



beer mos

Winter 2015

Issue Thirty Six

Adopt A Pub

Why?

WhatPub is CAMRA's national database of British pubs, and every branch is tasked with keeping up to date the entries for the pubs in its area. When that task is complete to CAMRA HQ's satisfaction, it is awarded 'gold' status. Anyone can consult the database by visiting whatpub.com though only accredited CAMRA members can amend it.

One of our branch aims this year was to raise all our entries for real ale pubs on WhatPub to gold status. With a terrific effort from our team of CAMRA advocates this was achieved.

However, the task to keep all the information on the pubs up to date cannot be maintained by a few members. We would like to ask all members that use a pub regularly to 'adopt' it. This would involve reporting changes and events at the pub. Not in some big brother spying way, but rather in a more casual way. We have 740+ real ale pubs in our branch and over 800 members. It would be nice to have someone for each pub. Don't worry about picking one that already has an adopter, the more the merrier. All verified changes will be passed to WhatPub.

WhatPub is encouraging more people to go to the pub, and to go to the pub more often, which is the primary objective of Key Campaign 4. Encouraging pub going will make a major contribution to ensuring that more pubs remain economically viable and that will keep more pubs open.

WhatPub will only continue to be a success and attract even more visitors if the pub information is complete and accurate. The primary responsibility for updating WhatPub lies with branches, but all members can help. When you use WhatPub you can login using your membership number and password, then you will see at the top of each pub entry a Submit Updates button. This brings up an online form, which when submitted sends your updated pub details by email to the member(s) in the relevant branch who keep WhatPub up to date. Please check WhatPub to see if the pubs near where you live are up to date, and if they are not, please send an update to your local branch. Similarly send updates when you are on holiday.

When you are In the Pub REMEMBER to score your beers!

Happy campaigning



Alan Fursdon
Branch Vice Chairman

*New Members
Made Welcome*

*Spoons For
Sale*

Diary Dates

*Pub & Brewery
News*

*Regional Pub of
the Year 2015*

Buszwords

*Bringing
CAMRA to
Younger
Drinkers*

*The Green Devil
& The Nights of
Glory*

*A New Star in
Milton Keynes*

Crawl Over

Membership

FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE



GREAT OAKLEY
BREWERY


GOBBLE


WOT'S OCCURRING


HARPERS


Delapre Dark


Wetland Valley M14


Wagtail


TAIL SHAKER

Ark Farm, Elgys Street South
Tiffeld, Northamptonshire, NN12 8AB
Tel: 01327 351739
Mobile: 07850 327658
www.greatoakleybrewery.co.uk

Olde England

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Northampton, NN1 4BP
07717 014001




**25 Real Ales
20 Ciders**



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Best Pub of the
Year 2014

WINNER

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and 10 Ciders,
Live music every
Saturday and Sunday
3pm – 6pm,
Courtyard garden
seating over 150**

The Falcon

Market Hill,
Huntingdon, PE29 3NR

**15 Real Ales and 10 Ciders,
Live music every Saturday
and Sunday 3pm – 6pm,
Courtyard garden and
rear garden
with seating for over 200**




Most Improved
Huntingdonshire
pub of 2015

New Members Made Welcome

New members, many of them signed up at our Branch's successful Beer Festival in October, were welcomed at a Social held in their honour in Wetherspoons in Central Milton Keynes on Tuesday November 17th.

Over twenty members came along, over a third of them new members attending their first CAMRA event. They had the opportunity to start using the Wetherspoons 50p off a pint of real ale tokens every CAMRA member gets whilst enjoying the wide and good value range of beers and ciders this chain a ways has on offer. Spoons made us most welcome, generously laying on a buffet for us.



Members old and new enjoyed a most convivial evening, and the new members in particular took the opportunity to make new friends who share their interest in ale and cider. It's clear that this may have been their first CAMRA event but it certainly won't be their last!

Gift Memberships

This Christmas why not get your loved one a one year CAMRA gift membership? The package includes our monthly What's Brewing newspaper, the quarterly BEER magazine, a discount on Good Beer Guide 2016, and free or reduced entry to all CAMRA beer festivals. Membership 'perks' also include 15% discount from National Express, £20 worth of Wetherspoons vouchers, and discounts at Milton Towers, Legoland, Blackpool Sealife and many more attractions. See www.camra.org.uk/benefits for more information.

This is the kind of present that can be used all year round! The membership only becomes live when it is activated so the recipient can decide when to start it, and after the year's up will be able to renew it.

As well as gift memberships, CAMRA has lots of books and merchandise to offer. For details visit www.camra.org.uk and select 'shop'.

NEXT ISSUE

The next issue of Beer Mode will be published on March 10th. We must have your stories, news and advertisements by February 25th. Late copy cannot be guaranteed entry.

