

Free

Solihull



Drinker

Free

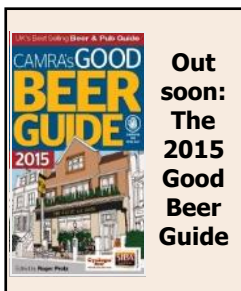
Issue No 69

Autumn 2014

Solihull Pub, Club & Brewery News



Featured in this issue:



Club of the Year 2014:

The Rowington Club

16th Solihull Beer Festival – spon- sors and itinerary



16th Solihull Beer Festival

It will soon be October, and that means one thing: the Solihull Beer Festival. On Friday 3rd and Saturday 4th October we'll again be welcoming hundreds of thirsty people to the Royal British Legion, Union Road, Solihull for the 16th annual festival. As we strive to keep improving the festival we're making changes to the opening hours – and there is even free beer on offer!

For the 3rd year the Whitworth Brewing Company has kindly sponsored the festival, and we will have five of their beers available. Last year we took Sobriety, Sobriety Blonde, Sobriety MPH, Crooked Elbow and Doolally Tap, but since

then Whitworth has added Ruby Sipper to its range, so you will have to come along to see which five we are offering.

We're delighted that another local brewery, the Silhill Brewery, is sponsoring the bars at this year's festival; we will have all three of their regular ales, and we may also have a 'festival special' brewed by them.

As usual we will be using a beer token system: the admission charge of £10 includes your entry fee, festival glass and programme, and £5.50 of beer tokens. CAMRA members also pay £10, but receive an

Continued on Page 8)

**Have you considered advertising with us? Get your pub, club or business into view!!
To advertise and for rates: call 0121 603 1621 or email editor@solihullcamra.org.uk**

THE BULL'S HEAD



Barston Lane, Barston Tel: 01675 442830

**Open Monday—Thursday: 11.00am—2.30pm & 5.00pm—11.00pm;
Friday, Saturday and Sunday: 11.00am—11.00pm.**

Brad, Joy and the team welcome you to their award-winning 15th century village inn with its selection of real ales (6-time winner of the Solihull CAMRA Pub of the Year award between 1998 and 2012)

Listed in the CAMRA Good Beer Guide for over 20 years

Cask Marque accredited

Home-cooked meals are available lunchtimes and evenings Mondays to Saturdays in the comfortable pub bars or in our separate intimate restaurant

(Sundays: 12 to 3pm for lunch - no evening meals)

TELEPHONE RESERVATIONS WELCOME



Summer gives way to Autumn, and we can expect rain, wind and falling leaves, heralding the bowing out of the year. But don't be downhearted: drop in and try your choice of our well-kept real ales and seasonal home-cooked food, and all will be well-being and comfort!



www.TheBullsHeadBarston.co.uk

Club of the Year 2014

It was with great pleasure that several branch members met up at the Rowington Club on Thursday 14th August to present club manager Adrian Cotton with the award for Solihull & District CAMRA Club of the Year 2014.

The Rowington Club was the first Solihull & District club that this branch entered into the Good Beer Guide, back in 2010; and when it was decided to add a Club of the Year to our Pub of the Year award, they were the first winners in 2013.

This year they were up against several more clubs in our area, all of whom keep a good pint and extend a warm welcome to CAMRA members, so competition was fierce.

However, the club's championing of real ales, always kept in great condition by Adrian and his team, were duly noted, not forgetting the sterling behind-the-scenes work of the club committee; and the club's position as a major focus for the village, keenly supporting local enterprises and the host to many enjoyable social events over

the course of the year, all add up to a laudable asset of which the locals can be very proud. As a result, the Rowington Club is once again the worthy winner of this award.



Chairman Carl Wright presenting the award to Rowington Club manager Adrian Cotton

NB. As this magazine went to print, we learned that Adrian was taken ill recently and rushed into hospital. He is now making a good recovery and hopefully will be back at the Rowington Club soon. The Solihull CAMRA Branch sends him their best wishes.

The Stratford Alehouse

At the July branch meeting of Shakespeare CAMRA, branch members voted the Stratford Alehouse 'Pub of the Season' for Summer 2014. The pub, which has now been running for over eight months, has proved popular with CAMRA members and visitors to Stratford-upon-Avon alike, and their wide range of well-kept real ales have gone down a storm since they opened.



If you happen to be in Stratford-upon-Avon, do drop in—12B Greenhill Street, near the station.

The 70th edition of the Solihull Drinker will be published on Monday 1st December.

Please note that the deadline for copy, advertising and any other contributions is Friday 14th November.

Hail to the Ale!

- local Beer, Pub, Club & Brewery news

Desco Lounge, Shirley

Longers, the West Country based restaurant/café/bar group has opened a brand new site in Shirley. The venue is a retro home from home, where dramatic art works sit next to oversized vintage sofas and statement light fittings in an eclectic style.

The bar will cater for all tastes throughout the day from a cup of coffee to a business lunch or a lazy all-day brunch. There will be two real ales on: a stout from Bath Ales and Cruiser Atlantic Pale Ale from the Bristol Beer Factory.

Desco Lounge can be found at Unit 9 Parkgate Shopping Centre, Stratford Road, Shirley.

Shirley Beer Festival

At the Shirley Round Table Beer Festival back in May, John and Carol Edwards sponsored a cask in

and beer festivals; and to publicise the Ian Edwards Cancer Break Trust, the charity they set up in Ian's name. The beer chosen - Sadler's "Hop Bomb" - was the first to sell out.

The Fieldhouse, Solihull

The Fieldhouse will be greeting the start of Autumn with a promotion where all cask ales will be £2.49 every Monday.

Beers on handpump will be Wadsworth 6X and Brakspear Bitter, plus a selection of regularly changing guest ales.

And finally, a quartet of local beer festivals, in date order:

The Inn on the Green

The Inn on the Green at Acocks Green, a Birmingham CAMRA Pub of the Year 2013 finalist, is holding a beer festival from Thursday 11th—Sunday 14th September, with 20 ales and 4 ciders. The pub regularly features 4 real ales (at the time of writing these were Liverpool Organic's Joseph Williamson, Humpty Dumpty's Norfolk Nectar, Milestone's American Pale Ale and Wentworth's Oyster Stout, plus Hairy Ferret's Traditional Scrumpy).

