



Campaign  
for  
Real Ale

# ALES & TALES

The Newsletter for the Campaign for Real Ale in  
Stourbridge & Halesowen and Dudley & South Staffordshire

Issue 41  
Summer 2019



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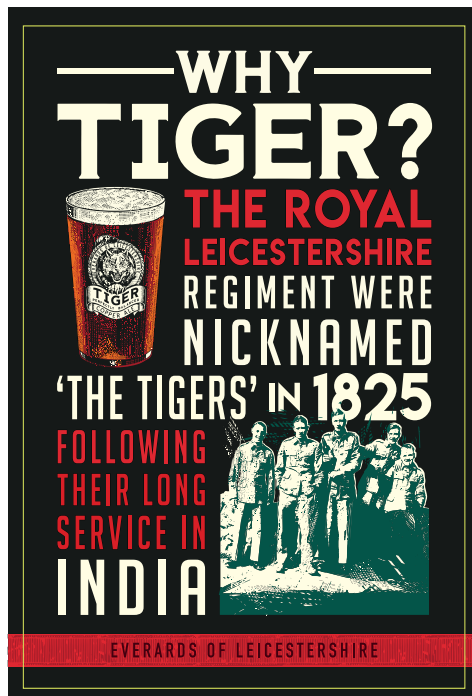
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# Welcome Back

Welcome to the 'Summer' edition of Ales and Tales. Let's hope we will see some form of summer this year so we can have a chance to use our wonderful beer gardens.

In this edition you will find the usual mix of news and reviews, bringing you up to date with what is happening between our two branches - Dudley & South Staffs and Stourbridge & Halesowen.

It's my turn to write the introduction for this issue, following Ryan's turn last month. As you may remember from the last issue, Ryan kindly mentioned that myself and my wife were expecting our first child, who has now arrived safe and well.

Now, we're used to taking our two dogs into our favourite local pubs, but we are now presented with the fresh challenge of taking a child. Not all pub goers like to see dogs in pubs, and I'm guessing a larger number do not like to see children in them either. To counter this, both types of additional visitors often come with strings attached such as restricted hours or areas of the pub where they are allowed. The balance with which the two additional groups are treated also varies, as one pub has even said from memory: 'dogs welcome, children must be tied up outside'.

Pubs should be for everybody, ranging from those who want to find peace and quiet, to family meals, to those who want to let their hair down with their mates while watching the match. You can't please all of the people all of the time, so it's good that many sway towards a particular target market, leaving other segments for different venues.

That's where our CAMRA website 'WhatPub!' comes in! The site allows you to search for pubs by name and location, but also contains a filter so pubs can be selected on the above features, plus sports TV, outdoor areas etc. It's certainly a feature I will be using even more in the coming months, to find places

where we can take both our dogs and our child. However, WhatPub! is only as good as the information it contains, and we're reliant on our members to keep us informed, so if you notice any errors, please hit the feedback button and let us know.

Returning to my own predicament, a good bet for both is our brewery tap rooms, which are often less restricted by some of the rules of more traditional pubs. Where venues are kind enough to allow small people and furry friends, customers must make sure they do not abuse the privilege, otherwise the facilities may be withdrawn, spoiling it for others.

As well as WhatPub!, don't forget that a free version of the CAMRA Good Beer Guide is available as a mobile phone app. You will still get WhatPub! functionality but there is also the option of adding Good Beer Guide information for a small subscription charge, which is actually cheaper than a paper copy of the Good Beer Guide. That said, I'm sure many of our readers will probably lament the encouragement to adopt an online portal. Online information is updatable instantly, whereas once printed matter is released, it cannot be changed until a new edition.

In mid-June we were approached about giving the Beer Central festival in Digbeth a bit of a nudge with the publicity. The event will have taken place when this magazine hits the shelves but we hope you had a great time. This is a good indicator of how far behind printed schedules are, and speaking of which, we have just signed off the proofs for the 2020 edition of the Good Beer Guide which will be released in September 2019, which has already been over a year in the making, and is one of the cornerstone activities of what your branch does, sometimes unnoticed, behind the scenes.

**Tim Cadwell**

*Chair, Stourbridge & Halesowen CAMRA*

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[trading.standards@dudley.gov.uk](mailto:trading.standards@dudley.gov.uk)



# Meet The Brewer Davenports Brewery



## Who are you and what is your position in the company?

Robert Huckfield, the Brewer and Brands Ambassador. The job brief for the latter is to promote all of the Davenports brands via sales and events.

## What is your background in brewing?

I started off as a home brewer producing beers from kits. I probably made a bit of a mess of it and then decided I wanted to brew genuine quality beers at home. I gained employment at Fixed Wheel as a Brewer's Assistant before moving to Davenports.

## What makes a brewer happy?

Being creative when brewing and then walking into a pub and drinking the results of my work and seeing the satisfaction and enjoyment of the customers.

## Tell us about recent developments within the company?

The company has recently started canning the beers that we brew and we are now looking at the possibility and logistics of bottling the core range of beers in the near future. We are also planning to introduce seasonal brews to the cask and keg range.

## What is your favourite beer that you brew?

In cask, it would be "Davenports Mild" which is a 3.5% smooth, dark ale brewed with Fuggle and Progress hops. In keg, it would be "Not Just Another Bloody IPA" which is a bitter and sweet 4.1% blood orange and passionfruit beer containing Citra and Simcoe hops. Finally, in can, it would be "Second Term" which is a new 6.5% American style Dry Hopped Lager.



## What is your favourite drink – anything?

GlassHouse brewery "Not Today, Nibs", Sarah Hughes Dark Ruby Mild, or anything by Verdant or DEYA. Naturally, given my time shadowing Scott Povey at Fixed Wheel, I still love his products today.

## What is your favourite pub? Why?

My favourite local pubs would be Tilt, the Wellington, and our very own Bulls Head in Birmingham and the Beacon Hotel in Sedgley. Elsewhere, the Euston Tap and Mother Kelly's in London.



## What's the best and the worst thing that has happened in the industry?

The best thing for brewers would be the progressive beer duty which has been a boon for the small brewer which has generally led to loads of developments in beer styles, providing the drinker with a wide diversity of beers. On the flipside, I think the industry is missing a trick by not implementing a comprehensive, nationwide programme for a common quality standard of staff training. More support would ensure a more consistent and higher quality experience for consumers.

## How can CAMRA help and support the brewing industry?

I firmly believe that CAMRA is an effective organisation which has achieved great things for the industry. That said, CAMRA does have fingers in many pies. Perhaps CAMRA needs to refocus its campaigns to show more support for the small independent brewers.



## As our farmers know all too well: no pain, no grain.

They say nothing worth having comes easy. Unfortunately for our farmers that's true of the barley we use to brew our beers. We use a classic variety called Golden Promise, grown to our own unique specification. The biscuity, golden malt it produces is the perfect partner to our natural spring water, and is vital to Landlord's depth and delicate balance of flavour. It's also a type of barley that's notoriously hard to grow, and our exacting specification makes it even more difficult. Which makes it a costly ingredient and a real challenge even for experienced farmers. Luckily we can offer some liquid therapy.

All for that taste of Taylor's





# Pub News

## Dudley & South Staffs

**Bird in Hand, John St, Wordsley DY8 5YS** - now opens from 12pm on weekdays (previously 3pm). The pub was listed in national CAMRA's "Top 10 pubs to watch the Women's World Cup".

**Bowketts Butchers, Wolverhampton Rd, Oldbury B68 8DB** - planning application for a change of use from a butchers shop to a bar and grill has been rejected because the premises is on a red route and the lack of off-street parking spaces would result in vehicles being parked outside residential properties.

**Bulls Head, Bilston St, Sedgley DY3 1JA** - closed on 28<sup>th</sup> May 2019 and throughout June for a full refurbishment.