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Trading Standards

If you have a complaint about any unfair trading practices, such as short measures or misleading product promotion, contact Milton Keynes Trading Standards at PO BOX 105, Civic Offices, 1 Stann. Gate East, Milton Keynes MK9 2 1J. Telephone: 01928 252433. Email: tsd@milton-keynes.gov.uk or Buckingham Trading Standards at 5/7 Water Street, Miffield, Bucks HP21 1LP. Tel: 0494 340503. Local Business Information & timetables are available at: www.camvabus.co.uk

To Advertise

To place an advert or enquire about our advertising contact: Neil Richards - 01536 350370



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Spoons for Sale?

Wetherspoons is disposing of 54 pubs nationally, according to CBRE, a major agent for commercial properties. These include the Secklow Hundred here in Milton Keynes. Banker's Draft in Bodford and Moon on the Square in Northampton. According to the website thisisamoney.co.uk, the most likely buyer is a Luton-based Stonegate pubs, owners of the Slug and Lettuce and Yates chains, and currently Britain's biggest pubco.

Many of the pubs Wetherspoons are shedding duplicate other Spoons outlets in the same town or city, but others are in places, like some small Scottish towns, where real ale - or even decent craft keg beer - is as rare as the proverbial here's tooth, and the local Wetherspoons the only place where good beer could be had, often over a quite large area. Will the new owners, whoever they turn out to be, show the same commitment to real ale as Wetherspoons has done? Not without trepidation we await developments, because if a company with the drive and experience of Wetherspoons cannot make pubs pay, who can?

www.propertymail.com/property-news/article/40383-Wetherspoons-pubs-34-pubs-on-the-market

Nags Head

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Good Real Ale Selection • Cash Marque Accredited

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Quiz Night - 1st Sunday of each month at 8pm

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Have you Scored yet?

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

0 No Real Ale	No cask-conditioned ale available
1 Poor	Beer list is empty or no cask ale is available with considerable resentment
2 Average	Competently kept, drinkable and suitable, I suppose in any way, for some drinking at another pub but you don't like the beer when really drinking
3 Good	Good beer in good form. You may cancel plans to move to the next pub. You wait to try for another visit and may seek out the beer again.
4 Very Good	Excellent beer to excellent condition.
5 Perfect	Probably the best you are ever likely to find. A recommended seller will award this score very rarely.

Diary Dates

Please note that this diary information is always subject to change – check online for latest information at www.mkcamra.org.uk. Items marked with a forked symbol are official CAMRA events

DECEMBER 2015

Saturday 12th

Pra-Christmas Pub Crawl in Northampton. A Bion Brewery Bar, Kingswell St MK1 1PR at 12.30pm. Details on our website. Buses 33 X4 and X7 take you to start.

Friday 18th

Sample Christmas beers from around the world at Bucks Star brewery. Admission is by ticket only but numbers are limited to 15 so be quick!

Apply via www.mkfoodrevolution.org

Thursday 24th

Christmas Eve socia 'Wetherspoons, 20' Midsummer Boulevard, Central Milton Keynes (next to Chiquito), 2.30pm onwards

JANUARY 2016

Wednesday 6th

Branch meeting, Barn, Central Milton Keynes, 8.15pm

Thursday 21st

Branch Annual General Meeting, Barn, CMK 8 pm

Saturday 23rd

CAMRA Central Southern Region's annual London Pub Crawl. All CAMRA members are welcome.

Please note - we can't extend the diary for branch events beyond the date of the AGM as then there will be a new committee and it will be their task to arrange future events. The new diary will be posted to our website www.mkcamra.org.uk and of course will appear in the next issue of Beer Mags. But here are the provisional entries, all subject to confirmation on our website nearer the time.

FEBRUARY 2016

Tuesday 2nd

Branch Meeting, Barn, 8.15pm

Thursday 11th

Rescheduled socia at The Old Beams, Shenley Lodge 6pm and Burnt Oak, Shenley Brook End 9.15pm

Thursday 18th - Saturday 20th

33rd LUTON BEER and CIDER FESTIVAL. Highdown Community Sports & Arts Centre, York Street, Luton LU2 0JD. Buses X31, 70 and 88 from MK.

Saturday 27th

Crawl 'Downhill all the way' through Central Milton Keynes, starting Sug and Lettuce 1pm, thence David Gamck, Moon Under Water Barn, Secklow Hundred (if still open and still called that, see p4), finishing at Wetherspoons by about 5.30pm

MARCH 2016

Thursday 3rd

Branch Meeting, Barn (unconfirmed), 8.15pm

Saturday 12th

Fenny Stratford Crawl. Bull and Butcher 1pm, then Mallards Arms, Chocuers, Swan Hotel, and Red Lion

LOOKING AHEAD

Friday 1st - Sun 3rd April

Pre-registration is now open for CAMRA Members' Weekend and AGM at Liverpool Guild of Students, Mountford Hall, Liverpool L3 5TR. All CAMRA members are invited to attend, but early booking of transport and accommodation is strongly advised.

