

Solihull



Drinker

Issue No: 59

Winter 2011

2011 Beer Festival



Our 13th beer festival opened and closed with unseasonably warm weather this year. Over 600 visitors came over the weekend to check out the 40 real ales on offer, and at times the beer hall was unusually deserted as people flocked to sit outside supping their choice of 40 well-chosen real ales.



Festival staff, ready and eager to go. Photo by Seven Star Photography.



L-R: Simon Hanson, Area Organiser, Carl Wright, Branch Chairman, and prize-winner Stuart Robinson. Photo by Gordon Clarke.

There were 7 entries for our Homebrew Competition this year, and first prize was won by Stuart Robinson with his Best Bitter, Commodore Ale.

The Warwick Uni Band did us proud over Saturday teatime with a selection of town and country-themed melodies, while The Strumtroopers played to great applause later on with their innovative ukulele take on



The Strumtroopers in action. Photo by Gordon Clarke.

a variety of hits past and present. Look out for these quirky chaps at future beer festivals across the Midlands!

Visitors also raised the welcome sum of £211 over the weekend through donations of cash and unused beer tokens for the charity Midlands Air Ambulance.



Beer and smiles all round. Photo by Seven Star Photography.

The Beer of the Festival vote was resoundingly won by the Brown Cow Brewery with their Captain Oates Dark Aromatic Oat Mild Ale.

Thanks to our host the Solihull Royal British Legion, all our visitors and to those who helped in any way.



Happy and discerning drinkers. Photo by Seven Star Photography.

Put next year's dates in your diary—Friday 5th and Saturday 6th October 2012, same time, same place—watch for further details in the 2012 issues of this magazine.



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TELEPHONE RESERVATIONS WELCOME**

Winter is nearly upon us—will it be deep and crisp and even, or wet and windy and soggy? Who knows—but in any event, a warm welcome awaits you here, with great food, fires, and your choice of perfectly-kept real ales. If you're really lucky there may be chestnuts roasting too!!

Most Improved Pub of the Year 2011

The White Lion at Hampton in Arden closed over a year ago when the previous joint landlords left. As it is now the only pub in Hampton, it was a sore loss to both locals and visitors. Good news came when landlords Chris and Françoise took over, with their able and friendly team, and restored the pub to its former place in the community, opening in late September 2010.

After a little bit of a refit in the layout of the rooms, without losing the wonderful ambience (the large bar was knocked through to the dining area, opening up the available space, and the snug retained), they created a popular drinking and eating venue. They offer a warm welcome to all-comers, have wonderful home-made seasonal food with a French slant, and most importantly have a range of excellently-kept real ales. The five handpumps are always kept busy and the beers please all palates.

Their hard work did not go unnoticed by local CAMRA members, and the pub was voted as the branch's Most Improved Pub of the Year 2011.

Several Solihull CAMRA members assembled at the pub on Thursday 10th November to enjoy the five beers on offer and to watch the presentation of the award certificate.

Beers on at the time of going to print are St Austell Tribute (4.2%), M & B Brew X1 (3.9%), Purity Mad Goose (4.2%), Sharps Doom Bar (4.0%), and a newcomer since our visit, Hobsons Best Bitter (3.8%).



Solihull CAMRA Chairman Carl Wright presents landlord Chris Roach with the award on behalf of the branch. (Photo courtesy of Seven Star Photography)

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

All 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 2011 ©

The 60th edition of the Solihull Drinker will be published on Monday 5th March, 2012.

Copy deadline for advertising and contributions will be Sunday 12th February, 2012.

Hail to the Ale!

Local Beer, Pub, Club & Brewery news

The Rock and Roll Brewhouse

We are delighted to report that there is a new brewery in town—the Rock and Roll Brewhouse, based in Shirley, has been set up by Mark Shepherd, ex-head brewer at the Weatheroak Hill brewery. Mark has a 1/2-barrel plant set-up and is already selling to local festivals—pity we found out about him too late for ours!

The Tom o' The Wood, Rowington

The Tom o' The Wood reopened on Sunday 2nd October, under the new management of Charlie Roberts and Chris Wallis. Charlie and Chris were responsible for turning round the fortunes of the Red Lion in Claverdon and the Cross in Kenilworth. The pub has been freshened up and good pub food is back on the agenda.



