

The newsletter of the Solihull & District branch  
of CAMRA - the Campaign for Real Ale

www.solihullcamra.org.uk



# Solihull Drinker



Issue No: 40

Spring 2007

## Community Pubs Week. 17th—24th February 2007

Lorely Burt lends a hand!!

Solihull MP Lorely Burt gave her support to CAMRA's national campaigning week when she met up with local members to visit the Golden Acres in Damsonwood before moving onto the Fieldhouse in Monkspath. Ms Burt is a supporter of the CAMRA-endorsed Sustainable Communities Bill, and said that she was delighted to "bang the drum for Real Ale".



Local papers were on hand as Lorely sampled the Scattor Rock Golden Valley (4.6%) at the Golden Acres. At the Fieldhouse, they snapped her pulling a pint with Roger Dipple, Solihull and District Branch Chairman and Branch member Bob Jackson, before enjoying a well-earned Springhead Charlie's Angel (4.5%).

The Campaign for Real Ale called for communities to rally

behind their local pub during Community Pubs Week as a shocking new survey revealed that more than 1,300 pubs nationwide are currently under threat from closure. The figures suggest that a staggering 56 pubs a month are lost forever, and 1,300 pubs are closed with an uncertain future.



L-R: Roger, Bob Jackson and Lorely  
(courtesy Roger Basset, Solihull Times)

Roger said "These figures prove why CAMRA's Community Pubs Week is so important." This is not a problem confined

to rural areas; in fact the survey revealed that 80 per cent of pubs permanently lost are in urban areas." He continued "CAMRA encourage people to support their local pub, as it is often a case of 'use it or lose it. I hear many people complain that there is 'no community spirit' these days. We tend to rely on TV, video and PC-based entertainment, and we don't get out to meet real people socially anymore. The pub has always provided a focal point for communities, and we should really make the effort to get out and enjoy the events they put on for our benefit. Help generate some of that good old community spirit!".

**Inside: Don't miss the Dates for your Diary**

**PUBLIC HOUSE  
BLACKBOARDS - A BOARDS  
& VINYL BANNERS MADE TO ORDER  
ALL ASPECTS OF SIGNWRITING  
0121-705 7751 / 07899 771524**

### Pub, Beer & Brewery Watch

Customers at Bernies Real Ale Off-Licence thought that Dave Queenborough must have been psychic during the snowy week in February when they braved the elements to top up their carry kegs ready for a cosy night in front of the fire. Amongst the ales featured - Phoenix Snowbound. Dave was asked by many impressed punters if he had any tips for the 3.30 pm at Newmarket!

A small Staffordshire brewery – the last remaining brewery in Birmingham before it moved in 2003 – has been named “king of the ales” after it scooped top prize at a prestigious beer awards. Beowulf Brewery won CAMRA’s Gold Medal and Champion Beer for the West Midlands 2006, with their Finn’s Hall Porter ale. The brewery, based at Chasewater Country Park, saw off competition from over 300 beers brewed by 67 other Midland breweries—including large established operations. Beowulf only started brewing in Yardley, Birmingham, back in 1997, and still only brews 360 gallons each week for distribution across the Midlands. Before moving to its current home, Beowulf Brewery was the last operational brewery in the city of Birmingham. Beowulf owner Phil Bennett said the 4.7% strength Finn’s Hall Porter, which won the bronze medal in the 2005 competition, is a “dark, inviting, smoky and hoppy beer, that isn’t too sweet to the taste”. Mark Haslam, from W. Midlands CAMRA said: “Beowulf Brewery may be relatively small, but it has a national reputation for brewing exceptional quality dark beers. This major award is much deserved, and I suspect will not be their last”

A small brewery in the Netherlands has launched a new beer designed to bring cool relief to thirsty dogs. Kwispelbier, marketed as “a beer for your best friend”, is made from a special brew of beef extract and malt. (‘Kwispel’ - means tail-wagging in Dutch). The beverage is a creation of pet shop owner Gerrie Berendsen, who wanted her dogs to share light refreshments with her after a day’s hunting. The beer is non-alcoholic and fit for human consumption, but costs four times as much as a Heineken.

Ms Berendsen, who lives in the eastern town of Zelhem, commissioned the small local Schelde brewery to make and bottle the beer. “Once a year we go to Austria to hunt with our dogs, and at the end of the day we sit on the veranda and drink a beer. So we thought, my dog also has earned it,” Ms Berendsen said.