Details on www.camraagm.org.uk.

Thu 31st March - Sun 3rd April Branch long weekend in Düsseldorf

On the outward trip on Thursday, we will visit Hofler Dornaal brewery in Belgium (hoflerdornaal.com) and coming back on Sunday spend 2 hours or so in Chent. On Friday or Saturday we visit Wuppertal, with its unique hanging monorail (www.schwobebahn.de/en/) and Cologne with optional Rhine cruise. The other day will be free.

Cost for 3 nights bed and breakfast in 10's Düsseldorf Central, and travel by private executive coach plus brewery tour is £255. (Single supplement £75.) As we go to press there are just two twin/double rooms still available. To book them contact Doug Dillow on 07738 508128.

Pub & Brewery News

PUB NEWS

Mate to Licensees: If you have news from your pub that you'd like to go in the next Pub News, please send details to the editor by February 25th 2016. Tell us what you've got planned for the new year and report on events that happened earlier. Remember - if you don't tell us about it, we can't tell our readers about it.

To place a paid advertisement in Beer Mags, contact Neil Richards on 01535 358670 or email him at n.richards@btinternet.com. Readers: PLEASE support our advertisers and patronise their businesses, for without them there would be no Beer Mags for you to enjoy.

NEWS EAST

Red House, Newport Pagnell is under new management. Beer Mags says goodbye to Dabs O'Reilly and welcomes new landlady Brenda Gibson to this thriving community pub.



NEWS WEST

King's Head, Buckingham, is being refurbished as we go to press with a provisional reopening date of Saturday 28th November. Expect a new look inside and out, with new signage, improved toilets, and a new kitchen. Real ale will be retained.

NEWS SOUTH

Tawny Owl, Walnut Tree now has five real ales on permanently according to our spy. Recent beers have included Titanic Plum Porter, Robinsons Unicorn, St Austell Proper Job, Brans SA, and Hook Norton Hooky as well as the usual Greene King range and GK seasonal and regional beers such as Gargly Ghoul and Hardy & Hansons Bitter.

Wheatsheaf, Bow Brickhill, has a new licensee following several months of temporary management. Beer from Homes brewery, just a few hundred yards down the road, has been sighted on the bar.

NEWS CENTRAL

Eight Belles, Bletchley. Our mystery drinker reports: Pis, mash, and liquor in Bletchley? Surely not? Yes, it's true! That London delight is being served every Monday from 6pm. Pies are sourced from Manages of Walthamstow. No need to book. Also available to take away!

'Also Cream Teas are available Mondays - Saturdays. This time it is bookings only; you'd want your scones to be freshly made, wouldn't you?'

Middleton Pavilion, MK Village, has been forced to drop cask conditioned beers due to their limited opening hours. According to our spy, they have however installed a

dedicated tap for Concrete Cow's MK IPA, so at least the craft-keg beer is local.

Suffolk Punch, Heelands Aa we go to press, the application to demolish this now long-closed pub has been withdrawn, and the developers met with the council planners on November 23rd to ascertain which type of application might be viewed favourably by them and the locals. Beer Mags will report on the outcome as it becomes known.

Victoria Inn, Bradwell Village, we've had lots of reports of good quality local beers featuring on the harcopis here including Bucks Star Homes, Towcester Mill and Vale.

BREWERY AND CIDER NEWS

Amphill Good news! This brewery, that closed earlier this year, has been reopened as Amphill Brewhouse by a consortium of locals. Under lead brewers Mary and Pete Jeffrey, the brewery has launched with a range of three beers, Session Ale (3.4% ABV), Golden Ale (4.1% ABV) and Indian Pale Ale (4.5% ABV). See amphillbrewhouse.co.uk for more info.

Bucks Star, who had their official opening in August (see p14), have unleashed their second beer: Tap (3.5% ABV) in bottles and cask. Speaking to brewer Dale at the Concrete Pint festival, he's already planning a third beer which is likely to be far stronger and much darker than the brewery's initial offerings. The brewery is also hosting a regular beer club run by MK Food Revolution. The first event took place on November 20th featuring a selection of local beers and the second event is due on December 18th when Christmas beers from around the world will be sampled. Admission is by ticket only - available via [www.mkfoodrevolution.org](http://mkfoodrevolution.org) with only 15 spaces per event. Fans of take-away beer to drink at home should check out Bucks Star's 'Eco-Growlers', refillable two litre glass containers. They'll be happy to help you fill them too.

