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THIRSTY TIMES

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Thirsty Times

BEERHOUSES, BRAINTREE & BAD BEHAVIOR! by Mike Bardell

When I wrote 'Give them Ale Enough, a history of pubs in Braintree & Bocking' back in 1998 I was surprised just how many of the town's pubs had started life as beerhouses. The book is now out of print and needs a full re-write not least because I subsequently discovered a further four pubs and because the town's pub landscape has changed dramatically in the intervening years; the reasons for the latter will be familiar to all.

Of the forty nine town pubs that I can remember - going back to the mid-1950s - eighteen were beerhouses originally; many that disappeared before my time were beerhouses too. This drove me to ask - what differentiates them from inns, taverns and public houses? My enquiry led me to the following brief conclusions.



Inns were invariably large establishments offering wine, spirits, beer, food, lodging and stabling; places frequented by the landed, mercantile and professional classes. Trade, business, town government, entertainment and political meetings all found a home within the substantial walls of the inn which may well have been the biggest building in a community after the church. Their apotheosis was the 'coaching era' of the 17th and first half of the 18th Centuries.

The White Hart in 1892, the town's most famous inn actually stands in Bocking, despite what the caption says; there were several more, notably the Horn and Wheatsheaf.

Taverns, most common in towns and cities, predominantly sold wine and food and were seen as drinking and gaming houses for the professional and urban classes; they might offer lodging. At first barred from selling beer they had ceased to be a distinctive institution by the turn of the 19th Century.

Brewing had been a largely domestic affair but from the 16th Century alehouses, often brewing their own beer, became ubiquitous in response to growths in population, towns and trade. Invariably smaller than inns they served beer, later spirits, and basic food, they might offer sleep on a table or even with the landlord and his wife in their bed! By the 17th Century purpose built public alehouses with rooms completely separate from the landlord's accommodation started to appear. The 'bar' itself made its first appearance as late as the 1820s.

So what was a beerhouse and how did it emerge? The story starts in 1830.

Drunkenness associated with market days and fairs had been an irritant to the "better sort" for centuries and it must have been to their astonishment when in 1830, the Government yielded to the free trade lobby and carried the Beer Act. The beer trade, it was felt, would benefit from the unfettered operation of market forces - if the monopoly of licensed houses could be breached, competition would be increased and demand boosted.

Further, liberal Whigs resentful of unrepresentative bodies like magistrates, who could deprive the worker of his beer and the publican of his livelihood, felt that liberty was to be prized above the problem of drunkenness and social disorder. Beer too, it was argued, had nutritional value and its more ready availability would help to suppress the sale of gin, a drink with none. Even the established church was not wholly condemnatory of the Act since it too feared the power of gin.

The Beer Act, 1830 allowed any person whose name was on the rate book to open his house for the sale of beer provided he obtained a two guinea excise permit. Character no longer came into the equation

and a person legitimately refused a licence by an honest magistrate could set up shop and sell beer; the sale of wine and spirits was not permitted.



This is The Spotted Dog in Coggleshall Road but over thirty such premises came into being in Braintree with yet more in Bocking. In villages, where there had perhaps been just one pub, working men now had to run the gauntlet of numerous beerhouses, each owner trying to separate the worker from his hard-earned wages.

The worst fears of the moralists soon appeared to be fulfilled - drunkenness, late hours, noise, disorder, music, dancing, gambling and petty crime all increased. Whether this was directly attributable to beer consumption or by publicans pushing the sale of gin (forbidden to be sold in beerhouses) is unclear, the real sin of the Beer Act was to place the control of popular leisure in the hands of lowly beerhouse keepers and beyond the jurisdiction of magistrates.

The need for every parish to provide overnight accommodation - a lock-up or cage - for the restraint of the drunk and disorderly soon become law. The Beer Act too must have been one of the key factors in



the establishment of proper police forces. Braintree had a proto-constabulary of part time watchmen in 1833, one of the first in Essex, as a development of the parish constable system ahead of the County Constabulary which was formed in 1840.

Braintree Cage, with two cells, still stands in New Street, it is a listed building maintained by Braintree District Council.

A Second Beer Act of 1834 required beer sellers to produce a certificate of personal character signed by six rated householders and the fee was raised to three guineas. Further control in 1848 saw the introduction of licensing laws that demanded closure between midnight on Saturday until 12.30pm on Sunday. With the country awash with beer the Act was repealed in 1869 after which Beerhouse Licenses were issued by magistrates.

Today Braintree and Bocking has twenty three pubs, excluding a few modern bars (which come and go and so are excluded in this count), nine of these started life as beerhouses.

It would be simplistic to suggest that all beer-related bad behavior emanated from beerhouses. Braintree Cage stands in New Street, a once busy thoroughfare, and the town's main route to Maldon, boasting many small manufacturing enterprises and the gas works until 1873. In the 19th Century it had four public houses, three of them of bad repute.

While the White Horse, demolished around 1896, seems to have had either a well-behaved clientele, or been lucky in escaping the attentions of the constables, the Three Tuns, George (both pictured) and Green Man, became known colloquially as "Little Hell", "Great Hell" and "Damnation"; this gives some indication of their reputations. A favourite game played in all three was one in which the participant spun around on the seat of his trousers on the well sanded floor - a novel form of cocktail shaker - the winner was he who spun furthest!

In August 1859 Braintree Petty Sessions had cause to suspend the Green Man's licence for six weeks; two years later Mrs Snow, landlady at the Three Tuns was "cautioned as to the future". Ten years on Mrs Snow was described as a "perky little woman quite competent to hold her own with boisterous agriculturalists". She may have benefited personally



from legal control but clearly her clientele were still prone to excess - and presumably endured a night in the cage as an occupational hazard!

So, what has changed on the pub scene in Braintree? Sadly, a few town centre establishments attract the kind of person who enjoys making the life of others a misery. Late hours and violence have helped to turn some parts into late-night no-go areas for all but the brave, or foolhardy. Pubs where conversation can be had over a decent pint are on the decline with my favourite soon to be turned into offices.

One wonders if reintroduction of the harsh regime of a night in the cage might be beneficial!

Difficult prisoners were probably handcuffed or chained by the leg to a bolt in the floor. Occasionally the prisoner's clothing was removed leaving him to find comfort in whatever straw or sacking had been provided. A breakfast of bread and cheese would prepare him, or her, for an appearance before a magistrate on the following morning. Punishment would be instant and difficult. If only we had evidence of its effectiveness.

The town of Braintree, like most in the South-East, has increased its size enormously alongside the decline in pub numbers. Today tiny houses and flats are being shoe-horned onto every practicable site, and onto some that are eminently unsuitable. In days of yore the pub provided men with refuge from the cramped and often squalid conditions of tied cottages and tenements, and the pressures of large families. Conditions for which, it must be said, they in no small measure caused.

If the birthrate should ever rise again we may yet see the return of a pub to every street corner!

Track down your favourite brew from our brand spanking new website BishopNick.com

11TH BRAINTREE REAL ALE FESTIVAL

Back in 2004 two members of Braintree Lions Club proposed to their colleagues that the club hold a real ale festival. The festival was to have three simple aims:

1. to introduce real ale to the people of Braintree
2. to raise funds for local charities
3. to promote the availability of Essex-produced real ale

Discussions took place with members of the North West Essex branch of the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) and the decision was made to run the event as a joint venture between Lions and CAMRA. That first Braintree Real Ale Festival took place in 2005 in a marquee in Weavers Park, Braintree. Over the last eleven years we believe the Braintree Real Ale Festival has encouraged more people across the district to try real ale and many pubs around the district now put on real ale events themselves. Others regularly stock a variety of real beers and ciders, often produced by local breweries. To illustrate the growth and popularity of real ale since our first festival, there are now over 30 breweries of varying sizes within Essex alone.

Since that first Festival in 2005, Braintree Lions Club has raised and donated in excess of £150,000 to local, national and international charitable causes with some £40,000 coming directly from our Real Ale Festivals.

Charities which have benefited from the festivals include Essex Air Ambulance, Marie Curie Cancer Care, the Alzheimer's Society, Helen Rollason Cancer Care, Macmillan Cancer Support and many locally-based charities.

The 11th Braintree Real Ale Festival will be held at Bocking Arts Theatre, Braintree, formerly The Institute, from the 11th to 13th June 2015.

This year we will once again have an "Essex Bar" to promote Essex breweries. Our 2nd bar will be an "Award-winning Bar"; this will have as many beers from the 2013 and 2014 CAMRA Great British Beer Festival medal winners as we can source. As always we have a Cider & Perry bar and for the second year we will have Essex wines available.

Once again we welcome Hopleaf back to provide the catering for all three days.

Proceeds from this year's Festival will be donated to Little Havens Children's Hospice and other local charities.

For more information please visit our website: www.braintreebeerfestival.co.uk.