The Navigation, Lapworth

The Navigation at Lapworth remains closed for unknown reasons; it is believed a new manager is being sought. If anyone has any news, please don't hesitate to pass it on.



The Winged Spur, Ullenhall

The Winged Spur, Ullenhall, was reopened on Monday 31st October by Gary and Philip Goth-Mead, owners of the Coach & Horses, Wetheroak. Although it remains in the hands of Enterprise it is free of beer tie and will be selling four ales: three from the brewery at the Coach & Horses plus Wadworth 6X.

The Hobs Meadow, Hobs Moat

The Hobs Moat has been reopened under new management, and has been refurbished inside, giving it a much pleasanter atmosphere than on previous visits.

The White Swan, Solihull

Dawn Lingley-Webster, former manager of the White Swan, has left for a new career elsewhere in the pub trade. Dawn was instrumental in the pub winning a place in the Good Beer Guide for the first time in the 2011 edition, and also being awarded our branch's Most Improved Pub of the Year last year. Her place has been taken by Natalie Fletcher, who was Dawn's deputy for three years, and who vows to keep up the high standards which Dawn had achieved.

The Acres, Emdon

The Acres recently introduced a new menu featuring traditional home-cooked food, and visitors can now choose to eat in the main bar or in a separate dining room. Early reports say that the food is tasty and reasonably priced, and the beers are well-kept with four real ales on at all times.



The Station Café Bar, Dorridge

The Station Café Bar, a former HSBC bank, was refurbished and opened by Matt and Tina Bullock at the end of September. The opening hours are from 6am until 11pm during the week and until midnight on Fridays and Saturdays, and they sell a range of food plus wines and beers—at present they have two real ales on, and hope to move to three next year. This makes two real ale outlets near Dorridge station—drop in if you are passing by and check it out for yourself.

The Warwickshire Lad, Woodend



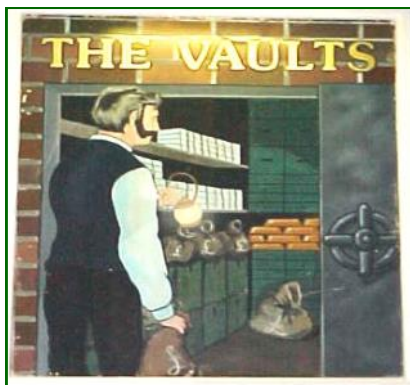
Formerly the Royal Oak, the pub's new proprietors Gaynor and Anton renamed the pub The Warwickshire Lad, the previous name, and after a total refurbishment it is now a country pub and dining establishment. There are still three real ale handpumps on. It has some very good reviews online, so if anyone visits to eat or drink, please pass your views on.

The Red House

The Red House is currently closed; apparently due to management problems. Thwaites brewery have boarded it up to keep it safe and are believed to be looking for a replacement manager, with a view to it reopening soon, although at the time of going to press it was still closed.

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

CAMRA National Winter Ales Festival 2012

If you're looking for any excuse in January to shake off the cold and damp of winter, pay a visit to CAMRA's National Ales Festival from 18th – 21st at Manchester's Sheridan Suite. (M40 8EA). With a whopping selection of over 300 winter warmers, as well as foreign beer and real cider/perry options, the Festival is the biggest showcase of its kind in Britain.

During the 4-day festival, thousands of stout, porter, strong mild and old ale drinkers are expected to come through the doors, and with recent research showing that 52% of alcohol drinkers in Britain have now tried real ale, the festival is welcoming newcomers to see what all the fuss is about. To complement the beer, the Festival promises an unbeatable food buffet including English and Indian dishes, as well as live music on the Saturday.



For further information, visit www.alefestival.org.uk

Two Towers Brewery

The Two Towers Brewery was the kind sponsor of this year's beer festival. The name is based on two local towers in Waterworks Road, Edgbaston, which are just one of many



Birmingham images that the brewery uses for its enterprise, as all their beers have associations with Birmingham features past and present.

The brewery is based in the industrial area of Hockley, famous internationally for its jewellery trade. The two founders, Mark Arnott-Job and Trevor Harris, have spent in excess of 20 years each developing recipes, trying to find the right combination of ales that present a full flavour and a smooth, balanced finish.



