



## Milton Keynes Gets its First Micropub

Wolverton Park is to get the first micropub in Milton Keynes. This exciting development, to be called the Biergarten, is in process of being set up as we go to press. The promoters have reached their crowdfunding targets so the pub should be open by May of this year at The Triangle, Wolverton Park (Off Old Wolverton Road),



Milton Keynes MK12 5FJ . The licensee is Franzi Florack, seen here on the right with some of the initial shareholders. Franzi is from Germany, hence the pub's name. Visit www.mkbiergarten.co.uk for more information.

But what, you may be asking, is a micropub? According to their trade-body's website

(micropubassociation. co.uk) it is 'a small free-house which listens to its customers, mainly serves cask ales, promotes conversation, shuns all forms of electronic entertainment, and dabbles in traditional pub snacks.' Beer Moos thinks that sounds most appealing!



Since 2005, when the Butchers Arms at Herne in Kent started the micropub revolution, 221 micropubs have opened in the UK. Now there will soon be 222.

If you can't wait till May for the Biergarten, the Bald Buzzard in Leighton Buzzard and Old Ale House in Woburn are established local examples.

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Membership





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50 High Street, Newport Pagnell, Bucks MK16 8AO Tel: 01908 211495



### New Faces on our Committee

At the annual general meeting of Milton Keynes and North Bucks CAMRA branch we were delighted to welcome two new members on to our committee. John McLaughlin is our new treasurer and Will Longmate has gamely taken on three tasks – pubs campaigns officer, public transport officer (tells you how to get to pubs without driving) and organiser of our next beer festival. Beer Moos asked each to say a little about themselves.

John McLaughlin writes: I was born and lived most of my life in west and north-west London until I moved to MK in summer 2014. For 39 years I was a civil servant, and union rep for 37 of them, retiring 4 years ago. I chaired the finance committee of my department's social club, and as a civil servant had responsibility for over £30m of public spending each year, so I should find managing a CAMRA branch's accounts fairly straightforward!

As to beer drinking, I started quite young, with quart bottles of (Watneys!!) brown and pale ale. At Essex University in the late 60s I was drinking real ale – Trumans mostly – and on returning to west London it was Youngs or Fullers. I've steadily expanded my repertoire ever since, and in the 80s I discovered Belgian beer. I was at the very first CAMRA national beer festival, in Covent Garden in 1975, and I have attended almost every Great British Beer Festival since then.

However I only joined CAMRA when I retired. I was a customer at the 2014 Concrete Pint festival and within a few months was on the committee and running the Belgian beer stand at our 2015 festival. And now I'm treasurer – there's progress for you!



John McLaughlin

Will Longmate writes: I'm a maltster, and hold a professional brewing qualification from Heriot-Watt University, so beer plays a huge part in my life. I've always been a fan of real ale, my favourite being Fyne Ales Jarl, and I adore any Americanhopped pale ale.



Will Longmate

#### **NEXT ISSUE**

The next issue of Beer Moos will be published on: July 1<sup>st</sup>. We must have your stories, news and advertisements by: June 21<sup>st</sup>. Late copy cannot be guaranteed entry.

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#### Trading Standards

If you have a complaint about any unfair trading practice, such as short measures or misleading product promotion, contact Milton Keynes Trading Standards at PO BOX 105, Civic Offices, 1 Saxon Gate East, Milton Keynes MK9 3HH Telephone 01908 252433. Email: tsd@milton-keynes.gov.uk or Buckingham Trading Standards at 5-7 Walton Street, Aylesbury, Bucks HP20 1UP, Tel: 08454 040506. Local Bus information & timetables are available at www.arrivabus.co.uk

#### To Advertise

To place an advert or enquire about our rate card please contact: Nei Richards - 01536 358670



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# Possible Wetherspoons in Newport Pagnell?

Have you Scored yet?

'Spoons has now made application for the former Robinsons Restaurant in St. John Street, Newport Pagnell to be turned into a pub (MKC ref 15/03080/FUL). As the former restaurant is rather small, Wetherspoons wishes to build also on the car park of the adjacent office. Though Newport is well supplied



with pubs, none in the town centre is really family-friendly, and the low prices might attract a new clientele. However, according to local media, Newport Pagnell Town Council is not in favour. And, Beer Moos thinks, central Bletchley is where something like a Wetherspoons is really needed.

CAMRA's National Beer Scoring System (NBSS) is an easy 0-5 point scale for judging beer quality. It is used to find out which pubs consistently sell well kept ale. The results help us to decide which pubs to consider for the Good Beer Guide.

All CAMRA members can submit beer scores for any pub in the UK.

Please go to whatpub.com and log in using your membership number and password. Locate the pub's web page. If you are using the desktop version, Beer Scoring appears on the right hand side of the page. If you are using the mobile version, click on the Submit Beer Scores tab.

Enter the date that you visited the pub, the name of the brewery and the name of the beer. Using the scale below, select your score. Once complete, click on Submit Score.

If you would like more information on beer scoring, please contact database@mkcamra.org.uk





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No Real Ale

No cask-conditioned ale available

Beer that is anything from barely drinkable drinkable with considerable resentment.

Competently kept, drinkable pint but doesn inspire in any way, not worth moving to another pub but you drink the beer withou really noticing.

