



**CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE**

Thirsty Times



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

**Issue 003
Autumn 2012**



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

Pub News

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

As our last issue went to print the mild month of May was just finishing. The **Compasses at Littley Green** might just have set a branch record for 15 different milds available during the month. Can anyone beat this impressive total? If not, there's always next year.

The pub's Hopstock beer festival in August was a great success. 75 firkins of beer were drunk and 1,500 burgers eaten. Even more impressive - £4,000 was raised for Farleigh Hospice.

During the festival, landlord Joss Ridley was presented with the Jack Hillier award by Mike Woods of CAMRA as Essex Pub of the Year. The Compasses now awaits the outcome of the vote for East Anglian POTY which should be announced in early September.

The **Cricketers in Moulsham Street**,



resplendent in bright yellow paint, has a new landlord, Colin Stroud who previously managed the Woolpack, having taken over from Kevin & Christine who retired in July. Colin tells us that the pub is having a makeover scheduled to finish in time for "a bit of a do" on 8th September. There will be 5 cask ales with Abbot served on gravity, live music and a few nibbles. Sounds like a good evening. Do try to get along and support Colin. After that expect 4 beers on handpump – a session bitter, best bitter, golden ale & a mild/stout/porter plus Abbot, with food

also available. 01245 261157

By the time you read this Dan Curtis will have moved from the Ale House to be the new manager at the **Woolpack in Chelmsford**. Dan is already well-known to the Woolie's regulars. Due to public demand food will now be available on Saturdays from 12-4 and will include a full English breakfast (Saturdays only). Alongside the regular beers Everards Equinox, Coach House Farriers, Vale Gravitas & Wadworth Boundary will be available over the next two months. Good luck Dan.

So that move left a gap at Dave & Maggie's other place – the **Ale House**. Step up John Green, ex manager at the Plough who has moved across Duke Street to be the new manager here. Presumably he didn't claim relocation expenses! John is a good friend and supporter of CAMRA and we wish him well. Dave tells us that he is applying for planning permission for the micro-brewery at the Ale House but is having difficulty sourcing some reasonably-priced brewing equipment. If you hear of any kit for sale, around 2.5-3 barrel size, please let Dave know. He might buy you a pint. 01245 260535.

Our good friend Dave at the **St Anne's Castle, Great Leighs** reminds us of his regular music happenings, details on [facebook.com/dave.stannescastle](https://www.facebook.com/dave.stannescastle). But here's a big one – 11th September sees the Castle host D'UKES,



the largest ukulele orchestra around playing all genres of music and well worth seeing. The

4 ales change regularly here, current favourites being Ghost Ship, Landlord,

Pub News

Doom Bar & Hobgoblin.

Victor & Sue at the **Square & Compasses** are hosting a beer cuisine evening on 9th October. Details of how to book, and the menu, which includes mussels, steak & venison plus vegetarian dishes, will be on our website, www.chelmsfordcamra.org.uk. Before that they are holding an Offal week from 10th – 16th September. On the local seasonal specials boards will be sautéed lambs kidneys, pan-fried ox liver & braised lambs hearts. Some real old favourites there. www.thesquareandcompasses.co.uk.

If you haven't been to **Galleywood** lately you might be surprised to learn that the **Eagle** has been completely transformed into a gastropub by proprietor and chef Philip Jensen. Read all about it at www.eaglepub.co.uk. Philip adds that GK IPA and a changing guest ale are also available.

Saturday 15th September is Battle of Britain day and down at the **Windmill, Chatham Green** they're celebrating it in style with music, food and costumes from the



1940's. A great fun day, with themed entertainment from 7.30. Proceeds will go to the Chelms-

ford RAFA Wings appeal. So get your bowler hat, a cigar and signal "Two more pints please"!

www.windmillmotorinn.co.uk.

The **Ivory Peg in Chelmsford** held a "Carnival Day" in August, which attracted over 300 people and raised £686 for J's Hospice and CLIC Sargent. Well done to everyone involved.

A NEW pub on the way. Greene King has

applied for planning permission and a premises license for a new-build, food-led pub at Great Notley where the road to the Skyline Industrial Estate (Avenue West) leaves the A131. A Hungry Horse we believe.

Pub Festivals coming up.

Barista has its 2nd OktoberFest and just like its illustrious namesake it's actually in September – 27th – 29th. Joining the regular steins of Bitburger will be Kos-tritzer Schwarzbier, a dark lager, König pils, Benediktiner wheat beer & Wernes-gruner. There will be German food and a Live Band. If you want the German atmosphere but British beer the normal 3 ales will be available.

www.baristachelmsford.com or [facebook.com/baristachelmsford](https://www.facebook.com/baristachelmsford).

