

NATIONAL AWARD FOR CHELMSFORD AND MID-ESSEX CAMRA

The Chelmsford and mid-Essex branch of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale, has won the Branch **Cider Campaigning Award 2015.**

Andrea Briers, Chair of APPLE, the Cider and Perry Committee made the presentation, at the CAMRA members weekend and AGM which was held in Nottingham 17th -19th April 2015.

CIDER COOLING

Accepting the award on behalf of the branch Claire Irons, Cider representative thanked all who had contributed to the success of cider campaigning with a special mention for Ian Reynolds who made cider-cooling kit, which is compatible with standard cooling equipment to cool cider and perry successfully in barrels and the bag-in-box format. This enhances the customer experience and resulting in increased sales at many festivals since 2012.

Consequently, a National Cider Cooling kit consisting of 3 crates of 32 loops has been made which has been used in England, Scotland and Wales during 2014-2015.

CHELMSFORD CIDER FESTIVAL

To celebrate 25 Years of CAMRA campaigning for Real Cider and Perry a Cider festival was held with leftover stock sold to local pubs to raise the profile of real cider and perry.

CIDER MAP

Pubs, which did not stock real cider in the branch area, have been encouraged to do so all year round. Hence, the number of pubs in the Real Cider Sold Here scheme has increased from 9 to 23 over the last year. Having encouraged pubs, which do stock real cider and perry to extend their range the details of these pubs along with the Essex Cider Shop are featured on the new Chelmsford and Mid-Essex Cider map. Visit www.chelmsfordcamra.org.uk for details.

40TH ANNIVERSARY REAL ALE AND CIDER TRAIL

The Recommended Pubs booklet forms the basis of the 40 Years Real Ale and Cider Trail promotion as part of the celebrations for the 40th anniversary of the branch in 2015. Members of the public and CAMRA collect stickers for buying real ale or cider in pubs with prizes for visiting 10,20,30 and 40 pubs promoting Key Campaigns 3 and 4. The Trails run from 17th January until 13th June with prizes to be collected from the biggest beer garden in Essex, i.e. Chelmsford Beer and Cider Festival 7th-11th July, Admirals Park in Chelmsford. Organised trips to pubs occur throughout the year, with distribution of CAMRA literature including cider related promotional material.

CIDER PUB OF THE YEAR

The Branch arranged Cider Pub of the Year judging for both the Branch and the county with judges visiting all the nominated pubs spread throughout Essex. Subsequently presentations were made to the winner and runner up pubs.

LARGEST CIDER BAR IN EAST ANGLIA

The annual pilgrimage to the National Cider and Perry Centre at Middle Farm, Firle, Sussex allows for fine-tuning of stock for the Largest Cider Bar in East Anglia held at Chelmsford Beer and Cider Festival in July. This is in terms of size, range (160 including 7 pyders, 31 perries and 10 Essex ciders) and the choice on sale at once (peaking at 116 July 2014) thanks to the National cooling kit in conjunction with the original branch kit. Sales this year were 95% up on the summer festival in 2012 proving that Chelmsford is a cider destination. The branch arranged for delivery from three producers in Northern Ireland of stock for GBBF and The Essex Cider Shop as well as their festival, which also had Scottish cider, showcasing Loch Ness and Northern Irish cider for the first time. New cider producers have been encouraged and assisted with local sales at festivals and pubs.

CIDER MONTH

For Cider and Perry month a very success trip was organised in October to Pickled Pig Cider in Cambridgeshire with visits to the Hertfordshire Cider POTY and 3 excellent Essex cider pubs including the branch winner. This was attended by cider circuiteers from neighbouring Suffolk and 5 Essex branches. Liaison with other branch cider reps in Essex has increased public awareness of real cider and perry with inter-branch activities encouraging the public to attend.

CME 40 CIDER

The branch is making a CME40 commemorative cider commissioned by local producer Bertie's Cider Company using local apples, which is to be sold to celebrate 40 years of the branch at the Chelmsford Summer Festival.

CIDER PRESS

Thirsty Times, the branch magazine has the Cider Press section highlighting real cider and perry news and articles. The branch website lists the pubs selling real cider and perry in the area.

BY Claire Irons, Cider Rep and Publicity officer for Chelmsford and Mid-Essex CAMRA