Good beer in good form. You may cancel plans to move to the next pub. You want to stay for another pint and may seel out the beer again.

Very Good

### **Diary Dates**

Please note that this diary information is always subject to change check online for latest information at www.mkcamra.org.uk

#### **MARCH 2016**

#### Friday 25th (Good Friday)

Bradwell Village Social, Victoria Inn 12 noon, Prince Albert later. There will be a Good Friday Beer and Bun Race from the Victoria. This has been a Bradwell tradition for many years. Bus 5 or 6 to/from Priory Common School then a short walk.

#### Saturday 26th

Beer Festival at **Hanslope Club** 12 noon onwards. Presentation of Club of The Year 2016 at 2.30 Opportunity to visit **Watts Arms** and **Cock**. Bus 33 goes to Hanslope.

### APRIL 2016 - COMMUNITY PUBS MONTH Wednesday 6th

Wheatsheaf, Maids Moreton. Presentation of Pub of The Year 2016 and social. 8pm.

#### Thursday 7th

Branch Meeting at **The Barn**, Central Milton Keynes 20:15

#### Saturday 9th

Minibus trip to **Oakham Brewery** in Peterborough to present Beer of the Festival award, followed by pub crawl in Peterborough. Mini-coach departs 09:30 from Wetherspoons. Fare is £16. Sadly, owing to space constraints, this trip is open to CAMRA members only. To book e-mail Doug Dillow d.dillow540@btinternet.com

#### Thursday 21st

Far Bletchley Social **Old Swan** 19:30/20:00 **Three Trees** 21:00. Bus 4 from CMK or Bletchley

#### Saturday 23rd

Wheatsheaf, Bow Brickhill, Pub Games Afternoon with visit to Horne's Brewery. 2-6pm

#### Saturday 30th

Social by bus, Woughton Woolstone and Simpson. Bus 18 from CMK at 11:40 or buses 8/11/12 to Childs Way and walk. Barge Inn Woolstone 12 noon, Cross Keys Woolstone approx 12:50, Bus 18 @ 13:47 to Olde Swan Woughton 13.55, Bus 18 @ 14:56 to Plough Simpson 15:00

#### **MAY 2016**

First week of month, date to be confirmed, Branch Meeting, **The Barn**, CMK, 20.15

#### Monday 16th

Willen Social. Lakeside Willen Lake 19:00, Ship Ashore Willen 20:30 Buses back to CMK: 1 @ 21:47 and 22:47; 2 @ 21:20, 22:20, 23:20

#### Saturday 28th

Stoke Hammond Social by bus. Bus **70** from CMK The Point @ 12:00, **Dolphin** Stoke Hammond 12:30, Walk or bus **70** @ 13:26 from Dolphin or 13.00 from CMK The Point. **Three Locks** Stoke Hammond 13:30 for **beer festival**. Bus **70** back from Three Locks @ xx:53, last one 17:53

#### **JUNE 2016**

First week of month, date to be confirmed, Branch Meeting at **The Barn**, CMK 20.15

#### Saturday 11th

Lavendon and Olney Social by bus. Bus 21 @ 11:44 from The Food Centre to Lavendon, Green Man Lavendon 12:30, Horseshoe Lavendon, Two Brewers Olney, Bull Olney, Swan Inn and Bistro Olney, Bell and Bear Emberton

#### Saturday 18th

Leighton Buzzard Narrow Gauge Railway Beer Festival Page's Park, Leighton Buzzard (www.buzzrail.co.uk) Bus D1 from Leighton Buzzard station, ask for Narrow Gauge Railway, Direct bus 70 from CMK – alight at Morrisons for Page's Park.

#### Thursday 30th

Minibus tour round villages north of Milton Keynes. Depart Wetherspoons 19.15 Cost £10, **Cowper's Oak** Weston Underwood 19:45, **Lamb** Stoke Goldington 21:00, Return to Spoons for 22:45

### **Pub & Brewery News**

#### **NEWS NORTH**

The Club, Hanslope has been nominated our branch's Club of the Year. We don't award this very often but Beer Moos reckons this club well deserves it.



#### **NEWS EAST**

**Red House, Newport Pagnell** still had a lease-for-sale sign displayed as we went to press.

#### **NEWS WEST**

**Bull and Butcher, Akeley** had a Fullers' Business Opportunity sign displayed when our spy drove past in January.

Fox and Hounds, Deanshanger is now a Co-op supermarket. Luckily for the village, the nearby Beehive is still very much in business as a pub.

**Prince George, Tattenhoe** has a new menu from 16<sup>th</sup> March, with fresh ideas and tasty new dishes (their favourite is Honey BBQ Smoked Beef Brisket.) There are also sections for the health conscious and for vegetarians, and a separate gluten free menu as well. The pub is also offering a range of gin cocktails for those wanting a change from beer!

Royal Oak, Tingewick Beer Moos is saddened to report that the Royal Oak's landlord Tony Diston passed away in January.

Shoulder of Mutton, Little Horwood has been up for sale and according the estate agent's website has been sold subject to contract. Beer Moos wishes well the new owners of this characterful pub whose origins go back to the 15th century.

