

Solihull



Drinker

Issue No: 60

Spring 2012

Spring 2012 Events

We start off Spring 2012 with a thank-you trip round some of the best of the North Oxfordshire village pubs at the end of March for those people who helped at the 2011 beer festival.

In mid-April there is a visit to the Coventry beer festival for their lunchtime session, where there will be 90 different beers on offer plus ciders, perries and country wines.

The beginning of May features another trip to the Long Itchington beer festival, which is split between the village's six pubs and features over 100 beers in total over the



Bank Holiday weekend. This event has been enjoyed by this branch for the last three years—a spot of rain does not dampen the day with so many real ales to choose from.; the picturesque village is very friendly and you can even catch a lift with the shire horses.



June sees a Sunday morning ramble around the Earlswood Lakes, which have a history dating back to the 1820's The walk starts and finishes at the Reservoir pub, where people can rest their feet with a pint and maybe lunch. This is one occasion where a sunny day would be welcomed, but bring your waterproofs and wellingtons just in case!

Further details of all events can be found in the Dates for your Diary page, or visit our website www.solihullcamra.org.uk for information as and when it is updated.

Have you considered advertising with us?

We distribute 2,000 magazines each quarter which go to 85+ outlets across the Solihull & District area. Get your pub, club or business into view!!

To advertise and for rates: call 0121 603 1621 or email the editor at julia.hammonds@blueyonder.co.uk



Newsflash: Brad and Joy are celebrating 25 years at the Bulls Head this year. Look out for more information in the next issue of this magazine.

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***"Spring is sprung, the grass is riz—I wonder where the real ale is?"
You will certainly find it here without a doubt—visit us for a
relaxing drink and treat yourself to a great meal from the main menu
or our daily seasonal specials board. See you soon!!***

New Brewery springs to Life

Whitworth Brewing Co., an exciting new micro-brewery based in Shirley, is being launched this spring. This is a family run business set up by Steven & Charlotte Whitworth, following Steven's 10-year hobby of brewing beer and creating a selection of impressive real ales. After 2 years of development, Whitworth Brewing Co is launching the brewery with their first cask ale, Sobriety. This is a gloriously golden beer topped with a creamy white crown having toffee notes followed by a cascade of floral hops, and an ideal beer to bring to those who have never tried cask ale before.

Says Charlotte." We believe that real ale will be the saviour of many local pubs that form the heart of many of our local communities; having seen the revival of some fantastic pubs within the local area those who seem to be a success story are those who really buy in to the real ale revival. We hope that by modernising the appeal of cask ales and producing a quality beer like Sobriety this will help to bring drinkers back into our pubs and clubs to keep the heart of the community beating".

Stop Press.....

Whitworth Brewing Co. are proud to announce the launch of their new brewery, based in Shirley, and to introduce their first beer..



Sobriety

n) the state of being sober and not intoxicated by alcohol

Tasting Notes

- A gloriously golden beer with a creamy white crown.
- With a cascade of floral hops combined with sweet toffee notes
- Giving you a full bodied beer with citrus flavours and a lasting finish.

Whitworth Brewing Co, 34 Dunard Road, Shirley, Solihull B90 2HR T:0121 347 6450

info@whitworthbrewingco.com www.whitworthbrewing.co.uk



The Solihull Drinker is the newsletter of the Solihull & District Branch of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale.

Contributions, comments and enquiries should be sent to Julia Hammonds, The Editor, Solihull Drinker, c/o 4 Kendrick Close, Solihull B92 0QD or e-mail julia.hammonds@blueyonder.co.uk

The Editor reserves the right to amend or shorten any items in the Solihull Drinker, but will always honour the spirit of the contribution.

Printed by Thistle Print Ltd, Leeds.

Solihull CAMRA 2012 ©

Hail to the Ale!

Local Beer, Pub, Club & Brewery news

The Meriden Bar

The old Yates airside bar at Birmingham International airport has been refurbished and renamed, and will be open to the public from Tuesday 6th March. There will be 4 handpumps with 3 regular real ales: Purity Pure Gold, Marston's Old Speckled Hen and Greene King Abbot Ale, with a changing guest from one of these breweries; and an 'aero-platter' of 3 x 1/3 pint glasses will be available. There will also be a selection of bottled craft beers, including Sierra Nevada Pale Ale, Little Creatures, Goose Island IPA and Chimay Rouge, plus two Belgian fruit beers. Dawn Lingley-Webster, formerly of the White Swan, Solihull, has been in charge of the changes and has masterminded the introduction of real ale. Good news re the selection, the bad news is that you have to be flying to try them!

