



CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE

THIRSTY TIMES

FREE

Chelmsford & Mid-Essex, Maldon & Dengie
and North West Essex CAMRA Branches



Chelmsford Summer
Beer & Cider Festival

Tues 10th-Sat 14th July 2018

See page 10 for details

FROM THE EDITOR

Well, well, well...

Entertainer Victor Borge famously used to deal with latecomers to his shows by thundering at the back row "Sir! Are you late for this performance or early for tomorrow's matinee?"

So it feels now, with CAMRA late to the keg and craft revolution according to the beer trade, but too early as far as the membership's opinion goes. At April's AGM and conference, the latter voted by just short of the required margin to change our articles so that we would be a campaign group for those that enjoy all drinks, including keg and real.

Of course, this may largely have been due to that small percentage of the voting membership, who incidentally waved through keg at festivals and cask-breathers as now being real dispense, considering that Drinker's Voice should be the body to campaign for all pub-goers, leaving CAMRA to focus on real.

And that's the operative word. Left. For so many

years the pace-setter in speaking out against iffy beer and poor brewing industry practices, we are now in a position where we have to run to keep up with trends elsewhere. Is this the end? Only time will tell...

STOP PRESS: The Woodbine is Essex Pub of the Year and Cider Pub of the Year

What an achievement for the Woodbine in being voted simultaneous Essex Pub of the Year and Essex Cider Pub of the Year. Hearty congratulations

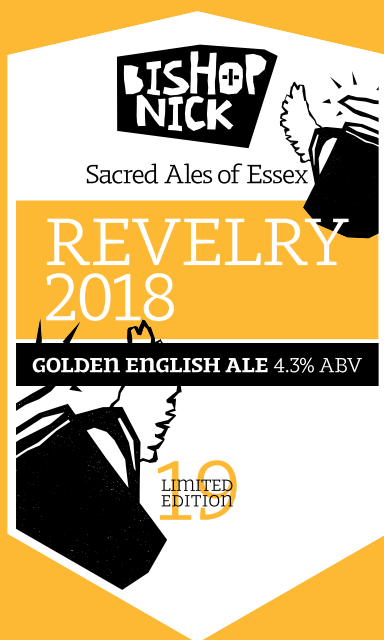
from all readers of Thirsty Times and best of luck in the forthcoming regional finals!



Ad multas cerevisias,

Tony Vernon

editor@chelmsford.camra.org.uk



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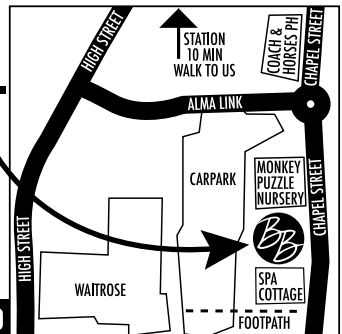
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REVITALISATION: DECIDED?

By Tony Vernon

The following article represents the personal opinions of the author, and does not necessarily represent the official views held by Maldon & Dengie, Northwest Essex or Chelmsford & Mid-Essex CAMRA

A New Hop(e)



Last month's AGM and conference at Coventry saw the culmination of a near-three year process to decide CAMRA's way forward in the post-millennial world. Whether the exercise genuinely ushered in an 'era of revitalisation' probably depends on your point of view.

Change aplenty there was indeed, but when the dust had settled those 'in the know' were sagely commenting that the special resolutions adopted into our articles of association merely codified and formalised what CAMRA had already been doing for several years. The organisation was already acting to promote a wide variety of beer styles, how and where they are consumed and crucially standing up for both independent and tied publicans in a somewhat-belated rearguard against those seeking to re-purpose or remove altogether an ever-dwindling number of pubs and bars selling the precious brew.

Fact: CAMRA is an ageing organisation, and our love of real ale is by and large not being passed to the 18-35 age group. The younger generation are intimidated by increasingly-draconian drink-drive alcohol limits and distracted by the rise of social media rather than the local watering hole as the default friends' meeting point. Neo-prohibitionists and government zealots have all but priced young people out of pubs with a ruinous succession of duty increases on all styles of alcohol.

Fact: the tipples of choice for this younger demographic (if they drink at all, and that's a whole other article) tend to be kegged fizz, which is respectable again, and various fluorescent/iridescent vodka-based shots plus an ever-growing selection of gins and botanicals that have appeared out of nowhere in the last decade.

Fact: CAMRA as an organisation is not very good at engaging the latter with the former; in recent years the ubiquity of pub-based and other beer festivals has diluted the unique selling point of the many and varied festivals run by local branches, which should be the prime crossing-point for potentially interested young drinkers and interesting ales.

Most of the special resolutions were aimed directly at addressing the above points, and expanding the battlefield to stand behind each and every drinker against those seeking to shrink, demote and make irrelevant in the modern world our enjoyment of beer. In passing all but one of the SRs, the AGM delivered a resounding endorsement of the national executive's direction of travel over the past years, including the failed SR6 which fell less than 3% short of the 75% majority required by the Companies Act.

Why were special resolutions necessary at all? Why was all of this change not handled at conference level as usual, with a succession of motions? The reasoning was that for such a fundamental change of CAMRA's *raison d'être*, the NE had to demonstrate an overwhelming 'buy in' by those voting for change. Company law in the form of changes to the Articles of Association conveniently offered a 75% majority required for change to either the company's Memorandum or Articles of Association, which also had the twin effect of binding future CAMRA executives, whatever they may think of the change or the reason for it, to working to achieving the effect of the new articles. In other words, if you don't like the new direction of CAMRA enshrined in the articles, then don't even stand for election.

Revenge of the Sixth

Now let's ponder the one special resolution that, at 72.6% approval, didn't achieve the required

75% to make it into the articles. Special Resolution 6, remember, was about CAMRA working to represent all pub-goers drinking any style of alcoholic beverage: *'To approve the insertion of the following Article 2(e) in CAMRA's Articles of Association: "2(e) to act as the voice and represent the interests of all pub-goers and beer, cider and perry drinkers;"'* This represented, indeed still represents, the fulcrum around which balances those seeking to keep CAMRA as it is, and those who wanted the organisation to plough forward into tomorrow's World of Drinking, whatever that may end up representing. The traditionalists won or, rather, didn't lose badly enough.

One of the outcomes of the whole revitalisation exercise has been that CAMRA represents sharply different aims and objectives to at least two distinct camps; on the progressive front there are those who want to 'move with the times' and plan ahead for whatever is being plotted for the drinker by the politicians and neo-pros. On the other are those who view the organisation as being the collective memory and conscience not only for drinkers of traditional cask ale, but for the entire eco-system that works to make, distribute and serve cask. You can't introduce cask-style drinking to an area that doesn't have it already, the skills properly to transport, look after beer and serve it properly simply are not there. So the traditionalists have a point, and there's nothing wrong with that.

Listening to the background chatter of those discussing why they voted against this, one phrase was heard again and again: "Drinker's Voice." Ironically, the insurance policy that CAMRA's NE bought around the time of last year's conference in Bournemouth may have ended up being self-fulfilling; a slice of the membership, that may have been the margin of success for SR6, voted against it as they could see a closely-related cousin organisation to CAMRA that had already been established with the specific remit to represent all drinkers, *à la* the aims of the resolution.

The ensuing feeding frenzy among the mainstream media was pretty predictable; "RIP CAMRA", "CAMRA votes against change for the Future" etc etc. It did not. All that happened was that a fundamental change was not 'incorporated into CAMRA's DNA', and so can in future be

changed by a national executive opposed to beer styles other than real/cask. It does not mean that at present that is the only style for which we as an organisation are expected to campaign.

What a pity, also, that this stampede masked other fundamental changes to CAMRA's thinking, such as allowing official festivals to stock and serve high-quality non-real beers (keg or otherwise), and to permit ales dispensed with cask breathers also to be considered 'real'. Past failure to recognise both of these have resulted in the organisation being ridiculed both by influential commentators and by the beer industry and its trade bodies. It wasn't so much that CAMRA was bullied into adopting these resolutions, it's a simple fact that high-quality ingredients and conscientious handling now mean that the quality of some kegged and cask-breathed ales is simply 'there'. It tastes as good as real ale, so should be classed alongside real ale.

The 'Landlord' calls Time

In the editorial for TT25, I mentioned that I had my own opinions about the whole revitalisation exercise. My thoughts are that CAMRA as an organisation will continue to grey and thin, like a present-day church congregation. Large headline membership numbers cannot mask the facts on the ground, that committees are largely the same people they were 10 years ago and some festivals are closing because there is no-one coming up from the younger ranks to take the yoke. Less than 10% of the official membership thought revitalisation was something worth voting about, if they were even aware the exercise was happening.

Exit CAMRA slowly from the fray, and enter stage right Drinker's Voice in the nick of time, to continue the struggle. And really, really, there's nothing wrong with that. The membership has affirmed that our purpose, for however much longer, is to preserve cask and all of its traditions and paraphernalia. Like the ultimate, brave act of the space ship *Discovery* in Arthur C Clark's '2010 – Odyssey 2' we are to turn our main dish towards Earth, and keep transmitting for as long as possible "all these brews are yours – except real. Attempt no landings there."

However you voted – or not – let's all now raise a glass to the future.

chelmsford.camra@runningsites.eu

BILLERICAY BEER FESTIVAL

By Pete Claughton

The Billericay Beer Festival is back. After having to cancel last year's event at short notice Billericay Lions are delighted to announce the 8th Billericay Beer Festival will take place on June 22-24, 2018 at a new venue – Hannakins Farm Community Centre.

There will be a selection of more than 40 beers and 15 ciders with food available at all sessions. The Football World Cup matches will be shown in the centre's lounge bar and it is hoped to have a program of acoustic music between games. The festival raises money for Billericay Lions to support a variety of projects in the local community.