Wheatsheaf, Maids Moreton has been nominated as Milton Keynes and North Bucks CAMRA Pub of the Year for 2016. Beer Moos congratulates licensees Bradley and Joanna Vyse for achieving this award.



#### **NEWS SOUTH**

The Old Ale House, Woburn This new micro-pub opened on 29th Jan at 11 Market Place in Woburn. A 'recent communiqué from our friends in South Beds CAMRA, in whose branch area Woburn lies, reported there were 6 Cask Ales on offer, including Restoration & Narrow Gauge from Leighton Buzzard Brewery, Dark Fox & Triple Goat Porter from Hornes Brewery here in Milton Keynes.

Oakham Citra, and one other. Two ciders were also on tap from Bedfordshire's Potton Press.

Woburn is tricky to reach by public transport from Milton Keynes. Perhaps the best way is take a train or 300 bus to Woburn Sands thence Grant Palmers' 49 bus to Woburn, but check return times before setting out!

#### **NEWS CENTRAL**

Cross Keys, Woolstone is under new management. Beer Moos welcomes Hannah Edwards who took over the tenancy in February. The Cross Keys offers CAMRA members 20p a pint discount



on production of an up-to-date membership card.

Enigma, Bletchley may disappear if new plans for central Bletchley are actioned. We will report on events here as we hear about them but information is welcomed.

Old Beams, Shenley Lodge Beer Moos welcomes new licensees Tracie Allen and Scott Webber to our branch area. They have moved to the Old Beams from The Angels in Hitchin.

Plough, Simpson has new licensees. Beer Moos welcomes Les and Steven (who is a CAMRA member) to our branch area. The Plough has four cask lines, two of which must be used for Charles Wells beers, and the pub is looking into stocking a local cask ale for the others.



Red Lion, Fenny Stratford had a visit from TV personality Al Murray, 'The Pub Landlord', who did a shift behind the bar at the Red Lion on Friday February 5th. The pub was packed, and Al's Beautiful British Beer (brewed by Gadd's of Ramsgate) ran out while our spy was being served - he even has a video of it.

The Red Lion has been nominated as Milton Keynes and North Bucks CAMRA Cider Pub of the Year for 2016. Well-done to licensees Guy and Glynis Plumb.





Ship Ashore, Willen On March 22<sup>nd</sup>, Ember Inns, owners of the Ship Ashore, is launching its own house ale at the

pub. It is a pale ale, 4% ABV, brewed by Black Sheep. CAMRA members receive a discount of 20p a pint at the Ship Ashore.

#### **BREWERY and CIDER NEWS**

Aylesbury Brewhouse's current special is Down Under (4.7% ABV), a Southern hemisphere dry hopped IPA full of Aussie and Kiwi hops, with tropical fruit flavours and a smack of citrus on the nose. Dry hopped with Australian Galaxy for intense aromas, it'll be followed by CH-47 (4.7% ABV), a single hopped Chinook IPA with the heavy hitting Chinook hop throughout, giving a refreshing citrus hoppy lift.

**Bucks Star** are pilot-brewing their next beer. Monthly themed beer tasting events in conjunction with Milton Keynes Food Revolution continue at the brewery.

Chiltern Brewery has a new brew out, Earl Grey (3.9% ABV). It's an extra pale, refreshing, citrus, spicy and floral ale made with Virunga Earl Grey tea from Birchall Tea Importers. Available for March only.

Concrete Cow is about to unleash something a little different: MK67 Lager! It's a 4.5% ABV beer with 100% Pilsner malt plus Whitbread Golding Variety, Motueka, and Saaz hops. Unfiltered and unpasteurised, it is lagering in the brewery's cold room as you read this, so should be available in the second half of April. It won't be real ale, but it should still be real good!

Concrete Cow also reports that its craft-keg MK IPA is on sale in Wetherspoons in Berkhamsted and is proving very popular there.

Cotton End Brewery, at the back of the Pomfret Arms in Northampton, will be holding "Beer Festival No. 1" from the 27th to the 30th of May. Their beers don't get out much, so this will be a good chance to sample their offerings, plus some ciders and guest ales from Yorkshire. Another opportunity for the Concrete Pint team to get their flat caps out again! Search ThePomfret Arms on Facebook for more info.

**Hornes Brewery** in Bow Brickhill has launched its fourth beer. Weighing in at 3.8% ABV, Dark Fox is unusually dark in colour for a bitter. Its rich flavours come from a mix of four different malts and three UK hop varieties.

Got Wood? **Leighton Buzzard Brewing Co.** has! They have invested in four wooden casks to experiment with. Restoration Ale was reportedly excellent from the wood at a recent brewery open day.

Phipps-NBC have added a gin to their range of beers. Kingswell Gin is hand crafted in small batches at the Albion Brewery in Northampton and is flying out faster than they can distil it. Planning is also under way for the Northampton County Beer Festival, which is set to run between the 19th and 22nd of May at Delapré Abbey.

Sad news from Oxfordshire Ales (who were actually

based in Buckinghamshire) as they closed in December 2015 and have now been formally wound up. Their beers were regularly seen on the bar of the Moon Under Water in CMK, where they seemed to be popular.

Good news from recently closed **Silverstone Brewery**, which has reopened with new owners and a new name – Silverstone Real Ale. Old favourites – Pit Stop and Chequered Flag - have been revived, and two new beers called Ignition and Octane added to the range. One of the new team used to be manager of motor-cycling legend Barry Sheene. They have an impressive new website www.silverstonerealale.com where you can read all about it.