The Navigation, Lapworth

Opened then closed again within a very short space of time, allegedly due to the rent imposed by the PubCo who own the pub. New tenants are being sought.

The Red House

The Red House reopened in early January under new landlord Craig. There are three real ale handpumps on with two regulars and a guest, which was Thwaites' Wainwright at the time of opening.



Silhill Brewery

Silhill have moved a 10-barrel brewplant to Solihull which is currently being refurbished; they are looking forward to using it in here in the near future.

The Rock and Roll Brewhouse

The Rock & Roll Brewhouse has left Shirley, destined for new premises at the Lamp in Birmingham. Brewing has temporarily decamped to the Pie Factory brewery in Warwick while the new base is being constructed.

The 61st edition of the Solihull Drinker will be published on Monday 11th June, 2012.

Copy deadline for advertising and contributions will be Wed. 16th May, 2012.

Worthington Red Shield

The Woodman's Rest featured Worthington Red Shield over the weekend of 3rd—5th February. This beer, brewed at the Bass Museum in Burton on Trent, was reported as the best beer on tap during a visit there and definitely worth trying. It also popped up at the Fieldhouse, the Colebrook and the Red Lion, Knowle at about the same time. Comments vary from 'Excellent!' to 'Nothing special', so if you should see it on tap you will have to make your own mind up.



Knowle & Dorridge Round Table Beer Festival

Taking place on March 9th (Friday: 18.00—23.00) and 10th (Saturday: 13.00—23.00) at Knowle Royal British Legion, with up to 20 real ales, half from the Warwickshire area. Entry is £10.00 to include free promotional glass, beer guide and £5.00 worth of beer tokens (£6.00 to membership card-carrying CAMRA, Knowle Royal British Legion and Round Table members).

2nd Shirley Beer Festival

Taking place on May 25th and 26th, see below for details.



Sponsored by:



Friday 25th May
17:30 to 23:30

Saturday 26th May
11:30 to 23:30

The 2nd Shirley Beer Festival

at **Camp Hill Rugby Club**, Haslucks Green Road, B90 2EF
£10 entry includes souvenir glass, programme and £5 beer tokens
(£6 in tokens for CAMRA members)

20+ beers and ciders hot and cold food available

www.shirleybeerfestival.co.uk

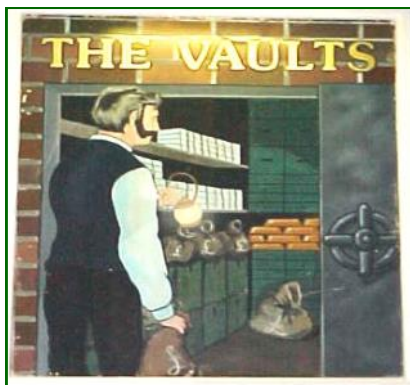


Organised by Shirley Round Table
and Shirley Ladies Circle



**Nick, Gwen and staff
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***CAMRA Good Beer Guide
listed since 1993***



**the Real Ale venue
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**Solihull CAMRA Pub of the
Year for 7 years between
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***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.***

Isle of Man Beer Festival

Should you be holidaying in the Isle of Man around 12th to 14th April, then head for Douglas, where Isle of Man CAMRA is hosting its first ever beer festival. There will be over 60 real ales, plus ciders, perries and wines at the venue in the Masonic Hall, Woodbourne Road.

Opening hours are Thursday 12th from 16.30—23.00 (corporate, trade and CAMRA members only); Friday 13th and Saturday 14th from 12.00—15.30 and 16.30—23.00 (general public and CAMRA members). Public entry is £3.00 per session (will be refunded if you join CAMRA at the festival), while valid card-carrying CAMRA members enter free. (Over 18s only).



Evening entertainment features 'Meet the Brewer' plus Q & A session, and local live music on both Friday and Saturday nights.

Siba Champion Beers Festival 2012

Upon seeing the flyer inside 'What's Brewing', CAMRA's monthly newspaper, about SIBA's (Society of Independent Brewers) annual beer festival for their champion beers, being held at the Castle Rock brewery-owned Canalhouse pub in Nottingham, I decided it might be worth a visit to seek out some unusual brews.