# THE BULL'S HEAD

Barston Lane, Barston

TEL: 01675 442830



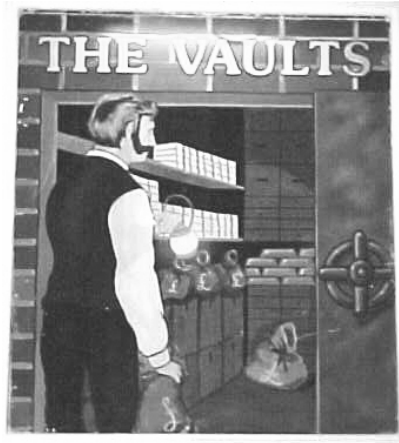
VISIT OUR 15<sup>th</sup> CENTURY VILLAGE INN  
WITH A SELECTION OF REAL ALES AND REGULAR GUEST BEERS  
Most recently listed in the CAMRA Good Beer Guide 2007  
*View our new website: [www.TheBullsHeadBarston.co.uk](http://www.TheBullsHeadBarston.co.uk)*

Solihull CAMRA Pub of the Year 2000 and 2002  
Cask-Marque accredited

HOME COOKED MEALS ARE AVAILABLE LUNCHTIMES AND  
EVENINGS MONDAY TO SATURDAY IN THE PLEASANT SURROUNDINGS  
OF THE PUB OR IN OUR SEPARATE NON-SMOKING RESTAURANT  
(Sundays 12 to 3pm for lunch - no evening meals)  
TELEPHONE RESERVATIONS WELCOME

*Spring is just around the corner, and although the real fires will be on for a  
**while yet, the trees are in bud and it won't be too long before you'll be in the**  
beer garden. Choose your spot — in or out — with a carefully crafted pint  
**from the bar. Wherever you sit, you're always welcome!***

Nick and Gwen welcome you to



### The Real Ale venue in Knowle

- ◆ Six hand-pumped beers including regulars Ansell's Mild, Greene King IPA, Burton Ale, Tetley Bitter and two guest beers
- ◆ Real cider from Weston's
- ◆ Food available lunchtimes Monday - Saturday

Solihull CAMRA Pub of the Year  
2003, 2004, 2005 and 2006

Come and see for yourself what we have to offer  
and why locals vote us a really great pub!

#### Spring Beer Festival

Commencing Friday 30th March, running for a week—20-25 guest beers  
on during this time, featuring Spring Ales from all over the country

CAMRA Good Beer Guide listed since 1993



***The Vaults, St John's Close, Knowle.***

*Tel: 01564 773656*



## Four Breweries and a Festival...part 2

Last October the Solihull branch was based at Knaresborough for our annual long weekend away which begins on Thursday and finishes on Saturday night.

Regular readers of the Drinker will recall in the last edition that I left you after our Thursday night pub crawl around Knaresborough. On arriving back at our digs, The Yorkshire Lass, some tarried for a quick one there, but I went up to bed as we had to present ourselves at the doors of the Coach and Horses, Harrogate promptly at 11 am next morning.

We were ahead of ourselves and just as well... but I jump ahead. We were all down to breakfast at 9 am except Kevin and Gordon who were not in the Landlady's good books, she having been got out of bed late the previous night as they had forgotten their key. Two rather sheepish brothers slinked in a little late for breakfast but all was quickly forgiven and forgotten and the team were at the bus stop opposite the Yorkshire Lass at just turned 10 am for the 10 minute trip into Harrogate, fired up for our express pub crawl of the town. We had to be back in Knaresborough by 1 pm for a tour of the legendary Roosters Brewery, not an easy brewery to get a tour of and definitely the highlight of our weekend.

Harrogate is completely different to Knaresborough the latter clinging to the hillside above the River Nidd whilst Harrogate is a spacious spa town. The bus dropped us off at the bus station and we made our way quickly through the town centre to our first port of call: the Coach and Horses, West Park. We arrived at 10:50 am, just in time for opening, only to find it had been open since 10 am. It has a modern pub interior but on traditional lines with, as the GBG says "snugs and alcoves". The beer range was Roosters Leghorn; Tetley Bitter; Timothy Taylor Landlord and Daleside's Bitter and Blonde. We tried the Leghorn, Blonde and Landlord to find them in excellent condition.



Knowing that time was not on our side and with two more pubs to go we legged it off to our next venue, Wetherspoons impressive Winter Gardens. This must be one of the largest Wetherspoons in the country with, as you can see in the photo an impressive staircase leading to the no smoking area.  
....(Cont.)