**Green Man Inn, High St, Swindon DY3 4NR** - now serves 1 rotating guest beer from the Marston's stable (e.g. a Jennings seasonal).

**Hinksford Arms, Swindon Rd, Hinksford DY6 0BA** - closed between 24<sup>th</sup> June 2019 and 11<sup>th</sup> July 2019 for a full refurbishment. The pub is continuing to enjoy positive feedback and growing attention for the one rotating guest cask line.

**Jolly Collier, Junction St, Oldbury B69 3HD** - was sold in June 2019. Dave Yale, the outgoing licensee, had run the business since 8<sup>th</sup> December 1998.

**Lenches Bridge, High St, Pensnett DY6 8XD** - now serves up to 4 locales including beers from Fixed Wheel and Black Country Ales. Having changed hands in November 2018, the pub has undergone another refurbishment.

**Long Hop Taphouse, Haden Park Rd, Old Hill B64 7HF** - now serves up to 4 real ales (often including Wye Valley). The club runs many family events which are advertised on their Facebook page. Pizzas are available Thursday to Sunday.

**New Inn, High St, Wordsley DY8 5QR** - Steve, now the other side of 60 and having pulled through some unfortunate health problems, has called time on his tenure having managed the pub for the full Bathams era (a decade). Liz, who was Steve's understudy, has inherited the top job.

**Presley's, High St, Cradley Heath B64 5HE** - is now trading as '95 Bar & Lounge' (no real ale).

**Puffing Billy, Raglan Rd, Smethwick B66 3ND** - was subjected to a suspected arson attack in April 2019. The fire destroyed the entire first floor and caused considerable water and smoke damage to the ground

level. The pub's licence had been revoked in 2016 following a fatal stabbing outside.

**Roe Deer, Lawnswood, Wordsley DY7 5QJ** - opened in June 2019 as the latest addition to the Brunning & Price restaurant group portfolio. The pub is open and serving food from 10.30am daily.

**Tipton Conservative & Unionist Club, Union St, Tipton DY4 8QJ** - permission was granted in May 2019 to convert the Club (which has been closed for 3 years) into 7x 1 bed apartments and 7x 2 bed apartments.

**Wall Heath Tavern, High St, Wall Heath B60 0HB** - is now participating in the CAMRA Discount Scheme. Real Ales are reduced from £3.00 to £2.70 for card-carrying CAMRA members.

**Wheelie Thirsty, Halesowen Rd, Old Hill B64 4HE** - opened May 2019 as the third establishment belonging to budding brewery Fixed Wheel. There are 6 real ales, 8 real ciders, and 9 rotating craft keg beers.

Dudley MBC is holding a **Heritage Open Day** on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> September (part of the annual National Open Days event). A new addition to the attractions will be the **Crown, Wolverhampton St Dudley DY1 1ED**. This impressive building was completed in 1898, replacing an earlier pub, the Coach and Horses. Although no longer a pub, the Crown will be open from 10am to 4pm and there will be displays detailing its history.

## Stourbridge & Halesowen

**Red House Boutique, Foster St, Stourbridge DY8 1EL** - had local Wychelm 'Vintage' medium dry cider on handpull during a recent visit, which complemented the bag-in-box on the bar. It isn't yet known if the cider on handpull is a permanent addition, but certainly worthy of investigation if you are passing.

**Seven Stars, Brook Rd, Stourbridge DY8 1NQ** - has finally been purchased! The latest Black Country Ales pub will be opening up soon.

**White Horse Inn, New St, Quarry Bank, DY5 2BA** - recent marking social discovered a great pint of Sarah Hughes Sedgley Surprise. Following a recommendation from our branch secretary, the food was also sampled, and found to be excellent! Well worth not only a visit, but a table reservation too in this thriving community and family pub.

# Brewery News

## Dudley & South Staffs

### **Black Country Ales, Redhall Rd, Lower Gornal DY3 2NU**

English Summer made its appearance in BCA pubs in June and will be available until September. The recipe has changed and it is 4.1%.

### **Britt Brewery, Rowley Village, Rowley Regis B65 9AT**

New pump clips were introduced in June 2019 for Working Mon's Dark, Black Country Bell End Bitter, Brew Britannia, and Eureka. There is a prominent 'B' at the top of the clips.



### **Davenports, New St, Smethwick B66 2AJ**

Having traded as Blue Bear brewery for many years the company is now trading as Davenports. A developing range of canned beers is being produced to support the existing Davenports Cask beers and the Keg beers which are branded as 'Dares' beers.

### **Holdens, George St, Woodsetton DY1 4LW**

Woodsetton Pale Ale has been brewed as a short run seasonal beer. The company has been running a promotion of their Black Country Bitter. The Bulls Head in Sedgley has undergone a major refurbishment.

### **Kinver Brewery, Britch Farm, Kinver DY7 5NW**

A new collaboration brew with rock legends Witchfinder General was launched at the Robin Hood, Amblecote, on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> May. It is a 5.5% "dark and heavy" porter.

## Stourbridge & Halesowen

### **Fixed Wheel, Long Lane, Blackheath B62 9LD**

The month of May saw the opening of the brewery's second micropub, Wheelie Thirsty – Old Hill which went live on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> May at 7.00 PM. Situated on 215 Halesowen Road, Old Hill B64 6HE and features a range of both Fixed Wheel & a rotating line of guest beers on both cask & keg. The larger venue will mean more opportunities for further events to take place.

The next quarter will see some of the traditional events and some new ones taking place at the brewery and the micropubs. On August 3<sup>rd</sup> – Talk on Cycling Legends Tom Simpson at the Brewery with Chris Sidwells. 22<sup>nd</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> – a Summer beer festival with live music & street food. There will be monthly cheese nights & pizza nights at the micropubs. In Lye, cheese night on 7<sup>th</sup> and pizza and pint night on 22<sup>nd</sup>. In Old Hill, cheese night on 14<sup>th</sup> and pizza and pint night on 29<sup>th</sup>. In September, live music at the Brewery with 'The EightyNines' on 7<sup>th</sup>. In Lye, cheese night on 4<sup>th</sup> and pizza and pint night on 19<sup>th</sup>. In Old Hill, cheese night on 11<sup>th</sup> and pizza and pint night on 26<sup>th</sup>.

The monthly specials that are being released are: a new Cherry Sour Milkshake IPA will be ready for release in July as part of the Birmingham Beer Week. G-whizz – Pale Ale 4.4%. A Salted Caramel Ice Cream Pale (Unknown abv). August will be The Shadow session IPA – 4.5%. September will be Mister Tom Golden Ale 4.5%.

### **Green Duck Brewery, Rufford Rd, Stourbridge DY9 7ND**

A new initiative, a 'Beer and Rum' festival, will be held between 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> August. Special beers scheduled for between July and September include 'Supernova', 'Hysteria', 'Come at me, Bro', 'Blush', 'Invincible', 'Feelgood', 'Evil Eye', 'One Great Thing' and 'The Great Divide'.