The **Orange Tree, Chelmsford** will have its first beer festival from Thursday 27th – Sunday 30th September, with a marquee, loads of beers & ciders, a hog-roast & other food, and live music. Watch for details on www.the-ot.com.

Don't forget that the **Ivory Peg** (Chelmsford), the **Picture Palace** (Braintree) & the **Battesford Court** (Witham) – now what links those 3 pubs? - will be hosting the "World's Largest Real Ale and Cider Festival" which runs from 24th October to 11th November. Details on www.jdwetherspoon.co.uk. Use those tokens!

Finally, two planning applications relating to pubs in our area.

One is for change of use to a residential dwelling for the **White Horse, Pleshey**.

The other, for refurbishment and the addition of 14 letting rooms at the **White Hart, Little Waltham**.

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

REGIONAL PUBS OF THE YEAR

These are the finalists for each county in our region as judged by CAMRA members. Details of the next round of Good Beer Guide Surveys are on the branch social calendar with a free bus for CAMRA members: www.chelmsfordcamra.org.uk



**The Rumburgh Buck,
Rumburgh, Suffolk**



**The Letter B, Whittlesey,
Cambridgeshire**



The Fat Cat, Norwich, Norfolk



The Compasses, Little Green, Essex



The Albion, Ampthill, Bedfordshire



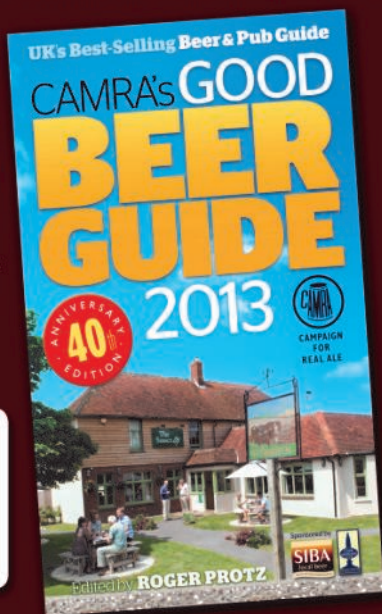
**The Land of Liberty, Peace and Plenty,
Heronsgate, Hertfordshire**

GOOD BEER GUIDE 2013... COMING SOON!

The *Good Beer Guide 2013* is the 40th edition of CAMRA's best-selling beer and pub guide. Fully updated with the input of over 140,000 members of the Campaign for Real Ale, the Guide is indispensable for beer lovers young and old. This edition includes:

- Details of 4,500 real ale pubs around the UK
- Easy-to-use listings that make it simple to find a great pub and a good pint nationwide
- The only complete listing of all the UK's real ale breweries available in print in the special 'Breweries Section'
- A 'Beer Index' that helps you find your very own perfect pint wherever it is available

Buying the book direct from CAMRA helps us campaign to support and protect real ale, cider & perry and pubs and pub-goers. The *Good Beer Guide 2013* will be published in September and you can place your order now (details below).



NEW!

Take the *Good Beer Guide* with you wherever you go!

The *Good Beer Guide* mobile app is available from the iPhone AppStore and the Android Play Store and is the perfect way to find great pubs serving the best beer while on the move.

The new *Good Beer Guide* e-Book will be out in September for all ePUB compatible devices with full-colour imagery and direct web and email links (where supported). You can find out more at www.camra.org.uk/gbg

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Brewery News

Brentwood Brewery

The guys at Brentwood Brewery have just announced their Autumn specials.



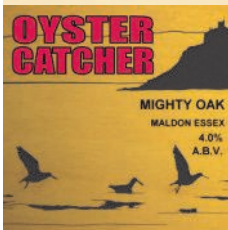
It appears that they will be brewing Weald Porter, a traditional 4.9%abv porter using English hops, Spooky Moon, a dark brown fruity 3.8%abv bitter and they have used Calcott Hall's strawberries to make Strawberry Blonde beer.

The beer will mainly be available in bottles at Calcott Hall Farm Shop but there is also limited availability in casks in pubs locally. Project Venus - Sugar and Spice 4.6% has been in circulation since mid August after its launch at GBBF.

They have also been nominated for 'Best Drinks Producer' by Essex Life Food and Drink Awards. The award ceremony is mid October watch this space.

Mighty Oak Brewery

It looks like Mighty Oak Brewery has some interesting new brews in the pipeline.



Oyster Catcher 4% abv Stout is one to look out for as it is brewed to coincide with the Maldon Regatta in September and said to be deep, dark and delicious!