#### Four Breweries and a Festival...

(CONT.)

The beers too matched the pub's magnificence. 10+ ales were on handpump, due to it being a Wetherspoons festival, putting our own White Swan in Solihull to shame. Greene King, Marstons, Courage, Youngs and Everards are nothing to write home about, but Rooster's IPA; Saltaire's Fuggles and XB; Naylor's Rocking Victoria's Blonde and Fruity; Oakleaf Piston Porter and Hanby Rainbow Chaser. Sheer Heaven were, and we only had a short time here. Still, enough for us all to have a good go. We were not disappointed—beautiful beer and, like all other Wetherspoons, at an excellent price. Oh for more time here but on to our last pub in Harrogate: a flying visit to the Old Bell close by. A two roomed, all-non-smoking pub with bare boards gives you a flavour of what this pub is like. It had Black Sheep Emmerdale; Moorhouses' Pride of Pendle; Phoenix Monkey Mild and Timothy Taylor's Landlord, all in superb condition and in a traditional atmosphere.



A whistle stop tour of Harrogate next. We did not do it justice, but our next port of call was to be a tour of Rooster's Brewery, so we tore ourselves .Rooster's is not an easy brewery to find. It is housed in what can only be described as a large Nissen hut on an industrial estate. You would expect to see the tell tale signs of empty barrels that a brewery is close by. But no, all is well hidden. This is, as Sean Franklin was to tell us later, due to the fact that he doesn't want to draw attention to the brewery and its valuable casks which if exposed, would be probably be stolen and melted down.

On arriving at the brewery we met up with Jamie Compton, an ex Solihull CAMRA member who now lives in York, and we all settled down to the hospitality offered us by Sean in the form of Roosters Special and his wife Alison who fed us with a filling pot stew. I have to admit a bias here as I have always



enjoyed Sean's beers from the days when he first set up Franklin's Brewery many years ago, so for me this was an opportunity to meet a man whom I have great admiration for. I was surprised to find what a shy, retiring man he seemed to be, but with what I can only describe as a restrained passion for beer and a knowledge which must be unsurpassed in the brewing industry. Sean began his sojourn with alcohol as a quality

controller in the wine industry in Bordeaux. He returned from France to be a cab driver for four years when, on popping into the pub at Goose Eye, decided that he could make beer, and so it all started.....(CONT.)



It takes all sorts to campaign for real ale

## Join CAMRA today...

Complete the Direct Debit form below and you will receive three months membership free and a fantastic discount on your membership subscription. Alternatively you can send a cheque payable to CAMRA Ltd with your completed form, visit [www.camra.org.uk](http://www.camra.org.uk) or call 01727 867201. All forms should be addressed to Membership Secretary, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, AL1 4LW.



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For concessionary rates please visit [www.camra.org.uk](http://www.camra.org.uk) or call 01727 867201.

### Partner's Details (if Joint Membership)

Title ..... Surname .....

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Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy) .....

I wish to join the Campaign for Real Ale, and agree to abide by the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

I enclose a cheque for .....

Signed ..... Date .....

Applications will be processed within 21 days



### Instruction to your Bank or Building Society to pay by Direct Debit

Please fill in the form and send to: Campaign for Real Ale Ltd, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, Herts AL1 4LW



This Guarantee should be detached and retained by the payer.

### The Direct Debit Guarantee

- This Guarantee is offered by all Banks and Building Societies that take part in the Direct Debit Scheme. The efficiency and security of the Scheme is monitored and protected by your own Bank or Building Society.
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- If an error is made by CAMRA or your Bank or Building Society, you are guaranteed a full and immediate refund from your branch of the amount paid.
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Banks and Building Societies may not accept Direct Debit Instructions for some types of account.

## Old Solihull Pub Names (part 8) V—Z

Finally we get to the last part of our history of local Solihull & District pubs. Alas, it will probably not be too many years from now till the cataloguing has to start again, if current trends of pub losses and **changeovers continue.....**

VIKING Olton  
Changed its name to the HOBS MEADOW in 1990.

VINE INN Knowle  
Listed in the Warwickshire Directory of 1874.

WARWICKSHIRE LAD Wood End  
Changed its name back to the OLD ROYAL OAK in 1992. The old WARWICKSHIRE LAD pub sign was hanging inside the pub until recently, but has apparently gone missing.