# WAGGON & HORSES

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# Branch Diaries

## DUDLEY & SOUTH STAFFS

### JULY

#### **Monday 1st July 8PM**

Dudley Winter Ales Fayre Planning Meeting; Park Inn, George St, Woodsetton, DY1 4LW

#### **Wednesday 10th July 7PM**

Lawnswood and Wordsley Scoring Social; meet at Roe Deer, then Lawnswood, Glasscutters, Queens Head, New Inn

#### **Saturday 20th July 2PM-7PM**

Interbranch social with Wolverhampton (BBQ and pub games); Old Chainyard, Castle St, Coseley, WV14 9DW

#### **Wednesday 24th July 7:30PM**

Holly Hall & Pensnett Scoring Social; meet at King William, then Fox & Grapes, Lenches Bridge

#### **Saturday 27th July 12PM**

South Staffordshire Scoring Social; meet at Wombourne Pool Bar, then Wombourne Cricket Club, Vine, Old Bush (Wombourne), Red Lion, Green Man, Old Bush (Swindon), Swindon Cricket Club, Hinksford Arms, Wall Heath Tavern, Horse & Jockey

#### **Monday 29th July 8PM**

Branch Meeting; Beeches (Tividale Football Club), Packwood Rd, B69 1UL

### AUGUST

#### **Monday 5th August 8PM**

Dudley Winter Ales Fayre Planning Meeting; Park Inn, George St, Woodsetton, DY1 4LW

#### **Thursday 8th August 9AM**

Branch Coach Trip to Great British Beer Festival, London (email [jedwards31@btinternet.com](mailto:jedwards31@btinternet.com))

#### **Wednesday 14th August 7:15PM**

Old Hill Scoring Social; meet at Wheelie Thirsty, then Spring Meadow Social Club & Institute, Long Hop Taphouse, Waggon & Horses

#### **Monday 19th August 8PM**

Branch Meeting; Bird in Hand, John St, Wordsley, DY8 4AZ

#### **Saturday 24th August 12PM**

Branch public transport social to Codsall Station Beer Festival, Chapel Ln, Codsall WV8 2EH

### SEPTEMBER

#### **Monday 2nd September 8PM**

Dudley Winter Ales Fayre Planning Meeting; Park Inn, George St, Woodsetton, DY1 4LW

#### **Saturday 14th and Sunday 15th September 10AM-5PM**

Black Country Boating Festival (with Real Ale bar staffed by Dudley & South Staffs CAMRA); Bumble Hole Nature Reserve, Windmill End, Netherton, DY2 9HU

#### **Wednesday 25th September 7:00PM**

Kingswinford Scoring Social; meet at Royal British Legion, then Bell, Cottage, Union, Kingswinford Snooker Centre, British Oak

#### **Monday 30th September 8PM**

Branch Meeting; Britannia, Halesowen St, Blackheath, B65 0ES

## STOURBRIDGE & HALESOWEN

### JULY

#### **Wednesday 3rd July 8PM**

Branch Meeting, Stourbridge Royal British Legion, Enville St. Stourbridge (Bring CAMRA Membership card)

#### **Thursday 18th July 8PM**

Short Cross Marking Social. Meet Whitley then Hawne Tavern, Edward VII and Waggon & Horses

#### **Saturday 27th July**

Annual Branch Real Ale Census.

### AUGUST

#### **Wednesday 14th August 8PM**

#### **(Note: 2nd Wednesday of the month)**

Branch Meeting, Waggon & Horses, Stourbridge Rd, Halesowen B63 3TU.

#### **Thursday 29th August 8PM**

Lapal – Long Lane Marking Social. Meet Cobham Arms, Howley Green Road B62 0JD then Royal Oak, Stag & Three Horseshoes, Swan, Snooks and Shelter Bar

### SEPTEMBER

#### **Wednesday 18th September 8PM (Note: 3rd**

#### **Wednesday of the month)**

Branch AGM, Duke William, Coventry St. Stourbridge (Upstairs Room Booked – Bring your CAMRA Membership card)

#### **Thursday 26th September 8PM**

Lye Marking Social. Meet Fox, Green Lane DY9 7EW then Hollybush, Shovel, Railway Tavern, Windsor Castle and Wheelie Thirsty

### OCTOBER

#### **Wednesday 9th October 8PM**

#### **(Note: 2nd Wednesday of the month)**

Branch Meeting, White Horse Inn, New Street, Quarry Bank DY5 2BA

#### **Thursday 24th October 8PM**

Stourbridge Marking Social. Meet Red House then Cock & Bull, Barbridge and Waggon & Horses.



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# Birmingham To Celebrate The Rich World Of Beer, Cider And Perry From 2020



Following on from three superb years in Norwich, it will be time in 2020 for the Great British Beer Festival Winter to once again set up in a new city, and we are excited to announce that the next edition of the festival will be held at the New Bingley Hall in Birmingham, from Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> to Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2020.

A region built on the trade and innovation of the industrial revolution, the festival will be taking on the theme of “A Festival of a Thousand Trades”, celebrating industry, diversity, and creativity throughout time. This theme will define the drinks on offer, which will include a range of spirits and non-alcoholic options to accompany over 400 beers, ciders and perries that will represent the region, the wider United Kingdom, and beyond.

Alongside the drinks, the festival will feature games and activities, musical entertainment throughout, a range of mouth-watering food stalls, and a selection of tastings and talks for those looking to expand their horizons further.

As always the Great British Beer Festival Winter will continue to host the finals of the winter beer categories in the Champion Beer of Britain Competition, with the winners going forwards to that year’s final at GBBF in August.

“This is an incredibly exciting opportunity for us to showcase the fantastic food and drinks that the region has to offer”, said West Midlands Regional Director Gary Timmins. “The region has a rich history in brewing and we’re looking forward to working with local museums, charities and organisations to tell visitors a story that will go hand in hand with their drink of choice.”

Planning for the festival is already well underway, and further details can be found online at [winter.gbbf.org.uk](http://winter.gbbf.org.uk), and across Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

West Midlands  
Region invites  
you to join us...



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**The New Bingley Hall**

**4-8 Feb 2020**

Find out more at: [winter.gbbf.org.uk](http://winter.gbbf.org.uk)



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(Ma Pardoes)

Halesowen Road, Netherton

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**Dark Swan Mild 4.2% ABV**

**Olde Swan Entire 4.4% ABV**

**Bumble Hole 5.2% ABV**

**Ma Pardoe's Black Widow Brew 6.7% ABV**

**NPA 4.8% ABV**

**Opening Times:**

Mon-Sat 11am-11pm, Sun 12noon-11pm

**Food Available:**

Mon - Sun 12noon - 9pm

(Menus vary throughout the day)

**Upstairs Function Room Available**

(up to 60 persons - No disco or any other form of row!)

**Contact Tim Newey on 01384 253075**

# The Tivdale Three

Admit it, if you were invited on a tour of Tivdale's taverns, you would most probably decline because you have to weed the garden or iron the bedsheets. "Are there any left?" might be your response (and understandably so). The rate of pub closures and demolitions has agonised local residents for consecutive decades. The Hangman's Tree – a popular Ansell's pub throughout the 60s and 70s – was flattened and replaced by a mixed retail development. The Plough on Dudley Road West is now a purveyor of halal gastronomy. Tivdale needed a community-oriented freehouse more than Dudley needs a train station.

Enter, stage right, Del and Lynn Sharpe. I first met the proud proprietors of **Tivi Ale** microbar on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2018 when we discussed their business plan over a pint at the Swan, Halesowen. We covered cellar practices, social media opportunities, reputable wholesalers, and many more topics. Sadly, their journey was obstructed by the usual handful of defiant neighbours who objected to the planning and licensing applications with blind opposition.



*Family Fun Day marking Tivi Ale's first birthday on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> June 2019*

On behalf of Dudley & South Staffordshire CAMRA, I submitted a Statement of Support querying how Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council could miss an opportunity to endorse entrepreneurial activity in the area given that the Tivdale Neighbourhood Employment &

Skills Plan (2011-2012) lamented that Tivdale ward ranked bottom out of all Sandwell wards for new business starts. Thankfully, common sense prevailed and Tivi Ale opened to the public on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> June 2018.

With a quick calculation you will already have realised that the microbar has now celebrated its first ale-iversary. The occasion was marked with a Family Fun Day including a food van and face painter. The pub is open from midday all week and serves Holden's Golden Glow plus two changing beers. The number of guest beers sold has already exceeded the one hundred mark. Bookings can be made for Afternoon Tea and the gorgeous cakes are on show in a cabinet adjacent to the bar to test your temptations! The pub boasts an average beer score of 3.34/5 at present (a minimum of 3 is required to be eligible for entry into the Good Beer Guide). A huge well done to all of the team and customers – a truly wonderful success story.