Mark Arnott-Job at our festival. Photo by Seven Star Photography

The festival saw their BSA (5.4%), a malty stronger ale with a full body, reflecting the flavours and characteristics of traditional English ales. BSA stands for Birmingham Special Ale but has clear associations with the Birmingham Small Arms company that manufactured the famous motorcycles. Also featured was Hockley Gold (4.1%), a malty bitter with a slightly darker, richer flavour, offering a nutty finish arising from a combination of malts and a careful blend of two traditional hops. The name of this ale reflects the importance and significance of Birmingham's jewellery trade and the role played by the Assay Office located in the Hockley area.



The brewery supplies many Birmingham pubs and clubs, where you can try their Mild & Brazen, Baskerville Bitter, Chamberlain Pale Ale, Jewellery Porter and Livery Street Mild.

For more information about the brewery and its stockists, see their website

www.twotowersbrewery.co.uk

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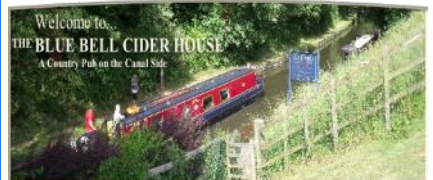
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Hawkshead Brewery & Beer Hall

During our holiday in the Lake District in August last year, my wife Jeanette and I took the opportunity to visit the Hawkshead Brewery and Beer Hall. Visits to the brewery can be arranged by prior appointment.



The Hawkshead Brewery

Hawkshead Brewery was founded by Alex Brodie and commenced brewing with a 7 barrel plant at Hawkshead in July 2002. In 2006, production moved to a new purpose-built brewery in Mill Yard, Staveley, a few miles outside Windermere. The current kit is a 20 barrel plant and the five fermenters provide capacity to brew up to 100 barrels per week. Large windows allow the brewing vessels to be seen from in the car park outside.

The beer hall is located in an upstairs room adjacent to the brewery and serves as the brewery tap, with two bars, beer shop conference room and visitor centre. It is open between 12 noon and 5pm Mondays and Tuesdays, and between noon and 6pm Wednesdays to Sundays inclusive, and the River Bar is also available for private hire in the evenings. Cask Marque accreditation has been awarded and the beer hall is also listed in the Good Beer Guide. The modern, spacious hall has a fully equipped bar; and windows throughout and a walkway through the building allow the public to see into the brew



The Hawkshead beer hall bar



3 x 1/3 pint tasting tray—a very sensible option!

house, the Main Bar cellar, the temperature-controlled beer shop and the new fermentation room. A wipe-board is located next to the viewing window, showing details of the beers currently being brewed and another large board adjacent to this describes the brewing process. Windows to the rear of the beer hall overlook the River Kent.

Five handpumps dispense the brewery's beers and a minimum of four real ales are on at any time. On the occasion of our visit the ales available were *Windermere Pale* (3.5%), *Hawkshead Bitter* (3.7%), *Lakeland Gold* (4.4%), *Red* (4.2%) and *Brodie's Prime* (4.9%). The usual pint and half-pint

measures are, of course, available but a tasting tray can also be purchased, comprising three one-third pints of your chosen beers. This was priced at £2.50 at the time of our visit (10p cheaper than the price of one full pint) and is an excellent way to try a number of different ales. We elected to try the *Windermere Pale*, *Bitter* and *Lakeland Gold*. Robin Cousins, the Assistant Bar Manager, was in attendance and guided us through the tasting of the various beers.



Robin Cousins, Assistant Bar Manager

Windermere Pale is a low gravity, pale summer ale. It is brewed with Maris Otter Pale Ale malt with a bit of wheat. The fruity hop flavours come from a mixture of traditional and modern hops, including the new and rare American hop 'Citra'. This beer is not as bitter as other pale beers.

Hawkshead Bitter is pale in colour with a hoppy bitterness and a slight elderflower aroma, coming from the use of Slovenian 'Celeia' hops. This is an excellent session ale, reputed to be the hikers' favourite.

Lakeland Gold is golden-coloured and is hoppy and bitter with fruit flavours resulting from the blending of 'First Gold' and 'Cascade' hops.

