

BEER Around Ere

No. 113 Autumn 2003 - P'boro & District Branch of CAMRA.



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EDITORS MESSAGE

Welcome to the Autumn edition of Beer Around 'Ere! We have enjoyed a splendid long hot summer, with the Peterborough Giant Beer festival on the Nene embankment as the main event, along with other local festivals such as Cambridge, Boston and not forgetting all of the fantastic pub garden events. For those of us who can't wait until next summer don't forget about the events during Winter such as Pub Guy Fawkes parties and the Christmas and New Year period. Also see page 4 for a list of special events that Bram has arranged for us. But please remember to book early as some are nearly sold out already.

Cheers

Marcus Sims - Editor.

Background - a Mash Plate commonly found in breweries.

ADVERTISING RATES

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DIARY DATES

OCTOBER

Thu 9 Branch Social. Presentation of Gold Award, Smiths, Bourne 8:30pm. Bus departs Brewery Tap 7:30pm. Market Deeping 7:50pm, Stamford 8:10pm.

Fri 10 to Sun 12 Vine, Market Deeping, Beer Festival.

Sat 11 & Sun 12 Swan & Rushes, Leicester, Cider & Cheese Festival.

Sun 19 Sunday afternoon pub crawl by bus. Departs Brewery Tap 11:15am for Mystery locations, lunches available, return 6pm, £7 approx. SOLD OUT.

Mon 27 Branch Committee Meeting,, Westward Bowls Club, 8:30pm.

NOVEMBER

Thu 13 Branch Social and presentation of Beer Festival awards to Oakham Ales, Brewery Tap, 8:30pm.

Fri 14 Presentation of PBF 2003 Cider Awards in Somerset. Further details are being arranged.

Sat 22 Trip to Sheffield by train visiting Historic Pubs or Upper Don Valley pubs.

Wed 26 Branch Committee Meeting, 8.30pm, venue tbc.

DECEMBER

Mon 8 Branch AGM, New England Club , 8:30pm. Bring membership cards.

Sat 13 Branch Christmas Party, Fletton Ex Serviceman's Club 7:30pm to 12:30. Twelve real ales, good food & entertainment, including live music. NB. Membership card or invitation essential to gain admission.

Tue 16 Branch Committee Meeting, tbc.

Sat 20 Christmas Social with Fenland Branch at Batemans Brewery. Traditional Pub Games Night & Food. Further details to follow. Bus departs Brewery Tap ca 5pm, £10 approx + food.

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We are sorry for the increase in cost, but the
magazine is now regularly more than 60g

Peterborough Beer Festival 2003

Blessed, as it was with superb weather, top location, brilliant customers, hardworking staff and some of the best Real Ales available in the country it could hardly be anything but a roaring success. And success is just what it was.

Visitor numbers were up a little on last year despite opening all day on Wednesday which meant that some people only visited us once instead of twice. Draught beer and bottled beer sales were similar to last year but cider sales rose by 6%.

So, for those of you who are into numbers: We had 42,369 visitors and you downed 121,000 pints of beer together with over 9,000 pints of cider and perry and around 15,000 bottles of beer.

Although the numbers are up a little, it does look like Peterborough Beer Festival has now reached a natural size and this will mean that we can concentrate on improving what we

have, instead of always having to worry about how we will deal with extra visitors and extra beer.

What we would like all of you to do now is to tell us what is good and what is not so good about the festival.

What was the beer like? Did we miss out any superb beers?

What did you think of the all-day opening on the Wednesday?

Did the kids enjoy the fun at the weekend?

Did all of you big kids enjoy the bands?

Were the toilets satisfactory?

And what about the food vendors?

Send your thoughts to us at:

PBF Thoughts

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Fletton

Peterborough PE2 9EA

or e-mail them to

pbf@beer-fest.org.uk

WETHERSPOONS BEER FESTIVAL

Drinkers will be able to enjoy a number of award-winning real ales at Wetherspoon pubs across the UK.

The pubs' are each lining up to 30 beers from around Britain for a five-day festival, including CAMRA's Champion Beer of Britain 2003 gold, silver and bronze winners.

The festival will run from Wednesday October 29 to Sunday November 2 inclusive, with all beers priced from £1.09 to £1.55 a pint (Central London pubs will be staging the festival from Monday October 27 to Friday October 31 inclusive with all beers priced at £1.79 a pint).

The beers on offer will include Harviestoun Bitter & Twisted (CAMRA Champion Beer of Britain 2003), Daleside Bitter (silver medal winner) and Triple Eff Altons Pride (bronze medal winner) as well as Jennings Cocker Hoop, Exmoor Beast, Tring Colley's Dog, Hop Back Thunderstorm, Shepherd Neame Bishops Finger and RCH Pitchfork (all winners of different awards from the beer and brewing industry).

Wetherspoon Operations Director Nathan Wall said: "The beers have been sourced from a wide range of brewers across the UK.

"The festival will give people the opportunity to enjoy an excellent choice of award-winning beers which are not normally available in the area, and it promises to be a lot of fun."