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PUB NEWS

I start with news of two pubs in our area which are on the market.

The **Leather Bottle at Blackmore**, something of a favourite in our branch and many times in the GBG, is up for sale for a fraction under £700,000. The present owners, who have been there for 18 years, are retiring.

Also, the **King's Arms in Broomfield** is advertised for sale, freehold – offers in excess of £335,000.

There are rumours that one of the large supermarket companies is interested in purchasing the recently-closed **Beehive in Chelmsford**. Owners, Greene King, commented: "To enable us to continue to invest in and secure the future of as many pubs in Chelmsford as possible, we occasionally have to make the difficult decision to sell a pub. Following a comprehensive review of the Beehive we concluded that sadly, it no longer fitted with our core estate." The Beehive was formerly owned by Ridleys.

Maybe better news that the building we remember as the **Green Man in Howe Street** is "under offer". No guarantee that it will reopen as a pub of course but fingers crossed.

Meanwhile substantial building work is under way at two of our pubs which are temporarily closed.

At the **St Anne's Castle in Great Leighs** the relatively modern extensions at the back of the listed building have been demolished and work has started on a single storey extension at the rear, a raised seating area at the side and extensions to the car park. A recent planning

application for signage shows that it will be a **Pie & Pint Inn** and, like its sister pub, the **Hare at Roxwell**, will have a name change - to "The Castle".

Bob, the previous landlord at **St Anne's**, has moved half a mile up the road to the **Dog & Partridge**, taking many of his regulars with him.

The **Fitch of Bacon at Little Dunmow** has been sold. Daniel Clifford, chef-proprietor of the two-Michelin-starred Cambridge restaurant **Midsummer House**, has bought the freehold for £300,000, and plans on reopening it in August after an extensive refurbishment, at an estimated cost of £500,000. The pub will have 35 covers, a large beer garden and three letting rooms which will open shortly after the pub itself, which will retain its name.

The pub will be headed up by former **Midsummer House** staff, both in the kitchen and front of house and will serve traditional pub food including "forgotten classics" such as steak and kidney pudding, homemade sausages, and Black Forest gateau. Clifford plans to use at least 90% of the produce supplied by his farm in Ongar which he purchased at the end of last year.

"Everything will be made on site with produce from the farm. We also have no ties to a brewery so I will be sourcing great local ales and a local winery which is 15 miles away and will be using them as well," said Clifford.

News that the **Windmill at East Hanningfield** has been refurbished and renamed the **Folly Bistro**, increasing the emphasis on food, but still selling real ales. Not sure whether you can still call in for a drink – reports please.

PUB NEWS

Another pub which has now reopened after a refurbishment is the **Two Brewers** in Springfield Road, and again any reports will be welcome.

The **Woolpack at Witham** has new licensees. Welcome to Jay Macdonald & Jodie Kingham, who intend to maintain the current beer offering. At the time of writing Witham Brewery's No Name was still on sale although the brewing equipment has been removed from the pub. Disappointingly the regular cider is no longer stocked (especially as the Woolpack is on the recently published Cider Map!) although they may offer an occasional cider during the summer. Bar snacks and live music at weekends are planned. We wish Jay and Jodie well.



The Compasses, Litley Green

Now, some news from the runner-up in the branch competition, the **Compasses, Litley Green**. Landlord Joss was "over the moon" to win the runner up prize for the second year running. It means that they've been either 1st or 2nd for the last 5 years, which is a remarkable achievement. Bishop Nick Ridley's Rite and Skinners Betty Stogs are always available here, plus other beers from all over the country. There is also a range of interesting bottled beers, including the full Bishop Nick bottle-conditioned range as well as European and US offerings.

They continue to support dark ale all year round and have been promoting mild throughout May - they hoped to have sold 25 from all over the country by the end of the month! You can see which beers they have on by liking their Facebook page www.facebook.com/CompassesLitleyGreen



The Orange Tree, Chelmsford

Our branch Pub of the Year, the **Orange Tree**, went forward to the Essex round of voting against the **Carpenters Arms, Maldon**, the **Horse & Groom, Cornish Hall End**, the **Mayflower, Leigh**, the **Victoria Inn, Colchester**, the **White Hart, Grays**, the **White Hart, Weeley Heath** and the **Woodbine, Waltham Abbey**. Against some stiff opposition the **Orange Tree** came second to the **Victoria Inn**, which was also last year's winner. Congratulations to them.

On 20th June the pub hosts the **Ridley Round** pub run/walk/crawl. This was introduced to celebrate 25 years of the **Essex Way** and passes 5 historic Ridley's pubs which are all still thriving and selling real ale - the **Windmill, Chatham Green**, the **Beehive, Great Waltham**, the **Leather Bottle, Pleshey**, the **Butchers Arms, North End** and **The Compasses** itself as well as the old brewery site at **Hartford End**. The route is 13 miles long and all money raised goes to **Essex Air Ambulance**.

PUB NEWS

Looking further ahead **The Hopstock** beer festival will be held on 21st - 23rd August this year - over 50 real ales and ciders, great live music, huffers, village stalls and vintage tractors ploughing in the field behind the pub. It's one of the friendliest and fun festivals in the local area, now in its 6th year. All money raised from glasses sales, games and raffles goes to a local charity and on average has raised over £4,000 per year! They don't yet have a theme for the real ales this year, so if you would like to suggest one, or any beers you'd like to see, tweet @thehopstock. Even better, call in and speak to Joss.



Railway Tavern, Chelmsford Image: Joanna Pearce

Still on the POTY theme, the **Railway Tavern, Chelmsford** was "Highly Commended". The photo shows John, Joy and Jo receiving their certificate from Doug & Claire. (They also win the award for the most alliterative trio running a pub in our area!)

Wednesday 1st July sees the pub hosting their second meet the brewer event with representatives from Woodforde's handing out tasters of their fine cask-conditioned ales, giveaways and nibbles. The time for this event is 6-8pm. They plan on holding a "Meet the Brewer" evening on the first Wednesday of every other month, after the first event, supported by Adnams, was a big success with a great time had by all.

Just down Duke Street is the **Golden Fleece**, from where landlord Brett reports: "First can I thank all (CAMRA) members that came along to our ale/craft/cider festival over the May bank holiday weekend. It was such a success we had sold out by the Sunday night!

"Our next festival will coincide with the 2nd weekend of cask ale week, 1st-4th October, and as usual we will host a CAMRA event which we will confirm nearer the time.

"Our new menu goes live in June and we continue to offer CAMRA members 20% off ale at all times except Monday & Tuesdays from 5 pm when it's £2 a pint. We will also be continuing the free cheese boards on a Tuesday too. As usual over the summer, we will have live acoustic music every Saturday from 2.30pm in the garden plus all our usual bands on Friday & Saturday evenings."

On to the **Woolpack (Chelmsford)** where Will & Donna thank everyone for supporting the Easter beer festival. It was a huge success with over 5,000 pints of ale from 75 different breweries and more than 500 pints of cider being drunk. Planning for the Late Summer Festival (September 3rd - 6th) has begun and they also are welcoming any suggestions,

PUB NEWS

requests or recommendations for Ales that people would like to see. Please email them at thewoolpackchelmsford@outlook.com (or call in, Ed.).

A couple of weeks later Cayley at the **Baker's Arms, Danbury** presents her second beer festival of the year running from Friday 18th - Sunday 20th September. An old favourite this one with a good selection of beers and ciders, and with food, including their speciality fish and chips and home-made chilli and curry, available all day. Live music as well.

Mike and Jacqui at the **Endeavour**, Springfield Road report a great few months with their customers feeling extra generous and energetic. They had an Easter Quiz night which raised £75 for the RNLI and £75 for the Chelmsford Women's refuge, a race night on Saturday 9th May raised £434 for Dreams Come True (fulfilling dreams for children with life-limiting conditions), and the next day a group of regulars did the Walk for Life on Sunday 10th May and raised nearly £500 for Macmillan.

They are still holding their popular pop-up restaurant nights with a different theme each time; Italian, Wine Bar and Indian so far with Spanish, American and Back in Time being planned. Ask at the pub for dates and menus, these all cost £15 per person and that often includes a drink!

They now have two guest ales each week alongside the four regulars - Mighty Oak IPA & Maldon Gold, Doom Bar and Betty Stogs. Their darts and crib teams, and poker club, always welcome new players of any level of expertise.

Continuing the theme of pubs and their, and their customers', contributions to charity, the **Six Bells at Boreham** raised £1,175 for Farleigh Hospice with a barbeque & auction on May Bank Holiday Monday. Stacey thanks all who supported them and hopes you'll go along to a hog roast with a live band and an auction again for Farleigh on Summer Bank Holiday Monday August 31st.