Three of us took the train, arriving at about 11.45am. The festival took place upstairs at the pub and considering it had only opened at 11am was very busy. There were some tutored tasting sessions for ladies on at the same time, introducing them to real ale; but for us gents, a free 1/2 pint glass was acquired and tasting commenced.

However upon closer inspection 90% of all the beers had gone, which was a bit of a disappointment, but undaunted we sent about sampling what was left. This seemed to be mainly porters, stouts, old ales and strong milds but with hindsight I am glad we did because we came across some real gems.

Beers sampled were Yeovil Ales Ltd 'Stout Hearted', 4.3%; Monty's Brewery 'Midnight', 4.0%; Redemption Brewing Co 'Fellowship Porter', 5.1%; Cairngorm Brewing Co 'Black Gold', 4.4%; Ossett Brewing Co 'Treachle Stout', 5.0%; Elland Brewery Ltd '1872 Porter', 6.5%; Dancing Duck Brewery 'Dark Drake', 5.5%; and Oakham Ales 'Black Hole Porter', 5.5%. After tasting the above we moved downstairs for lunch, with which we tried a seasonal beer from Castle Rock, 'Loxley's Tipple', 4.8%, a very nice ruby coloured beer in excellent condition.

We then moved on to the Castle Rock Brewery tap, the Vat & Fiddle, where we tried a few beers before catching the early evening train back Solihull. All in all a good day out.

Dave McKowen



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SIBA
Local Beer

LUDLOW SPRING FESTIVAL

Celebrating great beers, bangers, bread, music and much more!

Ludlow Spring Festival is now in its fourth year: with over 140 real ales on draught from small breweries in Wales and the Marches, producers selling seriously good food, a huge display of classic cars: all washed down with fantastic music inside Ludlow Castle—who could be surprised at the success of Ludlow's newest festival!

Beer

This will be a real ale lover's paradise of over 140 different beers from local SIBA members alongside perry and cider with Marches wines and liqueurs for a bit of variety. The Wales and West regional competition will take place on Friday 11th May during the day and then the bar will be open from 5pm to 9pm for a 'Meet the Brewer' experience where you'll be able to have 'first go' at the beers that have won the top prizes before they all sell out! The bar opens again Saturday and Sunday so you can make your way through the huge selection throughout the weekend.

Music

There will be top bands playing in the 'Festival Pub' marquee to entertain you from 11.30 am right through to closing.

Classic Cars

A quick walk outside the festival pub marquee and you'll find yourself amongst a dazzling array of fabulous classic cars – more than 200 will be present over the weekend with many of the larger cars (those that can't fit through the castle gate) in the square on Sunday.

Bread, Bangers and more...

More than 60 passionate small producers are exhibiting this year, so as well as great food on the day you'll be able to take home some lovingly produced fare. The food on offer is diverse and includes artisan cheeses and breads to goat sausages, game and a fresh fish BBQ. Also, you'll find some real treats... homemade cakes, fudge, preserves and pickles!

Now if you have never cooked REAL bread, then this will be a whole new experience for you as bread demonstrations will be taking you through the process from yeast through to flour varieties and dough making. For those with the 'passion', locally milled flour producers and local bakers will be on site to buy from and to answer questions.

Free 'hands-on' demonstrations will be running throughout the event, on our talks and demonstrations stage, so just turn up and have a go from everything from sausage making to cake decoration!

During the daytime do not miss out on the Pâté and Pudding Trails taking place around town over the weekend!

Everards brew an Old Flame

It's not too late to find Everards' seasonal Old Flame on tap, a wonderful chestnut auburn ale bursting with warming floral and forest fruit flavours with a zesty, malty finish.

At £2.30 RRP per pint it's kind on your pocket too.

Visit www.everards.co.uk to find out details of your nearest pub stockists plus details of other Everards ales, tasting notes and special promotions.