Corpe Titum

PARTNERS:

Sean P. Reynolds FFA, MSFA, FLIA.
Nicola J. M. Reynolds BA (Hons), CFA.

Archdeaconry House
Minster Precincts
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Sean Reynolds, Senior Partner, is a life member of CAMRA.

Peterborough Beer Festival - Champion Beers

OVERALL CHAMPION BEER

Gold - Oakham Ales - Bishops Farewell
Silver - Oakham Ales - Blackhole Porter
Bronze - Newby Wyke - Chesapeake

MILD

Gold - Titanic - Mild
Silver - Lidstones - Rowley Mild
Bronze - Elgoods - Black Dog Mild

BITTER

Gold - Durham - Magus
Silver - Roosters - Outrider
Bronze - Ossett - Pale Gold

PREMIUM BITTER

Gold - Oakham Ales - Bishops Farewell
Silver - Ossett - The BFG
Bronze - Newby Wyke - Slipway

STRONG ALE

Gold - Newby Wyke - Chesapeake
Silver - Cairngorm - Wild Cat
Bronze - Mauldons - Black Adder

BARLEY WINE

Gold - Oulton Ales - Roaring Boys
Silver - Oakham Ales - Attila
Bronze - Elgoods - Wenceslas Winter Warmer

STOUTS & PORTERS

Gold - Oakham Ales - Black Hole Porter
Silver - Crown - Stannington Stout
Bronze - St Peters - Honey Porter

SPECIALITY BEERS

Gold Newby Wyke - White Squall
Silver - Nethergate - Umbel Magna
Bronze - Oakham Ales - White Dwarf

BEST BEER FROM A NEW BREWERY

Gold - Haywood - Dr Samuel Johnson
Silver = Walsh's Bakehouse - Flying Top
Silver = Blythe - Blythe Bitter
Silver = Blindmans - Black Lab Porter (Continued page 9).

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Double Swan 4.5% May/June *Mad Dog* 4.4% July/Aug
Barley 4.8% Sept/Oct *Old Black Shuck* 4.5% Nov
Reinbeer 5.9% *Wenceslas Winter Warmer* 7.5% Dec

Champion Beers Continued from page 8

BOTTLED BEER

Gold - Trappists of Achel - Achel Blonde

Silver - Dolle Brouwers - Arabier

Bronze - Moortgat - Duvel

CIDER & PERRY

Gold - Broadoak - Moonshine

Silver - Ralph's - Medium

Bronze - Thatchers - Cheddar Valley Dry

Classic Beer Styles - Part 6

Wheat Beer

When a spell of hot weather occurs many beer drinkers want a cold thirst quencher and switch to lager. Fine if you want something chilled and bland.

However if you want something that's both cool and has taste then why not try Wheat Beer. It's far more thirst quenching and actually has some flavour.

So what actually constitutes a wheat beer? Well it's a beer that contains not less than 30% wheat malt, with many of the best containing 50% wheat malt and 50% Barley malt. The majority of cask bitters brewed in the UK contain some wheat malt as it improves the head (foam) retention, but usually the wheat element is just about 5%. The other factors that make wheat beers distinctive are moderate hopping rates and the use of special yeasts. All wheat beers fall into two style categories - the German style and those from Belgium, and they have very different characteristics. Wheat beer can be either be cloudy or clear. It is naturally cloudy as a result of the high proportions of wheat, and the yeast which is left in suspension. If it's clear then the wheat protein and yeast has been filtered out. When ordering wheat beer in the Flemish part of Belgium you should be aware that it is either called 'Wit' (White) beer, but also 'Tarwe' (Wheat) beer, whereas in the French speaking parts it's called 'Blanche'.

Most German wheat beer owes its distinctiveness to the use a very unusual yeast called 'Weihenstephan' which originates from the famous brewing school and brewery in Munich. This yeast imparts a number of characteristic flavours which are described as bubblegum, clove and banana - these are not pretentious beer snob descriptions - you can really smell and taste these flavours in a good German wheat beer. They are lightly hopped so as not to overpower the delicate yeast-imparted flavours. You can opt for a filtered clear wheat beer referred to as 'Kristall' or the naturally cloudy version called 'Hefeweizen' (or 'mit Hefe') meaning 'with yeast'. In Berlin wheat beer may be flavoured with woodruff or raspberry syrup which gives the beer a greenish or red colour. Another German/Austrian speciality is known as 'Dunkel Weissbeer' which is a dark wheat beer an excellent example being brewed by Edelweiss in Kaltenhausen, Austria.

So far as recommendations go I would suggest you try 'Hacker-Pschorr Weisse Kristall' from Munich - a fine filtered beer, or 'Allgauer Hefeweizen' from Kempten - a good cloudy version. For the first timer I would suggest 'Bischofshof Leichte Weisse' an easy drinking mild grainy beer. Leaving the best to last - the classic example of the cloudy German style is 'Schneider Weisse' (5.4%) - brewed in Kelheim since 1856 and full of the easily recognised clove and bubblegum taste.