Also for September there will be Bee'r Constrictor which is brewed with local honey and is an amber harvest-time thirst quencher.

As it is almost hop picking season again they have a freshly picked hop brew this

year called Oak Nouveau 2012 which is a light 3.6% abv blonde.



Towards the end of September Auf Wiedersehen Pet 4.5% abv German Style light blonde ale will be ready. We all love a good game of conkers and

their Completely Conkers 4.2% abv nut brown traditionally styled ale will be a Six-er I'm sure.

Watch out for their snake beer for October; Venom 4.7% a dark and dangerously drinkable stout with plenty of roast character and hints of espresso and dark chocolate. Late in October will see one of their one off brews, Hobbit Forming 3.9% abv a super amber session ale.

November sees Boomslinger 4.1% abv, a ruby hued best bitter with a sweet Autumn berry fruit aroma and palate.

Date for your diary; Saturday 1st December 11.30am to 3pm is a Free Christmas Beer Tasting day at Mighty Oak Brewery, Maldon. All 8 of their Christmas beers will be tapped and available for you to try.

Bishop Nick Brewery

Just had a report in from Libby Ridley of



Bishop Nick Brewery. Bishop Nick is enjoying a busy time and the beer is gushing out.

The beer festivals have been fun this summer and have provided a perfect opportunity to play with some reci-

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

Brewery News

pes. We brewed a bespoke Pale Ale for the Chelmsford CAMRA festival in July which was much enjoyed. We operated our own bar alongside our fellow Essex brewers which was great for profile and networking. Despite the weather much soggy and muddy fun was had by all.



Roger Protz chose our 1555 as one of half a dozen beers to speak about at a beer tasting during the weekend. We've yet to find out what he said about it!!

We also brewed a one-off for Joss Ridley's Hopstock Beer Festival up at the Compasses, Littley Green: The 'Hopstock IPA' was our first American influenced brew and it was a very drinkable 4.8% amber ale which also sold out after a couple of sessions. The weekend was balmy

in every sense. Huge crowds turned out for vintage tractor ploughing, great bands, village stalls and tasty brews from every county in the UK. The staff (including yours truly) had to wear yellow t-shirts but apart from that it was hugely enjoyable and a great success.

We're supplying new outlets all the time. The latest additions are The Angel & Harp in Great Dunmow and The Cricketers in Moulsham St, Chelmsford are serving our Ridley's Rite. We've got good coverage throughout Essex now and as the evenings draw in and the summer festivals wind up, we turn thoughts and energy to expansion plans. We're loving it.



Cider Press

INAUGURAL WALKING CIDER TRAIL OF CHELMSFORD

Please come and join in the First Walking Cider Trail of Chelmsford which I am organising for Friday 21st September 2012 hoping to drink real cider in all the pubs where it is available in Chelmsford.

We shall start at the Wetherspoons Ivory Peg next to WH Smiths in London Road at 7.30pm.

I shall be wearing green jeans, a pink Cider festival shirt and a luminous green jacket to be easy to find in the crowd. If you would like to join us en route please call or text me on 07773 093399.

Depending on numbers of attendees and choice available we shall probably spend 30-45 minutes at each port of call.

The Cider Shop at 166 Moulsham Street will stay open late on that day by special arrangement so we should be there about



8.30pm. If you decide to purchase supplies for home consumption you may bring your own marked carryout bottle or purchase a 4 pint one from Cliff Noakes at the cider shop for the draught

cider which is available in any quantity from a pint to a barrel. He has over 100 bottled ciders and perries to choose from. Your cider will then be delivered to the last pub so you don't have to carry it round for the rest of the Trail.

Subsequently the tour goes to the Orange Tree in Lower Anchor Street then over to the White Horse in Townfield Street and The Ale House near the railway and bus stations.

There may be the option of visiting the Thomas Mildmay Wetherspoons after that however the choice is unlikely to be different from the first Wetherspoons.

This walking tour is FREE apart from the cost of your drinks.

DELVIN END CIDERY

HOT OFF THE PRESS! Especially for CAMRA's Cider and Perry month in October Chelmsford and mid-Essex CAMRA have a trip to Delvin End 's new cider barn in Sible Hedingham, in Essex home of the famous Pheasant Plucker, Summer Festival and the new Sailor's Ruin (all7%.)

This will be on Saturday 20th October and will include visits to a couple of pubs in the area.

Please confirm your place with Brian Debenham on 01245 600294 who will put details on the Social Calendar on www.chelmsfordcamra.org.uk.

Many of the breweries the branch has



visited have cider or perry available and often there are pubs on the trips which sell real cider so whether you prefer cider or beer there should be something to keep you happy. Scintillating cider or brilliant beer whatever your tittle you're sure of good conversation and fun amongst friends.