Entry is £3 on Friday and Saturday and free on the Sunday, with a £2 refundable glass deposit. More details including directions can be found at www.billericaybeerfestival.co.uk.

pete.claughton@btinternet.com

Billericay Lions in association with W.B.C.A. Ltd

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22nd - 24th June 2018

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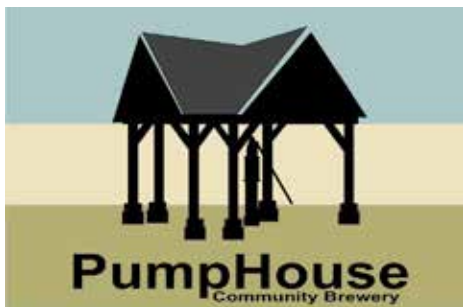
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GOLDEN PRIDE TO BE A ROARING SUCCESS AT THE COUNTRY'S FIRST COMMUNITY-OWNED BREWERY



By Allan Collard

The prestigious title of Festival Beer for the 2018 Braintree Real Ale Festival (BRAf) has been awarded to Golden Pride, brewed by the PumpHouse Community Brewery in Toppesfield, North Essex.

This year's BRAf, jointly organised between CAMRA and Braintree Lions, will be held at the Bocking Arts Theatre, Thursday 14th to Saturday 16th June, 11am-11pm each day. BRAf will be showcasing many locally-brewed ales and a strong contingent from the Scottish Borders.

PumpHouse was the country's first truly community-owned brewery when it started production in 2015 and is still the only one in the East of England.

With its decidedly micro-brewery capacity of a two barrel run, PumpHouse is structured as a not-for-private-profit organization; any surpluses generated can only be reinvested in the business or distributed within the community for social or charitable purposes. Its mission is to make excellent, affordable beer and to provide volunteering opportunities for people in the village, especially the retired.

Although volunteers play a critical role in the enterprise, PumpHouse employs a professional brewer, Aaron Osborne who despite being probably the youngest professional brewer in the county has six years experience in three other larger and well-known breweries.

Plans are currently well under way to expand the brewery and increase production during the coming year, following the enthusiastic reception the beers have received both in Toppesfield and in the surrounding area.

The brewery works closely with the two other community enterprises in the village – the Green Man pub and the community shop & post office. PumpHouse's main outlet, in fact, is the adjacent Green Man, Toppesfield which it supplies with a unique session bitter, Toppesfield Tap, as well as a range of draught and bottled beers. Other pubs, clubs and private customers are supplied around North Essex and retail outlets and farm shops have also started stocking the beers.

The brewery is usually open Saturday mornings for off-sales. All of this makes a community-brewed beer the perfect fit for the charitable objectives of BRAf, which has already raised over £35,000 for charity over the years.

The Festival Beer, "Golden Pride," says Aaron "has a strong malt base, from the use of Maris Otter East Anglian barley; together with a light and pleasant citrus aroma, given by Sovereign and Cascade hops. It has an ABV of 4.2% and a lingering aftertaste, and is especially delicious for quenching one's thirst during the long days of summer".

Golden Pride earned its leonine handle after a 'Name the Beer' competition in Toppesfield attracted over 80 suggestions, ranging from the predictable to the bizarre, to the downright perplexing.

It may be a predictable name, but it precisely describes the special qualities of a beer that's more than just a drink. So this year, why not do your bit for charity and the community? Get down to the Braintree Real Ale Festival – and fill yourself with PumpHouse Golden Pride!

magazine@northwestessex.camra.org.uk

CASTLEDINES CALLING TIME

By Claire Irons,

Publicity Officer, CME CAMRA

Jeff Castledine has retired as landlord of the Queen's Head in Boreham after 24 years and has passed the baton to his son, Max, who officially became the licensee on 6th April this year.

This Gray's pub has only had three licensees in 90 years: Percy Shelley (1939-1979), his daughter Margaret Smith (1979-1994) and Jeff (1994-2018). Keeping it in the family, Jeff and his wife Kim celebrated their retirement and grand-daughter Poppy's third birthday with a beer festival over the Easter weekend. Jeff told me: "It far exceeded last year: our festival gets better and busier every year." Check out their mural depicting the family in the tent bar in the garden and watch this space!

Jeff's first pub in 1976 was The Black Prince in Derby but he came to Essex as catering manager of New Hall School in 1987, where he met Kim who was the catering manageress. They married in 1989 and lived in Witham but regarded the Queen's Head in Boreham as their local.

Kim's parents were publicans in Bedford so Kim worked with her dad from age 16. Her training at Westminster Catering College (now Westminster Kingsway College) gave her the skills for cooking up culinary delights for the pub, a task ably combined with bringing up their family. Jeff, having been Hotel Services Manager at Springfield Medical Centre (now Springfield Hospital) in Chelmsford then London Area Catering Manager for The London Borough of Merton, thought that the opportunity to run their own pub was too good to miss when the tenancy for the Queen's Head came up in 1994.

CARTOON CAPER IN THE PAPER

Shortly after the smoking ban came into force in 2007, Chelmsford Borough Council had planned to prosecute Jeff for allowing smoking in the pub garden. Public outrage and local and



national radio and television coverage as well as in newspapers caused the council to back down due to public pressure. Hence he is proud of being featured in a national newspaper cartoon.

Telling me about Gray's, he said: "You couldn't wish for better partners in business. They show interest and care about the business and will source any beer requested." At 26, his son Max will be the youngest licensee in a Gray's pub and has been gradually doing more of the day to day running of it over the last four years since living there with his partner Jess. Having their daughter Poppy in 2015 and their son Vinny in 2017 has kept them busy but they have found time to plan their wedding this coming August.

All the family are proud that the Queen's Head features in the Good Beer Guide and has been in every Chelmsford & Mid-Essex Recommended Pub Guide since 2009. Max and Jess plan to maintain the friendly, traditional village pub atmosphere, with community events such as beer festivals, quiz nights, race nights and they have a football team.

Max said: "Rather than following the trend of knocking it into one area we shall keep the separate restaurant and bar area, with dogs on a lead welcome in the bar only. At weekends we have five cask ales with two on gravity and at least three during the week; also the plan is to have three real ciders as bag-in-box instead of bottled ciders." Jess will continue the traditional pub grub including home-made pies following Kim's

Thirsty Times

special recipes, using produce from local butchers and farmers.

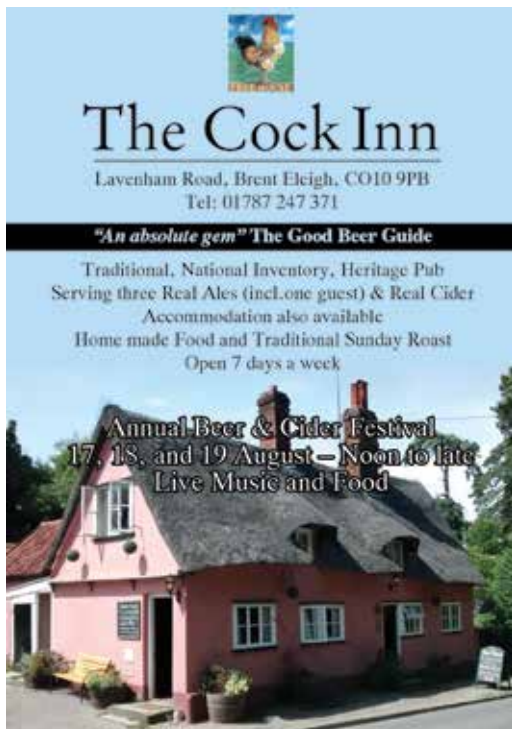
RETIREMENT PLANS


As well as baby-sitting, Kim will help in the pub kitchen when not relaxing in their bungalow in Boreham. Jeff is looking forward to peace and quiet in their caravan at Mersea, adding that he has been barred from being behind the bar but will miss the camaraderie and banter. "I will miss all the customers breaking their necks queuing up to buy me a drink" he joked. They will stay in the pub's National Lottery syndicate. Having won £57,000 between 16 customers they enjoyed a trip to China and new windows in their home. Who knows what will be next? "With our local bus routes 40 looping the village, 45, 71, 71A, 72, 73 we have lucky numbers for us and our customers."

TIME TO CALL THEIR OWN

Chelmsford & Mid-Essex Chairman, Doug Irons, presented them with a commemorative certificate, a personalised engraved vase and flowers on their retirement after 24 years on Easter Monday.

Thanks to Gordon Fish for the photograph.




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Quiz Night
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Wishbone - Saturday 25th August
Tripwire - Saturday 8th September

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CHELMSFORD SUMMER BEER AND CIDER FESTIVAL

By Claire Irons,
Festival Marketing Manager

SAVE THE DATES

Tuesday, July 10-Saturday, July 14

The biggest and best beer garden in Essex will be open to the public at noon on Tuesday 10th July, a week later than last year due to the FIFA World Cup.

Of course, it would be impossible to try all the drinks on offer with more than 350 cask real ales, 20+ Key Keg beers and 120 ciders and perries on the three CAMRA bars, the nine brewery bars plus numerous international beers from Podge's Foreign Beer Bar.

Come each day from Tuesday to Saturday to try as many as you like – as well as pints we serve in third and half measures too.

CAMRA bars also offer carry-out containers so you can continue refreshment at home at your convenience.

Be wowed by the world food, freshly cooked, including flavours from Argentina, the Caribbean, Italy, South Africa, Spain, Thailand and more. If they don't float your boat then perhaps traditional fish and chips or hot-dogs and burgers will! Stacks of snacks from sweets, crisps, pickled eggs, olives and nuts will also be available.

For Saturday only there will be an ice cream van for the Family Fun Day on 14th July as well as face painting, funfair and a coconut shy.

Entertainment Every Day

The performers and performance times may change so please visit the website www.cbcbf.info or enquire at the information tent at the festival.

So far the line-up is:

Tuesday 10th

Angie & Dave followed by Bijoux Toots

Wednesday 11th

Tonic Duo followed by The Sidekicks

Thursday 12th

Georgia and the Vintage Youth followed by Charlie's Aunt

Friday 13th

Andy Poole's Riddled with Booze Orchestra followed by Repertoire Dogs

Saturday 14th

Afternoon: Billy Watman followed by The Blues Experience. Evening: Gunrunner

Chelmsford and Mid-Essex CAMRA have held 60 festivals, with this being the 40th summer festival.