With ales duly sampled, we wandered around the beer hall looking at the information boards, with Robin giving us an overview of the brewery's history, explaining the processes involved in brewing and telling us about the beers in the current range, including the seasonal brews. A selection of the brewery's products are available for sale and we purchased a bottle or two to take home before heading off to find somewhere for lunch.

Our thanks go to Robin Cousins for a very informative and enjoyable visit.

Chris Lloyd

Footnote: Since this article was written, the beer hall has undergone a £250,000 expansion, with food now available during the day from the 'beer kitchen'.

(Photos: Jeannette and Chris Lloyd)

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Solihull Young Members

One of my main aims as the Solihull CAMRA Young Members Contact is to increase the amount of young people (18-35) who are members of CAMRA. There are currently only 30 young members in the Solihull Branch out of nearly 400, which although this is a better ratio than some of other branches in the country, I still don't think it's a true reflection of how many young people are drinking and enjoying real ale in the Solihull Area.

More and more young people are drinking real ale these days which is great news but we also want them to become members of CAMRA and contribute to the branch activities. CAMRA is a voluntary organisation which helps promote real ale and supports the pub industry, and we are reliant on our members and branch activities. If this is something that you are interested in, then you may want to consider joining up and being part of it too.

As you may have seen from my last article in the Drinker Magazine, I have launched a FREE BEER initiative where new young members into the branch will receive £10 to spend on real ale. If they have been nominated by an existing member, the existing member will get £5 to spend on real ale as well. So that's £15 worth of FREE BEER for membership that costs £20. And this is on top of all the other benefits you get including £20 worth of Wetherspoons vouchers and discount to 160 beer festivals. For more details feel free to email me at youngmembers@solihullcamra.org.uk.

I would also like to encourage the existing young members to become more active in branch activities. There are loads of different things to get involved in, for example: social trips to pubs, breweries and beer festivals; monthly branch meetings; helping with the Solihull Beer Festival; and there is even a post available at the moment as the Press and Publicity Officer for the Branch.



If anyone would be interested in getting involved in any of the branch activities, or has any other ideas on how to attract new young members please let me know.

Simon Tomlinson
Solihull CAMRA Young Members Contact

(Photograph: Keith Morris/Alamy)

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

Christmas and New Year opening:

***Christmas Eve: 2pm—12 midnight, featuring the Christmas Eve raffle draw;
Christmas Day: 12 midday—2pm; Boxing Day: 12 midday—8pm; Monday
27th—Thursday 30th December: 2pm—11pm***

***New Year's Eve: 2pm—1am (children welcome but only up until 9pm): Disco
Picnic—recycle your Christmas leftovers and bring your own picnic to the
Club!! Entry free to Club members; £20 to non-members
(limited tickets available so ring to book without delay).***

It's never too early to start growing for Marrow Sunday—get your marrow, onion, carrot, runner bean and parsnip seeds in the ground now to be in with a chance of winning!!

Rowington Club Game Fair

The Rowington Club held its third successful Game Fair on Sunday 9th November. This event is always a country-lover's delight, featuring various displays, pursuits, side-stalls and food cooked on the spot from morning till evening.

This year was no exception, commencing with a Breakfast BBQ from 10.30am which was eagerly awaited by early-comers. Later on a choice of hot meals including curry was available, which were very welcome in the early autumn sunshine which lasted throughout the day.

A country affair is not the same without dogs, and visitors were able to watch working gundogs on the cricket club grounds next to the Club. A falconry display followed, and watchers were treated to an expert handler's explanation of training and flying hawks and owls, with demonstrations of their abilities. Brave volunteers were able to don a leather gauntlet which they held up for the birds to return to after their flights.



For those who like to be hands-on, archery, air-rifle and clay-pigeon shooting were all available during the day, attracting a steady stream of customers.

Stalls were ranged along one side of the cricket pitch, with items for sale including 'boot fair' bargains for sale in aid of charity to specially-mixed herbal teas. Another stall proved very popular with a choice of ciders for those who did not wish to take advantage of the Club's usual excellent selection of real ales.



The Rowington Club Game Fair is well worth a visit for an excellent, interesting and relaxing day. Watch out for next year's date in this magazine and on our website, or ring the Club itself for further details of this and other events.