Lynne from the **Rodney, Little Baddow** announces a charity day in aid of Brain Tumour Research on Saturday 13th June. For those of you who are partial to both the grape and the grain there's Wine Tasting on Monday 15th June at £10 per ticket. Later in the summer local Morris side Alive & Kicking bring traditional North -West Clog Dancing to the pub on Wednesday 29th July, and the pub's annual Beer Festival runs from 7pm Friday 14th August, all day Saturday and through to 8pm on Sunday 16th.

Finally, a cheese and real ale festival at the **Horse & Groom, Writtle** sounds interesting. It is running for the whole of June and includes some interesting cheese dishes and real ales from around the country. Don't forget the 10% discount on real ale for CAMRA members on production of your card.

In September they will be having a food festival menu which links in with the 70 years anniversaries of VE & VJ Days. Dishes will reflect the staple foods that people were eating during the war and whilst on ration. Ah yes, I remember it well!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING ON BEER DAY BRITAIN NATIONAL BEER DAY - JUNE 15TH 2015?

Beer Day Britain is coming – so clear your diary on June 15th and join the party to celebrate Britain's national drink.

The reason for June 15th is because Beer Day Britain shares the same date as the 800th anniversary of Magna Carta, sealed in 1215. Ale is mentioned in clause 35 of the great charter:

'Let there be throughout our kingdom a single measure for wine and a single measure for ale and a single measure for corn, namely "the London quarter"

Academics do not know what the measure for ale was – the London quarter refers to the corn – but they do know clause 35 was inserted to appease the City of London merchants who backed the Barons in the civil war against King John. It was also one of few clauses that King John also approved of.



I could have chosen any arbitrary day for Beer Day Britain but I wanted national beer day to have a significant date. By connecting it with one of the most important legal documents in history, it would make the general public realise how important beer is in the national 'story' - both historically and in the modern age too.

A major activity on Beer Day Britain is the National Cheers to Beer starting at 12.15pm and going throughout the day and evening so people can join in at whatever time suits them. If you can't get to the pub, then please participate with a bottle of beer at home. We are aiming to trend on Twitter so please post photos and messages on Twitter with the hashtag #CheersBDB.

As for the Monday factor – I have had some negativity about that day of the week. Thankfully we can go to the pub on any day we want to and our glass will always be half full. St Patrick's Day, now inextricably

linked with drinking Guinness, and St Valentine's Days are moveable feasts that people celebrate in the pub regardless of the day of the week they fall on.

'Britannia's Brew' is a special beer for Beer Day Britain and was brewed at Brewster's Brewery with Sara Barton (brewery owner), Sophie De Ronde, latterly brewer at Brentwood Brewery, now the brewing technologist at Munton's malt; and Sue Fisher of Gadd's Brewery. Britannia's Brew is golden ale (5% ABV) containing Maris Otter malt, English hops (Sovereign and Boadicea) and botanicals to represent England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. It is available as a limited edition of 1,215 bottles (bottle-conditioned) exclusively from Essex's very own Ales by Mail. The cask version will be available from 6pm at the Rake pub, in London's Borough Market on June 15th. Sara, Sophie, Sue and I will be there but don't tarry because we are thirsty!

Beer Day Britain was started by me as a grassroots initiative with the assistance of Sophie de Ronde and Sara Barton. I am very grateful that so many organisations in the beer world including CAMRA and Society of Independent Brewers are now helping to raise awareness and enthuse people about June 15th. Special thanks to Podge for being enthusiastic from the beginning.

You can download a Beer Day Britain logo, beer mat artwork and information pack, and find social media contacts on www.beerdaybritain.co.uk. Please would you follow us on Twitter @BeerDayBritain and help get the word out about our peerless national drink?

Cheers to beer!

Jane Peyton is the instigator of Beer Day Britain; founder of the School of Booze; and author of several books including 'Beer o'Clock'.

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BREWERY NEWS

WIBBLERS BREWERY



Phil and Abby report:

Wibblers are sad that Nigel (Sadler) is leaving to pursue other beer-related projects and would like to thank him for all his hard work over the last 4 years and wish him all the best with his new ventures.

Open days are 4th July and 26th September so come down for a tour, sample some ales & ciders, hopefully with a BBQ too if it isn't raining - £10/p. Beers planned are Galaxy, Summertime, and NEW Blueberry Blonde for June/July plus short run specials of our Be The Brewer Day ales and Phil's Head Brewer's Premium Editions making a welcome return

– short runs of 8 casks of 'something a bit different' brewed on our Pilot Plant. The annual Crafty and Wobbly will be produced in August in time for the Maris Otter 50th Anniversary festival in September. Wibblers have been commissioned for Essex to produce a Maris Otter beer so we know this year's name ahead of time will be Crafty Otter.

We are also hoping to be at Chelmsford Summer Festival again so please come and say hi. Our exclusive Beer and Cider Club membership continues to grow, monthly members-only evenings and events' at the brewery plus discount on any purchases of Wibblers products. See www.wibblersbrewery.org.uk/beer-club for more details.

ROUND TOWER



Simon Tippler reports:

We are looking forward to having a bar at the summer beer festival again this year and have a cracking selection of beers lined up. This includes a specially brewed beer to

celebrate the 40th anniversary of Chelmsford and mid Essex CAMRA which is a 4% pale ale called 'The 40th'.

Another exciting beer to look out for will be our dry-hopped beer. In order to showcase a range of hops, we will be taking one of our beers and dry-

hopping each cask with different hops. The same beer will taste different as the festival progresses depending on the hops in that particular cask. There will also be some very limited edition oak-aged beers as we have been experimenting with old sherry and whisky casks.

In our brewery, we have finally got our larger kit in place, including an oversized mash tun. This has enabled us to brew some stronger beers and play around with some styles that have been difficult for us to brew in the past. Look out for a range of short-run specialist beers over the summer.

CROUCH VALE BREWERY

Mr Colin Bocking says:

Our beer of the moment is El Dorado, which will be reaching the bars of Essex pubs in time for June. It's an aromatic pale 3.9% ABV beer, brewed from Maris Otter malted barley and hopped with the American hops of the same name – how novel!



name. Boadicea is one of the more distinctive new-wave English hops and we rather like it!

Meanwhile, production of Blackwater Mild, Essex Boys Best, Brewers Gold, Yakima Gold and Amarillo continues unabated!

We also have a fresh bottling of Yakima Gold available in bottle-conditioned form to add to the bottle-conditioned Anchor Street Porter, currently available either from our shop here at the brewery or for delivery to pubs and other retail outlets.

Thirsty Times

BREWERY NEWS

BRENTWOOD BREWING COMPANY

What we're up to during June and July:

We have a special Fathers' Day offer throughout June. Buy a four-bottle gift pack for £12 and get a free pint glass, usually £3.

- **10th June:** The Swan, High Street, Brentwood grand re-opening after refurbishment.
- **13th June:** Strawberry Fair, Shenfield Common. We have a beer tent there.
- **15th June:** National Beer Day
- **18th - 21st June:** Sport and Beer Festival, Old Brentwoods RFC in Ashwells Road.
- **26th - 28th June:** Billericay Lions Beer Festival, Billericay FC.
- **26th - 28th June:** Theobald Arms Beer Festival, Grays.
- **4th July:** Brentwood Brewing Company's 9th anniversary and Open Day 10.30am to 3.30pm.
- **4th July:** Ingatestone Jazz Festival, Ingatestone Hall.
- **7th - 11th July:** Chelmsford Beer Festival. We have a beer tent there. (Also we're launching Ethan's Marvellous Medicine our latest creation which is a new concept in beer-drinking.)
- **11th July:** Brentwood Tattoo at Brentwood County High School. We have a beer tent there.
- **17th - 19th July:** Brentwood Festival.
- **18th & 19th July:** Essex Festival of Food and Drink, Cressing Temple Barns, Braintree. We have a stand in the Co-op tent.
- **31st July - 2nd August:** Epping and Ongar Railway Beer Festival.

MOODY GOOSE

We have a new brewery in the branch. Moody Goose, based at the King William IV in Braintree, started brewing in February. At present the beers are only available in the pub, although you might spot one at a local festival. We hope to have more information in the next issue.

WOOLPACK WITHAM

Sad news that the brewing equipment at the back has been removed from the pub, and is now mothballed.

The Sunny Sailor
1 Fullbridge, Maldon, Essex,
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New restaurant opening July
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CHEERS FOR 40 YEARS - UPDATE

.....
At our Summer Beer and Cider Festival we continue our year of celebrating the 40th anniversary of Chelmsford and mid-Essex CAMRA so come and join in the fun at the biggest beer garden in Essex at Admirals Park, Chelmsford 7th - 11th July.
.....

CME40 CIDER: COX-A-RUBY-DO!

Will be said thousands of times at our summer festival as we celebrate our 40th anniversary with our own celebratory cider.