We have been holding it in Admiral's Park, Chelmsford since 2008, where it has expanded to campaign and entertain more than 24,000 people last year. CAMRA festivals are organised and run by volunteers and more than 200 volunteers are needed to staff this huge event.

Souvenirs

Take home souvenirs to remember the festival such as a novelty hat and T-shirt from Smart T's stall as well as your commemorative glass and programme.

Charities & Festival Programme

This year our charities are Age UK Essex, which supports older people (anyone over 50, and their carers) and Farleigh Hospice, which exists to meet the needs of local people affected by life-limiting illnesses and support those who have been bereaved via a range of free-of-charge services. They will be providing soft drinks and programmes free at the information tent but would appreciate donations in the yellow buckets throughout the festival. If you do not wish to keep the souvenir festival glass you may wish to donate your refund to the charities who share the donations equally. Chat with their volunteers and have some fun with the extras they will be offering!

VOLUNTEERS REQUIRED

Our volunteers are rewarded with free drinks, food and a festival shirt provided you work more than eight hours, preferably in shifts of four hours. To serve customers more quickly we really need more servers on the beer and cider bars especially on Friday and Saturday, who will also have the perk of sampling the products to help make recommendations.

As well as set up and take down duties, help is required on entrance, glasses, membership, beer & cider cellar teams as well as serving staff, finance and general duties but NOT cleaning toilets!

For more details or to volunteer visit www.cbcbf.info or search ChelmsfordBeer on Facebook and Twitter. Celebrate the summer supping soft drinks, cider, beer and wine with good company, good food and good cheer!

publicity@chelmsford.camra.org.uk

Over 350
Real Ales



Over 120
Ciders &
Perries

Chelmsford Summer Beer & Cider Festival

Tues 10th-Sat 14th July 2018 Noon-11pm
Admirals Park, Rainsford Road, Chelmsford, CM1 2PL

Key Keg Bar ● Wine, Prosecco ● Live Entertainment
World Food ● Foreign Beers ● Membership Stand

CAMRA members FREE all times

Entry: Tue-Thu Free before 5pm, £2 after

Fri £2 before 5pm, £5 after

Saturday Family Fun Day only £2

Souvenir Glasses £3 (refundable)

Volunteers Wanted
www.cbcbf.info



OZ IN A HUNDRED BEERS

By Chris Harvey

If you thought beer in Australia is all about Fosters or Castlemaine lager served as close to freezing point as possible, then think again.

Craft beer is exploding in popularity Down Under, with over 500 breweries generating nearly £300 million revenue in 2017. Last year, I decided to make a long-overdue trip to Australia to visit my good mate Trevor and took on the challenge he set me at the start of the holiday, to score the quality of every craft beer I tried during my five weeks there.

Trevor's family live in Perth, so the first two weeks of my beer exploration were in Western Australia. Trevor's wife Liza very kindly offered to be our designated driver for a tour around the best breweries in the **Swan Valley**, which has been famous for its wines for many years.

Over the past decade the number of Swan Valley breweries has grown to the point where there's just as much reason to visit the region for its beer as well as its wine.

Our first port of call was the breathtaking **Homestead Brewery**. Built as part of Mandoon Estate winery, no expense has been spared with the large, family-friendly space containing high ceilings, sleek, modern finishes, and lots of shiny new German-manufactured Schulz brewing equipment in plain sight.

The next stop was the more homespun, but very friendly **Mash Brewery**, where I sampled the best beer of the day, Raisin the Bar – a Belgian style



Flight of Beers at Feral Brewery, Swan Valley

strong dark ale at 7.5% ABV. We finished our tour at the **Feral Brewery**, where we sampled no less than ten ales!

The following week, Trevor and I drove 200 miles south to the beautiful Margaret River region. This part of south-west Australia is known for great Cabernets and Chardonnays but could soon have as many craft breweries as it does vineyards. About 20 minutes' walk along a wonderful riverside trail from our accommodation was the **Margaret River Brewhouse**, which serves some very good beers matched with high-quality food. The highlight of our trip there was the Margaret River Brewery Tour, which took us in a minibus to five of the area's best breweries for a marathon day's beer sampling! The most impressive breweries visited were **Cheeky Monkey**, **Black Brewing** and **Beer Farm**. My favourite beer of the day was the West Coast IPA brewed by Cheeky Monkey at 6.5% ABV; as good as any I'd tried in the States.



Cheeky Monkey Brewery, Margaret River



A dazzling selection at the Boilermaker's House, Melbourne



Five Barrels Brewing, Woolongong
– head brewer Phil and me

It was time to head east and visit the other side of the country. My first stop was Melbourne – locals call it the “world’s most liveable city”, and it certainly boasts some great bars and pubs. One of my favourites was **Mrs Parma’s**, which matched Melbourne’s signature dish (parmigiana) with local beers. Another place I really enjoyed was the **Boilermaker House**, which offered a mind-blowing 700 whiskies from around the world plus a dozen craft beers on tap. The best beer I tried in Melbourne? It must be **La Sirene Brewing’s** Ekuant Saison (6.0% ABV).

My two-week journey through the states of Victoria and New South Wales took me to some very out-of-the-way towns and villages, some of which offered only a limited choice of craft beers, but I was always able to find something to challenge my palate. I stopped off in Canberra, the nation’s capital along the way. A very pleasant evening was spent at the **BentSpoke Brewing Company**, where I managed to have small samples of 10 of their beers to wash down the excellent food. My favourite was the BentSpoke Hub, a pale ale brewed with Centennial hops (5.8%).

My last overnight stop before reaching Sydney was in the coastal town of Wollongong. **Five Barrel Brewing** has a great taproom, where I was greeted by head brewer and owner Phil. I was mightily impressed by all the beers I tried here;



Batch Brewing Co. Marrickville,
Wayne and yours truly

well-balanced, full-flavoured brews in excellent condition. I fell in love with the Double IPA (9.0%) – a superb ale, which was surprisingly easy to drink.

Sydney is one of the world’s great cities and boasts an impressive number of craft breweries and pubs worth visiting. The southern suburb of Marrickville has a good choice of places to sample craft ales. I really liked the ambience and ales in the **Batch Brewing Company’s Taproom**. Top of the list was their Elsie The Milk Stout (4.3%), which was dark, smooth and toasty – heavenly!

My final day in Australia very fittingly involved a pub walk around Sydney with John, an old friend of mine who flew down from Brisbane to meet up. We went into six pubs in the Rocks and Surry Hills areas and sampled some very tasty beers. In the **Royal Albert Hotel** in Surry Hills, I sampled the best real ale of my trip – **Nail Brewing’s** Nail Red (6.0%) which, ironically, is brewed 2,000 miles away in Bassendean, Western Australia.

Sadly, my beer discovery tour was finally at an end – in total, I managed to score 106 beers (I think one or two might have slipped the net!) which is not bad going in five weeks. My No 1 beer in Oz? It must be Five Barrel Brewing’s Double IPA from Wollongong. I will return before too long...

Chris Harvey
Chairman, Maldon & Dengie CAMRA

charvey23@gmail.com



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Essex Pub of the Year 2018

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PUB NEWS

North West Essex

By Chris Rouse



North West Essex Pub of the Year 2018

We are pleased to announce that the winner (from a shortlist of five) is the **Plough, Debden**. The certificate presentation took place on Tuesday 27th March. We also featured the Plough last year in a series of articles about young licensees. The Plough is renowned for its food, but the interests of beer drinkers are never ignored and there is always room to enjoy their continually interesting, varied and high-quality beers. The pub is popular with villagers/locals and it's fine just to have a drink, even if the specials board is tempting! So, well done Lizzie and Chris for your continued hard work and success. We wish you well and look forward to future branch and individual visits.

North West Essex Club of the Year 2018

This year, the award again went to **The Birchanger Sports & Social Club (BSSC)**. The certificate presentation is yet to be arranged. BSSC is a thriving and growing social club and is committed to the highest quality real ale, cider, and food, along with other drinks.

Railway Arms, Saffron Walden – not so happy update

Dave Kenny, STRAP Chairman (Save The Railway Arms Pub) writes: In late April, we received the news via email from our agent that the directors of Charles Wells Ltd had decided at their meeting on 9th April that it is their “preferred route to undertake the investment in the pub [themselves] and then to recruit a partner to run the business

on a tenanted agreement". Thus we need to take stock and decide how we wish to proceed.

Clearly our offers are not welcome and there seems to be little point in pursuing Charles Wells on the matter any time soon. We were assured that their plans would be shared with us in a spirit of openness and potential co-operation but we were not advised of the terms of tenancy or lease, or even that adverts had been placed in late March. We were left to come across them online, quite by chance.

The Management Committee of the Saffron Walden Community Pub Ltd (SWCP) feel very strongly about the way our community and our pub have been dealt with over the last 15 months, and we have serious and well-founded concerns about the details of the refurbishment and terms of the tenancy or lease. Having kept confidences in anticipation of further contact we now feel we have a duty to you to speak out.

The directors of Charles Wells Ltd obviously believe they can acquire planning permission for a major refurbishment and that a suitable tenant with circa £50,000 available to invest in year one and around £35,000 in years two to five will come forward. Such a tenant will have to submit to a tie to the company for all drinks, and re-establish from scratch a customer base capable of providing a living for him/herself and a rate of return in the order of 10% on an inflated internal valuation of the Railway Arms.

The owner's unrealistic "book price" bears no relation to market value and it has proved unrealisable over the last 15 months. Nevertheless it is what drives the company's thinking and it is the Railway's inability to service that expectation that lies behind its sorry condition now and the planned major refurbishment.

Any talk of community in these plans (the word is [ab]used twice in the documentation) should be considered alongside the stated need to "...entice premium clientele..." and "...attract the affluent local population by introducing a premium drinks range and a distinctive, targeted food offer..." Premium clientele and the affluent local population may wish to consider that, in

opposing the registration of the Railway as an Asset of Community Value (ACV), Charles Wells Ltd appointed a solicitor who invited Uttlesford District Council to consider whether the pub is "more than simply a place where people can imbibe alcohol" and claimed that they cannot see any link between "a popular pub, serving good beer and it serving the social well-being or interests of the local community".