Over in Belgium and the Netherlands virtually all the wheat beers of any note are cloudy. A number of characteristic yeasts are used (not Weihenstephan) and they do not have the German clove\bubblegum\bannana flavours. Belgian wheat beers derive their tastes from the wheat, the special belgian yeasts and the use of spices.

The spices may be coriander, curacao, nutmeg, cinnamon, etc. and often the hops used are old or aged hops which are mellow. Aged hops are employed so as not to compromise the delicate spice flavours.

Continued page 12.

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The popularity of wheat (or white) beer in Belgium and much of Europe can be credited to just one man - the remarkable Pierre Celis. Pierre was a milkman who also home brewed and he was fascinated by a defunct beer style - brewed with wheat. Pierre re-created a spiced wheat beer called Hoegaarden (4.8%) from old recipes, starting off with just 5 gallons at a time. It was popular with his friends and before long he abandoned his milk cart and was brewing commercially at his De Kluis brewery. I visited the old brewery several months before a disastrous fire in 1985 and Pierre's enthusiasm for his new beer was infectious. A new brewery (much bigger) arose from the ashes with help from Stella Artois and sales soared. Eventually he was made an offer he could not refuse and sold out to Interbrew. Pierre re-surfaced in Austin Texas brewing wheat beer at his Celis brewery, and after more success sold out again to a bigger concern. Hoegaarden today whilst not the finest example of Wheat beer sets the standard. It is delicately spiced with coriander, curacao and a secret spice and is a lovely beer for a hot summers day. Even better in November to February Hoegaarden brew 'Hoegaarden Speciale' (5.7%) a more heavily spiced version, and much closer to Pierre's original.

Other fine Belgian wheat beers are 'Watou Wit' from Van Eeke brewery which has lovely citrus notes, and 'Blanche De Honelles' (6.0%) from the excellent Abbey de Roc micro brewery. Another favourite best tasted on draught (Van t' Vat) is 'Haecht' which displays subtle lemon flavours which lose their effect when bottled. Whilst the majority of the Belgian wheat beers hover around the 5% level a notable exception is a hefty 7.5% beer brewed by Bavik called 'Kuurnse Witte' or 'Witte Ezel' (White Donkey). Several years ago I had a few of these beers not realising their strength but can attest that they have kick like a donkey! The last Belgian wheat beer I really must mention is something of a hybrid, a cross between a lambic and a wheat beer. It's called Lambicus Blanche (4.5%), re-named as it was called simply 'Wit' and is brewed by Timmermans. It's an intriguing multi-layered beer with a great balance of sweet and sour in which you may notice lemon, lime and pineapple flavours. Drunk well chilled in bottle or on draught it's a world classic. Over the Border in Holland De Ridder brewery of Maastricht brew a hybrid beer called 'Wieckse Witte' which has some German bubblegum/toffee tastes but also the typical Belgian citrus flavour - very unusual. Just appearing over here from Holland is 'Korenwolf' (5.0%) brewed by Gulpener which is another good wheat beer and which should be well marketed.

What about the rest of the world you may wonder. Not surprisingly the U.S. micros faithfully reproduce both styles and I would single out Tabernash of Longmont Colorado as a fine exponent of the German style. Great Lakes Brewing produce a very good belgian style beer 'Wit'. The UK micros have many examples of a Belgian style wheat beer but I have yet to find and try a German copy. I have yet to taste more than a couple of good UK examples - Brewsters 'Claudia' a genuine cloudy wheat beer and Dark Star's spiced 'Landlords Wit'. Unfortunately too many wheat beers produced in the UK. have low proportions of wheat and use a standard ale yeast. Whilst not actually a wheat beer I am a great fan of Umbel Ale from Nethergate which is infused with coriander and shows what can be achieved with Belgian style spicing.

I feel that until the drinking public in the UK can be educated to realize that wheat beer is naturally cloudy we are on an uphill struggle to increase it's popularity. However with the likes of Interbrew and Coors showing some interest in this 'niche product' we may see some active marketing to get the message across. Cheers!

Brian Bosworth

Brewer - Rockingham Ales.

The Good Beer Guide's little brother is growing up fast!

In 1998 CAMRA launched the first ever Good Bottled Beer Guide, a companion guide to the best-selling Good Beer Guide. The book concentrated on bottle-conditioned beers ('real ale in a bottle') – unpasteurised beers that contain yeast and continue to ferment in the bottle for a fuller, fresher flavour just like draught real ale ferments in the cask in the pub cellar. At the time, bottled real ales were just beginning to bounce back. Back in 1971, when CAMRA was founded, there were just five such bottled beers in regular production and by the time the book hit the shelves that number had increased to around 170. Now, however, real ale in a bottle is booming. The brand new edition of the Good Bottled Beer Guide features more than 500 beers, prompting author Jeff Evans to describe the development as 'beer's quiet revolution'.

'Small brewers in particular have returned to bottling in a big way, partly in response to the way in which the pub market has been closed off to them by giant pub companies, who prefer to buy discounted beer from big breweries,' he said. 'The small brewers have looked for other outlets and discovered that bottled beer is the answer.'