Made in collaboration with Ian Reynolds of Bertie's Cider Company in Braintree our own branch cider is a single variety one made from cox apples and then matured in a red wine barrel to give a rubiness for our ruby anniversary. It will be available at the summer festival cider bar at 7% for the dry and the medium styles. So come and drink some to wish the branch Good Health with Wassail! COX-A-RUBY-DO!

REAL ALE AND CIDER TRAILS

Prizes for completing the various 40 Year Real Ale and Cider Trails are to be collected at the summer festival including bottle openers, Chelmsford CAMRA pens, free entry to the festival, Good Beer Guide 2015, T-Shirts, Beer, Cider and the coveted Trail Shirt. As the Flitch of Bacon in Little Dunmow will reopen after the closing date of Saturday 13th June the trail shirt will be awarded for visiting and drinking in 39 of the 40 pubs for 40 years.

40 YEAR BEER

Come and try celebratory 40 Year Beers made by local brewers and meet them at their brewery bars where they will be showcasing a range of their beers. As well as festival specials from Round Tower, Bishop Nick and Wibblers try the various ruby ales and milds throughout the week. The 40 not Out made by Felstar Brewery using 40 ingredients for the winter festival has become a collector's item with people collecting the label even if they cannot have the beer as it was a limited edition.

ALE AND HEARTY

There will be more material displayed regarding the history of our branch and the exhibition, which was done with Chelmsford Museum in 2013 called Ale & Summer 2015

Hearty--The Pubs and Breweries of Chelmsford. We plan to have photographs of glasses from all of our branch beer festivals from 1977 to the present day so come and see what is missing from your collection. Come and see who you know in the various photos depicting the life and events of Chelmsford and mid-Essex CAMRA. If you still have caps and ties from completing the Riddleys Round please wear them to share your memories at the festival and at our party.

CME40 PARTY

We are looking forward to sharing memories with members of the branch old and new at the CME40 Party, which will be on Saturday 17th October at the Black Bull in Margaretting, 40 Years after the first branch meeting was held there. Landlady Julie Bennett, who was a Ridley's tenant for over 20 years, will have 6 real ales, 2 brewed by Nelion Ridley of Bishop Nick Brewery, and a real cider for the party to accompany the buffet and good company. Come and visit the 40 Year Stand to sign up as we need to know numbers for catering purposes or contact me, Claire, on 01245 290710, 07773 093399 or email publicity@chelmsfordcamra.org.uk.

CIDER SAFARI

On Saturday 3rd October (Cider Month) we shall have an all day cider safari visiting the 12 venues selling real cider in Chelmsford as featured on the Cider Map consisting of 11 pubs and the Essex Cider Shop in Moulsham St. See Social Calendar for details and www.chelmsfordcamra.org.uk to download a map or collect one from the cider bar or the cider pubs in our branch area as there are also 12 more out and about in mid-Essex.

1975 GOOD BEER GUIDE PUB CRAWL

On Tuesday 10th November we shall have a bus trip to various pubs in our area which featured in the 1975 Good Beer Guide plus other good rural pubs so sign up with Martin Joy our social secretary on socialsecretary@chelmsfordcamra.org.uk or 07878 624443.



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SOCIAL CALENDAR

Please be aware that the Social team have decided to use privately-hired self-drive minibuses and the Community Buses, driven by CME Members and volunteers where possible.

With minibus hire we are unfortunately only allowed to take CAMRA members on these trips. Spaces are limited to 16 per minibus.

Non-members who wish to attend members-only trips are encouraged to consider joining CAMRA, especially at this year's summer Beer Festival where there are some special offers.

Community Buses will be used to more local runabouts and events. They are limited to 14 seats only, so if demand is higher we have the option of taking out more than one bus. These trips will be open to members and non-members.

All minibus and Community Bus trips will include the Chelmsford circuit drop off afterwards (see website).

We will continue to use Coach companies for our all-day trips and also runabouts that are a little further afield and where we know demand for places will be high.

Please note that for over-subscribed events we reserve the right to give priority to CME branch members over members of other branches or non-members.

JUNE

Saturday 13th June, 11am
Rural Pubs for 40 year Ale & Cider Trail bus.
Cost £10 members, £12 non-members. Booking required. Departing 11.00am opposite Chelmsford rail station. Pubs to be decided on the day.

Wednesday 17th June, 8.30pm
Branch Meeting at the Cross Keys, White Notley.
Cost £5.00 members, £6.00 non-members. Departing 8.00pm opposite Chelmsford rail station, 8.15pm Witham rail station.

Saturday 20th June, 7pm
Essex Cider POTY Presentation at the Three Elms, Chignal St James.

Community bus from opposite Chelmsford rail station at 6pm.

Sunday 21st June, 12 noon
Revelry Afternoon at Bishop Nick Brewery
Open House at the brewery with their range of cask ales on tap, local English wines from Felsted vineyard and refreshments. More details on the Bishop Nick website. Meet at Chelmsford bus station 12 midday to get bus to Braintree. £2.50 Sunday Super Saver.

JULY

Tuesday 7th to Saturday 11th July
Summer Beer Festival at Admirals Park.

Tuesday 21st July, 8pm (8.30pm start)
Branch Meeting at the Compasses, Littley Green.
Community Bus from opposite Chelmsford station at 7.30pm, bus departs 7.45pm. Cost £5.00 members/OAPS, £6.00 non-members. Drop-off afterwards.

Saturday 25th July, all day
Regional (East Anglia) Pub of the Year tour.
Visiting each county's Pub of the Year, judging and scoring. Full details and transport arrangements to follow. However this trip will be by minibus and is for CAMRA members only. 16 spaces available so book early to avoid disappointment. There is no charge as this is a campaigning activity.

Friday 31st July, 8pm
Visit to Epping and Ongar Beer Festival.
By minibus from opposite Chelmsford station 7.45pm, bus departs 8pm. Cost £5.00, members only.

AUGUST

Tuesday 4th August
Runabout to Gravesend.
Visiting the Compasses micropub, the Rum Puncture, the Three Daws, and the Robert Pocock, all in Gravesend. By minibus from opposite Chelmsford station for 7.30pm departure. Cost £7.50, members only.

Tuesday 11th to Saturday 15th August
Great British Beer Festival – Olympia.
Please make your own arrangements to visit this event. Tickets available from www.gbbf.co.uk.

Tuesday 18th August, 8pm (8.30pm start)
Branch Meeting, Horse & Groom, Braintree.
Community Bus from opposite Chelmsford station at 7.45pm. Cost £5.00 members/OAPS, £6.00 non-members. Drop-off afterwards.

Saturday 22nd August, all day
London Riverbus + Pubs Trip.
By train from Chelmsford to Greenwich + River Hopper ticket. Visiting recommended riverside pubs along the Thames. Meet at Chelmsford rail station at 10am to arrange GroupSave discounts. Further details and costs to follow. Please lodge your interest for this trip as soon as possible so that we can gauge numbers attending. We may have to book River Hopper tickets in advance.

Saturday 29th August, all day
Visit to Peterborough including the Oakham Tap and Beer Festival.
By coach from opposite Chelmsford station at 10am. Provisional costs £25 members/OAPS, £26 non-members.

Monday 31st August
Clacton Beer festival.

Members are encouraged to make their own way there by train.

SEPTEMBER

Tuesday 8th September
Runabout to Chappel Beer Festival.
Coach from Chelmsford station departing 7.30pm, also picking up in Witham and Braintree en route. Cost £9 members/OAPS, £11 non-members.

Tuesday 8th to Saturday 12th September
Chappel Beer Festival.
All members are encouraged to make their own plans by train if not attending the runabout on 8th.

Thursday 17th September, 8pm (8.30pm start)
Branch Meeting at the Cricketers, Chelmsford.
No transport to this event. All members and non-members welcome.

Friday 25th September
Visit to Witham Beer Festival.
Community Bus from Chelmsford station, departing 8pm. Full details to follow. Cost £5.00 members/OAPS, £6.00 non-members.

Wednesday 30th September, 8pm
Beer Cuisine Night at the White Hart, Margaretting Tye.
Taxibus/Community Bus from Chelmsford Station. Full details to follow

Events from October to December are listed on the website. These include a Cider safari, the Branch's 40th anniversary party, trips to Maldon, Oxford, Billericay brewery, Brentwood, Ipswich, Colchester and London, plus a Christmas meal in Chelmsford. Full details in our next issue.

50TH BIRTHDAY PARTY IN HONOUR OF A GRAIN

Maris Otter Sows Seeds of Celebration with Brewers



It may seem strange to note the anniversary of a cereal variety, but there's good reason to celebrate the half century of one particular barley type. Particularly so given the tale of domination, decline, rescue and revival that spans its extraordinary 50 year history.

