norwich City of Ale Festival 2014 can be found at www.Cityofale.org.uk/2014.

To sign up for the City of Ale newsletter that accompanies the Festival send an email to cityofalepr@gmail.com.

N.B. Norwich is about 90 minutes on the train from Chelmsford, single tickets start at £8, even cheaper with Groupsave. What are you waiting for?

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SOME BREWERIES TO VISIT IN SOUTH WESTERN USA

We recently arrived back from a great holiday in the south western USA. We hired a car and drove through California, Arizona (has to be my favourite state) and southern Utah. Despite the fact that the national parks were all closed when we arrived (luckily they opened while we there), we managed to visit some pretty interesting sights, including some breweries.

The first was The Old Bisbee Brewing Company in the town of Bisbee, Arizona, close to the Mexican border. This is a pretty, old copper-mining town, spread over the hillside. We stumbled across the brewery in the main part of the town. The doors to the brew house were open and you could just wander in and admire all the gleaming equipment. This microbrewery hasn't been open long and a couple of their brewers came over here to learn a bit about the trade at Brewlab in Sunderland. The bar next door to the brew house served a good range of six tasty ales, a couple of which we sampled. I particularly liked the Royal Stout. It's a pity we couldn't stay longer – half a day in Bisbee wasn't long enough to see everything or to try all the beers.

Next was the Beaver Street Brewery in Flagstaff, Arizona. We visited this place about 5 years ago and, although they served amazing steaks, we weren't very impressed with the ales. Almost all of them were very heavily hopped and I couldn't find anything that appealed to my taste. This time, however, there was a much better range of styles, I had no difficulty finding something I liked (and the steaks were just as good). Flagstaff is a university town in Northern Arizona, not far from the Grand Canyon and really worth a visit, not least to sup a pint or two at the Beaver Street Brewery. Our final brewery visit was to the Zion Canyon Brewing Company in Springdale, Southern Utah. This was very disappointing and although we



stayed in Springdale for four nights, we dropped in for a pint only once. There was, however, an interesting bottled beer available in Southern Utah called Polygamy Porter. The catch phrase used to advertise this quite palatable ale was "Why only have one?" Interesting, considering which State we were in! Although we were disappointed by the brewery, the views were amazing and Zion Canyon was one of the highlights of the holiday.

It's good to see microbreweries appearing in the USA and to have a better range of beers and styles to sample than we came across a few years ago. Seems like a good enough reason to have another holiday there!

Ann Davis

Thirsty Times


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BOOK REVIEW: WORLD'S BEST CIDER

What the beer writer Michael Jackson did for beer in the 70s, Pete Brown and Bill Bradshaw now do for cider with their newly published *World's Best Cider*. This is the first book on the market to offer a comprehensive overview of the history and development of cider worldwide, a description of the many different styles and traditions available and the stories of the passionate (and sometimes eccentric) people who make and champion them.



the bar and into the restaurant and finally to the rest of the world where this once-humble drink is reaching new heights, both in terms of flavours and fans.

Pete and Bill explore every aspect of this fascinating and often misunderstood drink. In its pages you'll discover what Johnny Appleseed really planted, find out what the Magners effect is and learn why Perry is a miracle drink.

Over 200 ciders are described in detail with full tasting notes. The book is illustrated with hundreds of Bill's inspiring and beautiful photographs that bring to life cider-making techniques and the festivals and traditions associated with it. This is a story that has never been told and will appeal to the novice and the discerning drinker alike bringing this drink the recognition and appreciation that it truly deserves.

'Cider Basics' outlines the origins of cider and its absorbing history before going on to apple varieties, cultivation and grafting and the importance of terroir. Cider styles from 'farmhouse scrumpy' and apple wine to Pommeau and ice cider are fully explained too. It travels from the Old to the New World teaching us not only how to taste and cook with cider but also how to truly understand its versatility. The journey begins in Spain where cider had been part of the culture for thousands of years. The authors then travel north through France to Normandy and Brittany, to Germany and Austria and then across to Britain to the famous cider regions of Somerset, the Three Counties followed by Wales and Ireland. The apple and its products take them next across the Atlantic to New England and Quebec, where cider has been reinvented taken out of

World's Best Cider. By Pete Brown and Bill Bradshaw. London, Jacqui Smith LLP. 2013. Hardcover, 256 pages.

Pete Brown writes the UK's leading beer blog (www.petebrown.blogspot.com) and was named 2009 and 2012's Beer Writer of the Year. He has previously written four books which have sold more than 90,000 copies between them: *Man Walks into a Pub*, *Three Sheets to the Wind*, *Hops and Glory* and *Shakespeare's Local*. He appears regularly on TV, radio and in print and currently writes columns in brewing and pub trade magazines in the UK and US.

Bill Bradshaw is a freelance photographer who has been documenting cider for the last seven years as an on-going personal project. His cider images are on permanent display at the Hereford Cider Museum and he has been published internationally in a number of magazines. His images and travels are documented on his blog: www.iamcider.blogspot.com

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Spring 2014

THIRSTY TIMES

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