Congratulations to **Tring Brewery** for winning the Barley Wine/Strong Old Ales category at CAMRA's National Winter Ales Festival with the excellent Death or Glory (7.2% ABV). If you haven't tried it yet head over to the Lamb, Stoke Goldington, immediately (Bus 37 takes you there). Tring's March special is Hummingbird (4.2% ABV), intensely malty with Mandarina Bavaria hops providing tangerine notes, dry hopped with Amarillo, and finished with a touch of orange zest. Dragon Rapide (3.8%) will fly in for April, a copper coloured, dry hopped session bitter made with all English ingredients. This year's beers are named after De Havilland aircraft and the brewery will be making a donation from sales towards improvements to the De Havilland museum just outside St Albans.

Vale has released Grand Union (3.9% ABV) to celebrate this year's Six Nations rugby tournament. Deep copper in colour with plenty of roast malt flavour, it features six different hops but is by no means a 'hop bomb'. March's seasonal brew is First Call (4.0% ABV), a golden pale ale. XT's 2016 beer, unsurprisingly called 16 (6.0% ABV), is an ambitious quadruple-hopped Belgian-style IPA. Belgian speciality malts, chomped on by an abbey ale yeast with a European Union of hops, complete the picture. Some of the recent Animal brews include Giraffe (4.6% ABV Amber ale), Newt (4.6% ABV Columbus single hop pale ale) and Big Foot (4.6% ABV pale ale with European hops). Some previously seen Animals will be making a return too, such as Raccoon, Oink and Rabbit.

Virtual Orchard cidery may be forced to move from its canalside location in Old Wolverton as the site's owners intend to clear it to build luxury flats. We await further news. VO's sister enterprise Wharf Distillery is looking for crowd-funding for their expansion plans. They made a very limited edition (14 bottles) of chocolate-orange liqueur for Valentines day. Visit these sites for further info. For more information visit www.crowdfunder.co.uk/wharfdistillery or www.facebook.com/wharfdistillery

#### **LOCALE NEWS**

Milton Keynes and North Bucks branch of CAMRA defines a LocAle as any real ale brewed within a 25 mile radius of the centre of the branch area. Accredited pubs commit to regularly stock at least one LocAle and consistently serve it at good quality or better. Our current list is:

Bell & Bear, 12 High Street, Emberton, Olney, MK46 5DH. [Various beers]

George, 16 Market Square, Winslow, MK18 3AB. [Vale, ABC] Lamb, 20 High Street, Stoke Goldington, MK16 8NR. [Tring] Swan Inn & Bistro, 12 High Street South, Olney, MK46 4AA. [Hart Family]

Three Locks, Leighton Road, Stoke Hammond, MK17 9DD. [Various beers]

White Horse, 49 High Street, Stony Stratford, Milton Keynes, MK11 1AA. [Vale, Frog Island]

#### Branch Pubs Offering CAMRA Discount

(on production of a current membership card)

Bull, Newport Pagnell (10%)
Carrington Arms, Moulsoe (10%)
Clock Tower, Emerson Valley (10% John Barras)
Cross Keys, Woolstone (Wells - 20p/pint)
King's Head, Buckingham (30p/pint, 15p/half)
Nut and Squirrel, Westcroft (Ember Inns - 20p/pint)

Olde Swan, Woughton on the Green (10% Chef & Brewer)

Ship Ashore, Willen (Ember Inns - 20p/pint) Stratton Arms, Turweston (10%)

Swan Inn and Bistro, Olney (30p/pint)

Talbot, Loughton (Ember Inns - 20p/pint)

White Hart, Buckingham (10% GoodNight Inns)

Wetherspoon's (vouchers must be presented along with your membership card if requested):

David Garrick (fomerly Lloyds No 1), Moon Under Water, Secklow Hundred and Wetherspoon's.

Note: This list is up to date as far as Beer Moos is aware – all discounts are available thanks to the generosity of the pubs and can be withdrawn at any time. Please let us know if you find that the discount is no longer available, or if you find another pub that offers CAMRA members a discount

#### What the Juice?

by The Cider Insider

Slightly belated news, but congratulations are overdue to Dicky of Woughton Orchard cider who is now a proud father (his first child) and so has reined back a bit on cider making activities. In the past Dicky has partnered with Laurence of Virtual Orchard to harvest jointly all the fruit from the cider apple orchard at

Woughton-on-the-Green, which they manage for the Parks Trust, and then press all the fruit together before creating their own personal blends: Wharf Cider (Virtual Orchard) and Woughton Orchard "7".

Dicky has reduced production to around 600 litres per year and is now doing the whole process in his back garden in Bletchley. Downsizing has however given him the opportunity to be more specific in the blend of the 7 varieties which grow in Woughton on the Green. So keep an eye out for the new season "7" when he releases it later this year, or early in 2017.

On the Virtual Orchard front there have been several developments. Firstly, Laurence has reported that he is actively looking for a new home due to plans to develop his current base at Galleon Wharf in Old Wolverton into luxury canal side homes. Although planning permission hasn't yet been approved, the terms of the lease mean that if Laurence waits and then permission is granted, he would have only days to find a new home, which could see him having to relocate to an industrial estate in Milton Keynes.