Concrete Cow Ganarchy in the MK beer scene comes from Concrete Cow, who continue to have success with their MK IPA (5.0% ABV) - an intense Shiscoe and Citra hop bomb available only in can and keg. The 2015 version of brewery's seasonal Winter Ale is available now in bottle and cask, a dark beer spiked with seasonal spices to get you in a festive mood. Brewer Dan has also teamed up with Laurence Conisbee at Wharf Distillery and Cidery to sell the wheels in motion for MK's first whisky. A batch of his wort has been fermented and distilled into malt spirit, and is now sitting in wooden casks to mature... Rat on 20th!

Gun Dog Ales, Woodford Halse, have produced their first Christmas beer with orange peel, ginger, raisin and

Cotswold Distillery whisky added to the brew. With the suitably Dickensian name Bah! Gundag! (4.7%) it is available now in bottle and cask, so look out for it in your local.

Haresfoot Brewery, Berkhamsted, have also jumped on the festive bandwagon with a limited edition seasonal brew available in the form of Festive Spirit (5.3% ABV).

Hart Family Brewers of Wellesborough have a special seasonal treat for bottled beer fans, in their Kimber Rasem Imperial Russian Stout, which they describe as 'a cheeky 9.2% ABV'. Sounds just a little more than cheeky to us! It should be available during December.

Homes Brewery have been having a good first year. They had the first task to run dry at the Concrete Pint Festival and took third place in the public vote for Beer of the Festival with their Porter. They followed this up by winning the 'Best Set of Labels' title at the Labologists Society's national awards for the Triple Goat range, designed with local company White Leopard. The brewery has also been visited by Ian Stewart, MP for MK South, which has resulted in an invitation to supply beer to the House of Commons' Strangers' Bar in 2016. Brewer Ryan is already planning a fourth beer, which is likely to be a standard bitter.

Leighton Buzzard Brewing Co have made it two in a row, coming second in the Beer of the Festival contest at the Concrete Pint, this time with their wonderful Smokin' Angel smoked porter. If you liked it, or missed out and want to try it, you can now buy it in bottles. The brewery also has two new beers available. The first is Bedfordshire Beest (4.1% ABV), a pale beer brewed for Friends of Bedfordshire Society to celebrate the first ever 'Bedfordshire Day' (29th November). The second is Xmasch (4.5% ABV) – three guesses what it celebrates!

Tring Brewery offered a special beer for November called Catsal (4.1% ABV), brewed with New Zealand Green Bullet hops. For December, look out for Santa's Little Helper (4.9% ABV) and Old Chestnut (4.2% ABV), not to mention their fine warming barley wine, Death or Glory (7.2% ABV). The brewery is adding some new kit for experimental brews – sounds like 2016 could be interesting!

XT at Long Crendon, have been improving their brewery, adding a dedicated tasting room and a brewery shop. On the beer front, they have a seasonal special, 25 (4.6% ABV), a burgundy 'AllBier' slow fermented for a smoother deeper flavour. Their Animal Brewing offshoot offers two seasonal brews: Rudolf (4.5% ABV) is a capousing stout brewed with special 'Silverback' Espresso from Dusty

Ape Coffee. Robin (4.6% ABV) is a rich, malty ruby ale available only in bottles.

Virtual Orchard cidery have released their 2016 version of Cider Clause, the seasonally spiced medium cider that can be drunk warmed or cold. It sits alongside the latest vintages of the regular range of ciders plus the new 'Coachbuilder' range of ciders infused with various fruits and natural flavours such as toffee.

Editor's Note: If you'd like to know more about local breweries and cider makers, check out the dedicated section on our website at mkcamra.org.uk at the breweries and pubs in our new Local scheme. The Local scheme focuses breweries within a 25 mile radius of the centre of our branch area, whether or not they are actually located within it, and currently includes around 30 breweries. Pubs that regularly serve real ales from these breweries can become accredited members of our Local scheme – contact local@mkcamra.org.uk for more information. We currently have six accredited pubs as follows:

Bell & Bear, 12 High Street, Embsay.
George, 16 Market Square, Winslow.
Lamb, 20 High Street, Stoke Goldington.
Swan Inn & Bistro, 12 High Street South, Olney.
Three Locks, Leighton Road, Stoke Hammond.
White Horse, 49 High Street, Stony Stratford.

The Royal George

The Royal George has been purchased by Daniel, Eithne, Gareth & Jane with the view of running a traditional country pub which will aim to be a focal point for the village.

A Real Ale has already been agreed with a new guest ale pub being introduced soon.

Following upgrading of the premises, traditional pub food will be available daily.

Large enclosed garden with parking area.

Please follow us on Facebook ([theroyalgeorgewinslow](https://www.facebook.com/theroyalgeorgewinslow)) to keep up to date with all our events.

Children, pets and well behaved dogs are welcome.