Save the Three Horseshoes in Helions Bumpstead

Save the Three Horseshoes are delighted to confirm that the share offer to fund the community purchase of the Three Horseshoes is NOW OPEN! Please find the share offer and business plan on the website www.helionscommunitypub.co.uk or email helionspub@hotmail.com with your queries. The Three Horseshoes (The 'Shoes) has been closed since 2014. A group of committed village residents has been working with the owners of the pub to develop an option for the community to buy their village pub and operate it for generations to come as a 'community hub'. They have received significant expert support from the Plunkett Foundation and the Pub is a Hub organisation. See www.facebook.com/savethethreehorseshoes for more.

magazine@northwestessex.camra.org.uk

CME

By Rob West

pubnews@chelmsford.camra.org.uk

At the **Queen's Head, Boreham**, Jeff and Kim Castledine have been running the pub since 1994 and their son Max took over as official landlord on 6th April this year. See feature towards the start of this issue.

Hot on the heels of being named 'Best Pub' in the county for the second year running by the National Pub and Bar Awards, the **Galvin Green Man, Howe Street** is giving CAMRA members 15% per pint off on presentation of a valid membership card. Also they will be holding events on the last Thursday of every month to highlight local breweries and the amazing work

PUB NEWS

they put into their products.

There will be a Summer Beer Fest at the **Woolpack, Chelmsford** from Thursday 23rd-Sunday 26th August featuring over sixty ales and ciders. There is live music every evening and Wednesday 22nd August 8-11pm is the CAMRA pre-fest drink evening, at £2.50 per pint with valid membership card.

The Pig & Whistle Gastro Restaurant, Chignal Smealey, is now introducing cream teas at the restaurant. They are investing into a larger kitchen and changing the décor ready for a big announcement to come [*Hopefully something to do with beer—Ed.*].



From Liz Haines: “As you know I sold **The White Hart, Margaretting Tye** last November so no Beer Festival for me this year!! However I am holding a Gin Festival in June at **The Star Inn, Ingestone**.

The Three Elms, Chignal St James is holding its usual Ale and Cider Festival over the Bank Holiday weekends at the end of May and August.

The Baker's Arms, Danbury is having a small Beer and Cider Fest Friday 25th May- Monday 30th May. It's an annual affair that has been running for many years, with a big garden and a children's toy tent, space hoppers and trampoline to keep the little ones entertained (table tennis for the big kids) so mums and dads can enjoy the beer tent. There's live music on the Saturday and fish and chips (the pub's speciality) throughout the weekend as well as home-made curry and chilli bubbling away.

The Ship near Chelmsford railway station has one pump free of tie which features Locales, often brews from Bishop Nick as it was a Ridley's pub. Landlord Grant is proud to have the original Ridley hand pumps in regular use with a changing range usually of four beers.

CAMRA's Colin Brown writes: “On Saturday 14th April a presentation took place at **The Leather Bottle in Pleshey**, pictured left, to celebrate the pub's status as an Asset of Community Value (ACV). The pub actually gained ACV status in 2017 but this was the first opportunity to get all those involved together. Many locals and regulars were present at this very popular event.

Pleshey Parish Council was instrumental in the success of the ACV application, the plan being hatched after the sudden departure of the previous landlord. Hopefully ACV status will allow the charming pub that is The Leather Bottle to remain serving the small community well. Pictured left to right are Rob Reilly (landlord), Colin Brown (CME CAMRA) and Daniel Kenning (Pleshey Parish Council).

It's Pub of the Year time up and down the country, and in CME branch the 2018 gongs went to **The Railway Tavern, Chelmsford** with **The Compasses, Littley Green** coming in a close runner-up.

Cider Pub of the Year 2018 and Runner-Up were the **Hop Beer Shop, Chelmsford** and **Compasses, Littley Green** again, with the **Three Elms, Chignal St James** earning a 'Highly Commended' accolade.

Thirsty Times



WINNERS: *The Three Elms, above, The Hop Beer Shop, The Compasses, and, top, The Railway Tavern*

Maldon & Dengie

By Chris Harvey, Chairman MaD CAMRA

In the last edition of Thirsty Times, we reported that the **Queen Victoria in Woodham Walter** had been taken over by a new licensee. She has since decided to move on and the tenancy is currently being advertised on the Gray & Sons website.

The Compasses in Great Totham has recently employed a new chef and are offering an enhanced food menu. They will be serving four beers on hand pump, with Greene King IPA and XX Mild usually on offer, plus two changing beers. Opening hours have recently changed, with the pub now open only in the evening on Monday and closed all day Tuesday.

Jim McGrane, the long-serving landlord at the **Huntsman and Hounds in Althorne**, has decided not to retire this summer and has extended his tenancy at this attractive Gray's pub. He has franchised out the kitchen to enable him to focus on the bar from now on.



This summer sees a number of our local pubs holding beer festivals. These include the **Swan in Little Totham**, which will be holding its annual beer festival in June (9th-17th June), the **Hurdlemakers Arms in Woodham Mortimer** who will host theirs the last weekend of June (29th June-1st July), the **Carpenters Arms in Maldon** which intends to have a cider and beer festival later in the summer (look out for details) and the **Queen's Head in Burnham-on-Crouch** will host their traditional August Bank Holiday weekend beer festival (24th-27th August).

charvey23@gmail.com

MIGHTY OAK'S TWO NEW AWARDS

by **Chris Harvey,**

Chairman Maldon & Dengie CAMRA

The Mighty Oak Brewing Company, based at Station Yard, Maldon, is no stranger to winning awards for its fine beers.

Back in 2011, the company received the supreme accolade of CAMRA's Champion Beer of Britain for its excellent Oscar Wilde Mild.

The Mighty Oak Tap Room in Maldon High Street now has more to display on its timeline, as the brewery picked up two awards in the CAMRA Champion Beers of East Anglia 2018 competition for Captain Bob (Gold in the Bitters Category) and Oscar Wilde (Silver in the Milds Category).

John Roberts-Morgan, Second Brewer and Charles Board,

the new Head Brewer were members of the Mighty Oak team that was presented with the two awards at the 2018 Maldon Beer & Cider Festival held at the Plume Academy in April.

charvey23@gmail.com



RECOMMENDED PUB GUIDE 2018

By **Claire Irons**

Publicity Officer, CME branch

Chelmsford & Mid-Essex CAMRA have published their Recommended Pub Guide since 2009.

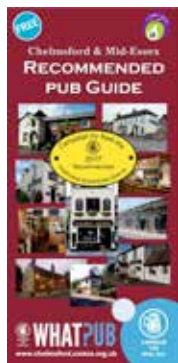
Our allocation for the CAMRA Good Beer Guide is seventeen pubs but of course we have a lot of excellent pubs selling top quality real ale, so each of

the pubs featured in the guide has a plaque proudly to display, corresponding to each guide in which that pub has featured (see full set of plaques at Queen's Head Boreham, right).

We encourage CAMRA members to score their beers using the National Beer Scoring Scheme on whatpub.com. The data collected is used to determine which pubs sell

consistently high quality ale throughout the year, for consideration in the national Good Beer Guide and our local Recommended Pub Guide. The RPG also has details of the CAMRA criteria for judging pubs and details of how to vote for your choice of the branch Pub of the Year.

While every effort has been made to ensure that the information given in the guide is accurate at the time of going to press changes may occur, so check before making your journey to avoid disappointment.



publicity@chelmsford.camra.org.uk

CHELMSFORD & MID-ESSEX BRANCH

Fares include drop off near home. Book with Martin Joy: 07878 624443 / socialsecretary@chelmsford.camra.org.uk Ask the driver to initial your Loyalty Card for future free trip /discount.

Members are encouraged to attend and support all listed festivals.

MAY

Tuesday 29th May to Saturday 2nd June – Colchester Real Ale & Cider Festival, Arts Centre, Church St, Colchester CO1 1NF, noon-11pm. Run by Colchester and NE Essex Branch. Public buses and trains run regularly from Braintree, Chelmsford and Witham.

JUNE

Tuesday 5th to Saturday 9th June – Thurrock Beer Festival, Civic Hall, Blackshots, Thurrock RM16 2JU. Run by SW Essex Branch. 100 Bus from Chelmsford.

Saturday 9th June – Visit to the Dengie Peninsula (the return) minibus departs 11am from opposite Chelmsford Railway Station. £10 per person with drop home afterwards. Members only.

Trip includes several pubs and five micro-pubs: One Green Bottle; Wibblers Brewery; Crouch Vale Tap; Mighty Oak Tap and Farmers Yard.

Tuesday 12th June – Branch Committee Meeting, UB (United Brethren), New Writtle Street, Chelmsford CM2 0LF, 8 for 8.30 pm start. Open meeting for all branch members who wish to observe the committee's reports and planned actions and perhaps become involved in the branch.

Thursday 14th to Saturday 16th June – Braintree Real Ale Festival, Bocking Arts Theatre, Braintree, Essex CM7 9AE, 11am-11pm. Run by NW Essex Branch and Braintree Lions. No.70 Bus
Summer 2018

from Chelmsford, 38 from Witham.

Saturday 16th and Sunday 17th June – Gibberd Garden Beer Festival, The Barn, Marsh Lane, Harlow CM17 0NA, noon till 8pm. Run by Herts & Essex Borders Branch and Gibberd Garden Trust. No.59 Bus from Chelmsford.

Wednesday 20th June 2018 – Branch Social, Endeavour Pub, Springfield Green, Chelmsford CM2 6AW, from 8pm. Public bus no.54 from City Centre. Please make your own way.

Saturday 30th June 2018 – Trip to St Peters Brewery and Crones Cider. Minibus departs 9am opposite Chelmsford Railway Station. Possible pick up in Witham en route if there is demand. Members only, £15 per person.