*The Tivdale Three – Tivi Ale, Beeches, Wonder*

Tivdale also has two further outlets dispensing cask ales which members of Dudley & South Staffordshire CAMRA frequented on the Tivdale scoring social on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2019.





**Beeches** is a busy social club adjacent to Tividale Football Club home pitch. The spacious split-level main bar is grey in colour and has a modern feel. There are a number of high definition flat-screen televisions including one of the biggest you will find in the area on the back wall. The smaller, second room has retained a more traditional character that you would expect from an estate club. Cobs are available and hot meals are served on matchdays. Up to 3 Real Ales are served and are likely to feature Wye Valley HPA, Wye Valley Butty Bach, Banks's Sunbeam, Holden's Golden Glow, Sharp's Doom Bar, Olde Swan Entire and Olde Swan Bumblehole. Members of the club can expect to pay in the region of £2.95 for a pint of Real Ale but non-members should expect to pay a £0.50 premium. The average beer score at present is 2.82/5 and you can join us here on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> July 2019 when the Club will host our branch meeting.



*Dudley & South Staffs CAMRA members  
visiting the Wonder*

So next time you're invited on a tour of Tividale's taverns, you should definitely accept and see what's on offer on the ten handpulls across these three venues.

**Ryan Hunt**

*Chair, Dudley & South Staffordshire CAMRA*



*Refurbished main bar at Beeches*

Via a pleasant stroll through Tividale Park you will arrive at the **Wonder**. This is an unpretentious community pub serving three regular beers (Banks's Amber Ale, Banks's Mild and Sharp's Doom Bar) and one guest beer. The background music can be fairly loud. Cobs are available at all times as well as other snacks, such as, pickled onions. There is a "coming soon" board above the bar which clearly displays which guest beers are in the cellar. Guest beers are sourced from the SIBA list and on our visit was Ringwood Boondoggle. The average beer score at present is 2.5/5.

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# 720 mile Pub Crawl

Having found so many new bars on our last trip and as it was conveniently halfway to my father's hometown our first stop was Sheffield. As soon as we arrived, we decided to have a look for Hop Hideout which had opened recently directly opposite the Premier Inn we were staying at. We were pleasantly surprised to find it is just one of the new businesses in the building called Kommune. There were ten different hot food establishments serving a variety of world dishes. We found Hop Hideout hidden behind a corner and sampled two of their keg beers and a can from one of their fridges before unpacking and having a rest.

The first bar on our evening walk was Dorothy Pax which is next to the quay at the end of the Sheffield canal. An attractive bar set in the arches of the nearby disused railway, the bar itself is built from the wood of a boat of the same name. Six keg and four cask were on offer, we tried a couple of crackers from local breweries Saint Mars of the Desert and Neepsend.

We couldn't resist heading to the Bar Steward next which we visited on our last trip, but it is too good to miss. We enjoyed one from Polly's Brew (formerly Loka Polly) and the nearby Summer Wine but had to leave as we had booked a meal at gastropub Milestone on Kelham Island. An Abbeydale and a Thornbridge beer accompanied our meal which was overpriced and took 50 minutes to arrive. As we were so near we had to visit previous Yorkshire Pub of the Year Kelham Island Tavern which had several Blue Bee Brewery beers amongst its line-up. A couple each before returning to Bar Steward to find it shut, no matter as the Shakespeare was right opposite for Neepsend before moving up to the Rutland Arms for the biggest range of cask and keg of the day but they didn't have the barman's favourite beer, he was from Stourbridge and longed for a pint of

Bathams. We promised to take him a bottle on our next trip.

At Hartlepool we stayed at a new Premier Inn built on the Marina, both sides of the building faced water and it was easy to imagine you were on a cruise ship. Our first call was the second micropub to open in the country, the Rat Race Ale House. Still run by the original owner, it was tiny, four casks and a couple of ciders on offer, we tried a Durham and a Williams Bros. beer each. We liked the owner's definition of a micropub, "A place you can run on your own." Not many so-called micropubs fall into this category though. We moved on to the nearby Wetherspoon which was rammed with young people playing music bingo??? Bouncers on the door and only the usual mainstream beers, we had a Punk IPA and moved on to Hops and Cheese.



*Hops and Cheese*

We really liked it, a cheese counter plus pork pies and a variety of scotch eggs if you were hungry and six key keg beers to quench your thirst. An eclectic mix of furniture with quiz cards on each table and lots of different table games stored on shelving. We were very surprised to find a copy of our last Ales & Tales there. We sampled Beatnikz and Tiny Rebel beers.



The owner told us Cameron's Tap house, the Anchor, was worth a trip so we headed there. A full range of their cask ales was available plus about 10 kegs from Tooth & Claw brewery, who I found was a Cameron's microbrewery. We had a couple of halves while we inspected their range of bottles and cans for sale. The likes of Magic Rock, Cloudwater and Northern Monk were there but bottles of Chimay Trappist beer for three for £5 was a must. We bought six.



*6 Degrees North*

Next we headed for Glasgow which was an expensive journey - a £100 fine for speeding when we got home. We stayed in another Premier Inn but this one badly needed a refurb. We complained to head office when we got home and received a full refund. After a lovely meal in Crabshakk, a few beers in Brewdog then we spent the rest of the evening in 6 Degrees North in Partick. They had ten Cloudwater, eight Belgian and six of their own beers on tap so there didn't seem any point going elsewhere.

Last stop was Manchester, which has some great boozers. We were in the Premier Inn Arena Printworks which was the nicest we have ever stayed in. We started at the Mash Tun which only opened a fortnight before, where we met with old friend and former Stourbridge resident Sarah Terry. There were about twenty beers to choose from, we had beers from Alphabet and Track before heading up to Marble Arch to meet

up with Sarah's husband Mark for a few of their beers and a meal. We have been to Marble lots of times, but this was the first time we had eaten there, we were impressed! Last call was another new place to us Beatnikz Republic Bar. Again, around twenty to choose from with plenty from their own brewery which is across the city near to Marble. A great evening to round off the longest pub crawl we have made so far. So many great pubs and bars were missed out but that's just opportunity to repeat another day.



*Marble Arch*

**Tony Skirving**



# Dudley Drinkers Descend on Worcester

Like many of the 26 West Midlands CAMRA branches, Dudley & South Staffordshire was well represented at the inaugural **Worcester Pub Beer Festival**. As we alighted the train at Foregate Street on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2019, we were gifted a jazzy brochure detailing the twelve participating venues.

Starting at the westernmost cluster of pubs, our first tipples would be served up at the **Paul Pry**. With a lone barman the service was slow so our friends from Stourbridge & Halesowen branch decided to rejig their schedule. It's unfortunate that not all of the pubs had prepared for the additional customers – some constructive criticism from us out-of-towners. Dark Star American Pale Ale scored 2.5. Just a small shuffle required to **Worcester Brewing Co** where Sabrina March was supped in the sunshine and we admired the steam locomotive Mayflower overhead. Our final establishment in this part of the city was **Arch Rivals**. Two beers available but unfortunately the seasonal special from Fixed Wheel – Sheriff Italian Grape Ale – carried an unintended haze (scored 1.5).



*Worcester Brewing Co*

Next up was the northern duo, starting with the **Sociable Beer Company**. An exciting venue which resembled student digs (especially the

extensive vinyl collection). Some of the gang opted for experimental keg beers but I took this opportunity to have a quaffable 3.6% house cask beer called Shindig (scored 2). Next door is the **Dragon Inn** – home of Church End brewery. A traditional outlet with a pretty courtyard. The Old Faithful and Pews Porter were both satisfactory (scored 2.5) but the Goat's Milk was really on point and rightly awarded a score of 4 to reflect that.