Claire Irons.

To read the full version of this article go to www.chelmsfordcamra.org.uk/news



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

AmeriCan Revolution

Most people who drink quality beers in the UK would never think of trying beer that came from a can. Likewise, many British drinkers would turn up their collective nose at US beers in general as “All that American stuff tastes like Bud.” So, when an invite goes out to come and taste some stateside tinned beers most people would feign an excuse or even injury. However, purely for research purposes on behalf of Thirsty Times readers, we decided to attend.

On offer were 16 different canned beers representing the breweries of Caldera, 21st Amendment, Flying Dog, Maui, Oskar Blues, SKA and Sierra Nevada. The beers came in a wide variety of styles including examples of wheat beer, pale ales, lagers, porters, Scottish ale and American IPAs.

None of the beers were what you would call bad, although the Mama’s Little Yella Pils came close. Surprisingly perhaps, some of the cans actually contained some magnificent well crafted brews.

The Back in Black (6.8%abv) described as a black IPA, was packed full of flavour and could stand up to almost any big dark British ale. The Underdog Atlantic and Bikini Blonde lagers were both in the Helles style and although not up there with the very best of what Germany is offering were perfectly formed and very drinkable. The best of the crop though were a bunch of the IPAs. If you get a chance to sample Big Swell IPA (6.8% abv) from Maui, Dale’s Pale Ale (6.5% abv) from Oskar Blues, and either Torpedo Extra IPA (7.2%abv) or just the plain Pale Ale (5.6%abv) from Sierra Nevada, go for it. We were very impressed.

As to beer in cans, the organisers of the

tasting, The Brewers Association and British Beer Writers Guild put forward some interesting assertions, which we reproduce below. You may not agree with all of or indeed any of them, however it makes you think.

Why Cans?

Environmentally friendly

The average aluminium can is made from 44% recycled aluminium.

It is 100% recyclable.

It is the most recycled package in the world.

Aluminium can recycling rate: 57%

Glass bottle recycling rate: 39%

It costs a fraction of the energy to produce, to ship and to recycle than glass.

Maintains quality

Beer in cans lasts longer and tastes better. Extremely low oxygen pickup during the canning process helps extend beer shelf-life.

Cans offer 100% protection from UV light. American cans have a special liner that keeps the beer away from the aluminium. Craft beer will taste as fresh as it did from a keg.

Safety – cans don’t shatter

They are safer;

In the brewery

When they are shipped

When the customers handle them

Empty cans can’t be hurled like missiles onto the playing field or concert stage.

That’s why event coordinators ban glass – but not cans.

Customer convenience

Cans are lighter and easier to handle, transport and recycle.

A 6-pack of cans is “the ultimate grab and go” retail package catering well to the impulsive consumer.

Cans chill down faster than bottles.

Beer & Wholesomeness

Crafted and brewed using natural, healthy ingredients; maintaining time-honoured British traditions; famed throughout the world for its unique quality and diversity; and environmentally friendly to boot! Not many drinks can claim to be as all-round wholesome as beer. Brewing, a complex and time consuming process, does not tolerate shoddy workmanship. Beer is made principally from seasonal, natural ingredients and any mistakes will show up immediately in the taste and the aroma. Consistent and careful craftsmanship are critical. Today's brewing industry is a by-word for stringent quality with the big players setting the standard.

"Beer is seen as a simple, unsophisticated drink especially when compared to wine," says Charles Bamforth, Professor of Malting and Brewing Sciences at the University of California, and the author of several books on beer and brewing. "Wine is made from one basic ingredient, grapes, and the finished product can vary from year to year in its flavour and quality. "In a good year they call it vintage. A bad year is simply passed off to the customer as 'one of those things'. Compare that with beer which is made from a variety of 'live' and temperamental ingredients and yet still, day to day, year by year, it achieves consistency of flavour and quality. Indeed there is little in beer that cannot be described as healthy and wholesome. Not for nothing was the drink known for so long as 'liquid bread.' And to add to the miracle that is beer, nothing from the brewing process goes to waste; leftover yeast is converted to marmite, the used grain fed to farm animals and the spent hops converted to high nutrient fertiliser.

All brewing starts with barley, a plant bursting with goodness, containing not only natural starch but protein and fibre too.