Everards' Southgate Bitter

Everards first brewed at the Southgate Street Brewery in Leicester in October 1849. 162 years later they are still brewing in Leicestershire and are proud to introduce their latest innovation, Southgate Bitter. This has been crafted to deliver a full, flavoursome beer at 2.7% abv. Careful consideration has been

taken to the brewing techniques and ingredients to ensure that whilst the beer is a lower strength, the flavours are prominent and the pint is very moreish. It has the traditional bitter and hop character that you would expect from a cask ale, balanced with a sweet finish. For stockists, visit

http://www.everards.co.uk/news_events/news/519 .



Spotlight on Solihull CAMRA



As the organiser, it is not unusual at our beer festivals for me to be asked “Do you do this in your day job?”. To which the answer is no, very few of us do. Which started me wondering: what *do* local CAMRA members do for a living?

One such is Steve Evans, who often pops up at our events complete with impressive camera kit and kindly takes photos for this magazine. Here is Steve’s story about how he makes his living.

“I qualified as a Chartered Accountant in 1975 and after 3 years at KPMG (called Peat Marwick Mitchell in those days), went into commerce and industry. After 3 positions lasting a total of 10 years, I joined a hotel group in 1988 and worked there until 2004. It wasn’t Smirnoff that turned me away from accountancy (do you remember the adverts?). It was always just a way of earning a reasonable salary and eventually, I decided that I wanted to do something completely different.

“Like the Monty Python character, I decided that I wanted to be a lion tamer - in my case, the lions being children - and started my photography business. Commencing with school photos, I’ve branched out into Family Studio sittings, Corporate & Commercial, Proms, and Balls, Private Parties, Performing Arts and Weddings.”

The successful business that Steve runs is called Seven



Star Photography, and it is not unusual for his photos of local events to be featured in the Solihull papers, but he also travels the length and breadth of Britain on demand. In the last few months he has worked in Edinburgh and Plymouth and to do a bit of name dropping, has photographed Chris Tarrant, Lynda Bellingham, Ruth Madoc and Ban Ki-Moon, Secretary General of the UN.

You can check out Steve’s website and find further details at: www.sevenstarphotography.co.uk; or call Steve on 0121 704 0564 or send an email to steve@sevenstarphotography.co.uk.

(Solihull CAMRA members who would like to be featured in future Spotlight articles should contact the Editor with their details at the address on page 3.)



For complaints about short measures or other beer-related problems, contact Solihull Trading Standards on 0121 704 6844



Membership Matters

As people may be aware, this year is the 40th anniversary of CAMRA. There have been many changes over the years; not least the membership number which is now over 130,000 nationally—the largest voluntary organisation in the country. The organisation is no longer just about campaigning for real ale but for prevention of unnecessary pub closures, support for publicans, realistic opening hours and so on. Some members are now saying that the campaign has achieved its objective (most pubs seem to stock at least one ale these days) and could now be turned into a drinking club. Perhaps you yourself feel one way or the other—or would like it to combine the two.

Whatever scenario appeals to you most you could, by joining CAMRA, give more power to its campaigning elbow *and* its drinking elbow. It only costs about £20 a year and could also come in useful for that awkward-to-know-what-to-get Christmas present. People can also choose from a great range of books and other items from the CAMRA website—again, all wonderful present material.

Bob Jackson, Membership Secretary



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|--|--|---|
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Dates For Your Diary

Branch Meetings

2012
Monday 5th Dec The Reservoir, Earlswood
Monday 9th Jan Hobs Meadow, Hobs Moat
Monday 6th February The Vaults, Knowle
Monday 5th March Earlswood Motor Club, Earlswood
(Branch meetings start at 8.30pm except where noted otherwise)

Committee Meetings

2012
Monday 19th Dec The Colebrook, Shirley
Monday 20th Feb The Farm, Shelley
(8.30pm start. Ordinary members may attend Committee meetings but only participate if invited to do so by the Committee)

Socials

Friday 16th December Jewellery Quarter Christmas Crawl—meet Solihull Station for 18.31pm train to arr. 19.01pm, or at the Drop Forge (1st pub) at 19.05pm. 5 pub visits planned for evening.
2012
Friday 21st Jan Beer & Balti, Red Lion, Knowle (8.30pm)
Saturday 11th Feb Trip to Burton Museum (TBA)
March Cambridge Trip (rearranged)

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.