As the Good Bottled Beer Guide reveals, real ale in a bottle can now be found on sale in all sorts of outlets, from corner shops to country craft centres. Many examples are now sold directly at farmer's markets, alongside the freshest local vegetables and the tastiest hand-made cheeses. 'This not only sums up the drive and innovation of the microbrewing sector but also the quality of the bottled beers themselves,' said Jeff Evans. 'A hand-crafted bottled real ale, made with top ingredients, perfectly fits the ethos of the farmer's market, where the best local produce can be tried and purchased, cutting out the middle man. Such events are an ideal showcase for all that is good in British brewing. People can see how beer is really an excellent example of quality agricultural output and not just about industrially produced global brands.'

Some supermarkets, who appreciate that quality and localness have important sales benefits, have also signed up to the real ale in a bottle revival. Safeway, in fact, is sponsor of the Good Bottled Beer Guide.

The new total of over 500 beers is an increase of over 150 since the last edition of the book was published just two years ago. 'Although the bottled beer market is still dominated by filtered, pasteurised and artificially carbonated beers, it is clear that real ale in a bottle has found a niche that is getting bigger every day,' Jeff Evans added. 'Brewers of these beers may not have the resources to shout about their efforts like the multi-nationals who dominate the business, but they are clearly changing the face of beer drinking at home. More and more people are seeking out real ale in a bottle, because it tastes better. You could say it is a quiet revolution.'

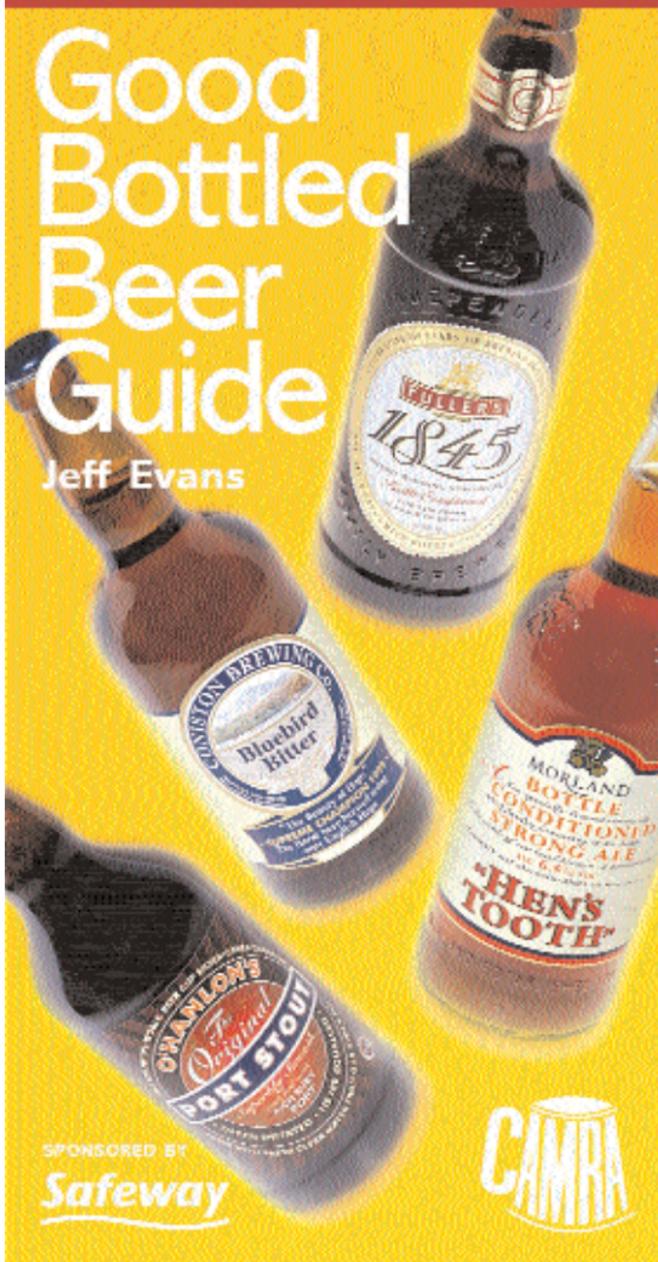
The Good Bottled Beer Guide features all known real ales in a bottle produced in the UK, with information on ingredients, tasting notes and other important details. There are also features on bottled real ales from overseas, organic beers, matching beer with food and how to keep and serve real ale in a bottle, plus a listing of the UK's top beer shops to help you track down the featured beers. A 256-page pocket hardback, the book is priced £8.99 and is available from good bookshops or direct from CAMRA on 01727 867201 (discount for CAMRA members).