While Maris Otter might not be a household name, it is legendary among a group of craft brewers and beer-lovers. Once malted, it becomes the ingredient by which loyalist brewers swear.

Although less than 6% of British beer is produced with Maris Otter malt, nine of the most recent fourteen Champion Beers of Britain (64%) are made with Maris Otter. Quite the record for an ingredient.

Most cereal varieties are superseded within five or six years. 50 years' continual production is truly exceptional. It is, as Mark Banham from grain merchants H Banham points out, "well worth commemorating." So he has joined forces with David Holliday from Norfolk Brewhouse to create a commemorative beer festival.

50 new beers are being created especially for the national Maris Otter 50th anniversary festival in Norwich, 17th – 19th September. Brewers from 44 different counties of Britain and 6 countries from across the world are each providing a birthday beer for the event. "This is the first beer festival to have all 50 beers brewed with a single malt variety," says Mark, "As far as we know, it's also the first birthday party ever to be held in honour of a grain!"

To book your tickets, or to see the full list of participating brewers, visit: www.h-banham.co.uk

MARIS OTTER BARLEY FACTS: THE MARKET

Despite reaching 50 and being the best known barley malt, Maris Otter remains a specialist variety. It



Tom Rivett and Tim Walpole of H Banham grain merchants checking the sowing of the 50th anniversary crop of Maris Otter barley, October 2014

makes up less than 6% of the barley used to create brewing malts.

There are now more than 1,400 breweries in Britain, and three new ones are opening each week. With the revival of the craft beer sector, interest in ingredients is extending, and demand for quality malt and hop varieties is growing rapidly.

Bottled ale sales are increasing at around 10% a year and premium cask sales by around 4% - with specialist craft beers even faster. In the 10 years to 2003, an average of 25,000 tonnes a year of Maris Otter barley was bought by maltsters, whereas in the 10 years to 2013 this had grown to 34,500 tonnes a year. That's an increase of nearly 40%.

Maris Otter is now exported to over 20 countries worldwide.

HISTORY

Maris Otter is a low-nitrogen winter barley (sown in the autumn and harvested a few weeks before the spring varieties), cross-bred from Proctor and Pioneer in 1965 by the Plant Breeding Institute in Cambridge.

Thirsty Times

Its popularity grew quickly and it dominated the market throughout the 1970s. However, by the late 80s it had fallen out of favour with many of the larger breweries – and was taken off the NIAB (National Institute of Agricultural Botany) recommended list in 1989.

Despite the snub and the fall in volumes, a number of brewers remained loyal to the breed. They said the malt it produced performed excellently in the mash tun, and the resulting beers had a depth of flavour unmatched by those made with other malts. This commitment from a small group of brewers encouraged grain merchants H Banham and Robin Appel in their quest to save the variety. Between them, in 1992, the merchants bought the rights to it – and they are still the sole owners.

There was a lot of work to do to re-establish the purity of the strain and the process of "re-selection" played a crucial role. It involved manually picking out the purest stock and using it to start a new breeding cycle.

NOW – THE SECRET PLOT

H Banham has continued to follow the practice, using a secret field in the wilds of North Norfolk dedicated to maintaining the integrity of the variety.

"We regularly take a 30m² patch of our special mother field and go through it manually, checking each and every ear of barley," says H Banham director Tom Rivett. "Anything that isn't a perfect specimen of Maris Otter is discarded. The remaining flawless grain from that patch is harvested separately and used to reseed the mother field. Within 7 years the majority of the Maris Otter grown in Britain will have come from our secret plot.

"It's a big responsibility, but as custodians of the variety, we're utterly committed to ensuring its integrity. The cultivation procedures and all the checks we undertake are extremely rigorous. Each year's crops are measured against control samples to see that they remain true-to-type over the generations.

"Of course we're lucky in terms of our location," he adds, "Norfolk's sunny climate, sea breezes and light soils make ideal growing conditions for Maris Otter. Most of the country's supply is produced – and malted – in our region for that very reason."

Summer 2015

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THE GOOD BEER GUIDE

As a relatively new member of the social and planning committee for the local branch of CAMRA, it occurred to me that much of our time is spent discussing the finer points of the Good Beer Guide, how we select pubs to go into it, and also how we can soften the blow for publicans whose pub does not make it, or indeed is removed from it.

For many years the Good Beer Guide (GBG) has been CAMRA'S finest publication and a great source of information for those people wanting to find the best places to drink Real Ale and Cider.

There is no doubt that it is held in much prestige and publicans who promote real ale and appreciate CAMRA's causes, take great delight in being included in it. You only have to see stickers in pub windows and adverts proudly proclaiming their inclusion in the GBG as proof of this.

However there are a few things that must be explained in respect of the GBG and the selection process for it.

The process of formulating each GBG takes as long as 18 months. That is one year surveying the pubs and submitting a shortlist and then a further 6 months for editing and publication. This means that every GBG is in effect 6 months out of date before it's finally published.

So I can hear you saying, "how can this be a true reflection on the status of a pub that is included in the GBG?"

Truth is it probably isn't but it's also true to say that many pubs achieve a reputation for serving good real ales over time and most of these are regular and sometimes permanent fixtures in each edition.

But a lot can happen to a specific pub in a 6 month time frame.

A change of landlord or change of owner can have positive or a negative effect on a pub and, it must be said that, with the attitude of a lot of the larger pub chain owners, even closure for redevelopment, (even though it's highly unlikely that a pub owner

will close a pub that's in the GBG or serves good ale).

Plus with the revival of Ale Houses and the sudden emergence of Micropubs more and more establishments serving great Real Ale are opening all the time and would surely deserve to be included in a GBG.

That's why CAMRA adopted the WHATPUB website and app, and the National Beer Scoring System (NBSS) to help provide a more accurate picture and a chance for members to judge and provide information on pubs and the quality of beers they serve.

CAMRA HQ recommend that the NBSS system is referenced when each branch decides on their shortlist for each year's GBG.

A couple of problems with this process are:

1. Many of the beer scores submitted may be down to personal taste and opinion from the person making the declaration. Even though many members do know their beer, have great experience and will use common sense when making their score, there are only a few that are actually qualified to do so. Not many are Beer Sommeliers.

2. Pubs which attract larger numbers of people will receive more scores. This is fine for pubs in towns but unfair to our more remote and rural pubs.

This is why local branches have to make their own decisions and rules relating to the scores that are received.

Common sense, word of mouth recommendations, setting a standard of score to be achieved and calculating an average of beer score from a number of different beer scorers, are all taken into consideration when formulating the final list of pubs with the best beer scores to go forward for inclusion in the GBG.

But unfortunately this creates another problem.

Thirsty Times

Branches will end up with a list of perhaps 30 to 50 pubs which all have a good beer score and should really be included in the Good Beer Guide. You will find that most of these pubs are included in local guides and many people will use these local guides when trying to find the best places to get a decent pint of Real Ale in that specific region instead of looking at the GBG.

Including all these Pubs would not be a problem if the GBG was larger and included more pubs. But we would end up with telephone directories with thousands of pages, which is not an ideal scenario. So CAMRA have to limit the number of pubs that each branch can put forward for inclusion in the guide.

For example, our branch has around 160 pubs serving Real Ale, but we are only allowed to put forward 17 pubs for the GBG. This means an awful lot of establishments cannot be included in the GBG just in our region alone.

This goes for most CAMRA branches in the UK and each will argue that they deserve to have larger allowances to enter more pubs in the GBG. Especially in such places where there are great abundances of really good real ale establishments; York, Norwich, London, Sussex the Lake District and even Colchester and Chelmsford all spring to mind.

So where does this leave the GBG?

Well there's still a place for it, as it is such a great source of information on pubs and also breweries

Summer 2015

and the beers they brew. Tourists just love it!

But I would suggest that if you are looking for a more accurate and up to date idea of which pubs are best to visit in a specific area, check out the local guides and magazines issued by each CAMRA branch, and their websites will often also have a listing.

Then there is always "Whatpub". This lists information on the internet and as a mobile phone app for virtually all real ale pubs in the country; again it's a fantastic source of information.

But lastly, and I would probably say, the most creditable source of information is from other CAMRA members.