During malting, the barley is allowed to sprout or 'germinate' and this releases the natural enzymes that unlock goodness from the grain. During the final stage of malting, the green malt is roasted or 'kilned'. Kilning is needed to stop the germination process – otherwise you would produce new barley plants rather than beer! Malt is at the heart of the colour and flavour of the beer, so it is down to the method of malting used to determine the final flavour of the beer. Different methods of malting are used to produce the different malts used to brew lager, ale, mild and stout. High temperature kilning produces malt that is dark with flavours such as toffee, chocolate or coffee. A more gentle heat produces paler malts used to brew lighter beers like lagers and pale ales. Next up is the brewing of the beer. The malt is crushed and mixed with hot water. Then the thick porridge, 'the mash', is left in a special container called a mash tun while the sugars are released by the malt's enzymes. Now the hops are added to provide the bitter flavour and aroma synonymous with beer and the mixture is boiled in a vessel called a 'copper'.

"Brewing water must always be of the highest quality" explains Professor Bamforth. "Soft water, such as that found in the Czech town of Pilsen, is needed for brewing lager. Hard water is generally considered the best for brewing ales. Rain that falls on the Peak District picks up salt as it seeps through the rocks into the deep wells around Burton on Trent where it is used to brew the town's famous India Pale Ales. "Hops give beer both bitterness and aroma. The more hops that are added to a beer the more bitter it will be. There are so many varieties of the hop plant and each has its own distinctive flavour from the Bramling Cross, which provides a spicy curranty

Beer & Wholesomeness

aroma to the mild herbal flavour of the Millennium.”

Finally the resulting liquid – the wort – is filtered, cooled and run into tanks, where the yeast is added and the fermentation takes place. Yeast is one of nature’s miracles, a fungus which feeds on sugar to produce alcohol, carbon dioxide and the host of flavours that make beer taste like beer. In just a few days most of the fermentation is complete and the ‘green’ beer left for the yeast to do the last of its work. Finally the beer – made with just these natural ingredients – is ready to be packaged and sent to the pub, the shop or the supermarket. A naturally wholesome and healthy drink ready for you to enjoy.

Taken from The Beer Academy’s recent Beer & Wholesomeness Report

New Policy Will Help Save Pubs

The National Planning Policy Framework is a powerful weapon in the battle to protect our beleaguered pubs.

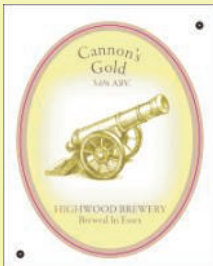
Over recent years, we’ve lost huge numbers of pubs through conversion to housing and other uses needing planning permission.

The new Framework simplifies the planning process and thanks to intensive lobbying by CAMRA, this new guidance includes national policies which are potentially very helpful to community facilities like pubs.

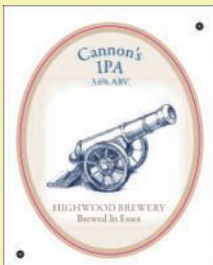
Most importantly, Councils are told to “guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services” which specifically includes community pubs.

To read the full version of this article go to www.chelmsfordcamra.org.uk/news

HIGHWOOD BREWERY



GOLD - Golden thirst quenching light beer, created by the fusion of succulent floral and citrus ripe hop flavours with light coloured malts producing a clean, crisp taste. A terrific session ale.



IPA - This hoppy taste and aroma come from two varieties of English hops – Challenger and First Gold – Light copper in colour: it hugs the glass beautifully and delivers a well rounded balanced taste

The beers are available in
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Big surge in fruit beer sales

Fruit-flavoured beers are enjoying a great boom in Britain according to the market research group AC Nielsen. Sales grew by a remarkable 80% over the past year, making it the fastest-growing sector of the British beer market.

As well as imported fruit beers – mainly from Belgium – British brewers are also turning their hand to producing beers made with the addition of such fruits as cherries, raspberries and strawberries. Last month saw the launch of Wheat Watchers, a raspberry-flavoured beer from Brewsters Brewery in Grantham, Lincs.

And spirit-flavoured brews such as rum, bourbon and tequila are adding to the trend. The fruit-flavoured sector is expected to grow even faster. According to Marston's Premium Bottled Ale Report, published in June, flavoured beers account for 12% of the traditional PBA sector, which is worth around £470 million annually.

Two years ago, Tesco stocked just four flavoured beers but the chain now sells 16. Sales have trebled during that period. Tesco's specialist beer buyer Chiara Nesbitt says: "The boom for flavoured beer has its roots in the recent ale and cider revivals. Over the past five or so years we have seen British drinking tastes diversify. The massive growth of ale with all its complex flavours and the cider revival are the best examples of this, as drinkers seek out different and more interesting flavours."