Jeff Evans HQ. (see picture next page)

THE CAMRA GUIDE TO
REAL ALE IN A BOTTLE

Good Bottled Beer Guide

Jeff Evans



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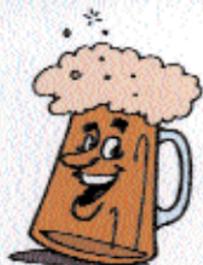
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CAMRA LAUNCHES NEW GOOD BEER GUIDE

Tuesday 23rd September 2003

ALMOST 900 NEW ENTRIES FROM ACROSS BRITAIN

CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale, today launched the 31st edition of their award-winning Good Beer Guide. The best-selling guide highlights the top 4,500 real ale pubs in Britain and offers a unique directory to every brewery in the country, large or small, with details of all the cask-conditioned and bottle-conditioned beers they brew, together with unique tasting notes.

Each pub entry, surveyed on a regular basis throughout the year by CAMRA members, gives a detailed summary of why the pub has been included in the Good Beer Guide and highlights information on the pub's facilities for families and the disabled, history, architecture, food, accommodation, local places of interest and, of course, the beer!

Almost 900 NEW Pub Entries!

There are almost 900 NEW pub entries in the 2004 Guide and each entry has been surveyed throughout the year by CAMRA members.

Roger Protz, Editor of the Good Beer Guide said, "CAMRA members have spent an enormous amount of time carefully selecting the final 4,500 pub entries and, unlike some other pub guides, there is no charge for entry into the Good Beer Guide. These elite pubs are selected by the real pub goer!"

Protz continued, "The pubs that appeared in the previous edition have all been updated with new information for 2004 and I am also delighted that we have almost 900 NEW pub entries this year. This just goes to show that this Guide, now in its 31st year, is the most up to date and comprehensive guide to British pubs in today's book market."

The 2004 Good Beer Guide includes 35 NEW breweries this year in the brewery directory, which lists nearly 500 breweries. Roger Protz said, "It is great to see 35 more breweries in this year's guide. The majority of these breweries are producing a wonderful range of real ales and as long as these are given the opportunity to be sold in British pubs then this can only be good for consumer choice."

If you would like to view the NEW pub entries for our area and see the list of NEW brewers then please visit the Good Beer Guide Media Site - www.camra.org.uk/gbgmedia.

BUT

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HAND & HEART WIN TOP AWARD



Well done to Eamon and Pauline at the Hand & Heart on Highbury Street. This September CAMRA members presented them with an award on the grounds that it has a unspoilt historic interior. The Hand is a rare example of a back street local with a traditional 1930's interior. The Hand is also the only pub in the branch area to be listed in the CAMRA National Inventory.

Push Penny World Championships

In the Stamford area is a unique traditional pub game called Push Penny. It is similar to Shove Ha'penny but it uses 3 old pennies (instead of 5 ha'pennies) and has slightly different rules.

At one time there were 128 teams and numerous leagues but, sadly, last season there was just one league left with only 8 teams and this season it is down to 7 - the Northfields has a 'A' and 'B' team, as does the Drum & Monkey with the other pubs being St. Mary's Vaults, Hurdler and Lord Burghley.

The pennies are ground down on one side (always the "tails" side) and there are two "heavy" pennies and a "light" penny which is thinner. The light penny "kicks back" when colliding with the heavy pennies and is usually played last making it easier to convert a loosing penny into two "chalks" from the last "push".

Every September just before the new season starts there is the World Championships played for over 3 nights. 32 people compete and it is open to all, but I don't rate your chances against the league players - top scorer being the chairman of the Stamford & District Push Penny League Derek 'Robbo' Robinson who once scored all 27 points (3 pennies in each bed) with only 29 'pushes' !!

I asked Derek how do they keep the boards so shiny so that the pennies literally glide across them. "The cloth used is washed in beer then another cloth warmed up by sitting on the radiator is used to polish it", he told me.

The main difference in the rules is that shove ha'penny has 'give and take' where if you land on a bed you already have 'chalked' three and your opponent still has some outstanding you give a "chalk" away to your opponent. However in push penny you have to score all the points yourself.

This years competition finals were held on

Friday September 19th at the Northfields, Drift Road, Stamford on a "best of three" basis. With each pub's board slightly different in some way e.g. some have slow patches making it difficult for the away team to win, they use up to 6 different boards in the world championships. "No one is allowed to use their own board or one they have played on in the last two weeks", says David (Doug) Burrows, secretary of the league who organises the event. This years final had one of the closest finishes ever with Northfields A team member Tony



Howard coming back from Two-Nil to force a fifth leg with David Flynn from the Drum & Monkey. The game finished with each of them requiring their final "chalk" in the furthest bed and David Flynn winning his first World Championship. Well Done David.