Tour of St Peters Brewery near Bungay, Suffolk, 11am. £10 per person includes tour, sampling and a bottle of beer to take home. Visit Green Dragon Microbrewery and Pub in Bungay then a pub in Banham for a meal. Option A: visit Banham Zoo for £19 pp payable at the zoo or stay at pub. Option B: Visit to Crones Cider. Complimentary drinks but donations welcome. We intend to end the day with an evening visit to the CAMRA-listed Heritage Pub the Red Lion in Kenninghall, before our return to Chelmsford for 9.30pm drop-offs.

JULY

Tuesday 10th to Saturday 14th July – Chelmsford Summer Beer and Cider Festival, Admirals Park, Chelmsford CM1 2PL, noon-11pm. Volunteers required, please see website www.cbcf.info for further details.

Tuesday 17th July – Branch Committee Meeting, Square and Compasses, Fuller Street CM3 2BB, 8 for 8.30pm start. Open meeting for all branch members who wish to observe the committee's reports and planned actions and perhaps become involved in the branch. Please make your own way there.

SOCIAL CALENDAR

Saturday 21st July – Epping and Ongar Railway Beer Festival (in association with CAMRA).

Meet 11am Chelmsford Station to purchase tickets for train to Shenfield where we board the vintage bus that runs to and from the festival in North Weald. CAMRA discount. Check website for more details. <http://www.eorailway.co.uk/events/real-ale-festival/>

Wednesday 25th July – Branch Meeting and Social, The Woolpack, Chelmsford CM2 0DN, 8 for 8.30pm.

Open to all members, free pint for first time attendees. Please make your own way to this venue. Meeting in beer garden if weather permits.

Saturday 28th and Sunday 29th July – Regional POTY Judging Trip.

Visiting the six nominated pubs in the East Anglia region over two days with an overnight stop in Norwich. Free campaigning minibus for first day but small contribution requested for the second day's hire. Minibus departs opposite Chelmsford Station 11am on Saturday with a possible pick up in Braintree and Witham if there is demand. This is a judging trip so persons will be expected to judge and score each pub on a list of merits, including beer quality and selection, to go forward for the Regional Pub of the Year Award. Please book your place and own accommodation in Norwich.

AUGUST

Tuesday 7th August to Saturday 11th August 2018 – Great British Beer Festival. Kensington Olympia, London. Check website for details – <https://www.gbbf.org.uk>

Saturday 11th August 2018 – Broadstairs and Ramsgate Micro-pubs Tour. Another chance to visit the many micro-pubs in this part of the Isle of Thanet in Kent. Minibus departs opposite Chelmsford Station at 10am, cost £15 members only.

We plan to visit Conqueror, Four Candles, Hair of the Dog, Hovelling Boat Inn, Mind the Gap Nauticales, Yard of Ale and the 39 Steps

brewhouse, with time in Broadstairs and Ramsgate for some seaside fun. Possible stop at the famous Dartford Working Men's Club on way home, time permitting.

Friday 17th August 2018 – Hopstock Beer Festival Visit at The Compasses, Littley Green, CM3 1BU

Minibus from opposite Chelmsford Station departs 7pm. Cost £9pp with drop home afterwards. Another chance to visit this excellent beer festival run by one of our best rural pubs.

Wednesday 22nd to Saturday 25th August 2018 – Clacton Beer Festival, St James' Hall, Tower Road, Clacton CO15 1LE, starting 6pm on 22nd. Check website for details – <http://www.tendringcamra.org.uk/clactonfest.html>. Run by Tendring CAMRA.

SEPTEMBER

Tuesday 4th to Saturday 8th September – Chappel Beer Festival, East Anglian Railway Museum, Station Rd, Chappel, Colchester CO6 2DS, 11am-11pm. Essex CAMRA branches fund raising event for EARM. Further details to follow.

Wednesday 12th September – Branch Committee Meeting, Compasses Littley Green CM3 1BU, 8 for 8.30pm. Open meeting for all branch members who wish to observe the committee's reports and planned actions and perhaps become involved in the branch.

Tuesday 18th September 2018 – Branch Meeting, Three Compasses, West Hanningfield CM2 8UQ, 8 for 8.30pm. All members welcome. Minibus from opposite Chelmsford Station 7.45pm departure, £7.50pp with drop off home afterwards. Free pint for first time attendees.

Friday 21st to Sunday 23rd September – Weekend trip to Bristol. By minibus from Chelmsford, times and costs to be confirmed but estimated to be £40.00pp. Please book your seat and own accommodation in Bristol. A chance to visit this historic city with many pubs and places of interest.

MALDON & DENGIE BRANCH

MAD Social Secretary

Mike Cutler, 07754 206099/01621 850833

JUNE

Tuesday 29th May to Saturday 2nd June – Colchester Beer Festival, Colchester Arts Centre, Church Street CO1 1NF. Social from midday onwards on Wednesday 30th.

Monday 4th June – Branch Committee Meeting, White Horse, 29 High Street, Maldon CM9 5PJ, 8pm. Open meeting to all members to observe and perhaps become involved in branch activities.

Monday 11th June – Branch Meeting, Star, The Street, Steeple CM0 7LF, 8pm. First pint FREE to new members attending their first meeting.

Saturday 9th to Sunday 17th June – Beer Festival, Swan, School Road, Little Totham CM9 8LB. Minibus trip to this event on Thursday 14th, pick up 7pm from outside All Saints Church, High Street, Maldon. **BOOKING ESSENTIAL** – by Thursday 7th June.

Friday 29th June to Sunday 1st July – Beer Festival, Hurdlemakers Arms, Post Office Road, Woodham Mortimer CM9 6ST. Social from 8pm onwards on Friday 29th.

JULY

Tuesday 3rd July – Branch Committee Meeting, Norton, 54 Latchingdon Road, Cold Norton CM3 6JB, 8pm. Open meeting to all members to observe and perhaps become involved in branch activities.

Tuesday 10th to Saturday 14th July – Chelmsford Summer Beer Festival, Admirals Park, Chelmsford. Social from midday onwards on Thursday 12th.

Saturday 14th July – London Walk, Richmond to Twickenham. The latest in our popular walks around London. This scenic five-mile walk
Summer 2018

takes in a lovely stretch of the Thames Path in Richmond and we'll use the foot-passenger ferry across the river to continue our walk in Twickenham. There are some great pubs to visit along the way, including the Sussex Arms in Twickenham (which has 15 beers on draught). Booking required by Saturday 7th July for lunch at a selected pub. Meeting arrangements to be confirmed.

Tuesday 17th July – Branch Meeting, Heybridge Inn, 34 The Street, Heybridge CM9 4NB, 8pm. First pint FREE to new members attending their first meeting.

Friday 20th to Sunday 22nd July – Beer Festival, Epping & Ongar Railway Line, North Weald Station. A fabulous day out with vintage buses, steam and electric trains running between Epping and Ongar railway stations, with real ale served on board the trains. Beer festival at North Weald station with 75 ales and 20 ciders. Heritage vintage buses leave from Shenfield station to North Weald on a regular basis. Social from midday onwards on Friday 20th. Meet in festival at North Weald.

Thursday 26th to Saturday 28th July – Harwich Beer Festival, Redoubt Fort, Harwich. A great day out at a superb circular fort dating back to the Napoleonic era, with a chance to wander

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SOCIAL CALENDAR

round historic Harwich and visit some of the pubs if you wish. Social on Thursday 26th. Meet on platform 1 at Manningtree station for 11am train to Harwich.

AUGUST

Date TBA – East Anglia Pub of the Year judging trip Visit to the six county pub winners in Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk, Cambs, Beds & Herts. This will be done over two days. If you wish to take part in this interesting and important judging trip please advise of your interest at the branch meeting on 17th July so that appropriate transport can be arranged.

Saturday 4th August – Minibus trip to Leigh-on-Sea Brewery Tap, Old Leigh, and West Road Tap, Westcliff. A chance to visit one of the county's newest brewery taps, plus a visit to Old Leigh (which has two pubs in the current Good Beer Guide) and the West Road Tap micro-pub in Westcliff. Depart from White Horse pub, High Street, Maldon at 11.30am. With pick up at South Woodham Ferrers Railway station at 11.50am. **BOOKING ESSENTIAL.**

Wednesday 8th August – Great British Beer Festival, Olympia, London. A visit to this iconic beer festival. **BOOKING ESSENTIAL** and required by Tuesday 17th July to obtain discounted tickets. Meet by entrance to platform 11 on Liverpool Street Station at noon.

Sunday 12th August – Social and barbecue, Hurdlemakers Arms, Post Office Road, Woodham Mortimer CM9 6ST, from 2pm onwards. An afternoon of fun, food, beer and games. Could you be the pétanque champion this year? Barbecue from 4pm, £10 per person or free to anyone who worked 10 or more hours at the Maldon 2018 Beer & Cider Festival. **BOOKING ESSENTIAL** (including any dietary requirements) by Saturday 4th August.

Tuesday 14th August – Branch Committee meeting, Maltsters Arms, Hall Road, Heybridge CM9 4NJ, 8pm. Open meeting to all members to

NORTH WEST ESSEX BRANCH

North West Branch Contact:

contact@northwestessex.camra.org.uk

Monday, 4th June – Branch Meeting, Half Moon, Cole Green, Belchamp St Paul, Essex CO10 7DP, 8pm

Monday 2nd July – Branch Meeting, Horse & Groom, Cornish Hall End, Braintree, Essex, CM7 4HF, 8pm

Monday 6th August – Branch Meeting, Green Man, 3 Church Lane, Toppesfield, Essex CO9 4DR, 8pm

Monday 3rd September – Branch Meeting, George, The Street, Shalford, Braintree, Essex CM7 5HH, 8pm

Monday 1st October - Branch Meeting, Kings Arms, 10 Market Hill, Saffron Walden, CB10 1HQ, 8pm

See the Branch Diary page of www.northwestessex.camra.org.uk for the current list of meetings.

observe and perhaps become involved in branch activities.

Thursday 23rd August - Clacton Air Show & Beer Festival, Seafront & St. James' Hall, Tower Road, Clacton on Sea CO15 1LE. A visit to this fantastic air show (including the Red Arrows) and the Clacton Beer Festival. Meet on Clacton Station at 12.45pm.