Find more information including opening times and the festival beer list, at www.innonthegreen.co.uk.



memory of their son Ian, who some of you may have met at our socials

The Blossomfield Club, Solihull

The Blossomfield Club is holding a beer festival on Friday 19th (5-11pm) - Saturday 20th (2-11pm) September. Free entry, festival glass £2, purchase via beer tokens, live music, food available.

The White Swan, Solihull

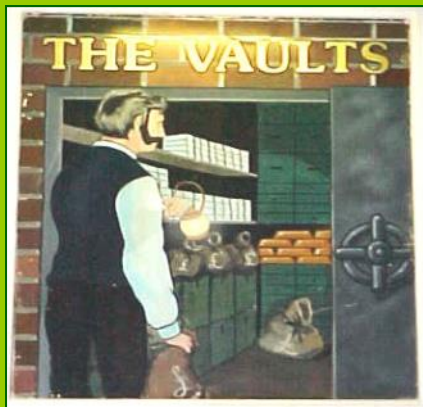
The White Swan will be holding a 'Locale' beer festival from September 22nd—28th, with the Backyard, Sadlers and Two Towers breweries competing against each other. There will also be 'Meet the Brewer'

sessions during the festival. For beer information, see the pub's website nearer the time

The Forest Hotel, Dorridge

The Forest has a beer festival from Thursday 30th October— Sunday 2nd November. There will be a pre-view on Wednesday night for CAMRA members and invitees; live music for Halloween disco on Friday night, and The Undercocks live on the Saturday. There will be a balanced yet exciting selection of beers—see the pub's website nearer the time for full details.

Nick, Gwen and staff welcome you to the Real Ale venue in Knowle



*CAMRA Good Beer Guide listed
since 1993*

**Solihull CAMRA Pub of the Year 2013
(& 7 times between 1992-2008)**

Wi-Fi now available for individuals
or meetings: ask at the bar for details.

**NEW: Cocktail nights from
6.30pm Fridays & Saturdays**



**Food available lunchtimes from
Monday - Saturday, 12.00-2.00pm**

6 hand-pumped beers including Tetley Gold, Sharp's Doombar, Adnams Lighthouse and St Austell Tribute + 2 ever-changing guests, and a frequently changing **guest real cider**.

The Vaults, St John's Close, Knowle Tel: 01564 773656

***Opening hours: Mon-Thurs 12.00-2.30pm and 5.00-11.30pm;
Fri & Sat: 12.00-11.30pm; Sun 12.00-11.00pm.***

Dates For Your Diary

Branch Meetings 2014

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

Monday 13th Oct	White Swan, Henley-in-Arden
Monday 3rd Nov	Bulls Head, Barston (NB. 8.00pm start, followed by the AGM at 8.30pm)
Monday 1st Dec	Railway Inn, Dorridge <i>(preceded by a New Members 'Meet & Greet' at 8.00pm)</i>

Committee Meetings

(8.30pm start. Members may attend but only participate if invited to do so by the Committee)

Monday 15th Sept	Grenville Club, Solihull
Monday 17th Nov	Tom o' the Wood, Rowington

Socials

Saturday 13th Sept	Walsall, Willenhall & Wolverhampton Crawl <i>(NB. Please phone Steve Dyson on 01216038994 if you will be going)</i>
Fri 3rd & Sat 4th Oct	16th Solihull Beer Festival
Saturday 1st Nov	Birmingham Beer Festival (TBC)
Saturday 13th Dec	Christmas Crawl round Warwick

For more details and contacts where appropriate, please call Secretary Allan Duffy on 01564 200 431 or visit our website: www.solihullcamra.org.uk

Most, though not all, of our local pubs have disabled access. If you wish to come to a meeting and require assistance to get inside, contact us beforehand and we will do our best to help.

W. Mids Beer Festivals 2014

Thurs 4th—Sat 6th Sept: 21st Tamworth Beer Festival, Assembly Rooms, Corporation St, Tamworth (11—11 each day). 90+ real ales from micro-breweries; ciders & perries + bottled beers. Admission £3 all sessions [except Fri. & Sat. 5-11pm (£4)]; CAMRA members: free entry all times. More details at www.LSTCAMRA.org.uk

Thurs 18th—Sat 20th Sept: 1st Cannock Beer Festival, Prince of Wales Centre, Church St, Cannock (Thurs 5-11pm; Fri. & Sat. 12 noon—11pm). 60 ales + 6 ciders/perries. Admission £3 gen. public, £2 armed forces, £1 CAMRA members, incl. refundable souvenir glass. Details at www.cannockchase.camra.org.uk

Fri 3rd—Sat 4th Oct: 16th Solihull Beer Festival, Royal British Legion, Union Road, Solihull (Fri. & Sat. 12 noon—11pm). 42 real ales plus cider/perry. £10 entry package incl. beer tokens, prog & refundable glass (includes £1 extra tokens for card-carrying CAMRA members). **Enter before 3pm Sat. & receive a FREE PINT!** www.solihullcamra.org.uk

Wed 29th Oct—Sat 1st Nov: Birmingham Beer & Cider Festival, New Bingley Hall, 1 Hockley Circus, B'ham B18 (Wed. 6-10pm—CAMRA members & invites only; Thurs.—Sat: 11am—10.30pm). Admission from £2.50. CAMRA members £2 extra tokens (except Wed). 300+ real ales inc. many fest specials; 100+ ciders/perries + huge range of foreign beers. Full details & admission info at www.birminghambeerfestival.co.uk

THE WHITE LION

High Street, Hampton in Arden, Solihull B92 0AA

Tel: 01675 442833 www.thewhitelioninn.com

Mon—Wed: 12.00—11.00pm; Thurs—Sat: 12.00-12.00

Sunday 12.00—10.30pm



Solihull CAMRA Most Improved Pub of the Year 2011

Bars *Six real ales on at all times (currently Brew XI, Sharps Doom Bar, Banks Sunbeam, Robinsons Dizzy Blonde. Thwaites Lancaster Bomber and Hobson's Best)*

Restaurant A la Carte menu; Sunday roasts from £9.50

Accommodation All en-suite; 2 miles from the NEC, Birmingham airport and Birmingham International station

A proper pub with a bit of je ne sais quoi!