WHEATSHEAF Lapworth  
Was on Lapworth Hill, now a farm. There is a Wheatsheaf Lane near Lapworth Church.

WHITE LION Bentley Heath  
Known to exist in 1861, the pub currently on this site is called the DRUM & MONKEY. The most likely explanation for the new name relates to the blasting powder carriers working on the construction of the nearby railway – the powder monkeys. The drum presumably refers to the receptacle the powder was stored in.

WHITE LION Hockley Heath  
Later renamed the WHARF TAVERN.

WHITE SWAN Knowle  
Called the SWAN in the 1874 Warwickshire Directory, located on the site of the NatWest Bank on Knowle High Street. If you look closely there is a carved Swan on the front of the bank. It was bought by Ansells Brewery from Lucas's of Leamington Spa in 1935, along with the RED LION. Not wanting two pubs so close together, they closed the WHITE SWAN & transferred the licence to the RED LION. The WHITE SWAN was demolished in 1938.

WOOD AT ROWINGTON Rowington  
And finally – a good example of how transitory some names are. This pub dates back to the 17<sup>th</sup> Century when it was named TOM O'WOOD after a local corn mill. A change in image resulted in it becoming THE WOOD AT ROWINGTON in 2005. However by the end of 2006, common sense had prevailed and the new owners restored the original name.



Steve Wood



## Four Breweries and a Festival...

(CONT.)

An evening in York was planned, so off we went. York is a well known tourist spot but it has some magnificent pubs, and we started at what many would say is the best: The Maltings, in the shadow of the city walls, is one of York's gems, not from an historical perspective but more from it's bohemian character. Until 1992 it was known as the Railway Tavern and Lendal Bridge. I can only describe this one roomed small, cramped pub as a bit of a mish-mash, but it exudes the comforting personality of an old friend. With Roosters Yankee; York Guzzler; Howard Town Dinting Arches; Yorkshire Dales Gunnerside Gold; Bottlebrook Full Moon; Goose Eye KW&V and Black Sheep Best Bitter we had more than enough choice



York Brewery's' Yorkshire Terrier was our next port of call. Winning CAMRA's Pub Design Award in 2005 for its conversion, this, a compact multi roomed pub with a function room upstairs, is located right in the historic heart of York. Most welcome is the availability of sample trays of 4 1/3 pint glasses for £3.00. This gave us the opportunity to taste all the beers on tap. From the York stable, IPA, Guzzler, Centurians Ghost Ale, Stonewall and Terrier. From Castle Rock, Elsie Mo and Black Gold whilst Oldershaw provided Cascade and Harrowby Pale Ale, all in good condition.

Our next pub was The Swan in Bishopgate Street which is on CAMRA's Inventory of Heritage Pubs, being an intact 1930's refurbishment. This superb pub has an unusual floor plan known as the "West Riding" layout. Supporting the bar was Roosters Yankee; Oldershaw Isaac's Gold; Saltaire Goldings Ale; Deuchars IPA; Timothy Taylors Landlord; Harviestoun Schiehallion and Tetley Bitter.



On we went to the Golden Ball in Cromwell Road, another National Inventory find. A Victorian street corner local, this lovely pub was refurbished by John Smiths in 1929 giving a distinctive 1930's look. Voted York Branch's Pub Of The Year in 2004, this four roomed pub has an unusual tiled bar area and a very pleasant covered garden, even in October. Down to the beer - Deuchars IPA; Marston's Pedigree; Ruddles Best; Wylam Bohemian and a Czech pilsner-style beer.

And so, last pub of the night: the Ackhorne in St Martin's Lane, one large rambling room with Acorn Barnsley Bitter; Ossett Black Bull; Roosters Yankee; Wylam Bohemia and Caledonian Deuchars IPA. I tried the Barnsley Bitter which got a 4 out of 5. Wishing to get back to Knaresborough for a quick one at Blind Jacks, we were off, having thanked Jamie for a well planned evening. We were soon installed there with a last round, reviewing the day.