*Dudley & South Staffs CAMRA members  
at Sociable Beer Company*

One of the day's most impressive offerings would be found in the east of the city at the Firefly. Progressive and well-kept cask beer in abundance including a much-welcomed Mild from Cloudwater and an unfinned pale ale from Siren scored 3.5 and 4 respectively.

We wrapped the day up in the south of the city where it was great to see that the team at the Cardinal's Hat had put on their own 'mini beer festival' showcasing local breweries. At the Plough we enjoyed a pair of Salopian pale beers – Oracle and Cliff Edge (scored 2.5 and 4). Finally, as Worcester began to attract the evening clientele, we squeezed into the Oil Basin where Lady Marmalade from onsite





Our thanks and congratulations to Stephen Connelly and all of the other volunteers for making this event such a success. It was great to see a CAMRA-run festival working in conjunction with public houses rather than in competition against them.

Chair, Dudley & South Staffs CAMRA



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# Hitchmough's Lost Pubs

Here is a photograph of another mystery pub.  
Can you identify it?



The solution to last issue's lost pub is the Nelson Inn, Spring Hill, Halesowen, situated at the corner of Hagley Road and Highfield Lane.

The Nelson still stands and has been converted into housing. The current building dates to the 1930s, replacing a much older one.

DEMOLITION.—100,000 Red Bricks, 3in. Slates, Rafters, Joists, Floor Boards, Quarries, for Sale.—Apply, The Nelson Inn, Highfield Lane, Halesowen.

*Advert 1939*

Our first record of the pub is from the 1841 census when it is being run by 30 year old William Knight and his wife Eliza. They are still there 20 years later. It would appear that William died in the first half of the 1860s as in January 1865 there is a sale at the pub of household furniture and brewing equipment 'in consequence of the late occupier changing her residence'.

No licensing convictions against William Knight have come to light. However, various later landlords were convicted for the pub being open after hours and before hours, permitting gaming and permitting drunkenness.

One landlord and his wife were charged with being drunk on their licensed premises. The police visited the pub because of a reported disturbance and found the passage covered with broken glass and potatoes. This was a result of the wife losing her temper because her husband had been to Birmingham and had not arrived back in time for dinner. They maintained that they were not drunk, but 'very much excited' and several witnesses supported the fact that they were not drunk. The magistrates gave the defendants the benefit of the doubt and dismissed the case.

One customer of the pub was sentenced to fourteen days' hard labour for assaulting his wife. The final straw had come when the wife went to the Nelson to fetch out her husband and he 'kicked her in a most savage manner'.

Henry Field ran the pub for a while in the 1880s. He was involved in the theft of 53 bundles of iron from the Great Western Railway goods station and was sentenced to six months' hard labour.

Occasionally inquests were held at the Nelson. In 1849 John Walters returned from Halesowen market, had beans and bacon for supper, and drank a pint of cider. During the night he became ill and was 'vomiting and purging' and died the following day. The verdict of the inquest was Died from Asiatic Cholera.

In 1887 Accidental Death was the verdict on a 3 year old boy who drank from the spout of a kettle and was scalded in the throat and stomach.

An unusual death was investigated in 1892 on a boy who had had something in his ear, which he alleged had been put there by one of his schoolfellows. Despite going to the doctor and to hospital the object could not be extracted and the boy died from inflammation of the membrane of the brain. This was another Accidental Death.

A new edition of the Halesowen file has recently been produced and is available for free download.

**Hitchmough's Black Country Pubs**  
[longpull.co.uk](http://longpull.co.uk)

# Ticket to Ryde

## Beer and Buses on the Isle of Wight

Imagine an attractive island, with over 80 pubs offering a wide range of island-brewed and other beers (some having their own beer festivals), linked by a network of 14 bus routes using over 70 heritage buses. Well, imagine no more, because this happens every October on the Isle of Wight during the Classic Buses & Beer weekend, organised jointly by the local bus museum and hundreds of local CAMRA members.



Keep up to date in the lead up to the event with the latest news and info at:  
[www.iwbeerandbuses.co.uk](http://www.iwbeerandbuses.co.uk)

IW Beer & Buses Weekend 2017



We started our trip at Poole, visiting the **Brewhouse & Kitchen** (with South African brewer of five regular beers, along with a seasonal Oktoberfest and wheat beer), the **Brewhouse** (outlet for the Frome-based Milk Street micro-brewery) and the **Drift** micro-pub (focusing on craft beers) down on the quayside. After a brief visit to the Swanage steam railway, visiting a couple of good pubs at Corfe Castle, we crossed The Solent by ferry from Lymington to Yarmouth. Here, we started our tour proper

on the Isle of Wight, visiting the **Kings Head** and **Bugle Coaching Inn**, both giving us discounts on their locally-brewed Yates and Goddards beers.

We then joined the heritage bus on Route C to the south-western coast at Hulverstone. Here we visited the 600-year old thatched and stone-built **Sun Inn**, with beautiful countryside and sea views (and 50p off the Goddards Wight Squirrel). Rejoining the heritage bus on Route C, we continued to Newport, changing buses to Route X as far as Wootton. Here we took a ride on the Isle of Wight steam railway as far as **Havenstreet**, where a small 10-barrel tented beer festival was in full swing. 45 minutes later we were back on the train, returning to Wootton and rejoining the heritage bus on Route X to Ryde. Here we visited the Isle of Wight bus museum and walked around the corner to the **Railway Inn**, where another excellent 30-barrel beer festival was being held. A quick visit to **S Fowler & Co** to check out the beers available at Wetherspoon's beer festival, before taking the heritage bus back to Newport, our overnight base.

That evening, the highlight in Newport had to be the **Newport Ale House**, which quite surprisingly was offering Fixed Wheel (Blackheath) Devil Takes the Hindmost from the cask; never has a beer travelled so far and tasted so good! Later, we called into the **Man in the Moon** to check out the Wetherspoon's festival beers, before visiting the **Wrens Nest** and finishing at the **Castle Inn**. An excellent day's beer and bus hunting!

Next day, we walked down to Newport quayside to join the heritage bus on Route J to Niton, to visit another idyllic stone-built pub in the countryside, the **Buddle Inn**, formerly used by smugglers (another 50p off a pint!). Rejoining





the heritage bus on Route J, we continued to Ventnor, to visit the **Winter Gardens** (missing their Oktoberfest by a day) and on to the nostalgic former shop, now a small bar "**Perks & Co**". Switching to Route X, we continued to Shanklin Old Village to visit the **Chine Inn**, another historic stone-built pub on the cliffs overlooking the bay (another 50p off a pint).

We then embarked on a bit of bus-hopping, taking Route G to Brading to call in at the **Kynges Well** (with another mini-beer festival) and then on Route F to Culver Down. Buses do not usually serve this remote headland with its superb views across Sandown Bay and Bembridge. Here we found the **Culver Haven Inn**, with a two-piece group playing "Hotel California"! Rejoining the heritage bus, we continued to Ryde, to visit the **Marine Bar**, **King Lud** and **Harry's Bar** on the Esplanade, before returning to Newport to visit the **Bargeman's Rest**, **Wheatsheaf** and a

second call to the **Newport Ale House**. Next day, we returned to the "North Island" by ferry to Portsmouth and home.

During the weekend, we must have sampled over 50 different beers in more than 20 pubs, travelling between them on a dozen or so different heritage buses, ranging from the 1930's to the 1990's. To list all the beers would take another article, but amongst those specially brewed for the festival included Island Brewery's *On the Buses*, *Busman's Holiday* and *Hop Aboard*, Yates' *On the Buses "I Hate You Butler"* and Ringwood *Double Decker*. Overall, an excellent weekend, well worth joining next year. Apart from a £6 programme giving discounts off drinks, travelling on the buses is free of charge and, although slow, they rarely break down. Beers and cheers, and see you next year!