16th Solihull Beer Festival *(continued)*



Part of last year's festival stillage display

extra £1 of beer tokens. Top-up tokens will be available in the main hall; unused tokens can be refunded or donated to this year's charity, the Royal British Legion. If you don't want to keep your festival glass, you can return it for a £2.50 refund. Even better: attend on Friday, come back on Saturday with your Friday entry slip and we will only charge £6 for entry, including glass and £3.50 beer tokens.

We know that in the past, it has sometimes been difficult to get to the bar on Friday evenings, so we're making changes. Firstly, rather than a single L-shaped bar, there will be two bars on opposite sides of the room; this will allow us to have the doors open that separate the main room from the seating area, giving more room. Secondly we will be opening at noon on Friday, with the aim of spreading the opening-day rush over more of the day. But by now, I know what you're thinking: what about the free beer? Well, it's simple: everyone who comes along on Saturday afternoon before 3 pm

will receive vouchers for two free half-pints of beer. Yes, that includes everyone getting free entry because they were there on Friday – does our generosity know no bounds?

Saturday afternoon will see the return of our popular Home Brew competition, where enthusiastic amateurs take centre stage. This year the competition has been sponsored by the Shed Brewery, whose head brewer, Perry Clarke, is a past winner of the competition – before he went commercial, of course! If you have a brew that you want to enter, contact the competition organiser, Max Lanham – solihullhomebrew@gmail.com.



The Strumtroopers in action

We are delighted to announce that The Strumtroopers will take to the stage on Saturday evening for the fourth year in succession – making us officially their most consistent booking. The group has been a huge hit with festival-goers, playing a mix of rock and pop classics on a variety of instruments including gui-

tar, bongos, ukuleles and plastic trombone. Earlier in the evening the Warwick University Brass Ensemble will entertain us again with an eclectic selection of tunes.

Visitors will also be able to guess the 'Mystery Beer', this year sponsored by the Shirley Boarding Cattery - only the ABV will be shown, so you will need to have a sup of it to decide what it is. There will be a prize for the first answer drawn with the correct beer and brewery name.

Hot food will be available until 9 pm each day, with sandwiches and rolls available after that. Finally, many thanks to those without whom there would be no festival – the Festival Committee, all our hard-working volunteer staff, our beer suppliers, advertisers, the Whitworth Brewing Company, Silhill Brewery, The Shed Brewery, the Royal British Legion for hosting us, and the Church End Brewery for providing the stillages and cooling equipment. A plethora of real ales, good company, great entertainment, even free beer – what more could you ask for? We look forward to seeing you there – bring your friends along.

Martin Buck
Festival Organiser



Thirsty visitors at the 2013 festival

Champion Beer of Britain 2014

At the end of the recent Great British Beer Festival, the Champion Beer of Britain was announced plus the winners and runners-up in all categories, as follows:

Supreme Champions – Gold: Timothy Taylor, Boltmaker; Silver: Oakham, Citra; Bronze: Salopian, Darwin's Origin.

Champion Bottled Beer - Gold: Marble, Chocolate Marble; Silver: St Austell, Proper Job; Bronze: Spire, Prince Igor Imperial Russian Stout.

Mild - Gold: Bank Top, Dark Mild; Silver: Branscombe Vale, Mild; Bronze: Castle Rock, Black Gold.

Best Bitter - Gold: Salopian, Darwin's Origin; Silver: Redwillow, Directionless; Joint Bronze: Purity, Mad Goose & Langton, Inclined Plane Bitter.

Speciality – Gold: Saltaire, Triple Chocoholic; Silver: Offbeat, Way Out Wheat; Bronze: Peak Ales, Chatsworth Gold.

Bitter – Gold: Timothy Taylor, Boltmaker; Silver: Mighty Oak, Captain Bob; Joint Bronze: Flowerpots, Flowerpots Bitter & Sambrooks, Wandle Ale.

Golden – Gold: Oakham, Citra; Silver: Hawkshead, Cumbrian Five Hop; Bronze: Salopian, Hop Twister.

Strong Bitter – Gold: Church End, Fallen Angel; Silver: Blue Monkey, Ape Ale; Bronze: Loch Ness, HoppyNESS.

Well done to all the award-winners.

Look out for a couple of these at our forthcoming beer festival on Friday 3rd & Saturday 4th October, 12 noon–11.00pm, at the Royal British Legion, Union Rd, Solihull.

A Typical Committee Meeting?

Events at the Soily Hill Committee meeting at the Cat and Twaddle on 1st April 2014

The meeting was scheduled to begin at 8.30pm. Just after 9.00pm, the Branch Chairman said that if the old lady drinking port, the barman, the barmaid, the landlord and the landlord's dog were counted then the meeting was quorate and might as well start. It was agreed that this would pass the time until the sandwiches arrived.

The Secretary was unable to produce the minutes of the last meeting but as nobody could remember what had happened or when the last meeting was, it was agreed to take the minutes as read. The next agenda item was finance. At this point the Treasurer produced photos of his latest holiday in the Maldives and after everyone had admired them, offered to buy a round of drinks. The Beer Festival Organiser said he had contacted the usual venue about rehiring it for this year's festival; their response had been that after last year's headlines in the local paper ("Real Ale Rowdies in Festival Orgy") we should never darken their doors again.

The Publicity Officer informed the meeting that the last campaigning trip had been a success, even though none of

the three people who went could remember where they'd been. At least, there were only three people on the return journey, though there was a vague recollection that there may have been more when it set out.

The Newsletter Editor reported progress with the current libel actions, and was now confident that the financial damage could be restricted to six figures. She acknowledged that her description of the Olde Town Watering-Hole as 'so evil it should be exorcised' was unnecessarily mealy-mouthed and that the next issue of the magazine would see a return to more trenchant criticism. She also added that of the six regular advertisers in the magazine, all six plus their closest friends and relatives had vowed never to advertise with us again.

The remainder of the agenda items were run though very quickly, with the exception of Cider & Perry, which no-one drank, where for some reason more was said on this item than the Secretary had space for on his notepad. Luckily for him the sandwiches arrived, so the Chairman declared the meeting closed so that the real business of the evening could begin.

Note: No character above bears any relationship to any person living, dead or undead. The suggestion that Soily Hill closely resembles any actual CAMRA branch is incorrect, as is the implication that the Committee spend every meeting eating sandwiches. Editor.



"Whew! That was close!
We almost decided something!"

NB. Many thanks to Stourbridge & Halesowen and Dudley & South Staffordshire CAMRA for kind permission to copy and adapt this article from their Winter 2013 newsletter 'Ales & Tales'.