Steve Dyson

*Part 3 in the next Drinker... the final furlong*

## Further to the November Social

### **A reader comments...**

Dear Ms Hammonds,

I was disappointed to read your somewhat one-sided report of your visit to the above mentioned establishment in the December issue of the CAMRA magazine. As a regular visitor to the Church Inn and a friend of the proprietors I should like to question some of the assertions in your article. Firstly let me make it clear, as you did not in your article, that the Church Inn is under new management, barely 2 weeks prior to your visit the pub was taken over, and the new proprietors have worked hard to understand the business, maintain standards and meet the needs of the pre Christmas rush. The fact that, albeit begrudgingly you agree that the food was "good" and the Bathams ale "excellent" is a testament to the hard work undertaken since the departure of the previous landlord. It is my understanding and that of the staff and proprietors that your party did not order food as a group and as such the kitchen staff were unaware of the need to have all the food served at the same time. Further, the proprietors did not receive any complaints about the food and the service and had they done, would have addressed the issues you raised. It is also my understanding that your party ordered different cuts of steaks, including T bone, fillet (wedge shaped!) and sirloins - all of which have differing cooking times as you no doubt appreciate, **though don't mention in your article. I am sure that on closer reflection you will appreciate my comments and be less critical of this Pub's excellent food and beer the next time you visit.**



Yours sincerely, Roy Cokayne

### **Editor's comments:**

On this occasion there were 13 of us, in two parties—call them party A (9 people) and party B (4 people). Party B arrived last and put their order in after party A. If Party A had all been served at the same time, then party B later on I wouldn't have been grumbling. However, I in party B, who ordered last of all, got served first. A lady in party A, who ordered first of all (fillet steak), got served right at the end. The four people who ordered fillet steaks—three rare, one medium rare, got served 40 minutes after everybody else. This was after querying when the steaks were coming (how long does it take to cook a fillet steak?)—no less than 3 times. We could hear other food cooking—but it wasn't our steaks. When the steaks finally arrived, two of the rare steaks were cooked medium rare, and one rare and the medium-rare steak were cooked well-done. We did mention this to the management but the response was vague and did not include doing the steaks again to a satisfactory standard. Hope that explains my comments about the patchy service, Roy.



# Dates For Your Diary

## *Socials*

Saturday 10 <sup>th</sup> March	Tunnel Brewery Trip
Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> April	Pub & Grub Night: Jimmy Spices, Station Rd. Solihull
Saturday 19 <sup>th</sup> May	Gloucestershire Minibus Trip (details TBC)
June	Black Country Pub-crawl by Tram (details TBC)
July	Knowle Ramble (details TBC)

## *Branch Meetings*

Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> March	Rowington Club, Rowington
Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> April	Drum & Monkey, Dorridge
Monday 14 <sup>th</sup> May	Reservoir, Earlswood (TBC)
Monday 4 <sup>th</sup> June	The Boat, Catherine De Barnes (TBC)

(NB. All Branch meetings start at 8.30pm except where noted otherwise)

*For meetings/socials yet to be confirmed or if more details are needed,  
visit our website: [www.SolihullCamra.org.uk](http://www.SolihullCamra.org.uk), or contact Branch  
Secretary Steve Wood on 0121 704 5258.*

## *Forthcoming Beer Festivals*

Anchor Inn, Digbeth: 15-18 March (St. Patrick's Day—12+ beers)  
Bromsgrove Branch: 12-15 July  
Coventry Branch, Rugby Football Club, Butts Road: 3-14 April  
Great British Beer Festival, London: 7-11 August  
Solihull & District: 5-6 October  
Vaults, Knowle: 30 March for one week

## Membership Matters

### Members' Weekend 20 - 22 April 2007

The Wolverhampton Branch is pleased to host the Members' Weekend and AGM Black Country 2007 which is to be held in the Wolverhampton Civic and Wulfrun Halls. The weekend is open to all CAMRA Members and is an opportunity to review what has been happening at branch, regional and national level as well as a great chance to socialise with other members. For further details contact CAMRA HQ

Carl Wright



## The 2007 Telford Community Beer Festival



### *"The Beers of Shropshire and the Midlands"*

New Bucks Head Stadium, Wellington, Telford

Friday 25<sup>th</sup> May: 5 pm - 11 pm

Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> May: 12 pm - 11 pm

Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> May: 12 pm - 8 pm

Up to 50 Real Ales available!!!