Steve James

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# Tempus Fugit

'Tempus Fugit' and my how does it fly. It only seems like yesterday that I was sitting in a branch meeting at a pub in Halesowen and a newcomer joined us and sat in our midst. The most notable thing about the newcomer, apart from his cheery disposition, was that he was wearing a woolly hat and it was early September. The newcomer then introduced himself to the meeting with the words "Hi, I am Scott Povey and I have just opened a brewery around the corner in Blackheath and it is called 'Fixed Wheel.'" That was September 2014.



I suspect that everyone at the meeting was a little taken aback that we had a brand-new start up brewery in the branch area that no one knew about until Scott introduced himself. It has to be borne in mind that this was the very start of the new microbrewery and micro bar era; now we hear almost weekly of new microbreweries starting up somewhere in the country, which in itself is a good thing, more choices of beer for the real beer drinkers.

I was fortunate to be able to visit the brewery shortly after the meeting, having offered Scott a bribe of some homemade chilli sauce. I recall it well. It was a cold October Sunday morning and I mean cold, that I went round to the brewery and it was not what I was expecting; for those

of you who have yet to visit the brewery and the real 'Tap room', it is on a business park. I could not find it. Why? Because it was and still is behind an unassuming blue door, like many of the others that were on the business park at that time. I found it and when I opened the door, there was the full brewery brewing equipment, but no Scott. I called him and suddenly the signature woolly hat and head appeared, out of one of the mash tuns. It was Scott!



He commented to me that he was working on a new beer for the brewery that would be a signature beer and in recognition of the location of the brewery, that beer was to be called 'Blackheath Stout'. (It should be noted that this is the only beer that the brewery produces that does not have a cycling theme in its name.)

It would be very easy to say "Well, the rest is history" because whilst it may be the case, it does not recognise the journey.





From the humble beginnings of a serious homebrewer, who like many of us used the commercial canned kits, to a prolific award winning brewery owner and micro tap bar owner in 5 years is some achievement.



A recognition of the Fixed Wheel brewery is the number of awards that it has received in those 5 years.

- SIBA – Midlands small pack competition 2015 – Porters, Stouts, Old Ales, Strong Milds & Strong Brown Ales
- CAMRA – GOLD. Beer of the festival 2015 – ‘Single Speed Citra’
- CAMRA – WINNER. Beer of the festival 2015 – ‘Chain Reaction’ Pale Ale
- SIBA – BRONZE. Small pack beer competition 2015 – ‘Chain Reaction’ Pale Ale

- CAMRA – Beer of the Year 2017 – ‘Blackheath Stout’
- CAMRA – GOLD. West Midlands regional champion beer of Britain – ‘Blackheath Stout’
- Wakefield branch of CAMRA – The brewery continued success in the brewing of ground breaking real ales – 2017
- CAMRA – BRONZE. West Midlands regional champion beer of Britain 2018 – ‘No Brakes’ IPA – Strong Bitter category
- CAMRA – GOLD West Midlands regional champion beer of Britain 2018 – ‘Blackheath Stout’
- Shirley Charity beer and cider festival – WINNER of beer of the festival 2019 – ‘King Kelly’ hoppy stout

Every beer produced by Scott has always had something that sets it apart from the normal beers available and I would advocate it is the personal touch and the love of good beer that keeps the Fixed Wheel at the forefront of excellent brewing and good beers. What will the next 5 years bring, well, I expect that will be a surprise that none of us can visualise, however, I expect it will be good and the beers coming out of the brewery, just as excellent if not even better, if that can be achieved.

The brewery and tap room are located at Unit 9, Long Lane Trading Estate, Long Lane, Blackheath, Halesowen B62 9LD.

07766 162794

[fixedwheelbrewery.co.uk](http://fixedwheelbrewery.co.uk)

**Phil Zjalic**

# Tour de Fixed Wheel

Now that the award-winning Fixed Wheel Brewery has opened two Wheelie Thirsty micropubs in Lye and Old Hill respectively (in addition to its Brewery Tap in Blackheath) I thought it might be fun to work out a crawl between all three establishments. Of course, you don't have to restrict yourselves to just the Fixed Wheel outlets, you might want to visit other pubs in the vicinity, but this is just to show what can be done by utilizing public transport.

Assuming that you are undertaking this crawl on a Saturday as the Fixed Wheel Brewery Tap is currently only open Friday from 4pm and all day Saturday, starting at the Fixed Wheel Brewery Tap, once you want to move on, leave the bar and walk to Rowley Regis Station. Allow 15 minutes walking time. Catch the train to Old Hill (2 trains per hour at 08 and 38 minutes past the hour – one stop – journey time 3 minutes).

When you alight at Old Hill Station, cross over the footbridge, walk through the car park and turn left onto the main road. Keep walking along this road and eventually it will curve right. The pub is on the right just past the church. (Walking time approximately 15 minutes from Old Hill station).

When you leave the pub, you can either retrace your steps back to Old Hill Station but remember, there are only two trains an hour to Lye at 11 and 41 minutes past the hour. Alternatively, you can cross the road to the bus stop and catch the X10 bus to Cradley Heath Interchange (Bus Station and Train Station in old money). Buses run every 20 minutes at 02, 22 and 42 minutes past the hour. The journey time to the train station (sorry, I mean Interchange) is scheduled to be 8 minutes so the best bus to get is the 02 and if it's running late or cancelled, you can always pop back into Wheelie Thirsty, have another drink and wait for the next one. (There is one of those display boards at the bus stop so you can

see when the next bus is due – assuming that it is telling the truth!)

When you arrive at Cradley Heath, walk over the footbridge and catch the train to Lye (2 trains per hour at 15 and 45 minutes past the hour – one stop – journey time 3 minutes)

When you alight at Lye Station, turn right and walk up to the main road. Turn left and walk up to the main intersection with the Windsor Castle opposite and turn left. The pub is a short walk from the junction, located roughly opposite the Pharmacy.

You have now reached your destination and completed your visit to all three Fixed Wheel outlets.

I'm sure there are other ways of visiting them all but this is the one that works best for me.

Drink responsibly and enjoy.

**Tony Morgan**





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# Pub of the Year Presentations Stourbridge & Halesowen

**The Waggon & Horses** Halesowen has won Pub of The Year for the 3rd year running! We presented their certificate during our May branch meeting, The Express and Star were also in attendance and kindly reported on the event. Dawn and Mick continually provide us all with a wonderful selection of brilliantly kept ales and ciders. Congratulations guys!



**Waggon & Horses** Stourbridge were presented with their Cider Pub of the Year award during our April branch meeting. During the meeting, branch members were able to sample an excellent pint of local Wychelm Vintage cider, served via handpull. Here is Dan Wilkes looking very proud of his certificate.



**Coombs Woods Sports and Social Club** was presented with their Club of the Year award

during our June branch meeting. It will be displayed alongside umpteen other awards currently in position behind the bar, reminding customers and members of their record for keeping a quality pint of ale.



The first to be presented with their certificate was actually the joint 3rd place for the **Red House Boutique**. We had already arranged a marking social in Stourbridge Town Centre on this date, so we thought we should combine it with a visit. It is fortunate that we did, as they were running an Oakham Ales Tap Takeover on the same night! Well done to Dani, Paul and the team.



We are still to present the team at The Robin Hood with their 3rd place certificate, watch out guys we'll be descending on you soon!