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www.bartons-arms.co.uk
e: bartonsarms.manager@oakagroup.com

A New Real Ale Pub for Birmingham City Centre

Birmingham city centre now boasts another real ale pub under the name of The Post Office Vaults. Situated at the top end of New Street (no. 84) on the same side as the old Post Office, it is easily overlooked as the entrance is quite insignificant. However, once



inside and down the stairs a compact bar awaits you with 8 real ales and 5 ciders. The décor of the pub is traditional with old pictures of Birmingham on the walls and unusually for Birmingham, a bar billiards table. On my visit on the pub's opening day I tried Hobson's Mild and Salopian Expression which were both in excellent condition. A welcome addition to the Birmingham circuit for real ale drinkers and somehow I think there is a link with the Wellington around the corner.

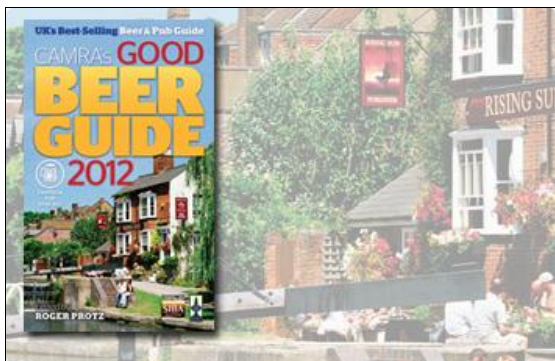
Steve Dyson

Membership Matters

In spite of CAMRA's burgeoning membership we need every new member we can get to help save our pubs. They have been closing at a staggering rate for several years now and very little help has come from the pubs industry, government or regulators.

As reported in the January edition of *What's Brewing* the government's proposal of industry self-regulation is quite ineffectual. We have all witnessed the ruthless, grasping actions of the pubcos overcharging publicans for rent as well as drinks, all too frequently forcing them out of business and then selling the property. Once the pub's closed and converted into a private residence it's gone forever.

There's been talk of minimum pricing for alcohol (in supermarkets as well as pubs) for quite a long time but nothing seems to happen. Much supermarket drink is sold at a loss and no pub can compete with this.



The more members we have the more powerful our lobbying can become. For the price of about seven pints you can become a member and not just help the cause but feel very virtuous too.

Bob Jackson

Membership Secretary

(For more information about CAMRA, its aims, how to join and benefits for members, go to: www.camra.org.uk)

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Saturday evening events a speciality: phone the Club for details of who's on.

Forthcoming events:

March: Members: please watch out for the annual clay pigeon shoot!!!

April: CAMRA Community Pubs & Clubs Month—events throughout

June: celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee at the Rowington Club on Monday 4th with food, fun and games including a pig roast and many surprises!

It's never too early to start growing for Marrow Sunday—October seems a long way away but it will be here all too soon! Get your marrow, onion, carrot, runner bean and parsnip seeds in the ground now to be in with a chance of winning!!

A Wet Monday in Pershore

Carol & I travelled to the Wyre Mill Club on the banks of the Avon at the end of November with the intention of walking on Bredon Hill but the day dawned so foul that we decided to head in to Pershore for a bit of shopping, eating and drinking. A quick glance at Ian's 2010 "Good Beer Guide" (probably the only one we'll ever use!) showed that the only pub worthy of mention in the town was the Brandy Cask on the main street, which brewed its own ales round the back.

We walked the half mile or so across the fields from our motorhome in our boots and covered them before we entered, something that the landlord said he was not used to seeing. We decided to try the 3 home-brewed ales straight away, Carol opting for the *Whistling Joe* (3.6%) – an amber ale with a fruity note which I was told resulted from the inclusion of some special crystal malt. I decided to try halves of the other two: *Brandysnapper* (4.0%) – a golden bitter, IPA-style beer, and *John Bakers Original* (4.8%) – a darker, nutty flavoured ale in which I thought I could taste a decent helping of chocolate malt. It was the sort of pub that Ian would have loved; the sort we visited on several occasions in 2010 when he was out of hospital. After supping and solving a few of the puzzles in the Daily Mail, it was time to order food and refill our glasses. There was an excellent, reasonably priced menu and it was only 1pm so we were well in time (a guy at the campsite warned us they stopped serving dead on 2!) I certainly couldn't fault the massive succulent piece of gammon that arrived at the table and Carol was defeated by the steak & kidney pudding she ordered.

She stuck to the Whistling Joe while I decided to sample the 2 guest ales that were on tap. Ulhampton Ales *Teddy Bear* (4.3%) was a golden, slightly sweet beer, brewed just a bit further north at Ombersley, but I preferred Northumberland Brewery's cornily-named *Firkin Freezin* (3.9%) as its golden hoppy flavour had an interesting sort of sour aftertaste. Alas, the Brandy Cask brewery's occasional *Ale Mary* was not available during our visit.