As Virtual Orchard is always eager for the public to come down and see apples being pressed, Laurence is keen to find a home that will attract the public, with plenty of parking and other retail opportunities. He is currently in discussion over a number of possible options; however it is possible that this might take Virtual Orchard over the border into Northamptonshire. Although this would be a great shame for Milton Keynes and our branch, the important thing is that Virtual Orchard is able to continue its great work converting local apples into delicious cider.

On other Virtual Orchard news, many of you are probably already aware that Laurence distils his own apple brandy and malt spirit, as well as the Sacred Cow malt spirit for Dan of Concrete Cow Brewery. Laurence now wishes to expand the distillery and is currently crowd-funding to raise money for a second still and develop the Wharf Distillery brand under which all his spirits and liqueurs will be sold. We wish Laurence well, and, if you would like to support his project then check out www.crowdfunder. co.uk/wharfdistillery.

Elsewhere all is pretty quiet in the cider world of our branch. January until March is always a subdued time for cider makers as the cider is quietly fermenting or maturing, and the makers are just waiting for the weather to warm up, for two reasons: firstly hoping for a mild spring with light winds and no frost to allow the blossom to set, and, no less importantly, because warm weather rouses the cider taste buds and gets the cider lovers a-drinkin'.

Finally, Virtual Orchard opens its doors every Saturday from 11am-1pm for the sale of cider, spirits and other locally produced goodies. It will also be hosting an Artisan Easter Market on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> April from 10am-4pm where there will be 10 or so local artisan food, drink and craft stalls as well as two street food traders from Wolverton. More details are available from www.facebook.com/VirtualOrchard

### **Battle of the Brewers**

On Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> February, Wetherspoons in Midsummer Boulevard hosted a Battle of the Brewers evening. The participating breweries were Concrete Cow, based in Bradwell Abbey, Milton Keynes, and Red Squirrel, whose brewery is in Potten End, Hertfordshire. Organised by Wetherspoons manager, Alex, the "battle" displayed far more conviviality than rivalry between the brewers.

They offered samples of their cask conditioned ales to Wetherspoons customers and there was an opportunity for customers to ask the brewers first hand any questions they had about



the beers and brewing. The samples on offer were Pail Ale from Concrete Cow and APA (American Pale Ale) from Red Squirrel. Other real ales and craft keg beers from these two breweries were also on sale at the bar.

Several CAMRA members were there and made the most of the opportunity to enjoy some comparative tasting and to discuss the beers' attributes. A most enjoyable evening was had by all.





### **Wellers of Amersham - Brewers**



I wonder if readers of Beer Moos can help me. I'm descended from an old family of brewers in Buckinghamshire - the Wellers, of Amersham Brewery. It is my dream to revive some of their beers, initially by commissioning a local and willing brewery to produce small batches, but perhaps leading on to a viable enterprise in the future.



William Weller -Portrait supplied by Malcolm Weller

My great-great-grandfather was the founding brewer, and from the 1770s to 1929, five generations of the Weller family owned a large brewery, and over a hundred and forty pubs across Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Hertfordshire and Middlesex. Sadly, in 1929 the youngest generation of the family decided it wasn't quite 'the thing' to be in beer, and forced the sale of the

business. Growing up knowing that story, how I wished I could have inherited even a pub or two, but it was all long gone.

William Weller was already a successful maltster and brewer in High Wycombe when he relocated to Amersham some time in the early 1770s, to the site of an earlier illicit brew house near St. Mary's Church where there had been a malt mill as early as 1504. Apparently the reason for the move was the water in High Wycombe which had become too polluted by the booming chair-making industry. By 1775 he had purchased an additional storehouse and his first two tied houses, the Saracens Head and the Old Griffin at Mop End. From there the business grew rapidly, Passing from father to sons, adding additional pubs, a new Maltings powered by water wheel, and the brewery at Bury End, they eventually employed half the town's work force.

When in 1929 the family decided to sell up, Benskins of Watford bought the whole operation. Since all they

wanted were Weller's 133 tied houses to add to their own estate, they immediately closed the brewery and maltings, and sold off the buildings and land. (In what may have been poetic justice, Benskins themselves suffered the same fate in 1972!)

It is my dream to revive some of their beers, which were so intrinsic to Buckinghamshire life for 150 years. Information on their brews is hard to come by. One of their most popular beers was a strong, dark beer called Weller's Entire, and they also produced stout, a bitter ale, a mild, and a brown ale. During the early part of the eighteenth century publicans



beer label supplied by Pete Standen

would mix light beers, ales and strong beers supplied by the breweries, allegedly to reduce the duty paid. After the laws in duty changed, some brewers came up with a combined brew to emulate this blend, called Entire, or Entire-butt. This was supposedly the precursor to what we now know as Porter. With their long history, the Wellers may well have based their Entire on this early style of porter. We do know that brown sugar was added to the Entire, which must have lent an interesting caramel character.