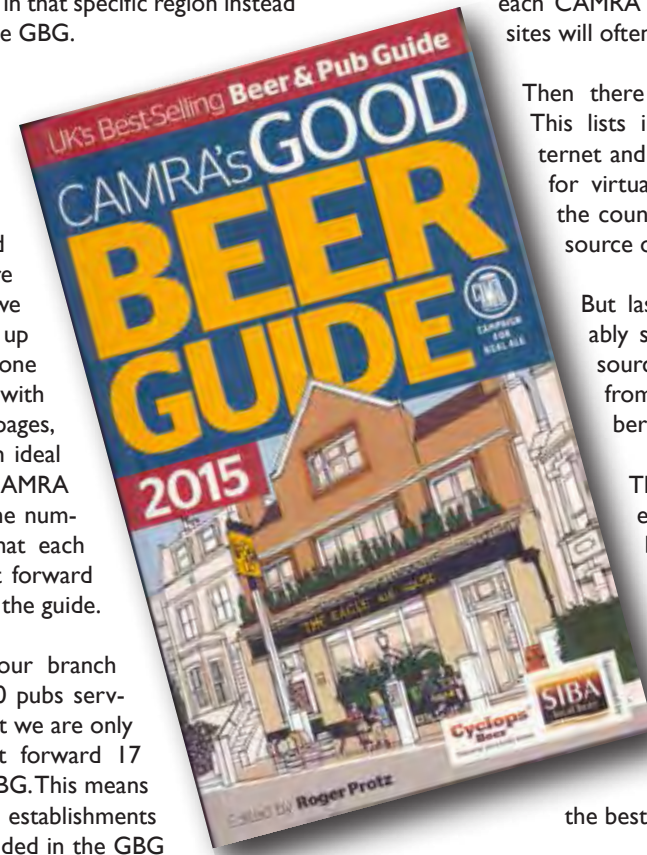
They usually give an honest opinion about the best places to go; they will also tell you about the latest place that may have opened or changes to a place that may now have a landlord who is pro-real ale, and of course where to get

the best pint.

So next time you get a disgruntled publican or member of the public asking you why their own or a specific pub has not been included in the GBG, point them to this article.

You might not get any sympathy but at least it will go some way to explaining how difficult and complex the whole process is.

*Martin Joy
CAMRA member since 1987
Social planning Secretary for Chelmsford
and mid Essex CAMRA*



CHELMSFORD SUMMER BEER & CIDER FESTIVAL 2015

From Tuesday 7th - Saturday 11th July, Admirals Park on Rainsford Road in Chelmsford will be transformed into a beverage village with its own village green as the Chelmsford Summer Beer & Cider Festival opens its doors for the 37th year. Serving noon until 11:00pm daily, you will have the chance to choose from 300 real ales, 100 ciders and perries, and a fantastic selection of foreign beers. There's something to suit everyone, with all styles of beer available - as well as the golden ales which are so popular at this time of year we'll also be offering plenty of bitters, milds, stouts and porters, fruit beers, IPAs and real cask lagers. There will also be some special festival exclusive brews to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the branch. Behind the cider bar the focus will be turned to lower ABV ciders than the normal 6%. Ciders sourced from the Midlands and produced from organic ingredients will also be available. Don't forget to try the special 40th anniversary cider produced by Berties Cider Co from Braintree! Free soft drinks will also be available for designated drivers, those under 18, or anyone just wanting a break from the alcohol.



through the wonders of real ale with tutored tasting sessions. Our tutors include writers Roger Protz, Des de Moor and Melissa Cole, and historian and author Siobhan McGinn.

Live music every evening in the stage tent. An eclectic mix of music all week from Barber shop to Rock and Blues to suit all tastes.

Treat your taste buds with a multitude of different foods to complement the beverages on offer. Choose from Indian or Thai curries, Chinese noodles, South American Chilli, German Bratwurst, Pizza, or hamburgers and hotdogs from the BBQ. Closer to home, there will be British fish 'n' chips, Cornish pasties and handmade pies. There will also be cheese, luxury crisps and artisan sandwiches and pastries available, along with chocolates for those of you with a sweet tooth.

Admission is free if you visit before 17:30 Tuesday to Friday. After 17:30 Tuesday to Thursday entrance is £4:00, and on Friday £5:00. All day entry on Saturday costs just £1. Admission is free all week to valid card-presenting CAMRA members. Under 18s can also enter free of charge, but must be accompanied by a responsible adult. If you would like free admission all week (as well as free admission to many other beer festivals) then sign up at the festival to be a member of CAMRA. Membership costs from as little as £16:50, and you will enjoy a host of member benefits along with a free pint.

Don't forget to check if you are one of our 12 lucky people whose face features on our large posters.



If you spot yourself or a friend, get in touch via Facebook and tag the advertising - you will get free entry for the evening of your choice for yourself and a friend. T&Cs apply.

If you'd like to get more involved with the festival, remember that volunteering at the festival is not just for CAMRA members. We welcome anyone over 18, and there is no need to have any prior bar experience. There are lots of roles beyond pouring the pints - amongst other things we need people in media, marketing and operations. See www.staff.cbcf.info for more information.

As well as having a good time and enjoying some excellent beer and cider, you will be able to support charity at the same time. Chelmsford Summer Beer and Cider Festival's chosen charities this year are Peaceful Place and CHES. Peaceful Place is a local support organisation for those with young onset dementia. CHES is Chelmsford's homeless persons support organisation. Both charities will be raising their profile and fundraising throughout the week. We are proud to support their work, and all donations will be shared equally between them.



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THE ESSEX BREWERY COMPANY:

“I want this to be a Beer Destination”

Within half an hour of me arriving at Norton Field Farm, Ian Chisholm, the straight-talking owner and brewer of the Essex Brewery Company, was outlining the plans he has for the site, and he certainly believes in thinking big. Although these are still very much in their embryonic form, when this fifty-five year old ex-market trader and duck egg farmer talks about what he sees as the future for his brewery and the outlying land it suddenly starts to become clear that not only does he have the tools at his disposal, he also has the drive and ability to actually pull it off.

If you should search for the Essex Brewery Company on the internet, which is exactly what I did when Ian contacted me with an invitation to spend the day there, then you won't find a lot of information available - well not at the moment at least. "This is deliberate," Ian tells me when I raise this with him, "I want to launch with a bang, to hit the ground running, to come out of nowhere and take people by surprise". We are standing in what will be the brewery shop, surrounded by bottles, crates, hops (from Charles Faram), sacks of malt, steel and wood, a lot of wood. Ian's son is welding in the corner of this two-storey building, and the upper floor will eventually become his on-site apartment so he can be on hand at all times just to keep an eye on things. When you're planning to have more than three thousand bottles of real ale from breweries the length and breadth of Britain then having your security literally living with the stock seems a very sensible option.



Ian had picked me up in his car from outside the Leather Bottle in Blackmore, six and a half miles north of my home town of Brentwood, and a ten minute drive had taken us to the Norton Field Farm site, and whereas you won't find a lot about the brewery using your browser, searching for the farm itself throws up a whole set of results concerning the giving away of their stock of ducks after a legal dispute with the supplier. I ask him if this was the reason he decided to switch to brewing but he tells me that this was always part of the plan but that this legal altercation, which is still going through the courts, made it happen a little sooner.

The brewery itself is exclusively a bottle-only affair, and even though Ian has no immediate plans to put his beer into casks and see his pump clips on bar tops Ian concedes that this may have to happen some day in order to promote the brand,

When it comes to the beer itself he's certainly not afraid to experiment. The first bottle he opened for me had yet to be named (although it has now been labelled as Chocolate Orange), but the aim was to get as close to a chocolate orange as they could. It's brewed with cocoa powder and marmalade, and whilst the initial impression is solely of chocolate, within a few minutes of drinking it the orange flavour suddenly emerges and carries it to a very pleasing citrus finish. We follow this with a lychee wheat beer



that has the classic lemon-edged flavour you might associate with this style cut through with the sweet grape-like flavour of lychee. It's really rather good. They have brewed a whole host of wheat beers in addition to the lychee, with mango, Morello cherry, lemon, lime, strawberry, white peach, a plain wheat, and a mixed berry version also available to buy.

As we drink we talk about how he started out on this brewing adventure, and how he initially employed Brendan Moore of Norfolk's Icen brewery on a consultancy basis before deciding to forge his own path. Changing tack suddenly, Ian takes me outside and points to the land stretching down to the field boundary around four hundred metres away. "This" he tells me, "is where I'm going to build my beer destination."

The plans are certainly ambitious. Not content with having an indoor brewery he wants to have an outdoor brewery too, with demonstrations of "hot rock" brewing in a semi-covered area that is also able to stage barbecues and beer festivals. Indoor beer festivals are also a possibility with plenty of room in one of the outbuildings to host one in the colder months or to guard against the vagaries of the English weather. If that wasn't enough we discuss plans for camping facilities, an accommodation block and even a children's playground. A local connection to fairground ride owners opens up other potential avenues of entertainment for young and old alike.

We move back inside and open another bottle of beer, this time it's an APA brewed with US hops. It's smooth and moderately bitter with those tropical flavours for which this style is known all present Summer 2015

but disappointingly muted. Wild & Green is the next beer we open, and the first beer brewed under the Essex Brewery Company name. Despite being close to eight months old it's clean and fresh tasting with loads of grassy hop character, a real winner.