All the ales seemed to have been kept in excellent condition but for some reason I couldn't really fathom the landlord, who didn't seem to be very keen on CAMRA. Perhaps he and his wife/chef have had bad experiences with elitist or hypercritical members in the past? They bought the pub in 1990 and opened the brewery in June 1995. As the owners of Pershore's only truly independent "Free House" their ambition is to preserve the heritage of the British pub in which juke boxes, pool tables, gaming machines & televisions have no part to play. Around 2000 different British real ales have passed through their pumps so if ever you are down Pershore way, perhaps getting your Victoria plums or other orchard fruits, make sure you pop into the Brandy Cask to try their beer and food. Perhaps it would be an idea for the branch to go on a group visit to the area and maybe even try for a behind the scenes brewery tour. Maybe we could get to the bottom of their dislike of CAMRA!



John Edwards

Solihull CAMRA Christmas Crawl.

Conveniently accessible to Solihull, the Jewellery Quarter in Birmingham was chosen as our Christmas pub crawl this year. From Solihull station the train takes less than 30 minutes to drop you off within yards of a variety of good pubs, and ably led by Bob Jackson we started off at the Drop Forge, two minutes from the station.

The Drop Forge has been on the real ale scene for a couple of years now. Converted from an old factory, it displays some machinery presumably rescued at that time. Its interior decoration is in the modern style with large open plan drinking/eating areas on two levels. For the summer months there is also an outdoor drinking area. There are usually four beers in stock but unfortunately on our visit only two were on tap, Brakspear Bitter and Malvern Hills Sozzled Santa, both in good condition but nothing special.



Machinery in the Drop Forge

Then onto the Jewellers Arms, less than 100 yards away. Completely opposite in character to the Drop Forge, this is a traditional looking pub both inside and out. Its internal layout is separated into a bar and snug. On our visit the pub was seething and finding seats was difficult so it was just as well the pub only stocks one real ale, Hobson's Best, which we all consumed with some speed to move onto the Two Towers Brewery tap.

The Brown Lion I'm sure I remember many years ago as one of the first pubs in Birmingham to stock Courage Directors—today it is the flagship pub for Hockley's newest brewery, Two Towers. The pub consists of two rooms, one a modern café style bar and a more traditional style lounge. To me the pub feels a little cold, lacking traditional warmth, although the staff there are very friendly and nothing is too much trouble for them. Furthermore, with five Two Towers beers on handpump the pub reinforces itself as a landmark pub to visit whilst you are in the area. Stacked on the bar was: Complete Muppetry; BSA; Jewellery Porter; Chamberlain Pale Ale and Mott Street Mild, a range to suit all tastes. In case you are peckish there is a good menu.

With both regret and anticipation we moved onto the Red Lion, Warstone Lane, owned by Urban Art Bars. The sister pub to the Lord Clifdon nearby, the pub is traditional in appearance: a large front bar is complimented by a small intimate lounge at the back, with a club room above. As to the beers: Elgood's Cambridge Bitter; UAB Vicious Ale; Wye Valley Christmas Whiskers and Castle Rock Harvest Pale. The UAB beers are brewed by the chain's own brewery. Time was slipping down as well as the beers so we moved onto our last pub of the evening.

The Rose Villa Tavern has recently been come under the wing of the Bitter 'n' Twisted

group who also own notably the Jekyll and Hyde in Steelhouse Lane and the Victoria near the Alex theatre. Built just after the First World War for Mitchells and Butlers the pub is well noted for its Art Deco tiling and internal original fittings. After appearing run down for some years the new owners have done a grand job of restoring these features putting the pub back into the heart of the Jewellery Quarter. The beers behind the bar on our visit were both from Thornbridge, Lord Marples and Jaipur—certainly a turn up for the book; last time I visited this pub twelve months ago Greene King IPA and Abbott Ale were on. My only gripe with this pub was that the music made talking almost impossible.



The Rose Villa Tavern by night

So all in all a good night out preparing us all for more pleasurable drinking over the Christmas break... well done Bob for a cracking night out. If I have missed out any beers from the evening put it down to the drink!