The inspiration for fruit beers comes from Belgium. Lambic and gueuze beers are one of the world's oldest beer styles and are made by spontaneous fermentation. When a mash of barley and wheat malts

with hops has been made, it's left in the brewery attic in an open pan or cool ship. Windows are opened and wild yeast spores in the atmosphere enter and attack the sugars in the sweet extract.

Once fermentation is under way, the liquid is transferred to giant wooden vessels where natural bacteria in the wood continue to attack the sugars. Lambic is aged for at least a year; gueuze is a blend of old and young lambics. Fruit lambics are the result of adding cherries or raspberries in the oak vessels: the natural sugars in the fruit create a further fermentation. Cherry lambic is known as kriek, the raspberry version is called either framboise or frambozen. As the fruit sugars turn to alcohol, the finished beers are dry and quenching, not sweet.

In Britain, most producers of fruit beer add the fruit during the copper boil with hops.

Roger Protz, Editor CAMRA's Good Beer Guide 2013

Beer Fetish

What I am trying to understand, is what I see as the growing fetishisation of beer. I think about the Holy Grail-like hunt for new varieties of hops, the more New World the better; the spillage of words that goes hand in glove with the debate of is it craft or not; beer evangelism (I'm waiting for the emergence of the Beer Salvation Army with its associated newspaper Wort-Cry); the campaign for this, the campaign for that; beer for her, beer for him, beer for that bloke with a funny hat.

From "Called to the Bar" by Adrian Tierney-Jones. To read the full version of this article go to

www.chelmsfordcamra.org.uk/news

Beer from the Brick – The Holborn Whippet

Not perhaps the most encouraging tagline for a new venture, but the newly opened Holborn Whippet is a great addition to the central London beer scene, and yes, the beer is served from brick – sort of.

Like its sister pub The Euston Tap they dispense beer from taps in a central brick column. There is a choice of seventeen draught beers from small breweries; both real ale and craft keg beer.

Small London breweries' beers do feature, but also beers and lagers from amongst others Bristol Beer Factory, Thornbridge, Dark Star plus quality imported beers.

To read the full version of this article go to www.chelmsfordcamra.org.uk/news



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Roxwell

At a time when we are reporting that there are so many rural pubs closing down, it is great to point you in the direction of Roxwell. Most of you reading this will know where Roxwell is but if you don't, you will find it about six miles out west of Chelmsford just off the A1060. Here you can call in on two thriving pubs; one is on the junction of the main road and the other at the village's heart. In many ways, they are very different styles of pub but both are united by their care for their Real Ale.

The pubs both have history. Formerly known as The Hare & Hounds and now simply as The Hare, the pub dates back to the first half of the 19th Century. During the first half of the 20th century it was in



the hands of the Letts family for 54 years until 1979, when it was selling Truman's beers brewed

in London's East End. The Chequers down the road in the village itself can also trace its heritage back to a similar time. The Earnshaw family were licensees for 67 years to 1963.

The Hare and Hounds first appeared in the Essex local guide in 1981 offering Truman's Tap bitter on handpump. This beer was Truman's return to real ale in 1978, driven of course by the emergence of CAMRA, after a period of about five years in the wilderness. By 1983 it had been joined in the guide by the Chequers which did both Truman's Bitter and Best Bitter on handpump. These had replaced Tap bitter at Truman's in 1982 as the demand for real ale grew. In 1986, there was no change at the H & H but the Chequers

had added the dreaded Websters bitter then owned by Watney Mann. The changes to free houses must have been in this period as by 1991 the H & H sold Flowers IPA, Wethereds bitter and Courage Directors and the Chequers had Websters and Ruddles bitters. By 1998 there was Flowers IPA and Ind Coope Burton at the Hare & Hounds and Greene King IPA and Wells Bombardier at the Chequers.

In September 2010 The Hare was transformed from tired old roadhouse into a modern end destination pub that is mainly food led. To make a go of any rural pub these days takes a lot of hard work and the staff really put a lot time and effort into events and promotions. They have monthly gatherings of car enthusiasts from Essex and the surrounding counties at their Breakfast Club, early evening promotions on food and special deals on a pie and a pint of their house beers on Thursdays. Talking of beer, alongside Adnams Broadside, their unique selling point is brewed for them by Brentwood Brewery. The house beer is Golden Crust Cask Ale a 3.7%abv copper coloured bitter that is complemented by the seasonal beers of Golden Crust Summer Ale (3.7% abv) and Golden Crust Winter Ale (4.8% abv). The beer is also used in some of their recipes for pies, fish batter and onion rings

The Chequers which is set in the beautiful village centre is a completely different kettle of ballgames.