The Railway Inn



Home-cooked food served daily
in pub and beer garden

Food service times:

Monday 12-2.00pm and 5.30-8.00pm
Tuesday-Thursday 12-2.00pm and 5.30-
9.00pm
Friday-Saturday 12-2.00pm and 5.30-



6 Real Ales (3 regulars + 3 guests)

www.railwaydorridge.com

Grange Road, Dorridge

Tel. 01564 773531

Opening Hours:

Mon—Fri: 11.00—3.00pm 4.30—
11.00pm
Saturday: 11.00—11.00pm



Secluded, peaceful beer garden & children's play

Upcoming Guest Beers;
Mercia IPA, Derby Brewing Co; OSM, Cotswold Spring Brewery; Red Dawn, Red Squirrel Brewery

Cask Ale Week: 25th September - 5th October

Join in the celebration: Download a voucher

Exclusive Club for CAMRA Members

The Lady Lane Wharf has launched a new Cask Ale Club just for CAMRA members. With effect from 26th August, all of their cask ales will be reduced in price to £2.50 per pint, down from the normal price of £2.80, between 5.00pm and 8.00pm on Mondays to Fridays.

Terms and conditions apply: CAMRA members will be required on request to produce their membership cards during these times to take advantage of this

price reduction. In addition, this offer cannot be used in conjunction with any other promotion at the club.



Coming Soon: Sadlers Brewery Cask Ales!

A Hidden Treasure in Earlswood

LADY LANE WHARF

The Real Ale Bar and Eating House



Excellent quality hot and cold food served all day

Live Bands / Entertainment every Saturday Night

New: Cask Ale Club— exclusive to CAMRA members

“We may not be the biggest or the most fashionable drinking venue but we certainly know how to serve real ale and quality food. Over and above our ‘resident’ Wye Valley HPA, we offer 3 other casks which are constantly changing. Our Cellar Manager, Mr Neil Ford (a CAMRA member himself), strives to endure that we offer not only a wide range of tastes and flavours but also that every beer we serve is second to none in quality and presentation.”

Lady Lane Wharf

Lady Lane, Earlswood,

Solihull B94 6AH

T: 01564 703 821 or 01564 702 552

E: granthyland@hotmail.co.uk

 Lady Lane Wharf

www.ladylanewharf.co.uk

Opening hours:

Monday — Saturday:

11.00am — 11.00pm

Sunday: 11.00pm — 10.30pm

Food served: 9.30am — 9.00pm

Find us: From the crossroads by Earlswood Post Office turn NE onto Valley Road and continue for roughly 650 metres / half a mile then turn right onto Lady Lane, turning right into the pub car park just before the canal.

Farewell to Bob Jones CBE

It was with shock and great sadness that we learned of the sudden death of Bob Jones in July, aged 59. Readers from the West Midlands will know that Bob was our Police and Crime Commissioner, but some may not be aware that Bob was also a very active member of the Campaign for Real Ale. A long-standing member of Wolverhampton branch, Bob was elected to CAMRA's National Executive in 1994, and remained a member for the next 18 years, a record which has not yet been equalled.

During his time on the National Executive, Bob held a number of positions. As chair of CAMRA's Industry Campaigns (later Campaign Strategy Committee) his experience in local government was invaluable in presenting successful campaigns for issues such as the reform of licensing hours and introduction of small breweries' duty relief. Among those posting tributes on CAMRA's website soon after his death was announced, many mentioned the encouragement they received from Bob to take up various positions at a regional or national level within CAMRA, and the help and support he offered once they had taken on those roles.



Bob Jones CBE

Bob was involved for many years in organising various aspects of the Great British Beer Festival, but his work was not just behind the scenes. For several years on Saturdays at Olympia Bob persuaded us to buy an entry form for the lunchtime quiz, as he wandered the hall on a fund-raising mission! While campaigning and organizing events at a national level, Bob remained a leading light at his local Wolverhampton Beer Festival. At the 2014 Festival, only weeks before he died, he even spent a while serving behind the bar.

Bob's career was in local government and from 1980 to 2013 he served as a councillor in Wolverhampton. He also spent a number of years on the former West Midlands Police Authority, and was awarded a CBE in 2010 for services to policing.

I fear that CAMRA will be left much the poorer for his passing. I know he will be sorely missed by those who knew him.

Brenda Duffy

Many thanks to Sue Rostance for her kind permission for the use of this photograph of Bob.



The Solihull Drinker is the quarterly newsletter of the Solihull & District Branch of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale. Views expressed in the Drinker are not necessarily those of the Branch or of CAMRA. **Contributions, comments and enquiries should be sent to the Editor, Solihull Drinker, c/o 4 Kendrick Close, Solihull B92 0QD; or email julia.hammonds@blueyonder.co.uk**

Printed by Thistle Print Ltd, Leeds.

Solihull CAMRA 2014©

The Editor has the right to amend or shorten any items in the newsletter, but will always honour the spirit and intention of the contribution.

IF EVER YOU'RE DOWN IN "ZUMMERZET"

A week near Lyme Regis at Whit gave me a chance to visit the two 'local' pubs listed in CAMRA's "Best Real Heritage Pubs". Each has been owned & run by a family for over a century and neither has been spoilt by 'modernisation' – they are a "must do" if ever you are in the area.



Landlady of the Luppitt Inn, Mary Wright

The Luppitt Inn, Luppitt is, to quote the guide: "*a rare example of a simple, unspoilt farmhouse pub of the type that would have been quite common a couple of generations ago, but is now virtually extinct*". It is closed on Sundays but opens weekdays from 7pm. When we arrived at 8.45pm there was one local chatting to landlady Mary Wright, who had recently celebrated her 92nd birthday, and we were soon



swapping tales and supping our pints of Otter 'Best Bitter'. On the only table in the now crowded room was an assortment of cunning (& infuriating) wooden & metal puzzles, most of which Mary knew how to get open and put back together again, while a signed photo of Tina Turner sending the Luppitt her best wishes gazed down on us from one of the walls!