Steve Dyson

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Dates For Your Diary

Branch Meetings

Monday 2nd April White Swan, Henley
Monday 14th May Bulls Head, Earlswood
Monday 11th June Railway, Dorridge

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

Committee Meetings

Monday 23rd April Tom o the Wood, Rowington
Monday 25th June Crown, Claverdon

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

Socials

Saturday 31st March Thank-you trip for Solihull 2011 beer festival helpers (N. Oxfordshire village pubs: details to follow)

Saturday 14th April Coventry Beer Festival—meet at Solihull station for the 10.46am train to Coventry (for festival details, see www.covnwcamra.org.uk)

Saturday 5th May Long Itchington Beer Festival trip—if wishing to go, please contact Robert Cawte on 0121 745 3882 or email him on campaigns@solihullcamra.org.uk. Further details and costs will follow in March via email to members & website.

Sunday 10th June Earlswood Ramble—meet at the Reservoir pub at 10.30am (approx. 2 hours walking followed by optional drink and lunch at the pub). Free viewing notes on the area's features will be available for walkers.

For more details, contact Secretary Allan Duffy on 01564 200 431 and visit our website: www.solihullcamra.org.uk

Many, though not all, of our local pubs are accessible to disabled people. If you would like to come to one of our meetings and would need assistance getting inside, please let us know ahead of time and we will do our best to help.

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Friday & Saturday: 11.30am-10.00pm

(Sunday: Closed)

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Mailbox, Birmingham Pub Crawl

For our recent trip into the city we chose pubs around the Mailbox. At first maybe not an exciting prospect but yes, there really are some reasonable pubs and amongst the modern wine bar style pubs there are a couple of traditional unspoilt ones.



Our first port of call was the Victoria, John Bright Street. The pub website advertises that it has two regular ales, Purity Mad Goose and Wye Valley Butty Bach, which indeed were on when we visited. 2 guests are supposedly available; unfortunately the Hopping Mad Hoppiness ran out just as we arrived there and no other beer was on offer. One would expect a better showing on

a Saturday. Situated near the stage door of the Alexandra Theatre, this pub obviously has strong links with the theatrical history of the area.

Next, the Craven Arms, Upper Gough Street. This gem of a pub has a superb tiled exterior. Originally a Holder's pub the interior is modern but comfortably traditional. Being part of the Marston's empire the beers on offer were Pedigree and EPA, an unimaginative range for such a cracking little pub although in good condition. Jennings Cocker Hoop had been on but had run out and no alternative was offered.



The Craven Arms

Into the Mailbox now and to Pennyblacks, Lower Wharfside. With up to 6 real ales potentially available this pub should provide solace for any real ale drinker suffering the retail delights of the Mailbox, but beware can disappoint: today it was the Wentworth Oatmeal Stout. Other beers on at the time of our visit were Pennyblack's Porter and Classic, Cottage Puffing Billy, Shardlow Chancellors Revenge and Wickwar Rite Flanker, none of which were particularly outstanding. What is good about this pub however, is that you can buy the beer in 3 one third pints called a stick of ale. Food is available here too.



The Canalside Café—
how did we all get in?

Along the canal towpath towards the ICC and the Canalside Café was our next venue. I really like this compact and I mean compact 'bohemian-style' pub/café. In the summer, outside seating enables you to watch the boats pass by on the canal, a pleasant way to while away an afternoon. Two real ales were on, Sadlers 360, which had to be returned, and Skinners Betty Stogs. Food is on offer here also.

We gave the City Tavern, Bishopsgate Street (down at heel) and the Prince of Wales, Cambridge Street (closed due to no beer) a miss and instead popped into Wetherspoons, where on tap were the usual Greene King Abbott, with guests including Black Hole Starry Night, Burton Bridge Staffordshire Brown Knot, Palm Biere De Noel (a Belgian beer from Palm Breweries) and Woods Santa's Ale.

Our last pub of the night was the Shakespeare, Summer Row, another example of Birmingham's Victorian pub heritage, where Hook Norton Flagship and Harviestoun Ptarmigan were amongst the beers there. One or two others could not resist the Wellington and popped in there for a quick one. With up to 13 beers to choose from it proved a fitting end for some of party to finish their day on.

"Sounds Like Real Ale" Competition

Identify the real ales from the clues below, and a prize of £20.00 will be awarded to the first correct entry drawn at random after the closing date of 30th April.