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Regional Pub of the Year 2015



The Regional Pub of the Year award 2015 went to the Rising Sun in Berkhamsted. On Friday 23rd October the certificate was presented by Nick Boley, Central Southern's Regional

Director, witnessed by the pub's customers and CAMRA members from surrounding branches.

The Regional Pub of the Year is judged by ordinary CAMRA members from across our Region, which comprises Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and part of Hertfordshire who assess each pub in the regional final. For this award a pub is assessed not only for the quality of its real ales and ciders, but also for whether it has a comfortable atmosphere, offers service which is efficient and friendly, is a vital part of its community by, for example, supporting local events and local sports teams, attracts young and old alike, promotes CAMRA's aims and values, and overall provides a good-value experience.

Each of the eleven branches in our Region can submit a candidate for Pub of the Year and this year the Rising

Sun scored more highly than its competitors, taking it through to the next round of the competition to find Britain's Pub of the Year 2015.

This free house has one regular beer, Rising Bitter brewed by Tring, plus four changing beers that offer the visitor a chance to try real ales not often available in this area. There are also fifteen real ciders and perry and bottled French pilsner complemented by an extensive range of unusual spirits and liqueurs.

The Rising Sun hosts many events throughout the year including quizzes, four beer and cider festivals, a cheese pub and a pop-up restaurant.

In his presentation Nick Boley congratulated Nigel and Mark, the Rising Sun's licensees, for the success they have had in the eight years that they have owned the pub and commented on the regular events held there, mentioning particularly a recent MacMillan coffee morning with a superb selection of cakes.

Beer Moos offers heartfelt congratulations to Nigel and Mark and wishes the Rising Sun every success.



The Mitre

Buckingham

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MK and North Bucks

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Buszwords

We're coming to the end of my second year as Public Transport Officer for the Branch, so I thought I would take this opportunity to reflect on the last twelve months.

At our AGM in January, we decided to form the Social Sub Committee comprising the Social Secretary, the Branch Secretary and the Public Transport Officer. Between us we devised a social calendar for the year with the aim of visiting as many of our 138 real ale pubs as we could. One of CAMRA's Key Campaigns is to raise the profile of pub going and to increase the number of people using pubs regularly. Many of Britain's pubs are closing every week through lack of trade.

We aimed to use public transport as much as possible to avoid drinking and driving. Most pubs within Milton Keynes can be reached by bus and a walk of under ten minutes from the bus stop. On many of our Social outings, we visited two or more pubs that are close together and, for the small towns in our Branch, we arranged a Saturday pub crawl that we hope will continue as an annual event. In February we visited four pubs in Olney and Emberton, in April we took the bus to Hanslope for the beer festival at the Club plus a visit to the two nearby pubs, in July we visited seven pubs in Winslow and Paddbury, in September it was five pubs in Stony Stratford and October seven pubs in Buckingham. In November we travelled to Newport Pagnoll for an evening crawl and called in at up to six pubs. In March, we plan to go to five real ale pubs in Fenny Stratford.

Pub visits by public transport are easy to organise: any number of people can attend; people can join in and leave at any time they wish, so they don't have to call in at every venue.

But what about our rural pubs that are not served by public transport? We haven't neglected these. On several occasions we have hired a minibus to take us around the villages with real ale pubs. This has to be organised and publicised well in advance. It is essential that we cover the cost of hiring the bus, so the price to each individual is higher than the price of an Arriva or MK Move day ticket. Happily, we have had enough interest to make these trips viable. We have even been joined in some of these villages by the members who live there but find it difficult to get to other events without having to drive.

January 2010 sees our next AGM when all Committee posts come up for election. Whatever the results, I'm sure that next year's social calendar will continue to support CAMRA's Key Campaign and promote many of our pubs. For details of all events, local and further afield, please

see our website www.mikcamra.org.uk or email social@mikcamra.org.uk to request to be added to the mailing list.

Branching Out

This issue's featured pub outside our Branch area but accessible by public transport and well worth a visit is the Abion Brewery Bar in Northampton. Home to the Phipps-NBC Brewery, the bar offers a choice of Phipps-NBC and Hoggley's beers plus guest ales and real cider on draught. CAMRA members receive a 10% discount. There are eight hand pumps in all and there is a good selection of bottle conditioned beers.

The Bar reopened at the end of July after a lengthy refurbishment. A glass screen was added between the bar and the brewery giving drinkers a view of the beer in production, but most original features have been maintained. The building has a stinking ceiling above the Victorian cast iron roof supports.

Along the front of the bar are bar stools and plush covered bar chairs. There are wooden bench seats and bentwood chairs at the tables, some of which are separated by screen dividers. The room also has a Northamptonshire s-tittles table and a bar billiards table.



As well as a fine selection of real ale and cider, the Bar has a varied menu that includes hand cut chips, soup, meat pie and mash, meat and veggie burgers, curry, tagliatelle and, the day I visited, lamb cumin chutney, which is butterflyed lamb shank marinated with herbs and spices. The Abion Brewery Bar is open from noon until 4pm.