Glancing at my watch I realise that I've been there for well over three hours and that I have another beer-related appointment to keep. However before I leave Ian wants to show me one thing more. Taking me to an adjacent building he unscrews the lid of a fermenter, dips in a measuring jug and pours a golden liquid into the tea mugs that we have been drinking from. This is lager, and although it's still a touch raw and not yet primed for carbonation in the bottle the flavours are all there, slightly spicy and fruity with a clean dry finish, and promises to be something rather special.

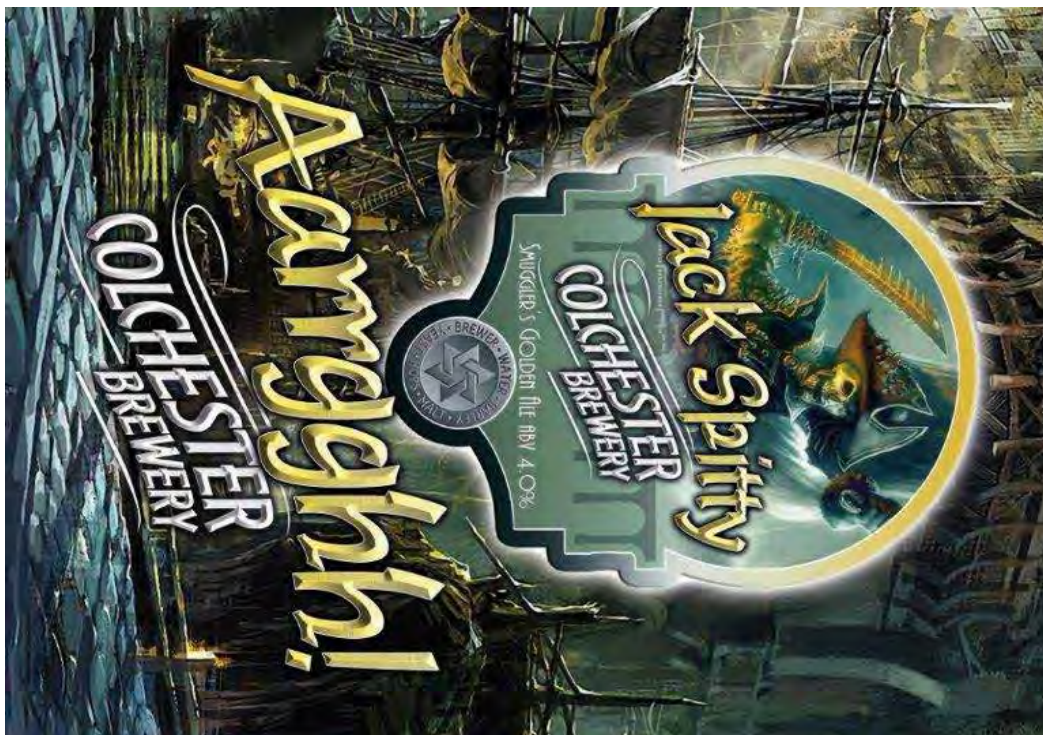
On the bus back to Brentwood I reflect on what Ian has told me, and although he is under no illusions that there may be a few hiccups along the way he is determined to make his vision a reality. The first phase, the beer shop, is having its grand opening weekend on the 27th and 28th of June, and I'll be going back soon to see how things have progressed. Time will of course tell, but we could well have a purpose-built beer destination in the heart of the Essex countryside in the very near future. Go along and see it for yourself.

Justin Mason





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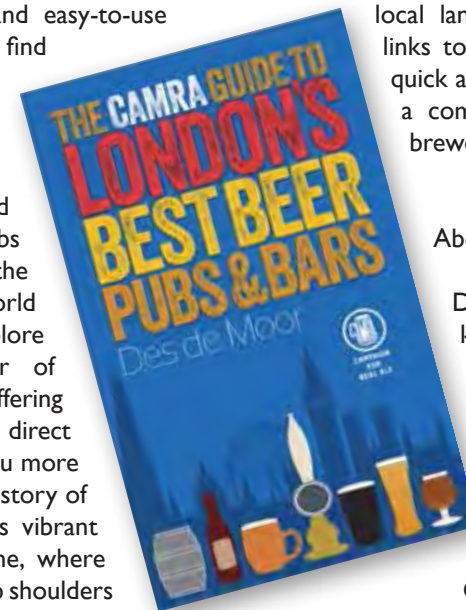


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(2nd Edition) by Des de Moor

CAMRA presents the essential guide to beer drinking in London, completely revised for 2015. *London's Best Beer, Pubs and Bars* is packed with detailed maps and easy-to-use listings to help you find the best places to enjoy perfect pints in the capital. Laid out by area, the book will make it simple to find the best London pubs and bars - serving the best British and world beers - and to explore the growing number of London breweries offering tours, taprooms and direct sales. Features tell you more about London's rich history of brewing and the city's vibrant modern brewing scene, where well-known brands rub shoulders with tiny micro-breweries and brewery numbers have quintupled in the last four years.

a variety of real ale pubs, specialist beer bars, brewery taprooms and other outlets, with detailed information on opening hours, local landmarks, and public transport links to make planning any excursion quick and easy. The book also includes a comprehensive listing of London breweries,



About the Author:

Des de Moor is a well-known beer writer and long-standing Londoner. He was a contributor to *1001 Beers You Must Try Before You Die* and also compiles the UK listings for the *Pocket Beer Book*. Des has been writing regular bottled beer reviews for CAMRA'S *BEER* since 2002, has judged beer all over the world and is also a regular contributor to *Craft Beer Rising* magazine and numerous other publications.

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CIDER PRESS by Claire Irons

CIDER CAMPAIGNING AWARD



Chelmsford and mid-Essex CAMRA has won the **Branch Cider Campaigning Award 2015**, which was awarded at the National CAMRA AGM and members' weekend in mid-April. This is in recognition of excellent campaigning for real cider in various ways:

- Implementation of **cider cooling** which has now been made to use at festivals nationwide increasing customer enjoyment and sales.
- **Promotion** of real cider and perry cider in pubs as well as at festivals.
- Creating the **largest cider bar in East Anglia** with a fantastic range, (The Summer 2014 festival had a choice of 160 including 31 perries and 10 pyders and many Essex ciders).
- **40 Year Real Ale and Cider Trail** encouraging people to try a range of real cider and perry in pubs.
- **Making our own cider** as part of the celebration of 40 years of the branch.
- **Visits to producers, suppliers and pubs selling real cider.**
- **Cider Safari** pub crawls.
- **Cider Map** of pubs in Chelmsford and mid-Essex.

CIDER SAFARI MAP

I shall be distributing the cider maps to the 12 pubs in Chelmsford and the 12 pubs in our branch area as featured on the Chelmsford and mid-Essex Cider Map so people can pick them up to go on their own cider safari.

The maps will also be available at Essex beer festivals including Chelmsford Summer Beer and Cider Festival 7th-11th July in Admirals Park. For more details and to download a copy of the map, see www.chelmsfordcamra.org.uk

NEW PUB SELLING REAL CIDER

Because of repeated requests for real cider at The Original Plough in Chelmsford as part of the 40 Year Real Ale and Cider Trail, it is now stocking Weston's Old Rosie, which is cloudy scrumpy of 7.3%.

CIDER PUB OF THE YEAR (POTY)



I am proud to announce that not only do we have the **Three Elms at Chignal St James** as our branch Cider POTY but it has also been judged as the **Essex Cider Pub of the Year** and **runner-up in the East Anglia** competition. With an outstanding range of ciders from the West Country, Eastern Counties and places in between, at least 2 perries, 3 Essex ciders and now a perry made by Bertie's Cider Company in Braintree it certainly deserves this accolade.

CIDER PRESS by Claire Irons

Hence there is a presentation to Pete and Gill on 20th June to celebrate their amazing achievement of being judged the best cider pub in Essex. See our Social and Campaigning Calendar in this magazine to book your place on the bus.

SUMMER BEER AND CIDER FESTIVAL

As usual I plan to order all the winners of the CAMRA National Cider and Perry Championships for our summer festival. So come and try some!

CIDER

Joint GOLD White Jersey, Orgasmic Cider Company, Herefordshire
Janet's Jungle Juice, Westcroft, Somerset

BRONZE Medium Cider, Three Cats, Derbyshire

PERRY

GOLD Gwynt Y Ddraig Two Trees, Glamorgan

SILVER Raglan Mill, Snowy Owl, Monmouthshire

BRONZE Snailsbank Perry, Herefordshire

This year there will be a Midlands focus but also all the best of the rest!

PROTECT REAL CIDER PRODUCERS TODAY!

The European Union is demanding that very small cider producers making less than 70 hectolitres (12,319 imperial pints) per year start paying a disproportionate tax of £2,700 each year. This would make small cider production uneconomic and cause irreparable damage to a vibrant, but still small cider market.