Speaking to a frequent drinker in the Chequers during the period 1969 to 1974 the beer served was Truman's bitter direct from the

Roxwell



wooden cask, which was seen at the time to be excellent session beer. This must have been

the very end of real ale at Truman's pre-CAMRA. The pub at that time was a bit of a warren of small rooms including one with a dartboard that had a groove worn in the ceiling caused by dart players going for double top in the very low room! The landlord and landlady were Derek and Muriel and it is remembered that the next landlord at the Chequers was a guy called Bernie who later moved to the Hare & Hounds.

The current Landlord and Landlady David



& Carol have been at the pub for the past 15 years, so they must be doing something right.

The pub serves the locals well and is the hub of this community. If you want to know anything that is going on in the locale this is the place to come.

Currently they have excellently kept Greene King IPA and Doom Bar on the handpulls plus another ever-changing guest beer. This autumn they are looking to feature Timothy Taylor's Landlord and possibly Fuller's London Pride. Why not pay them a visit and enjoy this delightful pub.

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Spotlight on Grays

Orange Tree, Chelmsford

Continuing our series on Gray's pubs in our area we head south from the rail and bus stations, across Central Park and past the County Cricket ground, to Lower Anchor Street.



In this quiet side street you will find one of Chelmsford's premier real ale outlets and one of its most passionate advocates – landlord "Silent" Mike Collins.

Mike ran the Queen's Head, a few doors along the street, for 10 years, winning numerous CAMRA awards and keeping that pub in the



Good Beer Guide for eight successive years. No surprise then that the Orange Tree was voted straight into the GBG when he arrived in 2008 and remains there.

Grays have owned the pub for nearly 90 years, and leased it for many years before that. It is first mentioned as a beerhouse in 1856. Parts of the main building, which houses the public bar, date back to then and maybe earlier. The saloon bar occupies a modern extension to the right of the original building and this also serves as an excellent venue for meetings, quizzes (every Tuesday), even for a private party if you wish. There is a pleasant patio at the back which can be a suntrap in the right weather, and a small car park.

On entering your eye will be caught by a blackboard listing the eight ales on offer with their ABVs and prices. The three



regulars are Black Sheep Best Bitter, Dark Star Hophead & Mighty Oak Oscar Wilde. Joining these,

expect to see beers from all over the country, dark beers, strong beers, old favourites and offerings from new micro's. The pump clips on the walls represent a fraction of the beers which have been sold but include many of Mike's own favourites which are almost always milds, stouts or



porters and he will tell a story about every one. It almost goes without saying that all of Mike's staff are also knowledgeable about the beers and happy to advise or offer a taste before you buy.

Each bar has a bank of 4 handpumps, those in the public bar having recently moved to the most prominent position facing the door, and behind each bar are 2 casks from which the beer is served by gravity

The pub supports rugby and cricket teams and is also a "destination" pub with some groups returning year after year, some but by no means all, to take in some cricket at the County ground.

The pub website is one of the most informative around, listing the beers that are on and those coming soon but beware – some casks have a lifetime of only a few

Spotlight on Grays

hours in this pub so it may be best to phone.

Discerning lager drinkers will find 2 on draught from Schwaben Brau of Stuttgart - Meister Pils & Das Schwarze.

There is an extensive lunchtime food menu ranging from sandwiches and jacket potatoes to daily specials such as curry, chilli and other favourites such as ham



egg and chips. Thursday evening is curry night with 5 different ones on offer, including a vege-

tarian option, between 6.30 and 9.00. Traditional Sunday lunch is served between 12.00 and 2.30. Better book for this.



Mike is used to staging Beer Festivals but this year will be his first at this pub, with over 50 real ales, ciders & perries,

American beers, food and live music. It will run from 27th-30th September.

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Death of the British pub – the up side

British pubs have joined the endangered species list and UK beer lovers assume this is a bad thing. I am not so sure.

Most pubs have been turning their backs on beer for decades, so death might be a blessed release all round.

The British pub does not need to be saved from closure, rather we need to remember why we needed it in the first place, so that we can re-invent it in more suitable premises for modern times.

Tim Webb, author of CAMRA's Good Beer Guide to Belgium.

To read the full version of this article go to www.chelmsfordcamra.org.uk/news

Beer Festival

Thanks for your help

As the organiser of the CAMRA Chelmsford Summer Beer Festival, I would like to express my thanks for the support we received from the trade, publicans, and the general public at the festival in spite of the atrocious weather.

As the festival is put on, run, and dismantled entirely by volunteers, it is your support that makes all their hard work worthwhile.

If you feel you would like to become more involved in this exciting and worthwhile event please let me know.

Hope to hear from you soon.