Most of the Push Penny boards only see the light of day when there is a match on but you will always find people playing on a Friday (and usually on Tuesday) night in the Northfields, Drift Rd on the eastern side of Stamford. This is a 1956 estate pub built by Home Ales which

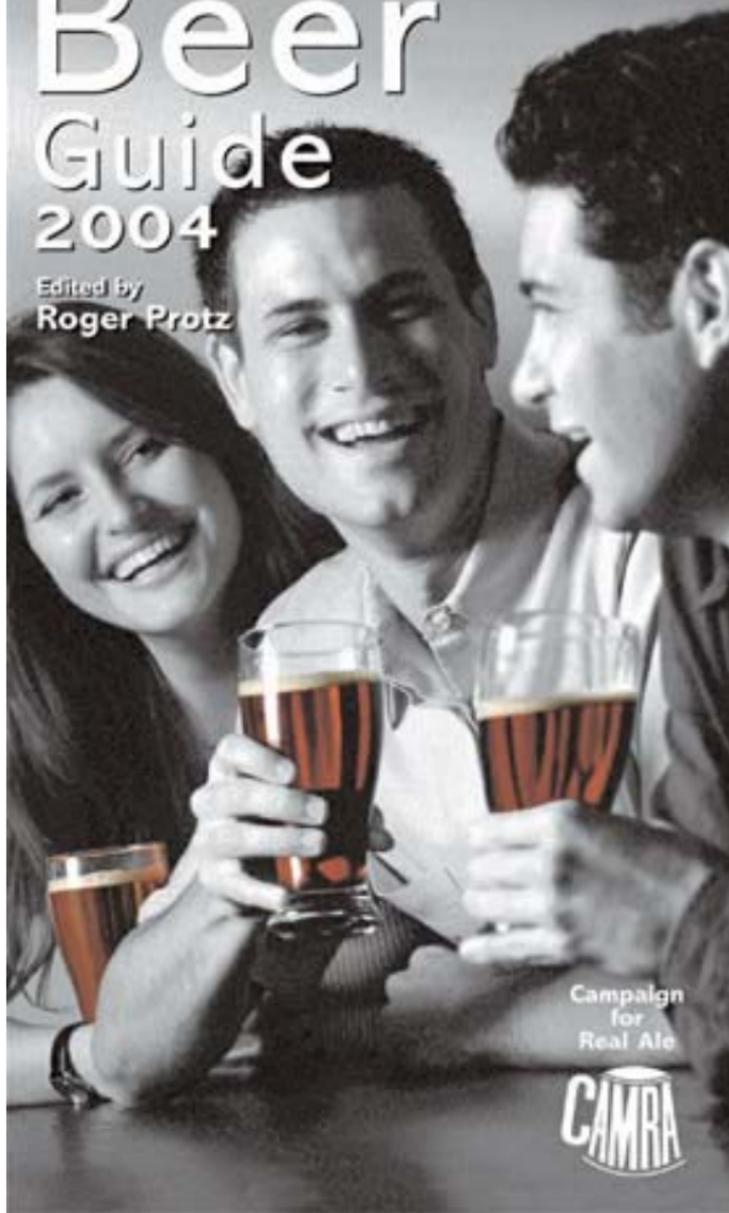
has seen only small changes over the years and is well worth a visit. It still retains its three rooms, the off-sales has been incorporated into the bar, but the hatch to the bar still remains. Also, it has a skittle alley on the left hand side - very rare in these parts, but popular in Notts, Derbys and Leics. The new tenant Chris is hoping to put it back into use but is still looking for a set of skittle and balls - if you can help him please ring on 01780 762689. The real ales on sale at the Northfields are Tetleys Bitter, John Smiths Cask and a guest beer.

Mick Slaughter

BRITAIN'S BEST PUBS

Good Beer Guide 2004

Edited by
Roger Protz



Campaign
for
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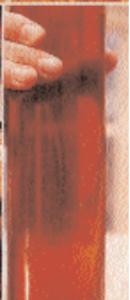
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PUB NEWS

The Rose at Frognall now has a refurbished and most attractive pub sign. The pub has recently achieved Cask Marque status.

Lee and Angela took over the Blue Bell at Belmesthorpe in January of this year. Both are from the Lincoln area and, although Angela has some background in the trade this is their first real foray. Lee is very keen on real ale and whilst food will remain a very important part of the free house's offering beer will also be very central. There are normally four hand-pumps in use and Bass and Summer Lightning are on most of the time with two other cask ales which change constantly.

In mid - July Peter and Tracy Reid from Glinton purchased the Whistle Stop by Tallington level crossing, from Pete Harvey. They are new to the trade and keen on cask ale. Courage Directors Tiger and Wells Bombardier are always on offer together with two guest ales. Lunchtime and evening snacks and homemade dishes are available every day except Sunday evenings.

In what seems like the end of an era Mick and Grete Pilkington are bowing out from the Bluebell at Whaplode St. Catherine to take a well earned retirement in Spain, after 35 years in charge. When they took over the pub in 1968 it was a Stewart and Pattersons (Norwich) house, but S&P were already in the tight grip of Watneys. In 1978 they bought the pub off Grand Metropolitan, as the firm had this free house and for many years sold Vaux and Wards cask ales. In 1999 Mick started brewing in an old potato store at the back of the pub. Three cask ales are produced: Old Session 3.7% ABV. Old Honesty 4.1%ABV & Old Fashioned 4.8%ABV.

Alan Bell, living locally has purchased the brewery and has been in charge since April and John Usher of the King of Hearts, west Walton took over the pub operations on the first week in September.