Up to 6 Ciders available

Selection of 10 British Wines at any one time

Quality Local Entertainment throughout the  
weekend in separate marquee:

*Brass Band, Show Band, Music*

*Hog Roasts, Curries, Burgers, Pies*

Tickets: £5 per day, including 2007 Festival Glass

Accompanied Under-**16's** - Free

Ticket upgrade available at the festival for £3 to cover all sessions

Tickets Available From:

AFCTU 01952 640064

Anthony Goodwin 07855 745453

Email: [TelfordIncrcris@aol.com](mailto:TelfordIncrcris@aol.com)

Web: [www.telfordutd.co.uk](http://www.telfordutd.co.uk)

New Bucks Head Stadium, Watling Street  
Wellington, Telford TF1 2TU

10 Minutes Walk from Wellington Train Station;

Frequent Buses. Discounted Accommodation available at Telford  
Whitehouse Hotel



## Warwick the Beer Drinker

Wanting to widen our horizons from the usual Solihull pubs, ten Solihull and District members recently caught the train to Warwick, just over twenty minutes by Chiltern line from Solihull station.

Our first stop was the 15<sup>th</sup> century New Bowling Green Inn. The recent Well's and Young's tie up clearly in evidence, with Young's Winter Warmer joining the usual Eagle IPA and Bombardier. From there it was a quick walk across Warwick to the Old Fourpenny Shop, a GBG regular. Originally named the Warwick Tavern when built around 1800, it takes its name from selling a coffee and tot of rum to the navvies for only 4d. 6 beers were available and our leisurely stop meant most sampled both RCH Pitchfork and Church End Goat's Milk, with both being in very good condition. It was then on to the Tilted Wig in the Market Place for a taste of Tilted Pig from Warwick's own Slaughterhouse brewery. A brewery that the branch had the opportunity to visit a few years ago.

The penultimate stop was the GBG 2007 listed Millwright Arms, a 17<sup>th</sup> century half timbered coaching inn. Again 6 real ales were available, including Milestone Brewery's Home Wrecker, which was brewery new to all of us. (Subsequent research on the internet revealed that Milestone is actually based in Cromwell, north of Newark on Trent). The Caledonian Deuchar's IPA was also appreciated. There was some discussion amongst the longer serving members as to when we had last visited the pub, a visit which included a tour of the sadly short lived brewery. To prevent arguments the pub's website states that the brewery was in operation from Dec 1997 to May 1998. From the Millwright's it was a short walk to the Crown and Castle, where we were pleasantly surprised to find Oakham JHB on at £1.85 a pint.

Malcolm Harry

For those of you who fancy following in their footsteps, addresses are: New Bowling Green Inn: 13 St Nicholas Church St; Old Fourpenny Shop: 27-29 Crompton St; Tilted Wig: 11 Market Place; Millwright Arms: 67 Coten End; Crown & Castle: 2-4 Coventry Rd (corner with Coten End).

### Supermarkets sell lager for just pennies more than water

The Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) is calling for a stop to irresponsible alcohol promotion as supermarkets sell lager for just 5p more than a pint of bottled water. A survey by CAMRA revealed that in some supermarkets Fosters and Carlsberg was available for the equivalent of just 54p a pint - or 16p before tax. CAMRA, members of parliament, trade press and pub industry chiefs are calling for urgent action to prevent promotions that serve to exacerbate the problem of binge drinking. CAMRA Chief Executive Mike Benner said: "The ridiculous practice of the major supermarkets selling below cost for alcohol to out-price each other is reckless, irresponsible and dangerous. To put it in perspective some bottled water in the supermarket costs 49p a pint and water is not subject to excise duty as alcohol is."

CAMRA believes that irresponsible drinks promotions in the off trade are a major cause of binge-drinking incidents, yet it is licensed premises that suffer the fallout while supermarkets continue with impunity. Mike Benner continued: "Pubs often come under unjustified attack for encouraging binge-drinking, yet the industry has committed itself to curb irresponsible drinking and cheap alcohol promotions in recent years. This hard work is undermined by supermarkets selling enormous quantities of alcohol at prices that simply cannot be justified. "An 18-year-old is free to take advantage of these ludicrous beer prices, walk out the supermarket door and then drink in a completely unsupervised and unsafe environment. Beer can be given by them to under-age drinkers who do not know their limits but pour premium-strength lager down their throats all night. This is in stark contrast to adults enjoying a drink in a pub which is regulated by law as to who they can and cannot serve." "Something has to be done now to make supermarkets realise the damage these promotions can cause."

MP John Grogan of the All Party Parliamentary Beer Group has tabled an Early Day Motion urging supermarkets and off-licenses to follow the example of pubs, act to end irresponsible drinks promotions, and not to use alcohol as a loss leader on their premises. CAMRA is urging consumers to lobby their MP to sign Early Day Motion 495 and make supermarkets take their social responsibilities more seriously. 41 MPs have signed the motion so far.