Many thanks, Derek Beaumont, Festival Organiser, (email – beauat62@tesco.net)

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*Grant, Jo and Alison wish Chelmsford
G. & B. a successful Beer Festival*



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Branch Diary

Wednesday 12th September Branch Meeting at The Viper, Mill Green. Bus fare £5 members, £6 non-members. Depart from opp. Railway Stn at around 8pm. To reduce bus subsidies we will travel to this meeting by taxibus - please arrive opposite the station by 7.50pm so that we can phone for enough seats to cover us. There will therefore be no dropoff circuit.

Friday 21st September Crawl of Chelmsford Pubs Selling Real Cider. Start at the Ivory Peg (New London Rd) at 7.30pm, then: Essex Cider Shop (Moulsham St) 8.30pm, Orange Tree (Lower Anchor St) 9.30pm, White Horse (Townfield St) 10.30pm, Ale House (Viaduct Rd) 11.15pm. Most of the stops also serve good beers so beer drinkers are most welcome to join the crawl!

Wednesday 26th September Survey of Pubs for Good Beer Guide 2013. The route will be revealed on the night. If you have any suggestions for pubs to survey in this survey period please contact Brian Debenham. Bus dep. opp. Railway Stn 8pm, free to mems, £5 non-mems.

Tuesday 2nd October Real Ale Runabout to White Notley, Black Notley, Silver End & Coggeshall. Bus departs opp. Railway Stn at 7.30pm, fare £9 mems/OAPS, £10 non-mems.

Tuesday 9th October Beer Cuisine Evening at the Square and Compasses, Fuller Street. 3 courses cooked with beer/cider for £19. Bus departs opp. Railway Stn. at 7.45pm, fare £9 mems/£10 non-mems. Please see the enclosed menu (also on the website) and book your menu choices with me, and whether you'll be travelling by bus, by Monday 24th September.

Wednesday 17th October Branch Meeting at The Walnut Tree, Broads Green. Bus

fare £5 members, £6 non-members. Depart from opp. Railway Stn at around 8pm. To reduce bus subsidies we will travel to this meeting by taxibus - please arrive opposite the station by 7.50pm so that we can phone for enough seats to cover us. There will therefore be no dropoff circuit.

Saturday 20th October Visit to Delvin End Cider, Sible Hedingham. After the visit we'll go onto a couple of decent pubs in the area arriving back in Chelmsford mid/late afternoon. Bus departs opp. Railway Stn at 10am, fare £9 mems/OAPS, £10 non-mems. If desired a pickup could be arranged in Braintree en-route - please contact me if interested.

Tuesday 30th October Survey of Pubs for Good Beer Guide 2013. The route will be revealed on the night. If you have any suggestions for pubs to survey in this survey period please contact Brian Debenham. Bus dep. opp. Railway Stn 8pm, free to mems, £5 non-mems.

Thursday 1st November Bus to 1st South Woodham Ferrers Beer Festival. Bus departs opp. Railway Stn at 8pm, fare £9 mems/OAPS, £10 non-mems.

Tuesday 6th November Real Ale Runabout to South Hanningfield, Ramsden Heath & Billericay. Bus departs opp. Railway Stn at 7.30pm, fare £9 mems/OAPS, £10 non-mems.

Wednesday 14th November Branch Meeting and AGM at The Cricketers, Chelmsford. No bus to this meeting which starts at 8.30pm.

Wednesday 21st November Survey of Pubs for Good Beer Guide 2013. The route will be revealed on the night. If you have any suggestions for pubs to survey in this survey period please contact Brian Debenham. Bus dep. opp. Railway Stn

Branch Contacts

Chairman & Essex Brewery News

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Chelmsford & Mid-Essex Pub News,

Bryan Grimshaw,
bryangrimshaw@hotmail.com

Chelmsford CAMRA Beer Festival,

Derek Beaumont,
beauat62@tesco.net,
01245 264128

Branch Diary (continued)

8pm, free to mems, £5 non-mems.

Saturday 24th-Sunday 25th November Weekend in Huddersfield. Huddersfield is a great drinking town and well worth a weekend away. The earlier we book the better train fares/hotel rates we'll get so please contact me ASAP if you would like to go. I aim to book things around 15th September. Train fare currently around £100 return (but we might get cheaper as a group depending on how many of us there are) and currently around £35 for a double room at the Huddersfield Travelodge.

An up to date listing of social events can be found on the web site:

www.chelmsfordcamra.org.uk, or contact the Social Secretary, Brian Debenham, brian@bdebenham.co.uk.

Thirsty Times

Thirsty Times is published by the Chelmsford and Mid-Essex Branch of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale (© 2012) All rights reserved.

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