For more information or to book any of these events, please contact MAD Social Secretary, Mike Cutler: mjcutlers9@gmail.com

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4TH-6TH JULY 2018



SUNDAY 8TH JULY BIG TOP 12 NOON-9.00PM

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ROBBIE GLADWELL AND THE SIDEMEN HOT TRAMP
FUNK 2K MAMBO CHUTNEY B-FEST WINNER

SATURDAY 7TH JULY BIG TOP 12 NOON-11.30PM

UK MICHAEL JACKSON ASHTON JONES PROJECT
THE KUBRICKS SOUTHBOUND THE KOPY KATZ
LITTER OF KINGS THE VAGABAND HELEN CONNELLY

FRIDAY 6TH JULY BIG TOP 6.30PM-11.30PM

BERNIE MARSDEN LAURENCE JONES BLUES'N'TWO'S

THURSDAY 5TH JULY

JAZZ AT THE MOVIES

Featuring Joanna Eden and the Chris Ingham Quartet.
St. Mary's Church. Doors open 7pm

B-FEST

Showcase for local young musicians in the Big Top.
Info and entry form on our website. Gates open 6.30pm

WEDNESDAY 4TH JULY St. Mary's Church. Doors open 7pm. Only £7

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UNDERCOVER STAGES & BAR COME RAIN OR SHINE

BBC RADIO SUFFOLK



THE PORTABLE PINT – OR REAL ALE

By Ian Fitzhenry,

Chairman North West Essex CAMRA

Hopefully you've picked up this copy of Thirsty Times in your local pub and are idly perusing it while drinking a pint of real ale, if so, count yourself lucky!

As we all know pubs are closing throughout the country, what does one do if you no longer have a local? Well, if you're in North West Essex, or South Cambridgeshire you could keep your eye out for a sign like this. The Portable Pint was set up by Tony Kelly in 2017 to bring real ale (and all manner of other good things) to villages which no longer have a pub.

After 20 years as a travel writer and a few more in education Tony discovered micro-pubs and after some years decided that he would like to have one of his own. Having researched things he came to the conclusion that rents in the local area with a decent population such as Saffron Walden (he's actually based in Linton) would be too high




to support a beer-only micro. His wife Kate then suggested that he take the micro-pub in portable form to village halls, reading rooms and the like in villages in the local area which no longer have their own pub.

In order that he should know what he was doing, having had no experience in running a bar/pub Tony gave up full time work at the beginning of 2017 and secured himself a bar job at the Fleur De Lys in Widdington (a long time GBC entry). In Tony's own words, Chris (the landlord of the Fleur) 'has given me a lot of advice and encouragement in setting up the Portable Pint as well as teaching me how to handle real ale'. He launched the venture in March 2017 in Hadstock village hall bringing real ale back to the village starved of such since the closure of the Kings Head a year previously.

From the beginning Tony realised that his enterprise faced challenges that an ordinary pub doesn't. As he essentially turns up, sets up and opens he can't supply 'normal' real ale as it wouldn't have time to settle. To this end he has struck up relationships with several local breweries such as Silks in Sible Hedingham, Crafty Beers in Stetchworth and Milton at Waterbeach.

From them he can obtain bright beer, that is, beers that have been on draught at the brewery which are then drawn off into another container. These can then be transported and drunk same day; whilst this does enable good beer to be available at the venues it does mean that careful consideration must be made as to amounts offered as the beer will only last for a day!

The Portable Pint returns to Hadstock with real ale straight from the cask - plus gourmet toasted cheese sandwiches from Warm & Toastie.



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VILLAGE HALL**

WHEN YOU HAVE NO PUB

As well as ale he also brings real cider from Cambridgeshire, bottled beers and wines; drivers are also accommodated with a range of soft drinks and a very good low-alcohol beer in Big Drop pale ale at only 0.5% abv. The usual snacks are available as well as pork pies and Scotch Eggs produced by his local butcher. Sometimes he also teams up with a variety of mobile food suppliers such as Warm & Toastie who do excellent toasted sandwiches and Barbe-kews, providers of gourmet burgers.

The first year of operation has been both successful and busy with several villages inviting him back on a monthly basis and he has also provided his beers at events such as jazz performances and quiz nights; the latest venture is the first Wednesday of the month at Sewards



End with the Bonne Fire Box mobile pizza van. Speaking to people at the events I have attended, they are extremely happy to have such a thing to bring the population together to socialise and just to get to know their neighbours.

While maybe not as ideal as having a local it's good to know that such an enterprise exists and appears to be thriving, bringing beer back to places and maybe even introducing it to people who might never otherwise

have tried real ale; so keep your eyes open as you travel the local area and if you are a FaceBook or Twitter user The Portable Pint can be found at www.facebook.com/ThePortablePint/ and @ThePortablePint

chairman@northwestessex.camra.org.uk

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By Claire Irons,

Cider Representative, CME CAMRA, and
Essex Cider Co-ordinator

Essex Cider Pub of the Year (POTY)

Thank you to all the judges from four different branches who enjoyed visiting and comparing the finalists in the Essex competition which was close with so many great cider pubs in our county.



Happy Cider Circuiteers

Each was judged on the following categories: Quality of Cider / Perry; Promotion / Knowledge of Product; Atmosphere / Style / Décor; Service / Welcome; Community Focus; Sympathy with CAMRA Aims; and finally Overall Value.

The finalists, listed alphabetically for the branch were:

Chelmsford & Mid-Essex: Hop Beer Shop, Chelmsford

Colchester & North East Essex: Victoria Inn, Colchester

Herts Essex Borders: Woodbine, Waltham Abbey

Maldon & Dengie: Carpenter's Arms, Maldon

South East Essex: Mawson's, Southend-on-Sea

Tendring: The Ship, Kirby Le Soken

No submissions were received from North West



Judging at The Ship, Kirby le Soken

and South West Essex branches.

The winner is The Woodbine, Waltham Abbey which had a booklet explaining about the definition of real cider and perry, listing a wide range of 40 products with a good geographical spread from around the UK and several local ones from producers in Hertfordshire and Essex. Therefore it is in the next round for East Anglia which is judged by CAMRA members from around the region.

The finalists in the Regional Round:

Bedfordshire: Engineer's Arms, Henlow

Cambridgeshire: Drayman's Son, Ely

Essex: Woodbine, Waltham Abbey

Hertfordshire: Garden City Brewery & Bar, Letchworth

Norfolk: White Lion, Norwich

Suffolk: Dove, Bury St Edmunds

I shall publish the result in the autumn issue of Thirsty Times and it will also go out on CAMRA EAR website in due course then presentations will be arranged. I hope that our readers will visit and enjoy the finalist pubs and take the opportunity to try cider and perry as there are so many interesting flavours to experience and enjoy.

NORMANDY JACK CIDERS

John Walpole, landlord of the Carpenter's Arms, Maldon has his own cider and perry made in Normandy exclusively for the pub although they have featured at Maldon Beer & Cider Festival, where I tried the Normandy Jack, Hammerhead, Watch That Tackle 6% which was fruity and flavoursome. No wonder they sell so well at the pub, which will be holding a Cider & Sausage Festival on Friday 14th to Sunday 16th September featuring 60-80 ciders and 6-10 ales in addition to the 2 house and 4 guest ales.

The full range of Normandy Jack Ciders:

Chisel Me Timbers	8.4%	Dry
Jack of All Trades	7%	Dry
Cloud 9	6%	Medium
Hammerhead	6%	Medium
Berry Licious	6.5%	Sweet
Queen of Tarts	5.5%	Sweet

MALDON AND DENGIE CAMRA

The Carpenters Arms, Maldon scoops both Maldon & Dengie Pub of the Year awards

By Chris Harvey,

Chair Maldon & Dengie CAMRA

There was good cause to celebrate St George's Day in the Carpenters Arms in Maldon this year, as the pub received two special awards from the Maldon & Dengie Branch of CAMRA.

John Walpole (licensee, pictured left) and Andrew McClaine (bar manager, centre) accepted



the Branch Pub of the Year and Cider Pub of the Year awards from Chris Harvey (Chairman, Maldon & Dengie CAMRA, pictured right) at a special presentation in the presence of customers and CAMRA members.

Chris Harvey said: "The Carpenters Arms was a very clear winner in the votes held by local members for their Pub of the Year and Cider Pub of the Year 2018, which is impressive in view of the strong competition in the area.

"There's always a great selection of beers, including unusual styles such as porters and strong ales on offer.

"The choice of real ciders and perries is unrivalled in our area, and includes ciders made in Normandy specially for the pub.

"The Carpenters Arms has a great ambience, with knowledgeable staff and a warm welcome. John Walpole and his hardworking team make it a pub the area can be proud of."

John Walpole commented: "This is a very special night for the pub. We are really honoured to receive these two awards from CAMRA; we appreciate the support we get from the Branch and its members."

The Carpenters Arms now goes forward to represent Maldon & Dengie in the judging for CAMRA's Essex Pub of the Year.

The pub will be up against strong competition from eight other pubs from across the county, with the New Inn in Colchester (last year's Essex Pub of the Year) leading the way.

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EPPING ONGAR RAILWAY NOW JOINS FORCES WITH CAMRA

By Alan Perryman

On 20th-22nd July for the first year since its inception, the Real Ale Festival at North Weald Station will be jointly hosted with the Campaign for Real Ale. This year's festival is inspired by the commemoration of 50 years since the final regular steam service on British Rail. The last services ran around Liverpool, Carlisle and Manchester so we have chosen 18 beers from the North West to commemorate this.

Catering provision will include a wide range



of meals (both hot and cold) served throughout the day. Use your CAMRA card to advance purchase a discounted fare on EOR's heritage trains and buses or simply show it on the day. The regular buses to and from Shenfield will run again from just outside the National Rail station. For full details of the bus services and beers, see www.eorailway.co.uk

alanperryman@gmail.com



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NEW 2ND BEER GARDEN COMING SUMMER 2018

FROM THE OTHER SIDE

MY DAYS WORKING THE CIDER BAR AT THE CHELMSFORD BEER AND CIDER FESTIVAL

By Victor Savant

Here's something new: someone addressed me as "Sir"! The last time anybody called me "Sir" it was a policeman standing at the open window of my car asking me, with formal politeness, if I knew how fast I had been driving. It was a rhetorical question of course, a formal prelude to writing me out a ruddy expensive ticket for speeding.