Sunday and Monday, until midnight Tuesday to Thursday and until 1am Friday and Saturday. Food is served until 9pm Wednesday - Saturday and until 4pm Sunday. (Details correct at time of writing, but please check www.philips-nbc.co.uk for any changes.)

The Albion Brewery can be reached by bus or by train with a short walk (under 10 minutes).

By bus, take the X4 or X7 from Milton Keynes shopping centre or rail station. Alight at Cotton End Level Crossing and walk towards the town centre, crossing Old Towcester Road, St Peters Way and Commercial Street, the brewery is on the left in Kingswell Street just past the King Billy. If you are unfamiliar with Northampton bus stops, you can stay on the bus to the bus station. Exit the bus station by the passenger waiting room. Cross Bradshaw Street

at the lights and turn immediately right walking parallel to the bus station. Turn left into College Street. Cross Gold Street into Kingswell Street following the street to the bottom of the hill. The brewery is on your right on the corner of Foundry Street, just before the King Billy. Return buses leave from the Drapery and Cotton End (across the road from the Porcelain Arms). The last bus back to MK leaves the Drapery at 18.50 Monday - Saturday and 18.40 on Sunday.

By train, leave Northampton Station turning left onto Black Lion Hill and go straight on into Marfair then Gold Street. Turn right into Kingswell Street following the street to the bottom of the hill. The brewery is on your right on the corner of Foundry Street, just before the King Billy. Trains back to MK run until late in the evening.

BRINGING CAMRA TO YOUNGER DRINKERS

Since being elected at our last Branch AGM, our Young Persons' Co-ordinator Ashleigh Rogers has run a series of activities for CAMRA members under 30. The latest was at our Branch Beer Festival in October. For this issue, Beer Mobs decided to interview her.

Hi Ashleigh, can you tell us a little about yourself?

Hi, I'm 24 and I live in Milton Keynes. I work as a manager in the hotel industry. One interesting fact about me, I was a young members ten-pin bowling champion at the age of 12!

When did you join CAMRA?

I joined CAMRA in October 2014 at the MK CAMRA Concrete Pint Beer Festival.

Why did you join?

I joined because I was interested to learn about real ale after my dad bought me one that year, and it turns out I love ale. You don't have to be old to like it! Plus CAMRA has a lot to offer, free beer vouchers to spend all year and even trips to Germany and Belgium organised by Branch members, which is a bonus.

What sort of beer do you like? What's your favourite beer?

I don't have a favourite beer really, anything light or blond like a Doom Bar or a Robinson's 'Dizzy Blonde' haha!!

What sort of places do you like to drink in?

Favourite places to drink... Any really, as long as I'm surrounded by friends and family!

What's your favourite pub?

Don't have a favourite pub, prefer a festival. There's more going on, more beers to choose from, and a lot more interaction with people



About as far from the stereotypes as you can get

What do you hope to achieve as Young Persons' Co-ordinator?

My main achievement as YPC is to find the young people out there who won't admit they like ale! It's a beautiful drink and so much tastier than your gassy Fosters or Carling. I managed to get two signed up at the 2015 MK CAMRA beer festival and that was a real achievement. I also plan to have a few socials next year.

What do you think CAMRA has to offer younger drinkers? Why should they join?

Young members should join CAMRA because ale and beer are slowly becoming stereotypical. Ale is known as the old person's beer. I remember telling a few people how much I loved beer and their reactions were the same 'Oh wow, you like ale. You're too young to like ale'. I think it's absolutely ridiculous. It's a beautiful drink and the young members need to take over before it becomes extinct. Take it from me, my view on beer was the same as everyone else's, but until you try it you'll never know. It's inevitable.

Thanks Ashleigh!

The Green Devil and the Nights of Glory

(a beer-laden fairy story)



Once upon a time in an oversized village called Milton Keynes, there lived a group of people who called themselves the Camrafolk, and they did meet upon weekday evenings in the snug corner of The Barn that stood on the edge of the settlement. Taking time to speak their minds on how to save the village from

the "curse of the lager", they resolved to plan a great gathering in the old bus station on the opposite side of the village. Here they would arrange for many woodchuck barrels of cask ale to be collected and delivered by the King of Great Oakley, bringing magical potions from the lands of Yorkshire and beyond. The Three Loco Wizards, Bucks Star, Concrete Cow and Hornes, worked with zeal

to cast their spells on cauldrons of secret ingredients, and the Camrafolk also sent word to the Giants of Oakham that a festival of beer was to be celebrated, and the Giants sent their best offerings for the appraisal of the people. Furthermore, Laurence of Conisbee rode into the village with a cart full of fine ciders.