ALISON AND ADRIAN WELCOME YOU TO

# The Rowington Club

On Rowington Green, Rowington, Warwickshire CV35 7BD

Telephone: 01564 782087

Opening hours: Weekdays: 2.00 pm – 11.00 pm

Weekends and Bank Holidays: 12 Noon – 11.00 pm

Large car park

Come and relax playing dominoes, cards, snooker and pool

Three regularly changing real ales available

(With your support we can even increase the range of ales!)

Live music most Saturdays and Special Events every month

Being a club, we charge £1.00 per visit  
(free to card-carrying CAMRA members)  
(full membership: £10.00 per annum)

## Forthcoming Events

*From now onwards:*

Bingo: Alternate Tuesdays

Live music (60's. 70's and 80's): alternate Saturdays

Plus an exciting fun-filled evening to celebrate **St. George's Day**

For full details of all events, please ring Adrian or Alison at  
The Rowington Club, and they will be only too please to  
welcome you to a wonderful night out.

# The Golden Acres

Rowood Drive

Damsonwood, Solihull

Tel. 0121 704 9002

Joint Solihull & District CAMRA  
Most Improved Pub of the Year 2005

Three guest  
real ales  
plus a  
regularly-  
changing  
traditional  
cider



Sports  
coverage  
a regular  
feature

Children  
welcome

Try our authentic Chinese food  
Eat in and/or Take-away

Mondays-Saturdays (except Tuesdays) 5.00-11.30pm  
Sundays: Eat-in 5.00-10.30pm Take-away 5.00-11.30pm

## BREWERS LAMENT

The pint's an imperial measure  
Designed for the man with a thirst.  
If it's beer, it's double the pleasure  
And others will follow the first.

Man's worries and cares have receded  
From the ale that washed them away  
By refreshing the parts that are needed  
A bit later on in the day.

But, alas he is hooked, and keeps boozing  
And finds to his utter dismay  
That the parts he had hoped to be using  
Are numb and unwilling to play.

So next time you go out on the town,  
If it's beer you are hoping to sup  
Just remember, whatever goes down  
May prevent something else staying up.

### CAMRA launches online National Beer Scoring Scheme for members

FOR the first time the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA's) 84,000 strong membership will be able to rate the quality of beer available in pubs using a new online National Beer Scoring Scheme (NBSS).

The NBSS is a six point scale (0-5) for judging beer quality in pubs that has been designed to assist CAMRA branches in selecting pubs for the bestselling Good Beer Guide. In the past CAMRA members filled in cards to rate the beer in a pub and then submitted the entries to CAMRA, but now they are able to fill the details in online at [www.BeerScoring.org.uk](http://www.BeerScoring.org.uk) - making the process quicker and easier than ever before.

NBSS Co-ordinator and CAMRA Director Brett Laniosh says it is the simplest way for CAMRA members to give feedback on the state of beer in British pubs as the website can be accessed at any time. In addition there are no longer postage costs to send back completed cards. Brett Laniosh said: "Giant strides have been made by brewers and retailers to improve cask quality, but there is still work to be done to make sure every pint of cask beer is served in excellent condition. The NBSS is part of CAMRA's continuing commitment to further improve beer quality."

CAMRA members will be asked to examine the look, smell, and taste of each beer before offering their evaluation. The scores are:

0 = Undrinkable: No cask ale or the quality is so poor you can't finish it.

1 = Poor: Barely drinkable

2 = Average: Competently kept but uninspiring.

3 = Good: Good beer in good form. Worth another pint.

4 = Very Good: Excellent beer in excellent condition, another pint is a must.

5 = Perfect: Very rarely given by the seasoned drinker. Probably the best beer you are likely to find.

Brett Laniosh added: "The scheme is only open to CAMRA members, so if you are passionate about real ale and would like to get involved, why not sign up to our organisation today and help 84,000 dedicated real ale lovers to find the best pubs and beer in Britain."

For more information about CAMRA or membership, visit [www.camra.org.uk](http://www.camra.org.uk) or call 01727 867201.

## SHUSTOKE AND FURNACE END - A WALK ON THE WILD SIDE

Whether you are a keen walker or just enjoy a stroll in the country, you may be familiar with Shustoke Reservoir. It is on the left as you enter Shustoke from the direction of Coleshill, with toilets, picnic tables and ample car parking. An active sailing club is also located there and the walk round the reservoir is very pleasant, with plenty of wildlife interest. Walking up a thirst and appetite is a good excuse to visit the Plough (almost opposite), a friendly hostelry serving three real ales and reasonably priced bar snacks. There is also a separate, non-smoking restaurant with a varied menu for those wishing to enjoy a good meal in pleasant surroundings. Just before Christmas 2006 the real ales on offer were Banks' Bitter, Bass and Highgate Mild.