This time it was a young man standing across from me, at the other side of the bar where I was volunteering at the Chelmsford Winter Beer and Cider Festival, asking for a taster of a pyder. Only too glad to oblige, it gave me the chance to show off the expertise I wish I had by explaining that "pyder is a combination of perry and cider,

and this particular one – a local tippie from Berties Cider Co in Braintree, called "Con-Cox-tion" – was made from Conference pears and Cox apples (get it?).

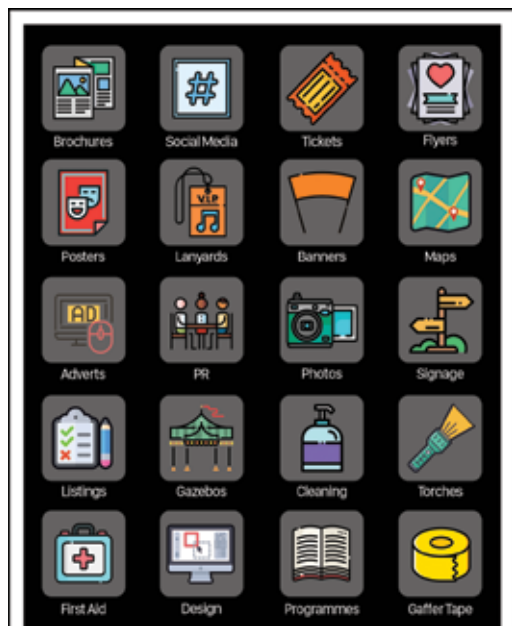
Just on word-play alone, it's really good. He got it and bought it. Did he like it? "Yes, Sir" he said.

Oh, I'm just bursting with facts and the deep, comprehensive knowledge of ciders I've attained... in the last twenty minutes since I started drawing these very special drinks for the customers who are beginning to flock in as the afternoon progresses. By now I've tried many of them. It's getting busy. I can describe tastes, give advice, make recommendations, assisted by the taste and appearance stickers on the cask cards.

Pause. Reflect. So now, this year, first time, and here I am on the other side, the business side of the bar. After almost a decade of really enjoying Chelmsford's beer and cider festivals – the little ones in our neighbourhood pubs and the big CAMRA ones in winter and summer – or the happy little local affairs in the pretty villages hiding all around the Essex countryside, I finally heard The Word, was finally moved to get involved as more than just a consumer of these honest beverages I like so much, and actually to participate, even in some small way, in the complicated mechanics of running a festival which will delight and entertain some thousands of visitors over a few days.

It was the first day of the festival when The Word came from the man with the microphone on the stage, reminding us that these big festivals can always use more volunteers. That meant me. So, with just a tinge of guilt, feeling like I've been something of a free-loader all these years, I went up and signed up.

Assigned to the cider bar the following noon I was welcomed with a name tag, some lunch tickets, and a nifty festival T-shirt; introduced to colleagues behind the bar, shown the till, taught how best to squeeze the little button taps on the cider boxes, informed we could taste anything we wanted; and sensed I'd just entered a Garden of



A veritable pick-and-mix of everything you could possibly need to promote and manage an event, whether it's a theatre production, a three-day music festival or a village fete!

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Eden with lots and lots of apples. A whole year's worth from all over the countryside, fragrant, aromatic, with tastes from tart to treacly, whose precious juices were living in the boxes stacked up in neat rows behind me, labelled with names descriptive, evocative or just plain funny, cooling tubes discreetly under the bag but in the box, and ready to be meted out to the curious hundreds who would pass in front of this bar in the next three days. This was going to be fun.

And it was, great fun, except for sore feet, the result of standing for hours, and an unexpected colleague, a purist curmudgeon who kept up a running line of negative muttering, complaining non-stop that not every cider fulfilled his notions of "real cider", and verbalizing loud criticisms of many customers' choices.

Fortunately most of them thought he was just a funny old grumpus, bought their drink and laughed their way away from the bar, but for those working next to him it got pretty tedious. The sore feet were completely forgotten the moment one began talking to drinkers, running to get tasters and draw down the thirds, halves and pints. The curmudgeonly complainer disappeared after just a few hours. Annoyances alleviated, we were back on track.

So CAMRA is a people organization and there are lots of different people at the festivals, brought together by the magnetism of the social event itself, focussed not only on the good tastes of the brews on tap, but – for some at least – with the conscious understanding that the artisan makers of these beverages have real integrity, investing their hard-won skills in producing with honesty the best they can. That's part of the deeper pleasure inherent in sampling their wares. It's serious.

No question: as I watch and interact with the hundreds of interested, lively folk discovering, tasting, discussing and comparing I cannot but find it all simply significant, deeply satisfying and really worthwhile. I've loved it.

And for sure at a bar at the next festival, once again I'll be on the other side. Cheers!

Contact Victor via the editor at
editor@chelmsford.camra.org.uk

Summer 2018

East Anglia real heritage pubs: Pub interiors of historic interest

By Dave Pickersgill

The CAMRA Guide to Heritage Pubs in East Anglia is now available as a free download. Edited by Paul Ainsworth, this ground-breaking publication aims to create an up-to-date snapshot of the East Anglian Pub Heritage picture, and can be read at <https://pubheritage.camra.org.uk/rhp/EastAnglia>

Paul Ainsworth, Chair of the CAMRA National Pub Heritage Group commented: "Over the past 25 years, CAMRA has developed its national and regional inventories of historic pub interiors.

"These highlight the crème de la crème that have either escaped much alteration for many years or contain features of exceptional interest."



Odd One Out, Colchester

Just such an example is the Odd One Out in Colchester, that has changed little since it became a pub in 1935. Included are over 60 images and detailed comment on the 120 East Anglian pubs listed on the CAMRA Pub Heritage website.

Grateful thanks are due to numerous individuals, the National CAMRA Pub Heritage Group and local Archives: the latter for providing access to unique historic documentation.

dpickersgill1@googlemail.com

CME BRANCH RURAL PUB TRIP

By Steve Waldock,

Pub Campaigns Co-ordinator CME CAMRA

Wrapped up warm against the mini Beast from the East a group of fourteen of us set off in the minibus from Chelmsford Railway Station for a trip around some of the branch's more rural pubs.

First stop was the Hare in Roxwell; concentrating mainly on food this Pie and Pint Inn did have four real ales on offer, two from the Brentwood Brewery produced for Pie & Pint: Golden Crust Cask Ale 3.7% and Winter Ale 4.8% plus Timothy Taylor's Landlord and Adnams Broadside.

Back in the bus for quick trip round the corner to the Chequers in Roxwell, where a lovely real fire ensured a warm welcome. The excellent Bishop Nick Ridley's Rite greeted us, and it was on special offer at £3 a pint! This lovely local is in the process of being taken over by Maria & Jon and we wish them well for the future.

Blackmore was our next stop, two pubs to try here, the Leather Bottle and the Prince Albert. The Leather Bottle had at least three real ales on, two from Adnams, Harvey's Sussex Best and Westons Old Rosie cider on hand pump. It was also good to see that it had started selling food again after its massive refurbishment a couple of years ago. A quick walk in the snow over the road to the Prince



Albert on the recommendation of Charlie and Linda. Unfortunately no Courage Directors today, but Skinners Betty Stoggs and Doom Bar were on offer.

Back in the bus and through snow-covered countryside to the Viper, Mill Green. By this time everybody was hungry and a big thank you to the staff for feeding us all even though it was 2.55pm. Great wholesome food was enjoyed and the amount of baked beans consumed would come back to haunt us later on! You can always expect a good selection of beers at the Viper. There is usually a mild on and this time it was the excellent Blackwater Mild from Crouch Vale, real cider and perry from Westons were also available.

Just round the corner is the Cricketers, a gastro pub with a lovely-looking dining room. They did have a couple of real ales, Adnams Southwold and





Skinner's Lushingtons, a golden ale which was new to me, but was very good - quite pricey at £4.40 a pint though.

From here we thought we would try the Hoop in Stock; although not officially in CME branch it has a great reputation. This small pub was so busy we were not sure it could handle fourteen of us piling in out of the snow, so decided to journey on to the next pub, the White Hart in Margaretting Tye. By this time it was properly freezing so it was group hugs all round while we waited for the minibus to come and pick us up. Beers straight from the barrel, this foodie pub has recently changed hands so sadly no Oscar Wilde any more but a good selection was available nevertheless.

The snow was falling heavily by this point but, not to be deterred, it was off to the Horse & Groom in Galleywood. Even though there wasn't a real fire we received a warm welcome in both senses of the word; ELB Cowcatcher, Ellgoods Fork Handles and Burlington Bertie by Mighty Oak awaited us. Adnams Southwold and Doom Bar were also available. Jeff the hustler was taking on all comers at the pool table but it was the trick shots by Julie and Martin that will be remembered.

The final pub of the day was the Three Compasses in West Hanningfield, an old favourite which has been run by Rose since 1971. A cosy fire welcomed us and a couple of excellent beers in the shape of Mighty Oak Captain Bob and Bishop Nick Ridley's Rite were on offer.

A big thank you to all who scored their beers, but the biggest thank you to Martin who drove the bus in quite horrible conditions.

Summer 2018



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BREWERY NEWS

BILLERICAY BREWING COMPANY **EST. 2012**

News from Trevor: The micropub and brewery continue to be busy at Billericay Brewing. During spring special ales Billericay Bees (made with local honey) and Norsey Gold (dry hopped) were very popular. May saw the long-awaited return of A Mild With No Name and a couple of beers for the Royal wedding – Gold Sovereign and the one-off Mash It Up Harry using a marriage of US and British hops.

The last couple of months has also seen the appearance of the first in a series of single-hopped beers. The first of these, Citra sold out very quickly and a whole series, featuring some of the newest and most exciting US and UK hops, will appear throughout the year.