So after many months of meetings the great day arrived and doors of the old bus station were flung open to permit the masses to enter. There was indeed a strong stream of the curious public on the Wednesday, and more on the Thursday. On Friday a great tide of humanity swept into the beer hall and drank with something not too far from decorous exuberance.

The Camrafolk worked long hours into the night making sure that the people should be happy, that they would be comfortable, watered, fed and entertained. The Band played as if it were their last performance, and a grand



tomatoes was in full swing, the bell ringing every time a winner's luck prevailed. Games such as snail the box provoked squeals of excitement over and above the lively sound of human chatter which rose as the night wore on.

The Bus Station Folk, although desired to be cast out of their home by the Order of the Council, made merry of their plight and pulled together to make the people of the village very happy people indeed, around the fire they could stand and eat sausages and burgers. As they left, after a long and enjoyable Saturday some spoke of the magnificence of Winemill Hill Cider which was to be awarded cider of the festival. And although god fearing folk (well, one or two of them anyway) their hearts had been stolen by the Green Devil of Oakham, beer of the festival. The true glory of the event though, was that once again the village congregation had been brought together for four days and nights in the worship of ale.

By J. Soudanore, Festival Organiser



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A New Star in Milton Keynes

On 21st August this year, the Bucks Star Brewery in Stonebridge, Milton Keynes was officially opened. This new brewery, possibly Britain's first to be solar powered, focusses on producing beer that is organic and suitable for vegans.

An exciting day for founder and brewer, Datis Go, began with the arrival of a film crew from ITV Anglia News to interview Datis at the brewery. Once they had the footage, it was off to the Three Locks near Stoke Hammond to film several customers enjoying a pint of Bucks Star No. 1. The video of this news feature can be viewed at www.facebook.com/BucksStarUK

Late afternoon back at the brewery invited guests started to arrive for the opening ceremony. The beer flowed freely as guests mingled, many enjoying their beer outside in the sunshine. After showing groups around and giving an explanation of the brewing process, Datis addressed the crowd before handing over to Jerry Elway, CAMRA's Brewery Liaison Officer for Bucks Star Brewery. Jerry spoke about Datis' involvement in CAMRA and the planning and hard work that he had put into setting up the brewery and producing its first beer, before culling the ribbon and declaring the brewery officially open.



After the formalities, Datis and his singing group entertained us with familiar songs whose words had been changed slightly to extol the virtues of beer. Beer, sunshine and song – the perfect end to a perfect day.

Festive Crawl

Our now traditional pre-Xmas crawl in the real-ale hotspot of Northampton takes place this year on Saturday December 12th. We start at Phillips-NBC's Albion Brewery bar at 12.30 and thereafter the proposed itinerary is as follows:

12.30 Albion, Kingswell St. NN1 1PR, 13.30 King Billy, 14.15 Wig & Pen, 15.00 Lamplighter, 16.00 Victoria, 16.45 Odo Eng and, 17.40 Bus or walk (20-30 mins) to bus station/Drapery. Either catch bus back to MK (from the Drapery) or continue to 18.15 Pinfel Arms, 19.15 Malt Shovel Tavern

These times are of course approximate – pub crawling is seldom a punctual science! You can leave or join us at any point on the route, and if you don't know them, the pubs' locations can be found on www.whatpub.co.uk or in most cases in the current GBG.

Buses 33, X4 and X7 will take you there, and bus back (X7) is at 18.50, thereafter it's London Midland's trains which have the advantage of onboard toilets.

Regional London Crawl 2016

CAMRA's Central Southern Region's annual London pub crawl for 2016 is on Saturday January 23. This time the focus is on Camden where it's hoped to visit five real-ale and two craft-keg bars. Here is the planned itinerary.

Black Heart (GBG2016), 3 Green and Flaps, NW1 0AP (www.ourblackheart.com) **BrewDog** (craft keg), 113 Baynam Street NW1 0AG, (www.brewdog.com/camden/) **Spread Eagle**, 14th Albert Street (corner of Parkway) NW1 7NB (www.spreadeaglecamden.co.uk/) **Quinns**, 85 Kentish Town Road, NW1 6NY **Tapping the Admiral** (GBG2016), 77 Castle Road (corner of Hadley Street) NW1 8SU (www.tappingtheadmiral.co.uk/) **Grafton** (GBG2016), 20 Prince of Wales Road, Kentish Town, NW5 3LG (www.thegrafftonnw5.co.uk/) **Camden's Daughter** (craft keg), 269-281 Kentish Town Road, Kentish Town, NW5 2JS (www.camdensdaughter.com/)

The crawl kicks off in the Black Heart at 12.30, and Northern Line tube to Camden Town and buses 8, 16, 24, 27, and 31 will all get you there. You are welcome to join or leave at any time - text or call 07899 900307 (on the day only please!) to find out where we are. All pubs are within walking distance of each other, and don't forget to bring your CAMRA membership card, as some offer discounts.