We wish Mick and Grete a long and happy retirement.

HOGSHEAD

PETERBOROUGH BEER FEST 2003 CIDER AND PERRY BAR.

1. Cider sales up this year from 2002 by 5.5% (980 gallons).
2. Perry sales up this year from 2002 by 12.5% (198.5 gallons).
3. TOTAL sales cider and perry up 6.5% from 2002 to 1178.5 gallons.
4. Apple juice sales up 18.5% from 2002 to 231 litres
5. Country wine sales up 8.5% from 2002 to 1020 litres.
6. Only 3 tubs of cider remained unbroached as the festival ended.

John Lewis - Bar manager.

Festival Times

After the main event of the year on the embankment - Peterborough Beer Festival, it was the turn of some of the local pubs to show us they could also organize their own beer festivals - many do all year.

Starting with the Golden Pheasant at Etton on the second weekend of September a selection of around twenty ales were on offer, with a cider and some Belgium bottled beers. This is the third beer festival held by licensees David and Tracy since they took over the pub around sixteen months ago. They usually hold it in the permanent marquee at the side of the pub, but this was not available all weekend so a smaller one was erected at the front of the pub with tables and chairs to rest weary legs. One corner of the marquee accommodated the bar, ably run by son Sean (apologies if incorrect).

During the same weekend over at The Green Man in Stamford the regular autumn beer festival was also in full swing. This was the eighth in number. Over thirty beers were on the menu, with cider and bottled beers. The outside courtyard was covered to keep out the blazing sunshine instead of the usual rain! Tony Shilling and his team were beavering away keeping the customers supplied with drinks. The beer was flowing supported by a fairly large group from Nottingham and Leicester branches of Camra. Alas all too soon Central trains were beckoning and it was time to return to the big city.

The third beer festival featured took place on the next weekend to the two above. The second festival held by Bruce and Steph at the Coalheavers Arms in Fletton off London Road featured twenty-five beers all from microbrewers. Glorious sunshine greeted customers on the first opening session on Friday, and the fine weather continued right through the whole weekend. The result was a full house almost continually. Included in the list of beers were a few from Scottish micros rarely seen in these parts. On Sunday night a group of Irish instrument players entertained yet another packed house. Again I had the privilege of being part of this fine festival in what is becoming an increasingly popular pub.

D. Murray



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GOLD AWARD NOMINATIONS

You may have seen write ups on recent issues of evenings spent in pleasant fashion, drinking glorious real ale and presenting the deserving landlords with a certificate claiming what a fine establishment they run.

Below is the form you need to fill in, in order to nominate the landlord of that fine pub that has somehow escaped our attention.

You need to be a CAMRA member to nominate a pub and it must have done something new to help the cause of CAMRA or Real Ale drinkers such as adding guest beers, improving the ale quality, adding real ale in a bottle or traditional cider, introducing traditional pub games, etc, etc.

If you have found such a pub, then fill in the form and send it to the Branch Secretary (See contacts page).

Please enclose your name, address, telephone number and CAMRA membership number.

**CAMRA - PETERBOROUGH & DISTRICT BRANCH
NOMINATION FOR GOLD AWARD**

PUB NAME

PUB ADDRESS

NOMINATED BY

MEMBERSHIP NO.

CONTACT PHONE NO.

REASON FOR NOMINATION

.....

.....

.....

.....

SIGNEDDATE

Cider Tracking

First time visit to a cider farm? Not sure what to expect? Neil Parker and Victoria Gorman recollect some of their first trips....

Hunting out small-time cider and perry farms can be fun and challenging. Our first real experience of this was searching out a farm producer in Devon, just outside the seaside town of Sidmouth. We had just finished a week's holiday and our large estate car was weighed down with the waste from a week's camping and with 2 bicycles hanging off the back. The CAMRA Good Cider Guide had provided us with the location of the farm but had not prepared us for the length and narrowness of the country lanes we had to navigate to get there. And there was an element of rural car-chase about it too.

The Guide had given a closing time for farm sales and we had only minutes to spare, the car's wing mirrors brushed past hedges and we expected the protruding cycle wheels at the rear to snag and cause untold damage. But we got there to a friendly welcome from a sleepy black dog and it's owner. After some well earned tastings we were rewarded with a gallon or two of the dry and medium-dry for the princely sum of about £1-a-pint. We took the precious cargo back home to London. It was truly the best cider we had ever tasted and since then we always have our copy of the Cider Guide safely stowed in the car. We not only make detours to collect cider to and from holiday locations, we have been known to pop into farms on our way back from job interviews! It's amazing how you can weave cider-collecting detours into all kinds of journey.

Our first trip to Cornwall was in a 35-year old VW Beetle in mid-October on a day with torrential rain and very high winds - there were several lorries blown over on our route during the course of the day, and we even saw one of them. The car was managing only 40 mph on of the level sections of road, because of the strength of the headwinds. We still managed to bag supplies of cider from two Devon producers on the way. We had targeted four but one supplier had sadly ceased production owing to bereavement, and another looked to have shut up shop for the winter. During the course of our holiday we looked up (successfully) 2 further Cornish suppliers both of whom still press their cider through straw.