Good luck!

1. WATER SUPPLIERS DROP A DRIER SPINNING
2. VICTORIA CROSSES, SAY, IN FRONT OF VESSEL
3. ANIMAL WRESTLE TWELVE INCHES
4. PIGS RETURN BEVERAGE
5. NAÏVE FIRST ENGLISHMAN HEAD INTERNATIONAL PORTS AUTHORITY
6. DAISY AND POPPY FIRST
7. SEVEN POINTER ANIMAL TOP
8. GOALKEEPER PAT'S SAUSAGE
9. CIRCLE JACK TREASURE SEARCHER
10. DOCTOR MOTORCYCLE SOUR
11. COOKING TOP WITH ZERO BLING WOBBLING
12. ARRANGED STYLE ET MINT
13. FARMWORKER ERIC NOAKES INITIALLY EATS FIRM PIE CONCOCTION
14. ISLE SURROUNDS GROOMING AID IN FRONT OF TAILLESS BIRD
15. BRAVERY BOARD
16. ALWAYS TOUGH, SAY, LASS FINISHES TONY
17. TWO THIRDS OF ONE GOODIE HOST
18. AGED DOTTED BIRD
19. SAD MAN ARRANGED WIDE TEAM
20. FISH LITTLE LESLIE ESSEX
21. STACK OF MONEY VALUE HALF A DOZEN CROSS
22. PACKED HESITATES BEFORE CAPITAL LIONS
23. SPOILS HUNDREDS IN FRONT OF TOP DOG
24. SID INITIALLY GOES ON BEFORE MAD ROOM

Post entries to Ray Cooke, 16 Milton Road, Bentley Heath Solihull B93 8AA, or email to Ray.Cooke@hse.gsi.gov.uk together with contact details including a telephone number (contact details supplied will only be used for the purpose of this competition and will not be passed onto any third parties.) The quiz master's decision will be final.

The winner will be announced and the answers provided in the June edition of the Solihull Drinker.

Solihull Young Members

As a young person myself (I think I can just about get away with calling myself young at 30 years old), I am really pleased to see more and more young people drinking real ale these days. And this got me thinking...what's changed and why?

Some people think that real ale is just for old men who wear socks with their sandals, have big bushy beards and like to talk about Morris Dancing. But this perception is changing rapidly, it's becoming much more acceptable for young people to drink real ale on a night out and I think it is almost starting to be a little bit cool and trendy. It's certainly not 'chic' just yet, but it's definitely getting there.

I think this can be attributed to a number of things. Firstly, some new breweries have got a different approach to marketing than the traditional micro-breweries. Brewdog is one that springs to mind, which was created by a couple of 24 year olds in 2007. Since then, they have grown from strength to strength, selling beers such as 'Punk IPA', 'Trashy Blonde' and 'Tokyo' which are not exactly typical names in the real ale industry. Their beer is aimed directly at young people in every way: cool names, funky labels and the bottles are even sold in 330ml size rather than the usual half litre. They've got themselves in the papers on a few occasions for making their record-breaking 41% ABV beer 'Sink the Bismarck'. I don't think many will be ordering this on a Friday night, but it gets people talking and is a great publicity stunt.

Purity have also been one of the pioneers for this revolution. As well as a modern look and big marketing budget, they have been able to get their product sold in a huge amount of pubs, restaurants and even some trendy bars. In Birmingham alone Purity beers are available in Island Bar, Edmunds, Metro Bar and Penny Blacks, which are not places that you would have expected to find real ale 10 years ago. In Island Bar, the real ale is sold in bottles rather than from cask. Now although some real ale purists will probably look down on this fact, I think it's a massive step in the right direction and a key for the future. A lot of younger people's bars don't have the facilities or demand to stock real ale in cask so selling bottles instead is a much more feasible option. And it's great walking into to a trendy bar expecting to order a pint of some rubbish lager, to find bottles of Purity Mad Goose in the fridge instead.

And to support my argument that real ale is starting to get cool, Guy Ritchie (director of 'Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels' and 'Sherlock Holmes') is rumoured to be starting his own brewery on his Wiltshire estate with plans to sell his produce to pubs in the area.

All I can say is that I hope this trend continues.

Simon Tomlinson, Young Members Contact



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J.D. Wetherspoon

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