With luck and a lot of help, I hope to find out more about the Weller's beer styles, and, if possible, bring these beers back to life. I was wondering if any of your readers might have any information on their brews - a collection of old bottle labels perhaps - as we only have the stout and bitter ale labels. More importantly, has anyone reading this researched the old beer styles of Bucks and happen to have references to the styles of beer made by Amersham Brewery, or, best of all, even hold recipes for their brews? I know it's a long shot, but it's worth asking, as there may well be readers with private collections or research. My email address is alister.rayner@gmail.com

We have a family website where you'll also find quite a lot about the brewery. Visit www.weller.org.uk/family/places/amersham/brewery/weller\_brewery.htm

There are some excellent photos of the brewery, dray horses etc. on the Amersham museum website - http://amershamhistory.info/people/17th-18th-centuries/the-weller-family/



Alister Rayner

Alister Rayner

# **Downhill All the Way**a Pub Crawl in Central Milton Keynes

Some people say that Central Milton Keynes is a bit of a real ale desert, but one Saturday in February we decided to challenge this thinking with a crawl from one end to the other. Thus, we found ourselves going downhill all the way from Campbell Park to near the railway station.



Starting point was the Slug and Lettuce, where we had a choice of London Pride and Hobgoblin as we waited for the group of a dozen or so to assemble. A short stroll brought us to

the former Lloyds No 1, recently renamed in honour of the 18th century thespian David Garrick (who as far as we can tell has no connection to the area other than being an actor and the pub being adjacent to the theatre!). Here all four hand pumps were in use. Most people opted for the Caledonian Deuchars or Arcadia Angler's Ale, one of

those hybrid beers Wetherspoons are keen on — this being a collaboration between Arcadia in Michigan and Banks's of Wolverhampton.



Next stop was The Moon Under Water. If you've ever wondered, the name comes from writer George Orwell's vision of the ideal London public house. With about eight beers on offer it was a bit more difficult to make a choice this time, but most of us managed it. On to the Barn next where four pumps were in action, giving us the thrilling options of Sharp's Doom Bar, Sharp's Doom Bar, or Sharp's Atlantic - a very easy decision for most of the group!

We lost a couple of people here as the Six-Nations beckoned on TV, but those more interested in ale than in guys with oddly-shaped balls made the long trek to stop five. The Secklow Hundred is named after the Norman/Saxon area of government where Milton Keynes now stands. Here we found a more varied selection, although

a couple of the more interesting offerings had the tantalising "Coming Soon" label attached to the pump! Unfortunately, 'soon' wasn't soon enough for us, as we



were on a mission to reach our final destination, the only Wetherspoons house in the city actually to carry the name 'Wetherspoons.' True to form, "Old Spoons" (named after some antique cutlery) had a wide selection of ales. First ales were selected, some took the chance for a bite to eat, and all contemplated whether to settle in for the evening or check the time of the next bus home. Or maybe the one after that — or even the one after that....

Altogether an enjoyable day and proof that you don't need ancient buildings to be served a fine pint.

Ian Dolby



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### **Ale Around Adelaide**

#### Beer Moos's Roving Correspondent Steve Brady samples some brews Down Under

In January, at the height of the Southern Hemispherical summer, your correspondent found himself in Adelaide, South Australia (as you do!) and, chauffeured by expert local beer guide Niall Dowdall, who conveniently also happens to be his nephew, set off in quest of the local ales.

Few of those resembled real ales here. In a climate in which quite often in summer the air is warmer than your blood, a living real ale at ambient temperatures would rapidly evolve into a revolting primordial slime, possibly capable of crawling off up the road under its own steam and certainly undrinkable. Cellaring at 8-12 degrees Celsius, which such ale requires, would need either a very deep cellar or expensive temperature control equipment, and in any case few locals would want to drink "warm beer" when it's 40 degrees in the shade, and to be honest I can see their point.

So Aussie beers are either flavourless frozen fizz (think cooled-down Carlings) - VB and West End are the keg kidney exhausts to avoid in the Adelaide area - or craft keg, served on draught or in bottles at 2-3 degrees Celsius and carbonated to around 2.7 volumes of dissolved CO2. As with craft keg here, there are plenty of mediocre products where the brewer has simply slung a load of extra hops into a high-ABV keg fizz and looked to his marketing department to rope in the punters with a suitably silly name such as Wombat's Willy or Platypus Plonker. But there is better to be found if you know where to look. Especially if you remember that "craft keg" type cooled beers may not be traditional in Britain, but they certainly are elsewhere in Europe, and some canny Aussie microbrewers have realised that such traditions may be better suited to their conditions than ours.

Before sampling the ales of the city of Adelaide itself we



ventured into the very pleasant and scenic Adelaide Hills, the haunt of kangaroo and emu - both a menace to the unwary driver in such parts after dark, as they seemingly seek

to aspire eagerly to the status of roadkill.

Our first port of call was the **Prancing Pony Brewpub** at Mount Barker, 20 miles
South-West, and over a



thousand feet above, the city. Sadly, despite its Tolkienish appellation, the Prancing Pony was light on mysterious strangers lurking enigmatically in shadowy corners or



half-cut hobbits, and indeed its airy modern ambiance is a long way from Bree. But it does offer some excellent craft beers and, thanks to the tasting paddles ubiquitous in

Aussie brewpubs, the chance to taste them six at a time. The Sunshine Ale for example is a very moreish thirst-quenching Pilsner-style beer at 4.7% ABV, which strength I fear is the locals' idea of a session beer.