The second pub also had connections with a famous lady, as the Grade II-listed Bridge Inn at Topsham is one of the very few pubs ever visited by the Queen, in 1998. With high backed set-



The snug at the Bridge Inn, Topsham

ties and bunting in the snug put up in WWI, the place had a lovely atmosphere in spite of the stark notice on the front door reminding punters of the "1914 (opening) Hours". Beers are served through hatches from a parlour and I was invited into this "inner sanctum" to take a photograph of the cosy 'snug'. The Inn has a lovely riverside setting, serves half a dozen real ales direct from the cask and has many interesting signs on the walls to read as you eat their excellent food.

John Edwards



THE FIELDHOUSE

10 Knightcote Drive
Solihull B91 3JU
Tel: 0121 703 9209

www.emberinns.co.uk/the-fieldhouse-solihull



Fieldhouse,
Solihull

Opening Hours:

Mon—Sat: 11.30am —12 midnight
Sun: 11.30am —11.30pm

Hot & cold meals served Monday to
Sunday all day to 10.00pm

Weekly quiz: Sundays
and Tuesdays, 9.00pm start

Live Bands (see Facebook page
for dates and further details)

5 Real Ales on at all times including 3
regularly changing guests. All Cask Ales
are £2.49 a pint every Monday.



CAMRA members receive a
discount of 20p off the price of
any pint of Cask Ale.

PubCo Reforms

After 10 years of campaigning, tough new PubCo reforms have been announced to help ensure a fair deal for pubs. The Government is introducing a new Statutory Code and Pubs Adjudicator which will ensure that publicans are treated fairly and will crack down on sky-high rents and beer prices charged by the big pub companies. Publicans could see the price they pay for beer fall by up to 60p a pint if the new Adjudicator forces the big PubCo's to match open market prices. As a result we could see cheaper pub prices for customers, more investment in pubs and ultimately fewer pub closures.

This campaign success is testament to ten years of tireless campaigning by CAMRA members and branches. The next step is to fight for the Government to go even further with guest beer and market-rent only options for tied publicans. At present the reforms only apply to England and Wales but CAMRA will continue pushing for reforms to be introduced right across the UK.



ADRIAN AND THE COMMITTEE WARMLY WELCOME YOU TO



The Rowington Club

Rowington Green, Rowington, Warwickshire CV35 7DB

Telephone: 01564 782087

Featured in the CAMRA Good Beer Guide

Solihull & District CAMRA Branch's Club of the Year 2014

Normal opening hours: Mon-Fri: 2.00 – 11pm; Sat-Sun/Bank Hols: 12 noon – 11pm

Large car park. Games available (dominoes, darts, snooker and pool)

Three regularly changing real ales

Full membership: £20.00 per annum.

Single visits for guests: £1.00 (free to card-carrying CAMRA members)

Forthcoming Events:

Sunday 5th October—Marrow Sunday from 12.00 noon, featuring various events: Heaviest Marrow, Longest Carrot, Longest Runner Bean, Longest Parsnip and Heaviest Onion, plus cake and jam classes. Entry only £1 per person regardless of number of entries! Proceeds to charity. Plus competitions, Tombola, stalls and

**We also have a private function room available -
please phone for rates and more information.**

Charlbury nil; Rugby, 6 (pubs, that is...)

Due to the June social to Charlbury Beer Festival being cancelled because of a lack of interest from Solihull CAMRA members, it was decided to go to Rugby and use the Real Ale Trail devised by Brian Wood of Rugby CAMRA for the user to walk through Rugby Town centre and sample the wealth of real ales its pubs has offer.

On Saturday 12th June, 3 of us set off and caught the train from Birmingham International to Rugby where another member joined us, and found our first port of call, the Severn Stars. Alas, this was shut at the time of calling, but by luck a passer-by informed us that the next stop on the Trail would be open and it was only a 2 minute stroll away.

The Alexandria Arms is home to the Atomic microbrewery and has a quiet, comfortable L-shaped lounge in which to enjoy our Atomic Fusion (4.1%) and the 4.1% Abbeydale Deception. Afterwards we retraced our steps back to the Severn Stars, a nicely refurbished Banks & Taylors pub with a smart traditional bar and lounge and with at least 8 real ales on offer. I sampled the B&T Extra Stout (4.5%): a very moreish pint, it has to be said.

The next pub on the trail is the Rupert Brooke, a Wetherspoon's outlet on the site of the old Rugby indoor market. We stopped here for lunch whilst enjoying a Maxim Brewery Swedish Blonde (4.2%) and the party of 4 became 5 as we were joined by another Solihull CAMRA member. We missed out the next two pubs on the trail and headed for the Raglan Arms, 2010 Rugby CAMRA pub of the year, and set about sampling a few of the beers

on offer, all in good condition.

We then made our way to the Half Moon pub but with only one hand-pump dispensing an uninspiring choice of ale we made our excuses and went to the Lawrence Sherriff, a Lloyds/Wetherspoon outlet where we used our CAMRA vouchers to good effect to try the various beers and ciders on offer at a reduced price.

After the Lawrence, the next stop - a previous winner of Rugby & Warwickshire CAMRA Pub of the year - was the Merchants Inn, with its cosy atmosphere and walls bedecked with brewery memorabilia. Upon inspection there were ten real ales and Belgian beers on offer, so we all enjoyed our pints of well kept ales before moving onto The Squirrel. Now a small single room pub, it was originally a three roomed building in the 18th century. I sampled a pint from the Cannon Royal brewery, then after an impromptu pub quiz between ourselves it was decided we should move quickly on to the last pub on the trail, the Victoria. This is the other outlet in Rugby for Atomic Brewery Ales and winner of Rugby CAMRA's Pub of the Year 2011, and we enjoyed Atomic's Meltdown (4.1%) in the traditional lounge with Victorian features.

A good day was had by all involved, it also meant we visited all of Rugby's 6 pubs listed in the 2014 Good Beer Guide. If you fancy doing this trail yourself you can download it in Pdf format from www.rugbycamra.org.uk - all the directions are well explained, and if you decide to walk the trail, I hope you enjoy it as much as we did.

Dave Mckowen

Shed News

The Shed continues to supply several local pubs on a regular basis, plus Shed brews have appeared recently at Earlswood, Tanworth-in-Arden and Camp Hill Cricket Clubs.

There was also a barrel at the Forest Hotel's beer festival.

The Shed is proud to sponsor Solihull CAMRA's Homebrew Competition at the Solihull Beer Festival this year.

Don't forget that you can also buy bottles of Shed beers direct from the microbrewery in Hockley Heath — if you would like to try before you buy, contact them on 07742 246455.