A bit further along the road, on the left at Church End is the Griffin. This pub has been frequently listed in CAMRA's Good Beer Guide and is a real ale Mecca, providing six regular beers and four guests. Regular beers include Hook Norton Old Hooky, Marston's Pedigree, Everards Tiger, Theakstons Old Peculier, and RCH Pitchfork. Reasonably-priced good food is served Monday-Saturday lunchtimes. A fine conservatory overlooks the garden, with lovely views over the countryside. A warning: the pub is on a sharp bend in the road with a potential traffic hazard when departing.

Finally, beyond and down the hill in Furnace End just before the crossroads, on the right stands the Bull's Head, a charming pub offering a good range of reasonably priced food and a constantly changing range of real ales. There are three handpumps on the bar and the landlord is very keen on providing a choice of quality beers, having gained 'Cask Marque' accreditation last year. Jennings' Golden Host, Cocker Hoop, Crag Rat and Tom Fool have all been offered, along with Thwaites' Lancaster Bomber, Young's Bitter and Special Bitter, St. Austell Tribute, Bateman's Valiant, Shepherd Neame Spitfire and Brains' Rev. James amongst others.

All in all, the Shustoke/Furnace End corridor is a haven of Real Ale and good food for those who wish to seek it out, so why not try a wander over that way?. You won't be disappointed—and can always walk it off afterwards if you wish!

Chris Lloyd

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## The Word on the Street...

A farmer is giving each of his cows up to 40 pints of beer a day to produce better beef. Cornish farmer Daren Pluess believes the booze helps the flavour and texture of the beef and even offers his five Limousine cattle a massage to make the meat extra tender.

Birmingham's most influential lobbying group, which meets every Friday at 3pm to sort out the city's problems, is transferring from the Old Joint Stock in Birmingham to the Wellington. It doesn't have an official title, although it has been dubbed the Tittle Tattle Club, ostensibly by envious council leader Mike Whitby, and the Old Jeremiah Society (OJS - get it!) allegedly by Dianne Benussi, chairman of Birmingham Forward (who they?).

These are the proud badges of honour for unsavoury types such as Duckers, Phil Parkin, John James, John Lamb, Roger Monkman, Tony Bell, Andrew Sparrow, Tony Flanagan, Andy Skinner, Joy Stefancki and Melissa Dickenson.

The pull-out from the OJS was agreed after it was decided no-one could take the disinterested and morose staff any longer (except the delightful Kelly) and was no longer prepared to put up with the eternity it took for anyone to bother serving.

The team on tour have since tried the Old Royal and Utopia, but a "wet" run at the Wellington last week proved such a success that all agreed on a return.

Here's Stefanicki (the love interest) and Matt Taylor (as Brad Pitt) trying on James's hat as they audition for the new horror film, It's Your Round Next.

All very apt for Taylor who had to be "carried out". Well, it was his Birthday.

## It's a Funny Old World

Ken Jackson, a long-standing Solihull & District branch member, has appeared on the pump clip of Church End brewery's latest beer, Harry Porter, 4.2%.

Other people honoured in this way include like the likes of Frank Whittle, inventor of the jet engine, and Mr Fox the undertaker at St Cuthbert's church, famed for his distinctive hat.

Ken has gone to no such trouble. "I am delighted the crowning glory of my career is to look a little bit like a fictional character from a children's story," he said. "It makes a change from looking like Adrian Mole," he added. Ken, aged 34 1/2, has always thought he looked like a film star but has foregone the fame and fortune of the silver screen in favour of visiting a few pubs.

The beer is a variant of Church End's famous Pews Porter. It is a full bodied potion of the chocolate and coffee style, like Guinness with ingredients in.

Harry Porter was distributed amongst deserving pubs in the south of England in time for Halloween.

Karl the brewer said, "We thought that sticking his mug on the clip would remind him to get his round in, but it's just frightening off the other drinkers."







# BERNDIES

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The Solihull Drinker is the newsletter of the Solihull & District Branch  
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The Editor reserves the right to amend or shorten any contributions in the Solihull Drinker,  
but will always honour the spirit of the contribution.

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