June sees the popular Fathers' Day activities with tours on both Saturday and Sunday of the weekend, lots of other gift ideas for dads plus the reappearance of the traditional amber ale My Old Man. Then in July the big event is the Summer Beer Festival from Thursday 5th to Sunday 8th July, with bars in the brewery and micropub featuring 20+ beers and ciders from Billericay and other local breweries and cideries.



with our twin Champion Beer of East Anglia Gold Awards, for Heresy (4%) in the Golden Ales and for 1555 (4.3%) in the Best Bitters category. Great now to have all our best-selling permanent beers applauded by the industry body.

We're gearing up for our Father's Day event on 17th June. This year's Revelry Day promises some great live acoustic music this time and children's entertainment and a bit more variety on the food front with Oishiiyatai, a Japanese food cart joining us. All our current range of ales will be tapped.



We'll have a brewery bar at Chelmsford CAMRA Summer Beer and Cider Festival in the 2nd week of July. We'll also be at Cressing Temple Barns for the Essex Festival of Food and Drink mid-July. We're sending beer off to Cambridge Beer Festival for 21st May and Bishops Stortford for 25th - 27th May and hope to have a presence at Braintree Beer Festival starting on 14th June.

BRENTWOOD



The sun's out. Summer Virgin is back. Like all Brentwood Beers, it's now gluten-free.

The thought of sunshine and a refreshing pint got us all dreaming about beer festivals. So we've come up with some tips on making the most of them.

Festival Tips

1. Drink halves in a pint glass. You'll get more of the aromas.
2. Try something new, you've not had before.
3. To get the best range of beers get to the festival early, when it starts.
4. Do have a taster but it may take more than a mouthful to appreciate the beer.
5. There'll be beers you don't like. It doesn't mean



Libby writes to tell us: It's been a busy few months for Bishop Nick. Alex Ratter is ensconced and brewing some lovely beer. He's concocting a new recipe in time for Father's Day REVELRY 2018—a lovely rich deep 4.3% golden ale for the summer packed with British hops.

We've got Dark Mild on at the moment marking CAMRA's Mild Month of May—a smooth British classic at 3.7%. Also available in bottle. The core beers are selling at an all-time high with both of our vans out on the road most days. We're thrilled

it's a bad beer – necessarily.

6. Remember to eat. Beer is great but so is food.

New Beers

Cambridge Beer Festival sees the launch of two new beers. Elephant Schools Hefelump 4.5%, Apricot Hefeweizen and Brentwood Session India Pale Lager 4.1% or SIPL for short.

Following Mallowphant's success, winning the SIBA national silver award for speciality beer, we're working on more speciality stouts. Try the new beers at The Brentwood Festival and Chelmsford Beer Festival where they'll be launched. Tasting notes to follow on our website.

Brentwood Festival

The brewery is again proud to sponsor the Brentwood Festival. Like last year, there'll be a preview evening on Thursday 12th July, with a vast array of real ales to choose from and live music to enjoy. Free entry, see www.brentwoodbrewing.co.uk for details.

Have a great summer. See you at the festivals. Love Beer, love Brentwood.



Hans writes to tell us about Chelmsford's newest Brewery.

We are the Chelmsford Brewing Company in Church Street Great Baddow. Our address

is the old brewery fields that use to belong to the original brewery in Church Street. We have been up and running since January although we first registered the brewery in 2016, taking our time to get the recipes right before we wanted to announce ourselves.

We currently have four core beers, all in cask. We are slowly starting to bottle as well.

Blueshack Pale Ale 3.8% – a sessionable zesty pale ale.

Blueshack Bitter 3.8% – rewarding fresh bitter.

Port Jackson 4% – our black beer, smooth and silky. Not roasted and rich in flavour.

Radio City American Pale Ale 4.2% – Our take

on a juicy and tropical American Pale Ale.

As a local brewery we have been touched by the response from our local publicans, in particular The Orange Tree, The Oddfellows, Hop Beer Shop and The Square and Compasses in Fuller Street. We look forward to meeting many more as time goes by. We like to think of ourselves as a progressive brewery that hopefully in time the people of Chelmsford will be proud to call their own.

[This was condensed down from a much longer and very interesting news piece on Chelmsford BrewCo. We'll run a proper feature on the brewery and Hans, Deist and their father Thinus' new enterprise in the next edition – Ed.]



FINE ESSEX ALES

New beers every few weeks right now – currently Nebula (ABV 3.9%) and also Citra (ABV 3.9%). There is also some Eclipse still out in trade (Oatmeal Stout – ABV 4.2%).

Being released next week is Galaxy IPA (ABV 4.0%). We also have fresh stock of Citra and Yakima Gold in 500ml bottle-conditioned form.



Gillian tells us: Brewing in earnest as orders and festivals are in abundance! Great endorsement from John Challis (aka Boycie) – Boycie's best brews! We sold out both days at the Robin Hood Show of our slightly, spicy cider; Prosecco-tasting cider and Cowgirl. Great being a local event to be able to stock up!



BREWERY NEWS



It's been a busy few weeks here at Maldon Brewing – we have launched some new beers celebrating the beard styles of the World Beard Competition.

We have just seen 'Natural Tache' sell out, but this beer was unusual. It was the first 'bright' beer we have produced that can still be called vegan-friendly. We ditched the isinglass in favour of a pea-based clearing agent. It was incredibly well received and sold out within a week!

New beers to come: Arbalest – a golden beer full of oats for a silky body and dry hopped with Archer hops. Smooth, fruity and delicious.

The English – The next in the beard series. A classic English bitter, light amber and planet of Goldings used a varying stages of the boil and fermentation

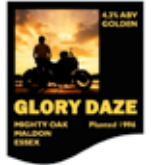
Both of these will be available on draft and in bottle at our micropub and bottle shop in Maldon, Farmers Yard.

Cheers, Mike



with customers. We are using the design from the top of our website (also on the window of the Tap Room) that shows a panorama of Maldon as we want to emphasise that we are located in a historic coastal town. One of our vans has been liveried in similar artwork – look out for it around the area. Our other two vans will be liveried as they are replaced.

Guinea Pig craft beer in KeyKeg is also now permanently available in the Tap Room, at the Fox and Hounds in Cock Clarks and in the Moulsham Tap. Try it – see what you think and let us know. Special brews coming up: June Themed Special: Whirligig 4.5% nut brown best bitter; July themed special: Flying Carrot 3.7% radiant copper; August themed special: Flying Suitcase 4% gold and Glory Daze 4.3% golden.



Abby tells us: Taproom extension starts in the next couple of weeks, we will continue to trade as normal. Hopefully completion will be 6-8 weeks, it will enable us to have more indoor seating and potentially have bands and events. The menu will also be expanded once the extension is complete.

'Be the Brewer' days continue to be busy with interesting one-off ales made, most recently a Marmalade Saison at 6.5%. Netty of the Hurdlemakers Arms will be joining us in May to 'Be The Brewer', which will be at their pub beer festival at the end of June.

We have re-built our website as the shop wasn't working, so you can place orders for delivery or collection for a range of products. Looking forward

to being at Chelmsford Summer Festival with a selection of cask and keg products and our Summer Open Day is planned for 4th August, £15 per person for four pints and tour.



News from Ruth: It's all go here at the brewery this spring and into summer – we have ventured into bottling for the very first time and, I must say, the results are rather tasty! By popular demand the fab three; Maldon Gold, Oscar Wilde and Captain Bob are now available in 500ml bottles either direct from the brewery or through our tap room in Maldon High Street. Gift boxes are available too.

New brewer Charles is settling in and we are getting feedback from our customers telling us that they think our beer quality is better than ever. This is music to our ears and of course, Charles too – he is the first qualified brewer we have employed, and has brewed world-award winning beers so we are expecting great things to come!

New design glasses and beer mats are now

BREWERY NEWS

Current specials are Copperhouse and Spring Thing with Summertime and Galaxy planned over the warmer months.

NORTH WEST ESSEX

By Chris Rouse


Pumphouse at Braintree Real Ale Festival

Pumphouse Brewery, a community-owned brewery in Toppesfield, is delighted to be brewing the Festival Beer for this years Braintree Real Ale Festival, which takes place at Bocking Arts Theatre, Bocking End, Braintree CM7 9AE, Thu 14th to Sat 16th June, 11am-11pm each day.

Golden Lion will be available at the festival, which is jointly organised by North West Essex branch and Braintree Lions, with proceeds to charity. See www.braintreebeerfestival.co.uk for more details.

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Forename(s)

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Date

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**CAMPAIGN
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Name and full postal address of your Bank or Building Society

To the Manager Bank or Building Society

Address

Postcode

Name(s) of Account Holder

Bank or Building Society Account Number

Branch Sort Code

Reference

Service User Number

9 2 6 1 2 9

FOR CAMRA OFFICIAL USE ONLY

This is not part of the instruction to your Bank or Building Society

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Name

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Instructions to your Bank or Building Society

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Signature(s)

Date

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Publication date for the AUTUMN 2018 issue (27) is 20th August. To volunteer to distribute Thirsty Times or if you have run out of stock contact the relevant branch distributor:

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COMING UP SOON IN THIRSTY TIMES:

- Focus on Wibblers brewery
- Beer in Norway
- A Day Trip to – The Stanford Arms, Lowestoft
- Heritage Pubs online
- KeyCask – Real or not?

THIRSTY TIMES

Thirsty Times is published by the Chelmsford & Mid-Essex, Maldon & Dengie and North West Essex Branches of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale. It is brought to you quarterly by unpaid volunteers with 6,000 copies distributed free to pubs and festivals across Essex. It is also available to read online at www.chelmsford.camra.org.uk

Please email letters, news, views and articles for possible publication to Tony Vernon, editor of Thirsty Times and to Claire Irons, Publicity Officer Chelmsford & Mid-Essex CAMRA. Thank you to all contributors and Mansion House Publishing. The editor reserves the right to edit articles if required with the full article appearing on the CME branch website.

Views or comments expressed in Thirsty Times are not necessarily those of the Editor, CAMRA Ltd or the Chelmsford & Mid-Essex (CME), Maldon & Dengie (MAD) or Northwest Essex (NWE) branches of the Campaign for Real Ale.

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