All the farms we visited were welcoming and the farmers more than happy to chat around a few glasses of cider. We made a detour on the way home and obtained supplies from the farm we thought had gone into hibernation returning to London with a fantastic variety. The producers all told us that cider keeps for "about 10 days, and you mustn't let the air get to it" but we have found that with care it will stay very drinkable for much longer periods than this. Only a few days ago we found an unopened container, which must have been months old - we have no idea where it came from. The contents were very drinkable, but very dry. Very, very dry!

So as well as your copy of the CAMRA Cider Guide, you would be wised to be well armed with a few empty containers although most producers will provide their own if you don't have any. It can be tremendously good fun following narrow country back roads to remote farms, taking wrong turnings and misreading road signs but a local map is also a useful thing to carry as many of the farms are marked.

Continued on page 26

CONTACTS

Editor: **MARCUS SIMS**
131 Fengate
Peterborough PE1 5BH
01733 558481
07816486145
email: marcuscartoons@aol.com

Advertising: **DAVID MURRAY**
15 Charnwood Close
Peterborough
PE2 9BZ
01733 560453
email: david-murray@supanet.com

Publicity: **DEREK GIBSON**
01733 352278 (H)
01733 866724 (W)

Distribution: **NOEL RYLAND**
01733 311453 (H)
01733 422570 (W)
07944 869656 (M)
email: nryland@britishsugar.co.uk

Under 26's **NOGS**
07801 702606
email: nogsale@lineone.net

Socials: **BRAM**
07903 651583 (M)

Memberships: **DARYL LING**
19 Lidgate Close
Orton Longueville
Peterborough PE2 7ZA

Branch Contact & Secretary: **HARRY MORTEN**
49 St Margarets Road
Fletton
Peterborough PE2 9EA
01733 764296 (H)
01733 422279 (W)
07900 056940 (M)
08717 333577 (FAX)
info@real-ale.org.uk

Articles from BAE available on our
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I/we wish to become members of the Campaign for Real Ale Limited and agree to abide by the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Campaign.

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Address.....

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Signature(s)..... Date.....

I/We enclose the remittance for:

Single Membership	£16 ()	Life	£192 ()
Joint Membership	£19 ()	Life	£228 () at same address.
Overseas Membership	£20 ()	Life	£240 ()
Joint Overseas	£23 ()	Life	£276 () at same address.
Under 26 Member	£ 9 ()	Life	Not applicable.
Retired	£ 9 ()	Life	£90 ()
Retired Joint	£12 ()	Life	£120 () at same address.

Remittance payable to CAMRA. Please send to Memberships, CAMRA Ltd, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, Herts AL1 4LW

Continued from page 24

Recently we were fortunate enough to be able to scrounge 2 beer polypins - the remnants of a friend's retirement party, which had to be removed from the hall. These have kept cider good for weeks because the air does not have to pass into the containers to let the cider out. Just take care if you are going to re-use this type of container, as it should be thoroughly sterilized first. As one producer told us - "You don' waant yur cider mousy!" Incidentally, the last poly-pin we had filled on a farm cost us £6.75, or less than 20p per pint!

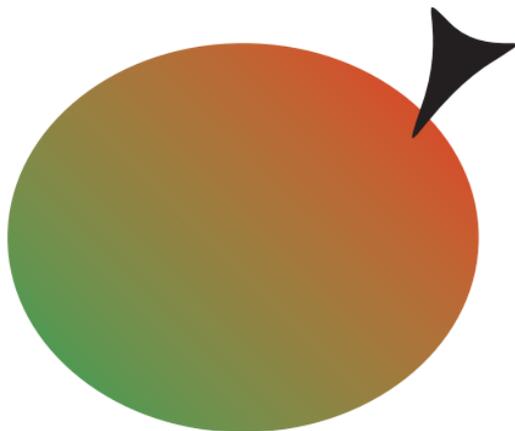
Of course, you don't have to go round the countryside spraying carbon solids and gases everywhere from the back of a car. There is plenty of scope for cider-collecting trips on foot or by using rail and bicycle. Maybe you could work out a waterways route?

There are an estimated 300 or so cider and perry producers (perry being the pear equivalent of cider) in the UK. Not all of them are large enough to advertise their wares, so there is scope for some real detective work. We have been directed to producers through meeting people in pubs whilst on holiday or even from other producers. The cider bar at beer festivals can also be a good source of information (and of course cider!).

The last CAMRA Good Cider Guide was published a couple of years ago and although still extremely useful Vicky is currently working on a new edition due for publication in an updated form in 2004. If you have any information, which you think could be included in the Guide, feel free to send it to vicky@applesandpears.co.uk

or

contact CAMRA HQ at 230 Hatfield Road, St. Albans.



PETERBOROUGH BEER FESTIVAL PHOTOGRAPHS by H Morten & M Sims.

If anyone would like photos on disk ask the Editor we have hundreds more like this.



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