Only 7 miles nearer Adelaide, and indeed if you're coming the other way conveniently just off the B34 Hahndorf exit of the Adelaide to Melbourne and



Sydney M1 motorway, is a local institution, **Grumpy's Bierhaus** (the proliferation of Bierhauses and Brauereis in this area is due to the settlement of the local area by Germans in the 1840s). This is an atmospheric country



drinker's pub serving its own excellent brews, and some splendid homecooked pizzas with names such as Salmon Rushdie and Zorba the Sheep. Given the ethnicity

of the area, it is not surprising that they brew a really convincing Munich helles Bier. Grumpy's is a favourite of

Adelaide Morris Men, who like their English counterparts know where to find good beer.

Hahndorf, the small town situated halfway between Grumpy's and the Prancing Pony, apart from trading on Germanness, gemütlichkeit



cuckoo-clocks to tourists, boasts two "German pubs". The German Arms despite its name is really just a clone Aussie bar, with innumerable pokie machines (onearm bandits) and betting slips sold at the bar to indulge the national weakness for gambling, which the State Government public-



spiritedly encourages in return for a lucrative tax take, and offers nothing that special in the way of beer. But the 150-year old **Hahndorf Inn** the other end of the main drag is the

real deal, with genuine Bavarian Arcobrau Bier on tap and excellent, if pricey, Bavarian food.

The other essential stop on the Adelaide area ale trail is the **Lobethal Bierhaus**, also a local beer institution, worth the 26 mile hike up the M1 and into the countryside west of the city. Again the German influence in the local brewing tradition, dating back to the 1840's, is manifest in the beers. Lobethal's take on the



traditional Cologne Koelsch is most potable, as is their Bohemian Pilsner.



If, like the author, you like fine German beers, and even if you are not that keen on the "craft beers" on offer – such as the local equivalents of BrewDog and the sundry stabs taken at India Pale Ales - you will find plenty to enjoy in

this and the other brewpubs in the Adelaide Hills. The fact that some German Bier, unlike British Ale, is traditionally pasteurised and carbonated means that the genuine article can be brewed and served in the



manner of its homeland in Australian conditions.



Lobethal's prizewinning brewpub is clearly a labour of love on the part of brewer Al Turnbull and his partner Rosie Holmes, as is evident from the wealth of notices explaining beer, brewing and its local history around the bar.

Although the Bierhaus is only open Friday to Sunday it is a true community pub in the CAMRA sense, with live music and much involvement in local societies and events.

Apart from bier in the German tradition, the Lobethal also normally offers something much rarer in the Antipodes: Real Ale on handpump in our own British tradition! At least it does when the weather is not too hot. Which at 1350 feet above sea level is often isn't – even snow is not unknown in winter, to the wonderment no doubt of out of area Aussie visitors.



Sadly in the 30-odd degree heat of summer even at this altitude the real ale was, not surprisingly, off, and it was only in one Adelaide city centre pub that I eventually found this locally rare and precious potation –see the next instalment (in Beer Moos 38) of this thrilling quest through upside-down land, where your intrepid alehunter ventures into the bright lights of the Big(gish) City of Adelaide and finds real Real Ale at last.....

### **Christmas Good Cheer in Northampton**

Although we are Milton Keynes and North Bucks CAMRA, we do not confine our activities narrowly within the borders of our "patch". Not when there is a whole world of real ales and ciders out there! Thus, before Christmas of



every year, we explore the hostelries of our neighbour to the north, Northampton. So it was that, on a December Saturday morning, over a dozen MK CAMRoids, including some young members who joined at our Beer Festival in October, foregathered at

the renascent **Phipps-NBC Albion Brewery** to begin our annual ale adventure in the town.

Fortified by a pint of their fine ale we began the day with a tour of that Brewery. Our host Mel explained the brewing process,



with samples of both ingredients and end product. Those of us who are veterans of many such tours listened politely to another variation on the – to them – familiar theme of producing hop-flavoured filtered fermented barley



porridge (just as the Mona Lisa is a variation on the theme of slapping paint on a piece of board!).



But the newer members were treated to an entertaining and lucid explanation of how real ale is made.

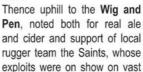
All of us were enthralled by the inspiring tale which followed of how a fine traditional town brewery, devoured like so many others by the mega-keggeries in the Seventies, had been brought back to life, thanks to the vision of the Neville Brothers and a

scion of the original House of Phipps ("Hear Me Pour"?). Clearly, for a much-loved local brewery, extinction is not necessarily forever. Sadly the same cannot be said for many a much-loved local pub, which is why it is so important to support CAMRA's crusade to protect them by listing them as Assets of Community Value whilst we still have them. But I digress!

We were enthralled by the fascinating old brewery building, which we toured from cellars to airy roof conservatory. The brewery hopes soon to restore the old well on which it stands so Phipps can be brewed not only according to the old recipe but using the original water, so central to the taste of a beer (as the sad fate of Young's when it moved from Wandsworth to Bedford attests.)