Have you considered advertising with us?

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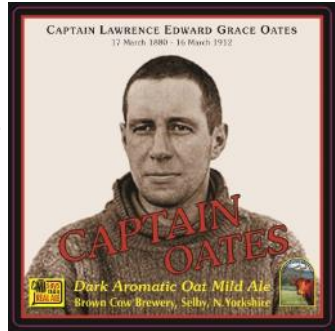
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The Brown Cow Brewery

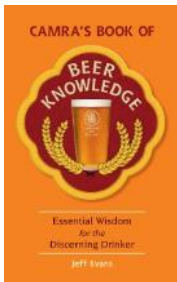
The Brown Cow Brewery, which won our Beer of the Festival with their Captain Oates Dark Aromatic Oat Mild Ale, was set up by Sue and Keith Simpson in 1997 and is based near Selby in North Yorkshire.

Back in 1984 the brewery moved into what had previously been The Brown Cow Inn at Barlow. It was built in 1790 as a public house and remained so until 1957 when it was sold as a private residence. Its location is fairly remote as it is half a mile from the village on the banks of the River Ouse with no near neighbours; as a result, its customers were mainly farmers who used to use the nearby rope ferry to transport cattle and sheep over the river, and the licensing hours were governed by the tidal times. The second world war brought an increase in trade when Barlow village was used as a depot for building airships. The road—although more of a lane than a road—was named after the pub and is still often referred to locally as Brown Cow Lane. Yet another intriguing historical case of pub first, road second!



Christmas is Coming....

Stuck for ideas for presents for your beer-lover?

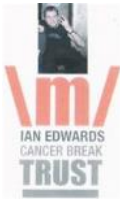


CAMRA's 2nd edition of its *Book of Beer Knowledge*, a pocket-sized compendium to load beer drinkers with the ultimate pub trivia before a trip to their local, is out now. Compiled by beer writer Jeff Evans, this must-have title for lovers of pub ammo contains more than 200 entries covering the serious, silly and the downright bizarre from the world of beer. Packed with beer facts, records, stats and anecdotes, *CAMRA's Book of Beer Knowledge* reveals everything from the smallest pub in Britain to how to say 'cheers' in 26 different languages.

The content includes such little-known facts as: China produces the most beer of any country in the world (410.3 million hectolitres each year); home-brewing is still illegal in Alabama and Mississippi, USA, Buddhist monks in Thailand have built an entire temple from old beer bottles; and the longest pub name in the UK is 'The Old Thirteenth Cheshire Astley Volunteer Rifleman Corps Inn'.

The book is priced at £7.99 from www.camra.org.uk/shop and all good retailers. Make sure they split the prize money with you if they win!

The Ian Edwards Cancer Break Trust



The Ian Edwards Cancer Break Trust was set up earlier this year by John and Carol Edwards and friends, after their son Ian, a Solihull CAMRA member, lost his fight against T cell Lymphoma last December. In between his treatments, Ian and his parents would go away for a few days, which helped them all relax and forget about their concerns for a while. These valuable breaks are now a great source of comfort to Ian's parents, and they wanted to provide the same opportunities for others in the same position.

This lasting memorial in Ian's name is intended to raise funds to help other people suffering from a blood cancer get away for a much-needed break between treatments by assisting with overnight or travel costs.

The Trust has outgrown its original status and is now officially Charity Number **1143886**, registered with the Charity Commission. It has recently helped its first two 'customers' each take a much-needed week's break from their respective hospitals.

Leaflets about the Trust and how to apply are available in hospitals, or by emailing info@ianedwardscbtrust.org.uk, or by writing to The Ian Edwards Cancer Break Trust, 157 Welford Road, Shirley, Solihull, B90 3HT. Further details can also be found on the website: www.ianedwardscbtrust.org.uk.

If you wish to donate to the Trust, you can either send a cheque to the address above, or pay through your bank to Barclays Bank account number 93272176, sort code 20-77-62; or use the forms on the webpage.