SUMMER IS ALMOST OVER...



HOPE YOU'RE NOT SCARED OF THE DARK...

EXECUTIONER'S PORTER

**ONLY WATER, MALT, HOPS AND YEAST.
JUST HOW HE'D HAVE DRUNK IT!**

*For more information on this, or any of our beers, please contact
Perry Clarke, Head Brewer at The Shed Brewery; No. 07742246455*

QUALITY ASSURED ENGLISH PRODUCE

THE SHED BREWERY

Sponsor of the 2014 Solihull Beer Festival Homebrew Competition

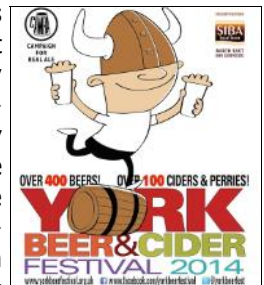
Beer Fest Volunteers Needed!

York CAMRA is currently recruiting volunteers to work at their Beer Festival in September. It is being held over 4 days from 17th - 20th September and all volunteers get free food and free beer as a "thank-you" for working and free camping (own tent or caravan) with amenities is available for those who want to stay over.

York Beer & Cider Festival is held on the famous racecourse and is now the largest Beer Festival in the North of England with over 400 Beers and over 100 Ciders plus an International Bar. Last year the festival attracted volunteers from as far away as

Belgium and is known throughout the UK for its friendly and welcoming atmosphere and they would love you to be part of this - maybe combining the Festival with a break in the lovely City of York

which is also hosting the renowned Food & Drink Festival from 19th September—28th September 2014. Visit <http://www.yorkbeerfestival.org.uk/2014/staffing/> to reserve your volunteer place or email any questions you may have to: york_beer_festival@outlook.com.



Membership Matters

With the Great British Beer Festival (GBBF) been and gone it seems upon reflection that there has been a real ale revolution in recent times. With up to 900 beers on offer at the festival the choice for real ale drinkers has never been better, since the inception of CAMRA some 40 years ago. I believe this is due to the part played by over 165,000 CAMRA members and the campaigns they have helped organise over the years.

The current membership both nationally and locally continues to grow at a steady rate, with our branch membership now standing at 478 members.

In an ideal world, Solihull & District CAMRA would love every member to be active within our branch! Although I fully understand the pressures of modern life including work and family commitments, it would be nice to see some new faces, whether they are existing members or a new member who has not been to any of our events before.

Our meetings, which are held on the first Monday of each month at a local pub, do contain a certain amount of business, but we try to make them friendly and not stuffy, and we make sure we enjoy a pint

or two of real ale at the same time.

If you can't attend one of our meetings then do try and come along to a social event: these are listed in this magazine and on our website www.solihullcamra.org.uk with contact details for each of them where appropriate. So why not join the real ale revolution & fill in the membership form in this magazine, or visit the CAMRA website <http://www.camra.org.uk> to join online.

'Meet & Greet' Evening

We held a successful 'Meet & Greet' session for new members in July; and the next one is planned for Monday 1st December at 8.00pm, just before the next branch meeting. Both will take place at the Railway Inn, Dorridge. So with the aim of seeing a few more new faces, I will be emailing everyone who joined the branch between 7th July and 30th November to invite them this event where I will put my hand in my pocket and buy those eligible members there a free pint. Can't say fairer than that!

Dave Mckowen
Membership Secretary

Notice of forthcoming AGM

Notice is hereby given of the Solihull & District CAMRA AGM, which will take place at the Bulls Head, Barston, on Monday 3rd November 2014, starting at **8.30pm**. The AGM will be preceded by a short Branch Meeting starting at **8.00pm**.

If any current Committee member wishes to stand down, or anyone wishes to apply to take up a Committee post (all Committee posts are open to any Solihull & District branch member), in both instances please email your intentions to Chairman Carl Wright at carl.wright@swisslog.com at least one week before the meeting.

2015 Good Beer Guide

The *Good Beer Guide* is fully revised and updated each year and features pubs across the United Kingdom that serve the best real ale. Now in its 42nd edition, this pub guide is completely independent with listings based entirely on nomination and evaluation by CAMRA members. This means you can be sure that every one of the 4,500 pubs deserves their place, plus they all come recommended by people who know a thing or two about good beer.

The unique 'Breweries Section' lists every brewery – micro, regional and national – that produces real ale in the UK, and the beers that they brew. Tasting notes for the beers, compiled by CAMRA-trained tasting teams, are also included. The Good Beer Guide 2015 is the complete book for beer lovers and a must-have for anyone wanting to experience the UK's finest pubs.

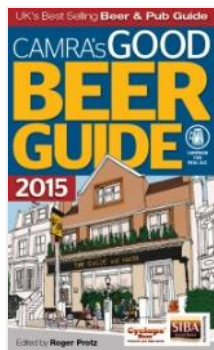
Key features include:

- Painstakingly researched listings of over 4,500 of the best real ale pubs
- Compiled based on recommendations from CAMRA members all over the UK
- Listings include Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales, England, the Isle of Man & the Channel Islands
- Detailed contact information, facilities listings and opening hours
- 'Places Index' allows quick reference to pubs near you
- An essential resource for information on every real ale brewery operating in the UK today

- Look out for exclusive '**We are in it**' material in featured pubs in September.

You can order a copy via the CAMRA website www.camra.org.uk/shop

Prices are: CAMRA member: £11 + p&p; non-CAMRA members: £15.99 + p&p.



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3 real ales at all times plus 4 traditional & 3 sparkling ciders

Homemade food with a wide variety of steaks now served Mon–Sat 12.00 noon - 8.30pm; Carvery served every Sunday 1200 - 5.00pm

Live music. Large car parking area. Children & pets welcome.

Large beer garden with views of the canal.

Keep up to date with what's new and what's on at our website

www.thebluebellciderhouse.co.uk

Opening hours:

Mon.–Sat: 11.30am–11.00pm

Sunday: 12.00-10.30pm



A Week in Whitby

A week's holiday in North Yorkshire, staying in a cottage in the seaside town of Whitby, gave me the opportunity to visit a number of the area's pubs. There was a wide variety, including several Good Beer Guide (GBG) stars, plus a beer festival – it was quite a week!