**Tim Cadwell**



# The Roe Deer



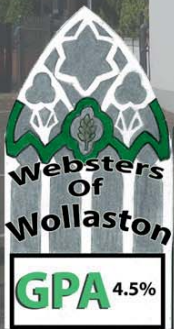
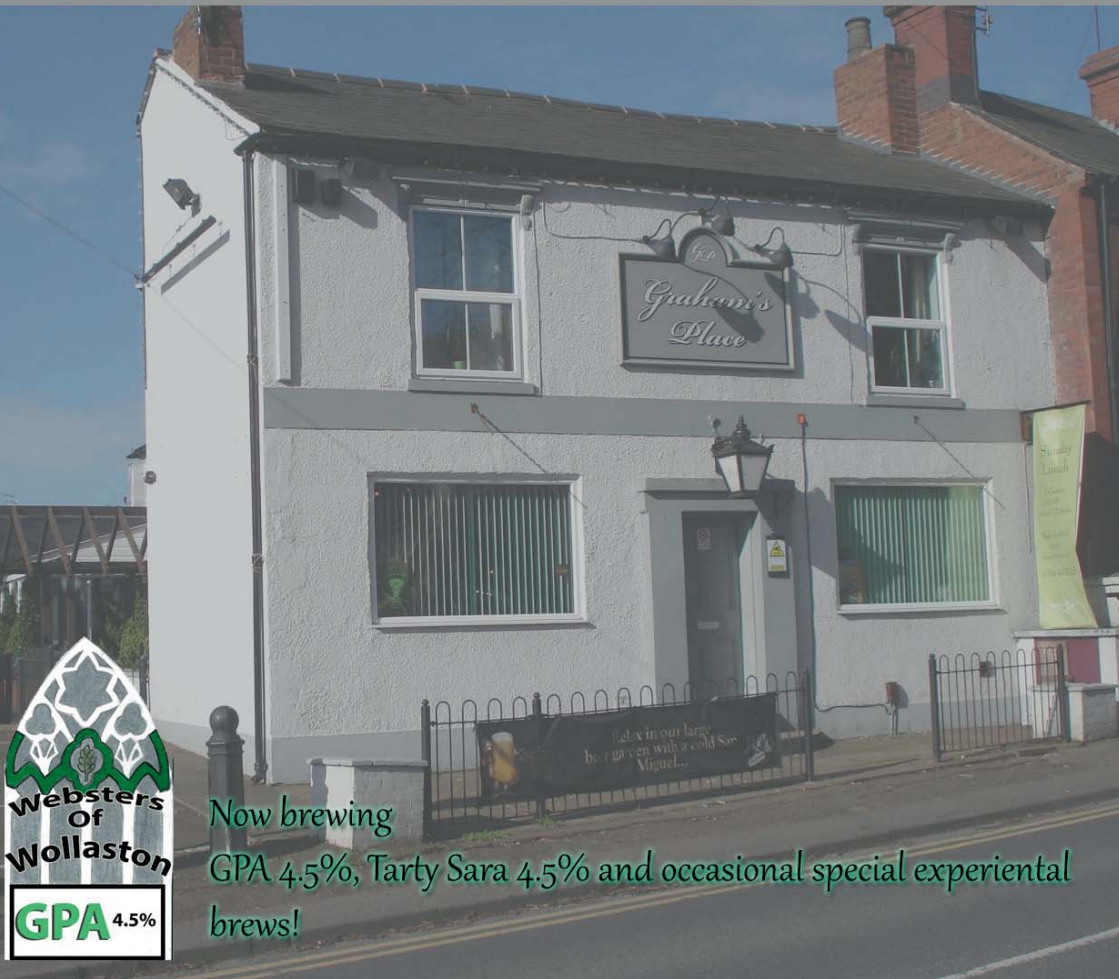
A photograph showing the interior of a pub or bar. In the foreground, a curved wooden bar with a light-colored top is visible. Behind the bar, several patrons are seated at high stools. The background features a well-stocked bar area with shelves displaying various bottles of alcohol. The walls are decorated with framed pictures and signs, and the lighting is warm and ambient.

The inside of the Roe Deer is just as impressive. Most of the building is devoted to diners, with three dining rooms on the ground floor and an outside dining area. There is also a room for private dining upstairs. If you just want to drink, there is a cosy drinking area by the bar. On the bar were seven real ales including two local brews from Green Duck and Backyard. Prices



## Tony Skirving

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# 'Live Craft Keg Beer' Debuts at GBBF

This year's Great British Beer Festival (GBBF), run by the Campaign for Real Ale from 6-10 August at London Olympia, will boast an exciting range of live craft keg beer for the first time in the festival's 42 year history.



Craft breweries such as Tiny Rebel, Magic Rock, Wild Beer Co and Siren will be taking over part of Olympia's National Hall to bring their favourite brews to festival-goers, all served from recyclable KeyKeg containers to ensure they are as eco-friendly as possible.

The keg lines can be found alongside the festival's international beer hall, which showcases 400 different beers from the top craft breweries around the world, including innovative flavours hailing from the US, Czech Republic, Germany, Belgium, The Netherlands and Spain, among others.

Plans are also underway to roll out a new Learning & Discovery zone at the festival, giving visitors the chance to compare samples of beer dispensed in cask as well as keg. Festival-goers can meet with brewers, learn about ingredients and the brewing process and find out more about the nation's favourite drink.

Catherine Tonry, GBBF Festival Organiser, said: "We look forward to rolling out the new KeyKeg takeover at this year's festival. Whilst as an organisation we campaign exclusively for real ale, cider and perry, people like me coming to the festival love beer in all forms and types of dispense. We want to ensure that everyone feels welcome and has the best festival experience that CAMRA can offer".

Brad Cummings, CEO of Tiny Rebel, said: "We have been working behind the scenes with CAMRA to lead the change to promote some of the best craft breweries that love keg and cask as much as we do. This will be the first time that consumers can drink at a dedicated UK craft keg bar in the National Hall, giving consumers a much greater choice of beers, in both style and ABV. We love beer in every form and look forward to seeing you there for a pint!".



Andrew Cooper, Co-founder of Wild Beer Co, adds: "We are incredibly excited to be pouring our range of wild-kegged beer alongside so many talented breweries at the Great British Beer Festival. This has offered us and our friends the opportunity to showcase some of our more diverse brews that wouldn't have been possible to bring before. The festival is about celebrating



great British beer, whatever the style or format and we can't wait to share ours with you all".

Richard Burhouse, Founder & CEO of Magic Rock, adds: "We're delighted to have our keg beers pouring for the first time at the UK's most famous beer festival. The revival of beer in the UK owes a huge debt to CAMRA and it's great to see that they're moving with the times and listening to what modern drinkers want from their beer. We produce both cask and keg beer but it's undeniable that some beer styles such as IPA's and Lagers suit cold keg dispense. We're looking forward to getting feedback on our keg beers from the customers at this year's GBBF".

Andy Nowland, Marketing Manager for Siren Craft Beer, concludes: "We're delighted to be working with CAMRA to pour our brewery-fresh beers at GBBF for the first time. At heart, we're

passionate about great beer in all formats - with the brilliant nuance that each brings. Following on from the success of Broken Dream last year, we can't wait to showcase a range of full-flavoured, modern beer styles in superb company".

The festival will be open to the public from 6-10 August at Olympia London and feature over 1000 British and international beers, ciders and perries, a wine bar and - new for 2019 - a gin bar.

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# Regional Mild in May

Each May, CAMRA members in the region meet to celebrate a style of beer that in many parts of the Country is in decline. Fortunately, in the Black Country we are able to select from many great versions of this drink. Bathams, Holden's and Black Country Ales all produce excellent milds that are widely available and the Dark Ruby from Sarah Hughes is a classic strong mild that draws visitors to Sedgley to drink this 6% version.

This year saw Shrewsbury & West Shropshire branch of CAMRA organise and host a tour of some of the finest pubs in Shrewsbury, some of which had acquired a mild especially for the weekend.