CAMRA Complimentary Club Competitions



Did you know that as a CAMRA member you can enter competitions from breweries to win beers, polo- and T-shirts, and even brewery trips? At present, 14 breweries ranging from Amber Ales to Woodforde's have signed up with CAMRA to offer goodies to be won.

To see which Complimentary Clubs are available to join, members need to log into the main CAMRA website to join any of the participating clubs: visit www.camra.org.uk/compclubs and pick which Clubs you'd like to get emails from with details of prizes to be won, and start entering!

Meet The Brewer

The Assembly Rooms in Solihull town centre is holding a 'Meet The Brewer' night with the Two Towers Brewery, on Monday 12th December starting at 7.30pm. There will be a chance to taste 5 of their ales, plus other Christmas ales, and there will be curry-tasting and other nibbles throughout the evening.



(NB. Fans of Thornbridge Jaipur IPA might like to know that it is now being stocked by the pub as a permanent ale. Nicely done: just in time for your Christmas pub crawl!!)

Pub Reforms Drag On...

MPs have called for a drastic reform of the pub industry to stop locals closing at an "alarming" rate. In a strongly-worded report in late September, the Business Select Committee criticised the large pub companies which run most of the country's pubs, so-called pubcos, saying self-regulation had failed. The committee said that after being given a number of chances to change the way it runs the business, pubcos should now be subjected to statutory regulation.

MPs criticised the "beer tie" system under which landlords have to buy alcohol from a pubco, which campaigners have argued has pushed up the price of a pint.

The report said: "The purpose of this inquiry into pub companies was to assess whether or not the industry had delivered on its promise of meaningful reform. As with previous inquiries, modest improvements have been made. However, the fact that it has taken a number of select committee inquiries to prompt these improvements demonstrates the deep-seated problems which lie at the heart of the industry. While the new codes of practice are a step in the right direction, they only address a limited number of areas.

"In many areas we do not believe that there has been a genuine commitment to reform. Many of the potential benefits of the new code, which were identified by our predecessor committees, have been undermined by a process of implementation which can only be described as half-hearted."

The British Beer and Pub Association (BBPA) was accused of being "impotent" in enforcing its own timetable for reform and MPs said the supposed threat of removing the membership of pub companies who did not deliver was "hollow". The BBPA rejected the committee's findings but beer campaigners predicted that a new statutory code would mean lower prices and fewer pub closures.

(Source: The London Evening Standard)



A Campaign of Two Halves

Fair deal on beer tax

Save Britain's Pubs!



Join CAMRA Today

Complete the Direct Debit form and you will receive 15 months membership for the price of 12 and a fantastic discount on your membership subscription.

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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

12/10

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J.D. Wetherspoon

The White Swan and The Assembly Rooms each offer two regular ales and a good selection of guest ales from both regional and UK breweries. Both pubs are pleased to announce consistent 'Cask Marque' and 'Best Bar None' accreditations and last year both received a 4-star accreditation from the Scores on the Doors Food Hygiene Standard

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 5 guest ales daily.

A music-free venue screening live Freeview sporting events.

2010 Winner of Solihull Best Bar None Best Town Centre Pub and Overall Winner of 2010 Best Bar None

Now in the 2012 CAMRA Good Beer Guide



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 5 real ciders on hand-pull. Live sporting events screened weekly; DJ's and dancing Thursday-Saturday.

Having a party? Our upstairs bar with seating for 70 is available for hire and can include music arrangements as well as food and drink, all tailored to your needs: please ask staff for further details.



REAL ALE SUNDAY: 20p off any pint of guest ale, all day Sundays!!

Christmas menu: your choice of 3 starters, main courses, and desserts, with something to please everyone. With a great selection of real ales and wines to accompany your food you will have a wonderful festive meal! Bookings now being taken for 14 November—22 December—ring for details of menus and prices, or select your local pub and book online.

(Be a real JD Wetherspoon's fan— join us on Facebook!)

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“ MERRY CHRISTMAS ”
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HPA is a truly delightful pale ale that gives hardworking real-ale lovers a taste that's distinctively different. Carefully made using Styrian Goldings and locally grown Target hops, HPA is smooth on the palate and boasts a citrus hop aroma leading to a balanced bitter finish. Join us by raising a glass to the festive season – and to a HPA new year!

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