On the first evening we had dinner in the Angel Hotel in Whitby; this is a Weatherspoon's pub, open for less than a year. We found a table upstairs, where the beer choice wasn't too inspiring, although the Golden Sheep from the Black Sheep brewery, and London Pride, were perfectly acceptable. There was a long wait for food, which meant that the Tea Kettle stout, from Tring brewery, was on in time for my final pint – it was worth the wait.

After a trip up to the ruins of Whitby Abbey to get some late-evening photos, we had a couple of pints in the Duke of York on Wednesday – Timothy Taylor's Landlord, and more Golden Sheep. We got lucky and found an empty table by floor-to-ceiling windows offering a great view over Whitby harbour.

Thursday evening saw us in Durham, where we visited the GBG-listed Head of Steam. A short walk from the city



The bar at the Whitby beer festival

centre, it offers a remarkable range of bottled beers, as well as two or three draught ales and one or two interesting keg offerings; for my final drink I tried the draught Chimay Trippel, which was delicious. The pub also offers excellent value 'happy hour' food until 7 pm.

On Friday we paid a visit to the Pickering traction engine rally, where there were two beer marquees offering real ales from both Deuchars (including Flying Scotsman and Golden XPA) and Theakstons.



The beer festival in full swing

Back in Whitby, we thought we should support the local Lions club by paying a visit to their beer festival – especially since it was only five minutes' walk from our cottage, in the cosy Mission & Seafarers Centre. I had to laugh when I looked at the beer list: four came from the Sperrin brewery, less than 15 miles from Solihull! Since there were another 27 beers, it wasn't much of a problem; we tried various beers from Cameron's, Hambleton, Pennine, Hayrake, Irwell Works and Whitby breweries. If I had to pick two, they'd be Saltwick Nab and Jet Black, both from the Whitby brewery.

A very pleasant walk on Sunday took us along part of the route of the North Yorkshire Moors Railway; heading back out of the valley, we stopped for a refreshing pint at the Horseshoe Inn, in the little village of Levisham. We stayed in the village about 18 years earlier; not much had changed.

On Sunday evening we ate in the Elsinore, in Whitby; Cameron's Strong Arm and John Smith's were the two real ale offerings. A brief stop at the Endeavour, one of three Whitby entries in the GBG, for a pint of Harviestoun Bitter and Twisted – and to admire the décor, which includes a number of musical instruments fixed to the ceiling!

It's worth noting that there are a lot of pubs in Whitby, far more than you might expect for a town of its size; the large number of tourists goes quite a long way to explaining this. It's also interesting that none of the three GBG-listed pubs offer food; perhaps combining serving food to hordes of tourists and keeping good real ale is difficult to get right.



One half of the bar in the York Tap

For our final day in God's Own Country we headed to York. Walking into the city from where we parked, we paid a quick visit to the York Tap – although I

was tempted to spend the rest of the day in this GBG-listed gem! In a converted tea room on York station, it offers no fewer than 18 real ales on handpump, plus a couple of ciders, and another dozen 'craft' beers on keg. Avalanche, from Fyne Ales, and Hawkshead Windermere Pale were both delicious, but we had to move on...

Walking around the city walls, lunch was taken at the Rose & Crown, accompanied by yet more Golden Sheep. After a tour of York Minster – briefly interrupted by a fire alarm – we headed for the Old White Swan for dinner.



The Old White Swan

Another GBG-listed pub, it looks like it's been cobbled together from three different buildings – which does give it the advantage of a very pleasant, partly-covered, non-smoking courtyard with tables and benches. The food was good and reasonably priced; we tried the York Brewery Yorkshire Terrier, though I preferred the Harbour Brewing IPA. There are a huge number of pubs in York – it made Whitby seem almost 'dry'.

Continued overleaf.....

(Continued...)

It was a great week, helped by generally fine weather; combining some touristy activity with pubs that offered good food and drink. We only scratched the surface – York alone has a dozen GBG pubs, with another seven in Scarborough. A return visit will definitely have to be made.

Martin Buck

The Old White Swan, York



UK's First 'Botanical' Beer Launched

UK distillery Chase and London's Meantime Brewing Company have joined forces to release what they describe as the UK's first 'botanical beer'. Created by replacing essential hops with a unique blend of botanicals from Chase's gin, the beer has been described as a "modern twist on traditional Gruit-style beers" in which botanicals were used to counteract bitterness, bringing together "delicate floral undertones of gin with a blend of rich and sumptuous malts".

Rich Myers of Meantime Brewing said: "Our shared passion for flavour has resulted in the creation of 'Botanical Beer' – something we are certain will delight the drinker by offering them a truly unique and full-bodied brew that stands as the perfect example of how far modern craft has come."

The brew has been described as having the aroma of "citrus and background notes of fiery ginger" complemented by a blend of "cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger, almond, coriander, cardamom, cloves, liquorice, lemon and of course juniper."

James Chase of Chase Distillery added: "Craft gin, much like craft beer is undergoing a huge revolution and we are proud to be joining forces with Meantime."

The "Botanical Beer" was unveiled at Meantime's Brew Fest over the August Bank Holiday weekend and was available at Chase's Rock the Farm Music Festival at the end of August.

A small amount will also be on sale at Meantime's online shops, Chase's distillery shop and the Running Horse pub in Mayfair.



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Wines, aperitifs, and other alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks are also available for all your get-togethers and parties—please come in and talk to us about your requirements and we will always be glad to help.

Now also stocking snacks and confectionery.

Choice which cannot be bettered



Solihull checks out the Champion Swan

I was heading home after 3 days peak-bagging in the North Pennines and the Lake District. No real ales on at the pub I was at, but over a cream tea (while my clothes dried out on one of their radiators), it struck me that the CAMRA Pub of the Year was probably not far off route and if my son Ian had been alive and in the car with me he would certainly have suggested a visit. So that's what I did, after checking that the deviation would only add 5 minutes onto my Birmingham ETA, plus drinking time of course! With Pendleton in the satnav I was soon heading down the A59 and on entering the village, the Swan With Two Necks was almost the first building I saw.