After a fine lunch in the Albion's splendidly traditional Brewery Tap it was time to hit the town. Our first stop was the **King Billy** next door. It is a bikers' pub and many of its

regulars are indeed bikers and attired accordingly, but this – to some - daunting and perhaps even scary first impression gives way, on getting to know them, to geniality and a heart of gold. A heart lubricated in this case by some fine well-kept ales.



expanses of plasma within. Refreshed, we commenced a protracted hike in the rain to our next destination. The



**Lamplighter** proved a warm and cosy haven.

Here one of our activists, Colin, proceeded to initiate us into the mysteries of a domino game, Fives and Threes, popular in his native South Wales. Traditional pub games such as this are part of our pub culture CAMRA is anxious to sustain – after all, you can't have a sociable game of dominoes in a supermarket beer aisle...

Then onward to the Victoria,

another fine back street local. More beer, cider and dominoes. We then crossed the seemingly



endless rainswept expanse of the Racecourse to find a real gem, the **Olde England**. This is a lovingly created ale and cider haven on three floors, with a beer cellar, a ground floor drinking area and something resembling a mediaeval banqueting hall upstairs. Beer and cider are served from a bar in the beer cellar and, on the first floor, a really traditional taproom, separate from the bar and with the ales and ciders on gravity dispense, which where possible is in my view the best way to serve them.

Finally it was time to head for home. A few stopped off

in a giant glass aquarium on Derngate offering "premium bottled beers" at prices up to £28 (not a misprint!) a bottle, but others shunned this dystopian vision of the future of English drinking. A group mostly comprised of young members, including Ashleigh, our Young Members' Co-ordinator, rounded off the day with a nightcap in the Black Lion by the station accompanied by a final game of traditional Northamptonshire skittles (albeit the level of skill in evidence had for some reason somewhat slipped from the first game in the Albion Brewery Tap in the morning...!)

And so home by train, after a thoroughly enjoyable day organised by Jenny our Public Transport officer. No doubt we'll be doing it around the same time next year. Join CAMRA and you could be enjoying it with us...

Steve Brady

### **PotYs CPotYs and CotYs**

As in every year, CAMRA branches choose a Pub of the Year, a Cider Pub of the Year, and, if they have a candidate in their area, a Club of the Year. (In CAMRA circles these are invariably referred to by the acronyms in the title above!)



Wheatsheaf in Maids Moreton

For 2016, Milton Keynes and North Bucks CAMRA branch has chosen the **Wheatsheaf** in Maids Moreton as our Pub of the Year, the **Red Lion** in Fenny Stratford as Cider Pub of the Year, and – the first for our branch – the **Club**, Hanslope as Club of the Year. Beer Moos congratulates them all on winning these awards.



Red Lion in Fenny Stratford



The Club, Hanslope

### **Venturing to the Dark Side**

During the last weekend of February several local CAMRA members made a pilgrimage to the excellent festival of dark beers at the Black Lion, Leighton Buzzard.



Leighton Buzzard is easy to get to from Milton Keynes with three bus routes, 70, F70 and 150, from the Point, each an hourly service and all stopping right outside the pub in Leighton

Buzzard High Street. All three go along V7 Saxon Street. The F70 and 150 turn left onto H10 Bletcham Way then join the A5; the 70 calls in to Bletchley bus station before

going out to Fenny, along Stoke Road and through Stoke Hammond. The return buses stop running around 6pm but there are up to three trains per hour until late



to and from MK Central and Bletchley, two per hour from Wolverton. It's a ten to fifteen minutes' walk from Leighton Buzzard rail station to the High Street.



The Black Lion was recently voted South Beds CAMRA Pub of the Year for the second year running. The accolade is well-deserved as the pub regularly

sells eight real ales, eight real ciders and an amazing selection of continental bottled beers. There are several

beer and cider festivals throughout the year and the beer festivals are themed. It was the theme of this particular festival that attracted CAMRA members from surrounding branches, South Beds, South Herts, Milton Keynes & North Bucks, and Aylesbury Vale & Wycombe, to name



but a few. Called "The Dark Side", it offered 27 different dark beers. It is rare to see so many dark beers under one roof.

Most of the beers, ranging in strength from 3.7% - 6.5% ABV, were on stillage in the barn at the rear of the pub with five on hand pump in the bar. There were milds, porters and stouts from around the country, including local, and almost local, breweries: Leighton Buzzard Brewing Co., Hornes, Banks &



Taylor, Towcester Mill, Hook Norton and Oakham. I like to try those from further afield that I haven't had before,



so husband Alan and I shared a tray of six different beers in third-pint measures. This is a popular and practical way of trying a range of

ales. All the beers were available singly in thirds, halves or full pints. Of those that I tried, I particularly liked Blackwater Mild (3.7%) from Crouch Vale, Swingbridge Stout (4.1%) from Humpty Dumpty, Old Wavertonian (4.4%) from Spitting Feathers, Parson's Porter (5%) from Beachy Head, and Hung, Drawn and Portered (5%) from North Cotswold. To complement the beer, the festival



food included huge pork pies (suitable for sharing, although some managed one each), samosas (lamb or vegetable) and Bedfordshire clangers, a local delicacy resembling a sausage roll with savoury beef at one end and stewed fruit at the other.

If you missed this one and want to know about future

festivals, please check out the Black Lion's Facebook page. We will also include details on our website www. mkcamra.org.uk in our monthly listing of local events.

Jenny Ellway

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