Our first pub of the tour was the Albion Vaults, situated across the road from the railway station. The pub is currently undergoing serious repair and refurbishment. Selling beers from the St Anne's brewery it had 2 milds available, Lea Cross Dark at 4.5%, a rich malty beer and May Mild at 4.1%, both very tasty. The pub also had 2 stouts on the bar, the first at 7% and a coffee stout at 7.5%. It should be interesting to see this project develop. With over 25 people already on the journey it was time to move on.

The Royal Oak was next, about a 10-minute walk. This is a Black Country Ales (BCA) pub so a pint of Pig on the Wall mild at 4.3% was the order of the Day. Decorated in the standard BCA style this was a friendly pub with an excellent range of other beers available.

The Woodman next door was not on the official list of pubs to visit but a small group decided to pop our head around the door. A regular outlet for Salopian brewery beers was the draw but the oak panelled lounge is worth a viewing if you are ever in the area.

A gentle stroll back in to Shrewsbury took us to the Salopian bar, one of my favourite pubs in the town. Sadly (for me) and a joyous occasion for others they had Sarah Hughes Dark Ruby on the bar. An excellent mild with many of the group having pints to savour. I chose the Market Porter followed by Stonehouse Station Bitter, both were excellent.

The Shrewsbury Arms which is a short walk away was next on the list. This pub is one of the Wetherspoon hotels. Rudgate Mild was on the bar but sadly we did not manage to get a drink as the service was appallingly slow. We left and went across the road to Shrewsbury's second Wetherspoon bar.

Montgomery Tower is a strange pub in terms of its layout, the right-hand bar always appears a bit dark and dismal like many Wetherspoon pubs but the left-hand bar is a light bright affair. Two excellent milds appeared to be available. Titanic brewery Nautical mild and Limestone brewery Stonefish mild. In typical Wetherspoon style both beers were not available although the pumpclips lead you to think they are. I am fed up with this policy, so generally when the beer I have requested is not available I leave the pub and take my custom elsewhere, as did a large number of others. I would imagine Wetherspools do not care.

A gentle walk through town took us to the Three Fishes. For those of us that are old enough to remember this was one of the first pubs in the country to ban smoking, well ahead of the total ban on smoking in pubs. A rarity for drinkers, M&B Mild was on the bar and very nice it was too. I don't suppose the youngsters (under 40s) remember drinking this.



The Prince of Wales was next but was quite a walk away. I had the Hobson's Mild, a regular winner of the West Midlands Mild of the Year competition. I enjoyed this pub, a good atmosphere with lots of jovial banter from the locals. The pub also has its own bowling green surrounded by memorabilia from the old Shrewsbury Town football club. A lovely sun-trap.

My final pub was the Abbey, a pub owned by the Stonegate group. Another Hobson's Mild supplemented by Purple Moose with their Dark Side of the Moose. Both beers were excellent. Although directed at diners this pub has plenty of space for those who only want a drink. Very friendly staff.

**Steve Thompson**



## **A Walk around Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter**

As part of CAMRA's promotion of Mild as a beer style in decline I joined Birmingham CAMRA's walkabout in the Jewellery Quarter. I must admit I had an ulterior motive but more of that later. For those thinking of a day out take the train from Stourbridge or Cradley Heath alighting at the Jewellery Quarter station or take the 74 bus from Dudley or the Metro from Wolverhampton.

The starting point was around the corner from the station, the Jewellers Arms, a Black Country Ales pub so naturally their Pig on the Wall mild was available. I followed that up with Rock and Roll brewery's Voodoo mild and also Fixed Wheel's King Kelly stout. An excellent start to an afternoon out.

A short walk took us to 1000 Trades. The pub offered a good range of beers in both cask and keg. Banks's Mild was on the bar but being the last person to arrive in the pub I was warned off it as it was in very poor condition. I plumped for XT (Animal) Orca, a nice hoppy beer.

A short walk to the Rock and Roll brewhouse for more of the Voodoo mild. Rock and Roll brewhouse is a quirky drinking den, open Friday evening and Saturday afternoon selling three of their Vegan-friendly beers. The premises is bedecked with music memorabilia. Check their Facebook to confirm they are open.

My final visit was to Burning Soul brewhouse. A pleasant industrial unit bar and brewhouse on the edge of the Jewellery Quarter. Coconut Porter had been my aim all along. A delicious 7% Porter with a delicate flavour of Coconut. The taphouse is open Friday 4pm until 8pm and Saturday from 1pm until 8pm.

**Steve Thompson**





# Hitchmough's Archives

## **Brierley Hill Advertiser 15/11/1856**

On Thursday last, a fine cow, the property of Mrs. Sophia Pitts, of the Queens Head Inn, at the Level, Brierley Hill, was accidentally killed by the trucks attached to Salt Well Colliery incline. The cow, which was in calf, was pasturing in a field through which the incline runs, and had unfortunately got one of its horns in the chain, but before it could be extricated the up truck, which contained about eight tons of coal, passed over the cow's head, and severed it completely from the body.

## **Stourbridge Observer 28/10/1871**

On Thursday afternoon, the Heath Tavern, High Street, Cradley Heath, received a visit from a cow belonging to Mr. Thomas Attwood, which was being driven down the street. The animal suddenly rushed into the passage, and, as only one of the half-doors was open, her body was jammed in the narrow space and she was unable to extricate herself. After the landlord's son had given her a blow or two on the head with a poker, a rope was procured and she was pulled into the street. Her visit frightened some of the inmates and she knocked a hole into the large pane of glass.

## **County Express 1/12/1900**

Yesterday week a cow and calf belonging to Mr. R. L. Leigh, of the Himley Arms Hotel, were being driven to the hotel along the road, when, near the vicarage, Mrs. Leigh, with her little dog, meeting them, endeavoured to pass. The dog barking irritated the cow which ran at the animal and then at Mrs. Leigh, and tossed her.

The vicar, the Rev. Harold Smith, hearing cries, ran out, and succeeded in beating off the cow with a stick. Mrs. Leigh was found to have been badly bruised about the body, and her clothing was pierced in places. Dr. Pearson has attended her.

## **County Express 22/12/1900**

A case which caused some amusement was called on, in which Joseph Kirton, Two Gates, Cradley, sued Albert Roper, of the White Lion, Colley Gate, for £1, damages caused by the defendant's cows visiting three perches of parsnips.

Kirton, in stating his case, informed the Court that the cows spent Bank Holiday in enjoying themselves among his parsnips, and likewise on other days before and since that holiday. He calculated that each perch would produce about 2cwt of parsnips, which Mr. W. S. Mobberley (who appeared for Roper) said worked out at 16 tons per acre. In answer to Mr. Mobberley, plaintiff said parsnips were worth 3s 6d per cwt. A question as to whether cows ate parsnips elicited from Kirton the remark that he didn't know, 'but the cows looked well after the feed they had off his parsnips' at which the Court had an uncontrollable fit of laughter.

For the defence Mr. Mobberley submitted that the damages were excessive, that the land was not of the dimension described by Kirton, the rent which he paid for the same being but 1d per week, or 4s 4d a year; and he argued it would be impossible for the plaintiff to grow the weight of parsnips stated.

The Registrar said he wished to know from an independent source the market value of the parsnips, and the weight obtainable from three perches of land.

It was not possible to get anyone to say the weight of parsnips three perches of land would produce, but in summing up, the Registrar said the weight alleged by plaintiff appeared to be excessive. He gave a verdict for 10s, the defendant to have the parsnips now on the ground, if removed in 14 days.

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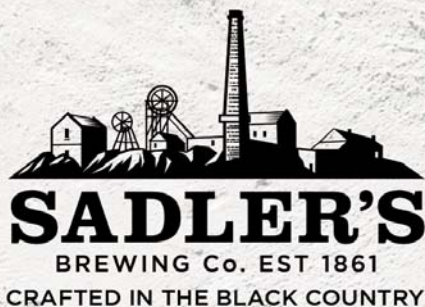


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