I had wondered if a quick bite to eat might have been possible but the place was packed, even though it was only 6.15pm, so it was liquid refreshment and a packet of crisps! There were 5 real ales on and as I still had 120 miles to drive I settled for their "float of 3 thirds". 'Jushua Jane' (Ikley Brewery, 3.7%) was a very tasty nut brown Yorkshire ale and the 'American Pale Ale' (Dark Star Brewery 4.7%) was just what it said on the pump clip but my favourite was 'Lights, Camera, Action'

(4.0%), Salamander Brewing, which was a lovely pale & hoppy session beer. The other two beers on tap were 'Nutty Black' (Prospect Brewery, 3.4%) and 'Golden Pippin' (Copper Dragon, 3.9%) and as I usually like the latter's brews I gave in and ordered a swift half. The landlady was very friendly and calm even though the place was extremely busy, and said it was fine to take a few interior photos, "in fact a



A busy pub even at 6.15pm!

couple of other CAMRA groups have already been over to investigate".

While supping this the chef came out and had a short friendly chat after my comment that it was the first pub I'd seen with a defibrillator next to the trophy cabinet. Apparently this belongs to the village and the pub is a convenient central hub for it to be stored for the locals. He also mentioned that "The Vault" area served as the post office for a while some years back, when the village PO closed.

Having been CAMRA national runner-up a couple of years ago, the "Swan" seemed a very worthy winner and well worth a visit if you're up in or passing through Lancashire.

John Edwards



The Swan with Two Necks at night

The Acres

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www.the-acres.co.uk



The Acres Solihull



A Community Pub in the heart of Damsonwood, The Acres offers a pleasant place to meet and drink or dine. Indian food available as eat-in or take-out.

6 hand-pumps serving 5 real ales + 1 traditional cider.

- Live entertainment Saturday nights including cover bands.
- Games... Darts, Pool Table and live Sky Sports.
- Function Room available free of charge—talk to the manager about availability and your requirements.



Opening hours:

Mondays—Thursdays: 11.00am—11.00pm

Fridays & Saturdays: 11.00am—11.30pm

Sundays: 11.00am—11.00pm

*Food service hours 11.00am—11.00pm Tues—Sun
(Restaurant and Take-Away service closed Mondays)*

J.D. Wetherspoon

The two Solihull JDW pubs each offer two regular ales and a good selection of guest ales from both regional UK breweries. Both pubs are pleased to announce consistent 'Cask Marque' and 'Best Bar None' accreditations and both hold 5-star accreditations for Food Hygiene Standards.

The White Swan, 32–34 Station Road, Solihull, B91 3SB

Phone: 0121 711 5180

Opening times:

Sun — Wed: 8.00am — 12.00am

Thurs — Sat: 8.00am — 12.30am

Offering 4 guest ales daily + Ruddles & a cider.

A music-free venue screening live Freeview sporting events.

2010 Solihull 'Best Bar None' Best Town Centre Pub & Overall Winner of 2010 'Best Bar Non'



The Assembly Rooms, 21 Poplar Road, Solihull, B91 3AD

Phone: 0121 711 6990

Opening times:

Sun — Wed: 7.00am — 1.00am

Thurs — Sat: 7.00am — 2.00am

2 regular ales, 3 guest ales and 2 real ciders on hand-pull.

Live sporting events screened weekly
DJ's and dancing Thursday-Saturday.

Having a party? Our atmospheric upstairs bar with seating for 70 is available for hire and can include music arrangements as well as food and drink, all chosen by you and tailored to your needs. Ask at bar for further details.



New Pricing!!

The White Swan has now lowered its ale prices to make it a more competitive and value for money destination for the discerning drinker.

The new maximum price point for a pint of ale is £2.30 and this will include Abbot Reserve, Jaipur, Kelham Island Pale Rider and Marstons Old Empire, to name but a few; all are subject to availability.

News: Beer Festival at the White Swan, Monday 22nd—28th September. For more details, see www.jdwetherspoon.co.uk

FULL SPEED AHEAD FOR Platinum



◀ Pictured are two recent large scale refurbishments completed by the skilled Platinum team.

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Rambling from the Railway to the Forest

On Saturday 16th, seven of us met at Dorridge railway station for the August social event, a real ale ramble. Our first stop was the Railway, reached via the railway footbridge and Dorridge park. The usual wide range of ales was on offer; wanting to pace myself through the day, I chose Holden's Black Country mild, a very nice start to the day. Heading over the fields we reached Hockley Heath and our lunchtime stop, the Wharf. An all-day breakfast, accompanied by a pint of the Wharf Blonde (brewed by Backyard brewery) went down quite nicely.

Our journey took us south along the 'new' section of the Stratford-upon-Avon canal (built 1799-1802), descending the impressive flight of 18 locks down to Kingswood Junction where we crossed over to the Grand Union canal. After the pleasant walk we sat in the garden at the Navigation Inn in Lapworth enjoying the sunshine. Several people opted for the pub's own Lapworth Gold, while I went for Thwaites Wainwright ale; both proved admirably refreshing.

Heading north along the Grand Union canal, before long we were at our next pub, the Black Boy. The present pub was built in 1793 to serve the canal trade; it takes its name from the nickname of King Charles II. Sitting on the patio overlooking the pub my pint of St Austell Tribute was most welcome. Just a few hundred yards further up the canal we reached the King's Arms; after a substantial refurbishment this pub switched back from the Heron's Nest to its

original name – the bridge next to the pub is called the King's Arms bridge. It was still sunny enough to enjoy a Purity UBU in the garden, although the wind had picked up.

Our final stretch on the canal took us up to Knowle, skirting the cricket club, where a game was in full swing, and the football pitch; on the other side there is now a building site where new homes are springing up. We headed to the Vaults, busy on an early Saturday evening; Buntingford Kaiser was a rather nice bitter, quite dark and full of flavour. Just a hundred yards or so along the High Street, we reached the Red Lion, where a pint of Truman's Eyrie went down nicely. (There is a new Truman's brewery in London, using the original Truman's yeast, which had been stored at the National Collection of Yeast Cultures - no, I didn't know there was one either - since 1958.)

A last stretch down Station Road took us from Knowle back to our starting point in Dorridge, and the Forest Hotel. This pub has a habit of having some unusual guests, and so it proved: California, a citrus blonde ale, comes from the Conwy brewery, on the north coast of Wales. A pleasantly refreshing end to an enjoyable day out; the weather cooperated, all the footpaths were in good condition, and a wide range of beers were sampled. It's testament to the healthy state of our area's pubs that we were able to visit eight pubs and drink beer from a different brewery in each of them.



The ramblers supping a well-earned pint at the Black Boy

Martin Buck