Consequently there could be widespread closures, job losses, less consumer choice and harm to the countryside with orchards being unattended.

CAMRA's APPLE chair Andrea Briers said, "The European Union is proposing to ban the UK's small cider producer duty exemption. This exemption supports very small cider makers, such as hobbyists or farm gate producers, for such a small scale production is an integral part of rural culture. The EU's proposal is wholly disproportionate given that a small cider producer selling up to 33 pints a day has no capacity to affect trade in Europe to any meaningful degree."

Please sign our petition for exemption from this duty on www.camra.org.uk/cider-duty or [facebook.com/campaignforrealale](https://www.facebook.com/campaignforrealale) or on [Twitter@CAMRA_Official](https://twitter.com/CAMRA_Official) or tinyurl.com/ciderpetition.

CAMRA plans to present the petition to the new government in the near future.

COX-A-RUBY-DO!

The CME40 cider produced as part of the celebration of 40 years of Chelmsford and mid-Essex CAMRA will be on sale at our summer festival 7th -11th July in Admirals Park. Available as Dry and Medium, both are 7%, made from cox apples as a single variety cider and matured in a red wine barrel hence the name **Cox-A-Ruby -Do**. Come and join us by drinking our special cider for Good Health or, as cider people say, WASSAIL!!

N.B. The award picture shows Andrea Briers, Chair of the APPLE Committee presenting me with the award as branch cider rep, Malcolm Graham, cider bar manager and Chris Rouse, East Anglia Regional Cider Coordinator.

SIX OF THE BEST!

London's beer scene continues to expand, improve and evolve at a frenetic pace. Nearly every week there comes news of yet another new brewery. As for new pubs and bars, my 'to do' list is never ending; no matter how many 'research' visits I undertake, there are always new places being added to the list.

Looking back on recent openings, some common themes emerge: new places now regularly start with excellent, exciting beer lists right from the off. Quality is high and beer choice is wide. Many offer cask, keg and bottled beers as a matter of course, understanding the preferences of today's London drinker. It seems that when new places open they do well, and demand for good beer remains high.

This article features six of the best new openings in the last six months; six great new places all of which deserve a visit, and all of which showcase the very best of the beer scene in London today.

FOURTEENTH COLONIE

www.beerguideldn.com/pubs.201

Based in Clerkenwell near the Jerusalem Tavern, this is the London branch of a bar in Brooklyn, New York. If you're not keen on the sound of an American bar, don't be put off; a closer inspection reveals an excellent list of over 50 beers - many from top quality American breweries (Brooklyn, Pizza Port, Victory, Oskar Blues and more) alongside some of the UK's finest (Buxton, Wild, Moor, Weird Beard, Brew by Numbers, etc.). Food looks good too and while smart and modern, the bar is relaxed and comfortable, with very friendly and welcoming staff.

THE ARBITRAGER

www.beerguideldn.com/pubs.197

This new bar in the heart of the City offers a range of eight beers from top London breweries

like Beavertown, Fourpure and Rocky Head. There's just one compact room - with mirrors, comfy seating along one wall and classy lighting - and the bar's along the back wall. As with most bars in the area don't expect to find this one open at weekends, but check it out during the week and enjoy a fine selection of beers.



The Arbitrager

THE HOP LOCKER

www.beerguideldn.com/pubs.192

And now for something completely different. Based in the South Bank Centre Market, directly behind the Royal Festival Hall on the South Bank, this market stall is a bottle shop/bar offering an incredibly well-chosen range of beer to drink on site or take away. Owner Joel is highly knowledgeable and it shows in his choice of beers from breweries like Magic Rock, Runaway (from his home city of Manchester), Weird Beard and Burning Sky. Buy a beer, grab some food from one of the many other excellent stalls and you're all set.



The Hop Locker

HOP BURNS AND BLACK

www.beerguideldn.com/pubs.186

New Zealanders Jen and Glenn opened this smart beer shop/tasting room on the Peckham Rye/East Dulwich borders just before Christmas, and it's immediately become one of the best places for good beer in London. It offers a staggering range of over 250 bottled beers from around the world. How times have changed; one entire section is devoted not only to London beers, but South East London beers! The selection is wall to wall quality, and includes beers from countries as far flung as New Zealand (of course!), Denmark, Belgium and the US as well as a great selection of local favourites. Four draught lines offer flagon/growler fills to take home, and hot sauce and vinyl complete the mix. Choose any bottle and drink it on site, hence the listing in our Guide. The space is small but a recent addition is more outside seating, perfect on a good day.



Hop Burns and Black

DRAFT HOUSE BIRDCAGE

www.beerguideldn.com/pubs.203

The Draft House chain of pubs has been slowly expanding over the last few years and now numbers seven, with new openings this year in Hammersmith and now this 'Birdcage' branch on Columbia Road in Hoxton. In my view the more recent openings have been getting better and better - for example the impressive Seething Lane branch near the Tower of London - but this new one is my favourite of the lot. It's a proper, comfy, atmospheric pub which

just happens to serve great beer - in this case 3 cask ales alongside 15 or so high quality keg offerings, and a really well chosen bottled list of around 85. The food is good too, with pies being prominent - and again very good quality.



Draft House Birdcage

THE ITALIAN JOB

www.beerguideldn.com/pubs.190

The first Italian bar in the UK, this small one roomed bar in Chiswick opened in February. Brought to us by leading Italian brewery Birrificio del Ducato, it offers an outstanding selection of Italian beers - normally 2 on hand pull and 10 very high quality keg beers. With friendly staff, efficient service and a very warm and cosy atmosphere this bar comes highly recommended and you'll almost certainly find something new.

These are exciting, heady times for the London beer scene and the pace of change shows no sign of letting up. Check out these new places and enjoy!

Written by Jezza, SW London. Jezza's guide to pubs and breweries in London can be found online at: www.beerguideldn.com

The site contains full details of all the bars featured in this article - including opening times, which you should check carefully while planning any visits. You can also follow Jezza on Twitter @beerguidelondon or @bonsvoeux1 for frequent updates.

THE SX BOTTLE SHARE

"Ideas are like stars, they fall from the sky, they run round your head" – Mary Chapin Carpenter, Ideas Are Like Stars

Often, when you have an idea it remains just that. Nothing more, just an idea. However when this idea is shared among like-minded individuals it can develop into something that gains momentum until it becomes reality.

Far be it from me to suggest that a bottle share is an original idea, they have been going on for decades, indeed I have been to and organised several on a local level, however if you're going to call it the Essex Bottle Share (which we have shortened to the SX Bottle Share by common assent) then it has to be something a bit special.

Thankfully we had two people ready to take up the challenge and a venue who were prepared to take us on, so when Steve Bentall (of the Beer O'Clock Show podcast) and Clayton Chisholm approached Alex Maclean at the Ale House in Chelmsford he was more than happy to oblige.

We set the ground rules early on, taking our lead from the Norwich bottle share organised by Nate Southwood, a mutual friend of ours. A bottle is needed of course if you wish to take part, one 500ml (or larger) bottle or two, or three smaller ones, or even cans to ensure that everybody gets a taste. It doesn't have to be an ultra-rare limited edition craft beer aged in artisanal whisky barrels either, but neither should it be a supermarket staple or one that we've all had many times before, but if you are a home brewer then we'd be more than happy to welcome you. We wanted the beer to provoke discussion and be the binding force of our group. We keep a list updated on our website



(sxbottleshare.wordpress.com) in order to avoid duplication.

The first event, held in February this year was a big success. Clayton had designed a logo for us and produced a tasting notes sheet for us to write our thoughts on each one. Alex provided us with a reserved table, glasses and water, necessary to rinse after each beer and refresh our palates, and the eight of us who had ventured out on that chilly winter evening had a fantastic time.

Taking place on the first Tuesday of every month, by April our number had increased to thirteen and we have drunk thirty different beers from ten different countries. As I write this our May meeting is just over a week away and we will be welcoming Trevor Jeffrey from the Billericay Brewery to share some of his beer with us, talk a little about it and most importantly join in, and hope to have other Essex brewers with us in the near future.

If you are reading this and think it is something that you would like to be a part of then we'd love to have you along. Should you have any questions you can contact me on twitter at @1970sBoy or the SX Bottle Share directly at @SXBottleshare and I'm sure that the good folk at the Ale House will also be happy to help. As I mentioned we meet on the first Tuesday of every month around 6.30pm for a 7.00pm start, and welcome any from Essex and occasionally beyond whether you're a self-confessed beer geek or just beer-curious. There is no fee but you must bring enough for everyone to have a drink and be prepared for a great evening. We hope to see you soon.

Justin Mason

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Publication date for the Autumn 2015 issue (15) is 16th September. If you run out of stock or have not received the next issue by 25th September please contact:

Derek Beaumont, 01245 264128,
 beaut62@tesco.net.
 Summer 2015

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