Crawling Round Newport

One of CAMRA's Key Campaigns is to encourage more people to drink in pubs, and to that end we in Milton Keynes and North Bucks CAMRA organise regular pub crawls in our branch area whereby members and supporters can discover new hostilities to patronise.

So it was on Wednesday 4th November that around a dozen local members gathered in the Coachmakers Arms, by the bus stop in the Market Place of Newport Pagnell, to explore the pubs of this historic old town. (Actually, a few enthusiasts had frogmarched earlier at the Rose and Crown in Silver Street, to try a pub not on the scheduled tour list!)



Crawlers enjoying the hospitality of the Cannon

After sampling the ales on offer in the Coachies', our group proceeded to do likewise in the Dolphin and Cannon on the High Street and

the Bull in Tickland St., with surviving drinkers rounding the evening off at the King's Head opposite.

During the evening, members helped make sure the CAMRA Good Beer Guide is what it says it is, by scoring the quality of the ales they sampled in each pub on the WhatPub? website. Inclusion of a pub in the GYG is based on how well its beers score throughout each year, so it's important that all CAMRA members, every time they visit a pub, should use this site to feed back on the beer they drink.

These CAMRA tours are always welcome in the pubs they visit, and indeed two of our hostesses, Molly in the Cannon and Emma in the Bull, laid on free and much appreciated nibbles for us.

A number of fine pubs, now to some from other parts of our Branch area, were visited, some very nice ales and beers sipped, and a good time had by all whilst waging a Key Campaign for CAMRA. You could join us next time – keep an eye on Moos or our Branch website for details.

Steve Brady

Art Is An Ale

Whenever I visit France I resign myself to the fact that I may not find any decent beer during my stay. Whenever I am pleasantly surprised to find an establishment that serves the unexpected, I feel compelled to notify Beer Moos so that others who venture to the same French town can head straight for bars that delight the beer lover.

I recently spent a week in Carcassonne, in the square called Place Carnot, where there are a number of restaurants with tables and chairs in the open on the square, is a bar called Le Cochon Noir



which serves about a dozen Belgian bottled beers including Duvel, Chimay Rouge, Chimay Bleu and Kwak. They range in price from 5 euros to 7 euros a bottle. To aid our dégustation, we ordered a plateau charcuterie et fromage, a selection of serrano ham, chorizo, salami, oate and camembert, with crusty bread, to share for 10 euros. Not far from Le Cochon Noir, in Rue Georges Clemenceau between Place Carnot and the railway station is Bar Le 98. There are about twenty different bottled beers, mainly Belgian, that include Delirium Tremens, Mort

Subite, Barber and two locally brewed bières artisanales. The first one I tried is called Dora Carcas, the lady after whom, according to legend, Carcassonne is named. It is a blonde beer flavoured with honey and has 6.6% ABV. The flavour is rich and well-rounded with a hint of hoppy bitterness. The second beer called Adèle is very hoppy and refreshing and has 5.5% ABV. These two beers were 3.50 euros each and the other bottled beers in Le 98 are between 3.50 euros and 5 euros.

The third place I found to drink enjoyable unusual beer is a restaurant called Chez Fred in Boulevard Omer Sarrail, near the junction with Rue du Docteur Albert Toméy. The beer is listed as bière artisanale on the menu and changes regularly, depending on what is available from their supplier. The evening we dined there, we were offered a blonde beer with muscat or an amber beer. We both chose the amber. I thought that amber was a misleading description because the beer was very dark, almost black. It was quite like a Belgian dubbel and we both enjoyed it. Unfortunately, I don't remember the name of the beer, its strength or how much it cost, but that particular beer may not be available when others go there, although there is bound to be something interesting in its place.

A votre santé.

Jenny Ellway



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Crawl Over



After ten successful years I have decided not to run a Cycle Pub Crawl in 2016. Unfortunately, the event has become a victim of its own success, and over the years the numbers grew considerably from nine the first year up to a high of somewhere in the region of forty-two last year. These increased numbers have added extra difficulties to arranging and managing the event, and unfortunately there were a few incidents over the past couple of crawls which fell into the category of health and safety, and could have led to injury or threat of liability. Fortunately neither happened, but it is too great a risk for the riders, the organisers, and the public in the future.

I'd like to thank all of you who have come along and supported the event over the years. I've met some great people, and I hope to see you all again, soon, either on a bike or in a pub.

Alan Sanders

Editor's note: I am sure all of us in Milton Keynes and North Bucks CAMRA branch and all those who, members or not, have come and enjoyed the great ride with us over the last ten years, will join me in offering Alan a hearty vote of thanks for organising what has been a truly splendid annual event.

Here are some photos of previous years' crawls. I hope they bring back happy memories.





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